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God's Word for Our World

Volume II

Theological and Cultural Studies in Honor of
Simon John De Vries

edited by

J. Harold Ellens, Deborah L. Ellens,
Rolf P. Knierim and Isaac Kalimi



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FOREWORD

Rolf P. Knierim

This work is a celebration of the career of Professor Simon John De Vries. His colleagues present the chapters in this commemorative volume with honor and esteem, on the occasion of his eighty-second birthday, 20 December 2003. This is not the place to write Professor De Vries' biography. However, it affords an opportunity to mention the illustrious stages of his *Curriculum Vitae*. This list alone gives cause for much thought and appreciation: his military service as a Lieutenant in the US Marine Corps from 1942 to 1946, his marriage to Betty Marie Schouten in 1942, his education at Calvin College and Theological Seminary and at Union Theological Seminary in New York where he earned his STM and ThD, his postdoctoral studies at Leiden and Tübingen, his positions as pastor during the 1950s, and as Professor of Old Testament at various institutions thereafter.

Professor De Vries spent his life's career, 1962–88, as Professor of Old Testament at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio and is now Professor Emeritus. He continues his work as guest lecturer, research professor, and member of a number of learned societies in the USA and abroad. He is internationally recognized for his grace and wisdom, and for his meticulously researched and written published works. These phases of a rich career point to a life, filled to capacity, of vocational and professional involvement, of deep devotion and high achievement, in both the church and the academy, a life which deserves particular attention, admiration, and respect.

Even so, the additional fact of his works published in print is nothing less than astounding. It belongs to a level of literary productivity reached by few anywhere. There is a list of constant publication starting with 1951 and continuing all the way until 2003, with the exception of the years 1974, 1984, 1994, and up to the moment of this writing. These important works appeared in approximately equal numbers in each of those fifty years.

Their total number exceeds 180, including seven major books and about 50 major research articles. He is, at this moment, in the process of preparing for publication three more books and three major articles.

Striking in De Vries' published work is not only the quantity of his productivity, with its wide range of discussed issues and topics, but also its sustained high scholarly quality, especially noticeable in his exegetical biblical studies. Whatever his generally stated ideas or theories have been, which are by no means secondary for him, they are always developed from or backed by specifically studied aspects including full usage of the technical apparatus in exegesis. The same is true for his reviews of scholarly publications. Wherever he agrees or differs from the original author, he demonstrates the result of a circumspect and reliable study of what he is reviewing, combined with his own solid knowledge of the subject under discussion.

To be sure, Professor De Vries has, throughout his scholarly life, above all been an heir to the legacy of the classical literary-critical, transmission-historical, and tradition-historical school. Whether more or less in the center, this legacy remains indispensable. It continues, fortunately, to be carried on by a solid segment in biblical scholarship, including *his* contributions. As late as 1995, his massive book *From Old Revelation to New* demonstrates once more his painstakingly diligent labor in persistently progressing from detailed analysis to synthesis, and so consistently throughout the work. It is, again, the fruit of an *ethos* of personal discipline sustained throughout years and decades, and regardless of the degrees of popularity. What an example!

More than 35 years ago, while still in Heidelberg, I read a review article by a scholar named Simon J. De Vries, who was then unknown to me. It was a critique of a book on a subject with which I was familiar. I was struck by the exegetical competence, balance, and incisiveness of that article. From then on, the name of that reviewer was in the store of my memory as that of one of the most important scholars in our field of Hebrew Bible studies. I consider it as one of the fortunate and enriching events in my life that my path has lead me into the path of his life, and that we have become mutually respectful personal friends, as well as collegial scholarly collaborators.

It would be preposterous were I to imply that I am the one, at least more than others, who is best equipped to write this encomium as a Foreword to this volume of studies. All of the authors contribute here to honor Simon John De Vries as the very senior scholar, teacher, and pastor that he is.

There are many who would have their own version of an encomium. I just happened to be one who participated in suggesting the idea of a celebratory volume in his honor. The merit for having taken up the idea belongs solely to Dr J. Harold Ellens. He carried it out and secured the publication of the volume, inviting the participants, processing the organization of the work, and seeing it through the complex publishing process. He belongs to the group of scholars, together with Dr Deborah L. Ellens and Dr Isaac Kalimi, who deserve the credit for the editorial work.

I believe no one will object when, in conclusion, I speak in the name of all our contributors to this volume, expressing to Professor Simon John De Vries our indebtedness and admiration for his life's well done effort, and wishing for him and his wife Betty happiness, energy, and contentment as long as life is granted them.

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	David Noel Freedman (ed.), <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (New York: Doubleday, 1992)
AKM	Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
ANEP	James B. Pritchard (ed.), <i>Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954)
ANET	James B. Pritchard (ed.), <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950)
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ArOr	<i>Archiv orientální</i>
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BDB	Francis Brown, S.R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907)
BHS	<i>Biblia hebraica stuttgartensia</i>
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament
BO	<i>Bibliotheca orientalis</i>
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur <i>ZAW</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur <i>ZNW</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBSC	Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges
CHANE	Culture and history of the ancient Near East
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica, Old Testament
CRBS	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
EBib	Études bibliques
EJL	Society of Biblical Literature: Early Judaism and its Literature
EncJud	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
EvTh	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

GKB	Wilhelm Gesenius, E. Kautzsch and Gotthelf Bergsträsser, <i>Hebräische Grammatik</i> (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 28th edn, 1962)
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> (ed. E. Kautzsch, revised and trans. A.E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910)
HALAT	Ludwig Koehler <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament</i> (5 vols.; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967–1995)
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HAWAT	<i>Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
HCOT	Historical commentary on the Old Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	George Arthur Buttrick (ed.), <i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962)
IDBSup	IDB, Supplementary Volume
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of The Economic and Social History Of The Orient</i>
JEOL	<i>Jaarbericht...ex oriente lux</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
IPSV	<i>Jewish Publication Society Version</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSNTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> , Supplement Series
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i> , Supplement Series
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KB	Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner (eds.), <i>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libros</i> (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1953)
KHAT	Kurzer Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KJV	King James Version
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, Robert Scott and H. Stuart Jones, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 9th edn, 1968).
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic text
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NEB	<i>New English Bible</i>
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBT	Overtures to Biblical theology
OIP	<i>Oriental Institute Publications</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	James Charlesworth (ed.), <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i>

PMLA	<i>Proceedings of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RIA	<i>Real Lexicon der Assyriologie</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SAA	State archives of Assyria
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SÖAW	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften</i>
TDNT	Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–)
TDOT	G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
THAT	Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann (eds.), <i>Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1971–76)
ThWAT	G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970–)
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
TRE	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i> , Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

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INTRODUCTION: BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND TEXT-CRITICAL STUDIES

J. Harold Ellens

Brevard S. Childs brought out his first volume on the primacy of a canonical approach to biblical studies in 1979. It was entitled *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*.¹ In that volume he wrestled with the developing problem of the time, the viability of Biblical Theology as a discipline. In his Preface he set forth the problem as he saw it:

Two decades of teaching have brought many changes in my perspective. Having experienced the demise of the Biblical Theology movement in America, the dissolution of the broad European consensus in which I was trained, and a widespread confusion regarding theological reflection in general, I began to realize that there was something fundamentally wrong with the foundation of the biblical discipline. It was not a question of improving on a source analysis, of discovering some unrecognized new genre, or of bringing a redactional layer into sharper focus. Rather, the crucial issue turned on one's whole concept of the study of the Bible itself. I am now convinced that the relation between the historical critical study of the Bible and its theological use as religious literature within a community of faith and practice needs to be completely rethought. Minor adjustments are not only inadequate, but also conceal the extent of the dry rot. (p. 15)

Childs emphasized in this work that he wished to create a new model for doing Hebrew Bible studies. His model 'seeks to describe the form and function of the Hebrew Bible in its role as sacred scripture for Israel. It argues the case that the biblical literature has not been correctly understood or interpreted because its role as religious literature has not been correctly assessed' (p. 16). Five years later Childs produced a similar treatment of the New Testament and in 1985 a follow-up study of his former work on the Old Testament.² Significantly, he entitled this last volume in the set of

1. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).

2. *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

three, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*.³ His focus upon canonicity as the proper method of doing a textual and theological study of the two testaments had matured. The important thing for him seems to have been theological reflection upon the Bible as canonical writings, not as a set of narratives about events or experiences reported by the practitioners of ancient Israelite religion or of the post-Easter Church. It is interesting that, whereas in the first of these three volumes he observed upon the death of the American Biblical Theology movement, in the third of these volumes he came round to an attempt at formulating an Old Testament Theology.

When I first became aware of Childs' approach to biblical studies I was in conversation with Bruce M. Metzger at the 1979 convention of the Society of Biblical Literature. I had occasion to observe, in that dialogue, that if the quest for a theological and religio-historical understanding of the Judaic and Christian scriptures were to shift as radically as Childs proposed, from text-critical studies to canonicity, students of the disciplines of scriptural studies would leave the fields of excruciatingly and meticulously careful linguistic text-analysis; choosing instead the linguistically less demanding, and more broadly conceptual, and philosophico-theological approach of canonicity. I expressed the fear that in two generations of biblical scholars, the mastery of the exquisite skills and apparatus of literary, historical, form-critical, and redaction analysis, worked out so painstakingly over the last century, would be lost. Metzger seemed to affirm this sentiment, and the concern behind it.

These fears now seem generally to have been warranted and the predicted state of affairs has come true. When we compare the popularity of work like the rather simple narrative studies and theological analysis of Walter Brueggemann, on the one hand, with the less popular but immensely more critical and crucially fruitful approaches of *Form-Geschichte* and Redaction-Criticism in the work of Rolf P. Knierim, David J.A. Clines, and Simon John De Vries, on the other, it is clear that the retiring generation is taking with it those finely honed skills; and the more popularized world of contemporary biblical study has been seized and trivialized by the canonicity approach.

Childs' personal address to the texts of the canon did not in itself completely devalue text-critical study. In his *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* he emphasized the fruits such study had produced but

3. *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

relegated it to a lesser role than it had had for half a century. However, by the arrival on the scene of his *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*, six years later, he had moved away from an emphasis upon the text-critical disciplines as the foundation of biblical studies, and strongly towards the perspective that theological analysis of the scripture as canon was the proper source for understanding the documents of the two testaments. This approach has increasingly become the method and perspective of biblical scholars, with the exception of those trained in the generation in which Childs himself was trained, in the 1940s and 1950s, and who continue to produce works which employ the full range of text-critical disciplines.

Among these latter scholars, the work of Simon John De Vries stands out as a pinnacle of achievement in the world of traditional-historical, redaction-critical, and literary-exegetical scholarship. De Vries is the author of a series of book-length studies that demonstrate this in a remarkable way. In 1975 he published *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Time and History in the Old Testament*.⁴ Three years later he wrote *Prophet Against Prophet: The Role of the Micaiah Narrative (I Kings 22) in the Development of Early Prophetic Tradition*.⁵ By 1983 his comprehensive volume, *The Achievements of Biblical Religion: Prolegomenon to the Old Testament Theology*, was ready for publication.⁶ *From Old Revelation to New: A Tradition-Historical and Redaction-Critical Study of Temporal Transitions in Prophetic Prediction* arrived on the scene in 1995.⁷ In the meantime he had also produced exegetical-hermeneutical commentaries on *I Kings*⁸ in the Word Biblical Commentaries series, and *1 and 2 Chronicles*⁹ in the Forms of the Old Testament Literature series.

Childs' canonical perspective reflected his priority of interest in the role of the final form of the Hebrew Bible and LXX in shaping Rabbinic and Patristic literature. That shifted his focus from a critical assessment of the

4. *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Time and History in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: SPCK, 1975).

5. *Prophet Against Prophet: The Role of the Micaiah Narrative (I Kings 22) in the Development of Early Prophetic Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).

6. *Achievements of Biblical Religion: Prolegomenon to the Old Testament Theology* (Washington: University Press of America, 1983).

7. *From Old Revelation to New: A Tradition-Historical and Redaction-Critical Study of Temporal Transitions in Prophetic Prediction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

8. *I Kings* (WBC, 12; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985).

9. *1 and 2 Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988).

narratives and textual products of the ancient Israelite religion, the main subject of the Hebrew Bible, to the role of the finally redacted canon in the formation of Rabbinic Judaism and nascent Christianity, in the second to the sixth centuries CE. De Vries' work stands in marked contrast to the perspective proposed by Childs. De Vries has a deep appreciation for the role of the Bible in the life of the church and in the formulation of the theological confession of the church. He also has a high regard for the function of the Bible as canon. However, his view and practice of biblical studies is focused upon the cruciality of a critical analysis of specific biblical themes and textual pericopes, with a view to understanding their roots and origins, their interpretation in terms of those roots and origins, their function in ancient Israelite religion, and the import of the manner in which they were redacted at various times, particularly during and after the Babylonian exile. Out of this he draws an integrated view of the meaning of the texts.

De Vries seems always to be answering the question: 'What did the ancient Israelites think about how God was present in their history and what meaning did they derive from the perceptions that question afforded them?' For De Vries, this is a canonical question only after it has been a question put carefully and critically to each facet of the greatly varied and disparate fabric of the separate narratives that make up the total text of the Bible.

Each of De Vries' published works, which Knierim in the Preface to this work indicated run into the hundreds, is a meticulous text-critical analysis of the specific texts in the Hebrew Bible which set forth and control a major theme of ancient Israelite religion. Thus they afford us a carefully developed foundation for conclusions regarding cultural and theological themes that reigned in and shaped that religion. Since Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as we know them today, all find their roots, themes, metaphors, and grounding in the literature of that ancient Israelite religion, De Vries has done us a great service in understanding not only the contours of that ancient world, but also the shapes and forces of our world today.

De Vries' work stands boldly in the worthy tradition of linguistic analysis, and thematic interpretation. He is a consummate master of exegesis and hermeneutics. For this De Vries will be known and honored in the history of biblical interpretation. His type and style are hard to find any longer. He will be greatly praised for the kind and quality of work that he does. The direct relevance of and interest in his publications and methodology will last for centuries to come. Thus the products of his scholarship

will have profound and sustained currency. He will continue to be praised for the heroic stance in biblical analysis that he championed, modeled, and refused to give up, even when the tides of scholarly preference were turning in a different and less profound direction.

As long as there remains even a minor interest in what the text of the Bible originally said and meant, where it came from, how it got that way, and why and what that means, honest and serious scholars will find it necessary and delightful to consult his works. They are a standard for method, and a paragon of scholarly achievement. It is this dimension and quality of the scholarly legacy of Simon John De Vries that has prompted so many scholars to join in creating this substantive series of studies in his honor.

ON WORLDVIEWS IN THE BIBLE OF THE CHRISTIANS

Rolf P. Knierim

Introduction

I want to begin by stating the following distinctions in my terminology.

I distinguish between the words 'world' and 'reality' because I want to account for two different perspectives which are fundamental for the Bible.

By the word 'world' I refer to the biblical perspective of the world *vis-à-vis*, or in front of God, that is, the world created and sustained by God of which, however, God is not a part.

By the word 'reality' I refer to the biblical perspective of both God and world. While in this perspective both are considered as related to, not separate from each other, each is seen as distinctly different, not mixed with the other. They are thereby considered as related in the sense that God is related first to the world, whereas the world in turn is related to God.

The meaning of the word 'reality' is more fundamental than the meaning of the word 'world'. The world is in reality perceived as the world of God and not as the world alone, just as God is in reality perceived as the God of the world and not as a God alone.

To say that 'the Bible speaks about God' is false. Except for specific reasons on a few occasions (e.g. Ps. 90.2), it always and basically speaks about God's relationship to his world, and never about a God alone without a world. Both words, each with its own focus, point to the most comprehensive or all-inclusive or universal or total horizon of reality in which the relationship of God and God's world are perceived in the Bible.

The horizon of universal reality is decisive for the biblical vision at the outset. If God is not the deity of the total world, God is either no God at all, or parts of the world have other gods or no God. The criterion for the truth of the concept of monotheism rests first and above all else on the affirmation that God is the deity of the world in its most universal sense conceivable.

God is perceived as the God of the whole world before he is 'my God' or the 'Christians' God' or 'Israel's God'. Indeed, he is the God of Israel, of the Christians or believers, and 'my' God, too, precisely because he is the God of the total world, of all his creatures and especially all human beings in all the earth and at all times. Unless this is so, God would be the hero of a special group who would use his universal influence by exploiting all his other creatures for the benefit of his chosen or specifically loved and preferred people. For all those creatures, such a God would be irrelevant to say the least. I take these perspectives to be intrinsic to those criteria in the Bible that are fundamental for its claims to truth, and by no means as extrinsic in any way to either Testament.

Any discussion about the relationship of God and world in the Bible is based on, and has therefore to start with, the concept of universal reality. All other aspects are, and have to be, components within this concept, and subordinate to it, just as they are both called for and justified by it.

Second, by 'worldview', or 'view of the world', I refer to those standpoints or vantage points from which the world is perceived in the biblical writings. What is meant by standpoint or vantage point is thereby not an attitude of distanced 'theoria' in these writings, as in the distance between the spectator and what happens on the screen in movie theaters or on television. On the contrary, 'worldview' refers to the framework or even the matrix of our mind which is always at work in the orientation of our lives in everything we fathom, think, say, or do. Worldview is the conceptual infra-text, or sub-text, of the way our lives operate.

Third, by the word 'worldviews', in the plural form, I refer to the fact that the Bible of the Christians, their Old and New Testament, contains more than one and the same worldview. An elaborate analysis, for which there is no place in this paper, points to several views, views that not only differ but in important respects also conflict. Later, I want to focus on two such conflicting views in the Bible.

Fourth, since I am speaking of the Bible of the Christians, their/our Old and New Testament, which also means of us Christians today, I want to address differences between the worldviews in the biblical books, a task of biblical theology; and our own worldview(s) today which are the frame and foundation of reference in which we ourselves exist, a task of biblical hermeneutic.

In the following, I have two parts. In the first part I want to highlight differences between the biblical and our worldviews with some examples. In the second part I want to discuss specifically an essential difference

between two worldviews which exist in the Bible of the Christians, and which consequently affects our own questions and answers today. I refer to the difference between the view of an indefinitely ongoing world and the view according to which the world is near its end because of the impending coming of the kingdom or the second coming of Christ.

I might as well mention that for much in modern scholarship, these topics are no longer on the agenda. I think, however, that they are developed very little, if at all, in our Churches. To them we owe a contribution.

The Biblical and Our Modern Worldviews

Nobody in our civilization has to be a trained historian in order to know from her/his own, often daily experience, that the conditions under which we live at this moment are different from the conditions in recent decades, from those conditions under which our predecessors lived before World War II, those before World War I, those in the United States after the Civil War, those from the Pilgrims to the Civil War, those during the thousand years of the Christian Holy Roman Empire, the conditions of the Roman Empire, the Hellenistic period, the 200 years of the Persian Empire (540–330 BCE), the chain of Babylonian and Assyrian Empires and the Sumerian city-states, alongside 3000 years of the ancient Egyptian Empire, let alone some 150 known Canaanite cities and city-states, including 5000-year-old cities such as, for example, Shechem, Amman, and Jerusalem. Maybe I packed into this litany a bit more than is readily present in each person's memory. Information is readily available, at least in our open Western culture.

Those who read the Bible ought to be aware that it was not written today, revealed or not, but in the distant past between 3000 and 2000 years ago. Not only does each of its pages indirectly point to the generations in certain groups or persons of which it was written; it refers in uncountable references to those generations directly. Whatever its relevance is for us today, it was not written as a religious ideology abstracted from and timelessly floating above God's presence in the ongoing conditions of his world.

The historical difference between biblical times and ours is vast. Ancient Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Rome, Israel, are not today's America, China, European Union, Russia, or Israel. Our modern conditions of political, economic, international, and domestic life, as well as the role of the sciences, are vastly different from those in antiquity. Whether or not we believe it or

like it, the ancient conditions are past. They have long ceased to be a blueprint for the orders of our societies. I am pointing to these general facts because they represent the limitless range of differences between the especially distant past and our present time and future developments, the range to which also belongs the issue of the differences in the views of the world as a whole, the issue on which I shall be focusing.

The biblical views of the whole of the world and of reality deserve special attention because they represent what is understood as the priority, or foundation, on which everything else depends, to which everything is relative, by no means irrelevant, and without which nothing can exist; even as such foundational reality is neither the only one nor the last one to be recognized.

In the following, I will highlight significant differences between the biblical and our modern understanding of world and reality, by focusing on the two aspects of cosmology and history, the aspects which, among others, stand out in the Bible as well as today and have played a prominent role in the discussion in recent decades.¹

Cosmology

In the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, the world is understood cosmologically, before everything else, as a universal cosmic order created by God out of the chaos, the *tohu-wa-bohu*.² This order consists of two parts, the heaven and the earth, to each of which belong all things existing in the cosmic order. These things are parts of that cosmic order, and imbedded in it. For the realm of the earth, this means that its flora, generated by the cyclically recurring annual seasons and their calendarically organized agricultural order, and also its fauna and, most importantly for our understanding, the humans as well, are first of all understood cosmologically, as parts of the created cosmic order.

1. See Leo G. Perdue, *The Collapse of History: Reconstructing Old Testament Theology* (Overtures to Biblical Theology; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

2. The assertion of the priority of the cosmology in the Old Testament's worldview rests on the recognition of the place of its cosmology in the system of its worldview, not on the statistical frequency of references to it. The fact that it is by far not as frequently addressed as other issues does not mean that it is not considered as the foundation of all else.

This aspect of the humans is especially important, because they are understood cosmologically in distinction to, and before they are understood as belonging to, the category of history. In as much as humans are defined as male and female and as blessed with the potential for procreation, they belong to their cosmological, not to their historical condition. This condition, which is also reflected in the very important biblical genealogies, the 'beget' lists, does not depend on, but is the presupposition for human history.

The cosmological view of the world from various aspects, in various forms and for various purposes or intentions is expressed in texts such as Psalms 8; 19.1-6; 29; 104; Job 38-42, and in many texts from the Wisdom Literature, the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.³ Of course, it is most clearly, and programmatically, systematized in Genesis 1.

For the systematization of this cosmology, four aspects are before all others important. First, the world is understood as a two-storey space, of heaven and earth, built solidly and permanently. Second, the earth is one of the two parts of the cosmos, *vis-à-vis* the firmament of the heaven which protects the earth and whose lights serve as signs for the days, seasons, and years on earth. The earth, its order climaxing in the creation of humans, is understood as the purpose of and the decisive location in the cosmic space. This cosmology has been called geocentric. Third, predominant is the aspect of the stratified spatial order of the earth, of water, land, and air, with their respective species of life, and not the question of how many years ago this happened.

Fourth, as far as any aspect of time occurs, it is the aspect of the creation of the world in six days (through eight acts), with the day of rest on the seventh day, which precisely reflects the week of seven days, 24 hours per day, which we have today. The seven-day pattern is uniquely Israelite, and even in Israel the specialty of that priestly group (of Aaronide denomination) that is accountable for the so-called Priestly Source of the Pentateuch. The pattern has no parallel in the ancient Near Eastern societies, and is neither based on nor connected with the astronomically identified seasonal cycles of days, months, and years, which were also known in Israel and used for its calendrical system. It is directly linked to the institution of the Jewish Sabbath, as one can read in Exod. 20.8-11 and 31.12-17, and in all other passages in the Old Testament about the regular Sabbath week,

3. Cf. Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom and Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994); Odil Hannes Steck, *World and Environment* (Biblical Encounter Series; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978).

whereby our seventh day refers to the Saturday, the Sabbath of the Jewish people, not to the Sunday of the Christians.

By explicitly connecting the order of the creation of the world with the pattern of Israel's Sabbath week, and by ordering Israel above all else, next to the order of circumcision for the males, to live according to this order forever, from week to week, these priestly writers said that nothing less than the original fullness of the whole, created world is in the life of each Israelite actualized from week to week. The origin for this actualization is understood to antedate and precede in principle, and to be independent of, the types of natural-seasonal and historical periodization. In this pattern of existence, Israel understands itself not only as unique among all nations but also as the symbol for the foundation on which all nations and humans rest and depend: the order of the created world.

The Old Testament's and Our Current Cosmologies

I am not interested in losing time defending that ancient cosmology, including the one in Genesis 1. I respect it for what it was in its time, some 2500 years ago: an impressive intellectual achievement, arrived at under the conditions of the state of the sciences available at its time from various fields, such as astronomy, geology, and biology, by priests who most probably did not belong to the scientific specialists in those fields. If we ministers would be as up-to-date about today's state of the sciences as these priests were in their own time, the churches could be taught, for the benefit of our modern societies, to focus on the real problems by which the Bible confronts us, rather than being stuck on whether the world is some 5761 years old or not, or rather than avoiding such problems with the excuse that they have nothing to do with religion and faith.

The comparison between the cosmology of Genesis 1 and our cosmology should in my opinion not rest on the division between our scientific age and the ancient pre-scientific age. It should rest on the changing states of knowledge, including scientific knowledge.

In this regard, systematized, empirically verifiable classifications of natural order are found in Genesis 1 that are as valid today as they were common knowledge at the time of the text regardless of its particular theology. On the other hand, the indisputable geocentric cosmology of the text(s), its/their understanding of the structure of the heaven, of the relationship of light and darkness and more, should be accepted for what it is: a cosmology which reflects an edition of ancient knowledge, which is not only by far surpassed by our own constantly advancing editions, but which

is replaced and passed away, together with many other kinds of knowledge that were not even correct in their own time, respectable as they were. Some may like it or not, but modern cosmology will never go back to past systems or acknowledge them, including the biblical one, as an equal discussion partner.

What the cosmology of the biblical texts points to is something else, something that our faith has ignored through centuries and today focuses on only in part: the ancient, profound, irrefutable, never-relative insight that there is nothing on earth, including human life and history, indeed the earth itself, that is not cosmic and would exist and be possible without this cosmic condition. It is in this condition that the truth of the world is present, God the creator. Waste this condition, and we not only commit the ultimate sin against God's creation whether we are believers or not, but we also reap the results because nothing else will matter. Has our so-called faith understood this?

History

The Old Testament

In its second most important aspect of reality, the biblical view of the world is concerned with universal human history. This aspect too receives center stage in the Old Testament, in contrast to the New Testament where it stands at best on the sideline, and not coincidentally as I will mention later.

It is important that one understands the place of human history in the Old Testament's worldview first of all in its relation to its cosmology, its relation to the world as an already-ordered and existing system, a view that beyond any doubt can be verified exegetically.

According to that systemic order, (a) history arises in all relevant texts temporally after the creation of the cosmos; it (b) evolves on the basis of the conditions laid down for it in the cosmic order and not without or apart from that basis; and (c) it remains for its entire duration dependent on the everlasting cosmic stability. Indeed, one may not go too far when saying that the Old Testament implies, in one of its views, that just as human history began after the creation of the cosmos, so also will it end long before the cosmos comes to its own end.

With the view of history against the background of cosmology, the Old Testament's concept of history itself focuses, then, on the relationship between Israel and the nations in, through, and as history. This focus is evident throughout the prophetic and historical books, and is certainly

programmatically conceptualized in the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is a history work, which is conceptualized as the program of Israel's divine election from among the nations on earth for the threefold purpose of (a) God Yahweh as its one and exclusive deity; (b) its covenant loyalty as the one nation holy to this God; and (c) its expected exclusive possession of the land of Canaan as its own land of Israel, in the midst of the lands of the nations, for its permanent life in this land as the one nation under the one God.

The oneness of God Yahweh, the nation and the land of Israel are inseparable. Without this triune concept, the Pentateuch would not be what it is. The composition of the entire work is, from its first to its last chapter, generated and controlled by this concept which is operative in all its literary strata. The concept is presented as evolving in the history which begins with the creation of the world and ends with the death of Moses, the historical period before the next period, which begins with the actual takeover of the Promised Land. The Pentateuch is therefore the history of the preparation, or of the preparatory program or design, for its implementation in the actual life of Israel in the land.

It is the history of the promise, compared to the following history of the fulfillment from Joshua onward. Not coincidentally, it culminates in the history of the function of Moses during the last forty years of his life until the day of his death. This history extends from Exodus through Deuteronomy, covering Israel's journey from Egypt to Sinai, the events at Sinai, and the passage from Sinai to the fields of Moab, the border to the Promised Land including Moses' testament for Israel in the book of Deuteronomy.

In this culmination of the Pentateuch, the time of preparation for Israel's life in the land not only comes to its conclusion, the program laid out in it remains for all times the yardstick against which the following history of Israel in the land is, or is to be, measured. The centrality of the focus on Israel's election under one God, as one people of God Yahweh, in the one land of Israel, and of the place of this focus in the Pentateuch's worldview, cannot be over interpreted. However, neither can it be overlooked that this focus appears in the context of the Pentateuch's view of the totality of humanity, and not in isolation from, or as a replacement of, that totality. This context comes into sharp relief in the relationship between the primeval history in Genesis 3–11 and the shift to Israel's election beginning with the story of the patriarchs from Genesis 12 onward.

The Pentateuch focuses on two histories: the history of humanity which begins before the history of Israel's election and the history of Israel. Both

histories are presented in the light of the very good order of the original creation in their background. Most important, however, for the Pentateuch's understanding of history in its worldview, is the aspect of the relationship between humanity and Israel.

The aspect of the relationship of the two histories is already included in the facts that Israel's origins come out of the nations and that it is one of the nations. Specifically, the abrupt shift from the universal narrative about the nations to the particular narrative about the patriarchs, in my opinion, must be understood to be motivated by the condition at which the history of humanity has arrived by the time of its attempt to build the 'tower with its top in the heavens' (Gen. 11.4). By that moment, enough had become evident that the history of humanity was irreversibly on its sinful course. And it was inevitable from that moment onward, that in answer to that lost history of humanity, another history had to be launched, within the total history of humanity and for its sake.

At issue in the subject of history in the Pentateuch's worldview is the question not only of the wondrous preservation of the history of humanity from self-destruction, but of the ideal of humanity's reintegration into the good order of creation. That ideal is admitted to be a hopeless goal, also for the time after the Flood. Hopeless, because of the characteristics of humanity's thorough and incurable sinfulness. The hamartiology of the primeval history is paradigmatic for the entire Old Testament. It has often been interpreted and can be read in any reasonable commentary or Old Testament theology.

I want to summarize.

The primeval history is conceived as the history of the divine effort to prevent humanity from following a course toward self-destruction, a course characterized by ever-more spreading and radicalizing sinfulness and augmenting types of sins. The subject of sin occurs in ten passages. Six are in the time before the Flood (Gen. 3.1-7; 4.1-8, 23-24; and 6.1-4, 5, 11-13) and four after the Flood (Gen. 8.21a; 9.6a, 11-14, 20-22). The types of sin consist of: (a) transgressions of the limit-conditions of the humans (Gen. 2.17; 3.1-7; 6.1-4; 11.1-4); (b) violence (Gen. 4.1-8, 23-24; 6.11-13; 9.6); (c) the violation of the taboo of parental nakedness (Gen. 9.20-25; cf. Gen. 19.30-38; also Lev. 18.6-18); and (d) the magnitude of malice/wickedness of the humans on earth (Gen. 6.5; 8.21). Furthermore, the texts distinguish between sinful seeing and emotions (Gen. 3.6; 4.5b; 6.2), seeing and saying (Gen. 9.22), and the progress from evil thoughts to destructive actions (from Gen. 6.5 [J] to 6.11-13).

Especially important are two aspects. No text in Genesis refers to the mental attitude alone, without speaking about its execution in word or action. The acts weigh heavier than the activities of the minds in which they are plotted. And the texts point to the understanding that no type of sinful action ends when the next appears, but that each type happens always and is only complemented by other types as history progresses. The type of violence which includes different kinds of actions and ultimately ruins the earth is thereby especially highlighted.

History in the Bible Compared to Our Current Worldview

Although the primeval history does not say all that would need to be said about the Old Testament's understanding and its picture of history, it has always been considered representative, especially since it focuses on the history of humanity universally. A comparison of this picture and its standards with the picture of universal human history based on today's standards for historiography has to be circumspective. Compared to what is historically ascertained today for the time span envisioned by the Pentateuch, the Pentateuch's picture of primeval history is useless. It plays no role in any modern study of what is known about the history of those times, from the beginning of creation to the time of Moses.

Its Mesopotamian horizon is too narrow, its implied perception of the time span too short (some three thousand years) and its episodic presentation insufficient for a balanced presentation of the development of humanity. Furthermore, its focus on the history of Israel's divine election, amounting to some 96 per cent of the material, in the modern view of that period of humanity's history plays not only a quantitatively absolutely negligible role, but no role at all as far as the importance in the Pentateuch is concerned for Israel's election as answer for, or the way towards saving humanity from its decaying or rotting history.

Whoever wants to consider the Pentateuch as competition to, or even a replacement of what is known by modern history advocates a cause long lost. Particularly, we must realize that the Pentateuch is written by Israelites and from a vantage point which values the importance of the world and its nations for Israel and Israel's election for all nations. For the purpose of that vantage point, the destructive nature of the history of the nations is, one-sidedly though understandably, cast in the sharp relief of a systematized doctrine of sin in narrative form, in order that the purpose of Israel's election as the light for the nations may be clearly demonstrated. The only problem is that in this interpreted history the vantage points of

the nations themselves at the time are not also, likewise, considered. The history of humanity did not culminate for the nations in the critical distinction between humanity and Israel. That is, Israel for them was not as important as Israel itself believed it to be, and human history has gone its own way as it is doing today.

Now, then, is the picture of history in the Pentateuch irrelevant in light of our modern criteria for the understanding of history? In my opinion by no means. I want to mention three aspects.

First, in the episodic composition of the primeval history, the episodes are lined up as stations by which the nature of the common course of human history is highlighted. They reflect the interpretation of the meaning of that whole course. This interpretation is one-sided in two respects. It is nothing but pessimistic, and this pessimistic picture of humanity is necessitated by the Israelite writers' vantage point about the opposite function of Israel's election. However, this interpretation rests on insights that belong to every understanding of history, not only to Israel's understanding. It presupposes that no historical event or course is value-neutral; and it rests on the fact that human history has been until today not only a history of undeniable progress, but also, even increasingly, a history of human destructiveness. In this respect, the pointer of the primeval history to this side and the danger of human history remain today at least as true as ever, if not more.

Second, in the modern understanding of history, the workings of God are not accounted for. This fact should function as a wake-up call for people who continue to use God, or the word for God, as they use a dollar, or use it as a dollar, without ever thinking or saying what they mean by using that word. Nevertheless, modern history would do well to consider the experience of the category of what I am calling the wondrous, which is precisely what is meant in the primeval history's understanding of the continued existence of humanity despite its destructive tendencies. There is only one difference. A possibility now exists which no biblical aspect ever thought possible. We are now able to extinguish life, at least all human life on earth because life itself until our generation was assumed to be forever guaranteed by God. That assurance is gone. We can do what faith said is impossible.

Third, in contrast to the concept of history in the Pentateuch's view of the world, the understanding of the history of humanity in other societies was never determined, and is nowhere today determined, by the critical bi-polar relationship between the nations on earth and Israel, especially in

its conceived unity of one nation, one land, one God. In three thousand years, the history of the nations has gone its way without the Pentateuch's and the Old Testament's view of world history, and continues so today.

And for the New Testament's worldview, neither the contra-position of the nations and Israel nor even the history of the nations as such is axiomatic. This does not mean, of course, that Israel's historical existence could be regarded as irrelevant, then and today. For the course of our ongoing human history it is just as relevant as the existence of any other nation, not by virtue of being a particular nation or ethnicity or locality or religion, but to the extent to which it contributes with all others to the advancement of such developments that serve all equally and constructively or not.

In today's worldview of history, in which the workings of God can be discerned, what is good is not determined by one nation or religion, but by who does what is good for God's whole humanity, whoever and wherever that person, group, nation or society is, regardless of its own identity and without its own advantage. That is a perspective for an indefinitely ongoing human history, which belongs to a part of the Old Testament's worldview, whereas this perspective is basically left aside in the New Testament.

Original and New Creation

The understanding of cosmos and human history in the Old Testament's worldview rests on the assumption that not only the cosmos but also the history of humanity on earth go on indefinitely. This understanding is fundamental also for the various eschatological or apocalyptic predictions found in the Old Testament.

When we come to the issue of the role which eschatology and apocalypticism play in the Old Testament's and lastly also the New Testament's views of the world, we must realize where the real line of demarcation lies. This line does not lie in the differentiation of the various eschatological concepts, or in the distinction between eschatology and apocalypticism. As for the Old Testament, it lies in the question whether any of its eschatological predictions envisions more than a new beginning and more than transformed conditions within the basic continuation of human history on earth and especially on the continuing existence of the original cosmos; or whether it envisions the replacement of, not only the fallen, but also the original creation by a new heaven and a new earth.

Concerning the question of a vision of a new heaven and earth, which would make the vision of any history on earth superfluous, the findings in the Old Testament are negative. The predictions in the books of Amos, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Obadiah, First Isaiah (chs. 1–39), Deutero-Isaiah (chs. 40–55), Trito-Isaiah (chs. 56–66), Haggai, Malachi, Joel, and Daniel, are, each in its own way, concerned with Israel's future caused by miraculous divine intervention and Israel's true conversion, a future by which also the nations will be affected, which is considered mostly near for the current generation rather than indeterminately and abstractly futuristic; and which still belongs to the ongoing history of humanity on earth even where its coming days appear to be seen in a longer and remote distance.⁴

This picture is not offset by the few passages in Trito-Isaiah (60.19-22; 65.17-25; 66.22-24). Indeed, 60.19-20 speaks of an altered function of sun and moon 'for you', and 65.17 and 66.22a even more of 'new heavens and a new earth' which Yahweh will create. Yet, however this new heaven and earth is envisioned, the contexts of these units show that this new cosmos reflects a return to the ideal of the original cosmos and its basis for human and especially Israel's history on earth, rather than the replacement of the original cosmos by a totally new one without the cosmic nature of the earth and human history on it.

The Old Testament's eschatological visions belong to its basic worldview of an indefinitely ongoing cosmic order and human history on earth based on this order. Indeed, the view of this indefinitely ongoing world is represented by those portions of the Old Testament for which eschatological future plays at best a parenthetical, if any role at all. The Pentateuch, the historical works including Chronicles, the Wisdom Literature, and many Psalms are such portions.

Compared to this worldview of an indefinitely ongoing world, including its eschatological predictions, the worldview of the New Testament rests on a fundamentally different foundation. It rests on the vision of the replacement of the old by the new creation.⁵ For this understanding, on which the entire corpus of the New Testament scriptures rest, many texts

4. On the interpretation of the history of these eschatological predictions and their variety, see the eminently important, thoroughly comprehensive scholarly tome by Simon J. De Vries, *From Old Revelation to New* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

5. When referring to the New Testament, I mean the books of the New Testament as we have them before us.

are paradigmatic. For example, Paul, for whom even the new creation after the destruction of all enemies of God including the last death, will not be a distinct world but paradoxically one absorbed into or replaced by not Christ but by God himself, who will be 'all in all' (1 Cor. 15.24-28), expresses it most radically. (On my mentioning of this passage to my wife, she remarked: 'This looks like nobody but God alone on the other side, after the whole universe will have passed through the black hole'.) 2 Peter says 'In accordance with his promise, we wait [not just for a new earth but] for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home' (3.13), while Heb. 11.1 speaks of 'the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'. Even Rev. 21.1-4 emphasizes the newness of heaven and earth, despite speaking of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven and God's dwelling with men, there or on earth. Still: 'The first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more', and 'death shall be no more'. The Synoptic Gospels rest on the announcement of the impending coming of the Kingdom of Heaven or God's Kingdom. On a conceptual basis that amounts to more than anything the Old Testament could say, and therefore to more than any configuration it could express as long as it avails itself of the aspects of the original creation and human history on earth.

The statement 'of that day and hour no one knows' (Mt. 24.36, 42; 25.13) means that one has to be ready for it any moment because 'the day and the hour' will not only have arrived suddenly but is near, at hand. That its schedule is unknown does not mean that one can relax for a year, a decade, a century, a millennium, or millennia because it makes no difference whether it will arrive tonight or in a million years as long as one only believes that eventually, in its own time, it will arrive. To assume that the schedule of the arrival is insignificant, not decisive, amounts to the abandonment of the decisive reason for the absolute urgency of the call to be ready, not just at all times but now.

What is the reason for the fundamental difference in the New Testament's worldview, for the radical reconceptualization of the eschatological traditions in it rather than only their recontextualization in the context of its time? Answer: It is the belief of the writers of these books in the ultimacy of God's revelation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Unlike other resurrections, God's resurrection of Jesus Christ was understood as the decisive watershed in the history of the universe. Compared to this event, all eschatological predictions in the Old Testament, regardless of their individual differences, their aiming at historical fulfillment, the

length of time pondered for their arrival, and their assertions of God's own supra-natural intervention, fulfilled or not (and none was ever fulfilled to this day as expressed), are nothing more than preparatory at best. They are nothing more than prophecies now replaced by the event of the fulfillment, the penultimate now replaced by the eschatological ultimacy.

This new creation has arrived and exists from Christ's resurrection onward. But since it is actually, in this world, realized only in signs, without already having consummated the old continuing creation, this consummation is expected to be near, to be fully realized in the appearance of the new creation in the second coming of Christ which is impending. The disciples, by being 'in Christ', belong to and exist in this imminent new creation already now, hidden though it still is. The ethos for their lives is therefore to be unequivocally determined by this new existence, and it is intensified by the certainty of the nearness of the second coming and the preparation of their lives for it. If we take this worldview away from the New Testament's scriptures, we may have any collection of writings according to our liking, except those of the extant New Testament. Only in the Gospel of John does the temporal eschatological aspect step back in favor of the presence, once and for all, of the ultimacy of the revelation of Christ in terms of eternal life in the midst of the darkness of this world.

What we have, then, is the contrast of two worldviews, the one, in the Old Testament, of an indefinitely ongoing creation and human history in it and including its this-worldly prophetic predictions; and the other, in the New Testament, of a new creation which has already arrived and in principle replaced the validity of the old creation even as it still goes on, and has continued to go on to this day, even beyond the *kairos* of our New Year 2000. What are the implications, when we compare these two worldviews? I must confine myself to two essentials: the aspect of history and the aspect of science in both Testaments.

It is very clear that the attention to history, to the existence of the nations, even of Israel, to the many aspects that belong to that history, let alone to the perspective of the history of humanity on earth, an attention that pervades the entire Old Testament, has no parallel in the New Testament, not even remotely.

According to the texts that we read, neither Jesus nor the early Churches were involved in the structures that are indispensable for the affairs of the nations in this ongoing world. For their commitment to the Kingdom of God and the reign of Christ, the policies of the Roman Empire, such as its subjection of other nations and regions by military force, its tax system, its

social stratification and economic organization, were of no concern. The field of law in it, the famous Roman Law, a field central in all societies ancient and modern, is unchallenged by the criteria for God's or Christ's reign. Indeed, the Christians have to observe it as God given. Thus, the slaves had to remain slaves and the women subordinate to their husbands. Last but not least, their attention to the state of the sciences in the Roman Empire played no role in their worldview, for their ethos, and for their education. This assessment is not offset by the fact that the Christians were called upon to do good works within their Churches. They were not called to change the secular system of the empire.

This all is basically different in the Old Testament, as, for example, a look at the Old Testament's attention to the broad state of the sciences demonstrates, sciences known and relied on internationally and also recognized by Israel regardless of its Yahweh religion by which it was separated from the nations. I am referring to the evidence in the texts for the sciences of architecture, warfare, political and social administration, history writing, law and judicial administration, systematization and catalogization of the available knowledge of lands, nations, types of animals and plants, of astronomy and cosmological order, of mathematics, metallurgy, even medicine, and much more.⁶ None of all this has anything to do with the expectation of, and waiting for, a new world, or even of inner-historical changes in a sort of prophetic eschatological vision.

One should not say that the New Testament writers were unaware of what is going on in this ongoing world, that they were illiterates. Nor should one say that they were against what was going on in what we call the structures and developments of civilization in the societies. They left these facts on the side! Why? Because these structures did not belong to the structures to come in the second coming. They belonged to the structures of the old world, which are going to go away when the new world comes, and which are irrelevant for those already existing under the order of this new world. The absence of attention in the New Testament to the structures of the old world is not coincidental, it is a programmatic element of the ethos of the New Testament which we have before us.

6. A discussion by myself of this subject was first published by Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St Paul, MN, in its *Word & World: Theology for Christian Ministry* 8.3 (1993), pp. 242-55, and reprinted in my volume on *The Task of Old Testament Theology, Substance, Method, and Cases* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 400-15.

In the meantime, neither the kingdom nor the second coming has arrived as said and expected. And regardless whether our faith continues to rely on the certainty of this expectation, the certainty asserted by the New Testament,⁷ we have for a long time been living under the conditions of the indefinitely ongoing creation rather than under the conditions of the new world while leaving those of the old world aside. And regardless whether we realize it or not, and whether we account for it or not as a part of our own ethos and integrity, the fact is undeniable that we do not live, as our rhetoric claims, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the New Testament. Indeed, to live in accordance with this letter and spirit is impossible. Not because it would be too difficult, but because two thousand years of the delay of the parousia are compelling evidence that our ethos cannot be based on the assertion that the second coming will therefore happen tomorrow. This sort of delay proves only that the parousia may indeed happen in thousands or, as somebody insisted, in a million years, if at all. Whether its expectation has become irrelevant or not, it has become relative.

The definitive fact has been and continues to be that this old world has been going on and continues so indefinitely. In this respect, whatever modern empirical science says about the future of the universe and this globe, it is in accordance with the developments of the past millennia, and has to be attended to, whether some people like it or not. And the definite task is that as long as this old world is going on, we had better pay attention to its structures, unless we want to be understood as people for whom God has in the first place nothing to do with it, is not present in it, and is not going along with it for all its imperfection.

Indeed, the neglect of this old world, in important respects caused by the worldview of the New Testament, is what seems to have contributed to developments throughout generations in which the earth itself was considered as nothing more than quarry for the exploitation of its resources for our progress, rather than as the only permanent ground for our existence. In this perspective, the Old Testament's worldview of the indefinitely ongoing cosmos and human history appears as a critical complement

7. The category of 'certainty' has, in eschatology as well as generally, essentially nothing to do with 'hope'. Hope basically presupposes that one is not quite sure whether or not something, even something prophesied or promised, will happen. By contrast, the eschatological predictions were given to generate the certainty of their fulfillment as the reliable ground for the faith and ethos of the believers.

to the New Testament, a complement that it has never had in the history of the relationship of the two Testaments in the Bible of the Christians.⁸

8. In a review of the work by Simon J. De Vries (see n. 4) in *Religious Studies Review* 24.3 (1998), pp. 259-61, I discussed and acknowledge De Vries' exegetical focus on the tradition- and redaction-history in prophetic predictions, but concluded by distinguishing between this focus in exegesis and the different task of evaluating that tradition- and redaction-history in light of the questions arising from the task of Biblical Theology. Saying that 'there remain questions of a different sort', I asked, among others questions, 'How is the validity of futuristic eschatology and apocalypticism of any kind to be evaluated, when compared with other worldviews about past, present, and future in the Hebrew Bible in which futuristic eschatology and apocalypticism and related predictions play no role? All exegetical results reflect historical facts, but none of these facts is true by virtue of its mere existence or by anyone's claim to its truth. Such questions are important, not only because exegetical scholarship has long been debating the differences between fulfilled, unfulfilled, and unfulfillable prophetic predictions, but because the matter of truth is intrinsic to the issue of revelation. The answers to these questions must—and can—be worked out by practitioners of the different discipline of the theology of the Hebrew Bible, which rests on and follows from exegetical work. I do not think that De Vries wanted to write a segment of a theology of the Hebrew Bible...' This is an aspect that I have taken up in the present study

THE HOLINESS OF GOD IN CONTEMPORARY JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Thomas B. Dozeman

1. *Introduction*

Simon J. De Vries laid the foundation for a Biblical Theology in his book, *The Achievements of Biblical Religion*, published in 1983.¹ The study presents a broad sweep of ancient Israelite belief set against the backdrop of ancient Near Eastern religion. The cornerstone of the study is holiness. De Vries begins the book with an evaluation of Rudolf Otto's study, *The Idea of the Holy*,² and he returns to the topic of holiness repeatedly throughout the work.³ The emphasis on holiness as the basis for evaluating ancient Israelite religion was unique at the time of publication. Other models, such as covenant or salvation history, were more prominent for organizing the religion of ancient Israel and for constructing Biblical Theology. But, for De Vries, the holiness of Yahweh provided points of similarity between ancient Israelite and ancient Near Eastern religion, while also laying the foundation for the uniqueness of Israel's personal view of God. The study of holiness has expanded greatly in the two decades since the publication of *The Achievements of Biblical Religion*, especially within Jewish Biblical Theology. This development is due in part to the timely work of Simon De Vries. And it is with pleasure that I dedicate the following article to him.

My study of holiness will separate into three parts. First, I will summarize the phenomenological study of holiness in Christian Old Testament

1. Simon J. De Vries, *The Achievements of Biblical Religion* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983).

2. Rudolf 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. John W. Harvey; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn, 1969 [1917]), pp. 2-4.

3. De Vries, *The Achievements of Biblical Religion*, pp. 47-49, 51-105, 243-44, *et passim*.

Theology as it has developed under the influence of Rudolf Otto. I will focus in particular on the Old Testament Theology of Walter Eichrodt, since he was the first to translate Otto's work into the field of Old Testament Theology. Second, I will describe recent anthropological study of holiness, focusing in particular on its influence within contemporary Jewish scholarship, especially in the work of Jacob Milgrom. Comparison between the two approaches will include the nature of holiness, its transfer to humans, and its relationship to morality. I will conclude by exploring ways in which the interrelation of the two approaches allows for the reclaiming of sacramental ritual in Christian Old Testament Theology.

2. *The Phenomenological Study of Holiness in Christian Old Testament Theology*

a. *Rudolf Otto and the Idea of the Holy*

Rudolf Otto established the framework for the interpretation of holiness in Christian Old Testament Theology. His book, *The Idea of the Holy*, is a quest for the essential nature of religion and religious experience.⁴ Otto conceded that religion requires rational concepts for explanation (i.e. spirit, reason, purpose, good will and power). But such concepts occupy only the foreground of religion, arising from partial analogy to human life. In every case they imply a non-rational subject of deeper essence, the true subject matter of religion. Otto wished to probe the pulp of religious experience by describing the subject at the core of religion.

(1) *The Nature of Holiness.* Otto identifies holiness by underscoring its Semitic meaning of difference or separateness, thus introducing the basic distinction between the sacred and the profane. Holiness designates the 'wholly other'. But the separateness of holiness, its transcendence, is not attributed to a being who possesses positive attributes or to a realm above and beyond the profane world. The transcendent quality of holiness is, rather, a radical immanence lying beneath the profane world. Holiness is an *a priori* numinous at the innermost core of religious experience.⁵ The numinous is a *sui generis*, irreducible object outside of the self, which constitutes the nucleus of religion. The numinous is ineffable and pre-moral. It is not the content of religion, but its matrix—a primary and elementary

4. See the recent evaluation of Otto's work by Melissa Raphael, *Rudolf Otto and the Concept of Holiness* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

5. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, p. 5.

datum—an 'over-plus' of meaning.⁶ Otto concludes that it is the absence of content, 'the void', which marks the numinous as the wholly other.⁷

(2) *The Transfer of Holiness to Humans.* The numinous is a spiritual reality that can only be appropriated through religious feeling. Religious feeling is neither rational thought nor psychological self-evaluation. Rational reflection on morality may clarify the foreground of religion, but it is not able to penetrate to the pre-moral numinous.⁸ The same is true with regard to feelings of dependency or personal insufficiency. These categories are too psychological to probe the essential subject at the core of religious experience.⁹ Religious feeling, according to Otto, is 'creature-consciousness', which requires the direct and present experience of the *numen*.

The transfer of the numinous to humans is essentially charismatic in nature. It is direct, immediate, and personal.¹⁰ The numinous cannot be taught, nor can it be transmitted through ritual processes. The deeper essence of the numinous is more immediate, pressing itself upon humans and creating a sense of urgency that lacks specific content. And, as a result, humans do not grasp holiness; they receive it as a spiritual gift. The direct transmission of holiness is an awakening, according to Otto, of an inborn capacity to receive its essential nature.¹¹ Teaching and ritual may enhance the awe of the worshipper, but they are not themselves 'really spiritual'. Theory, dogma, exhortation, and ritual cannot replace the essential charismatic nature of the transmission of holiness through the inspiration of personal feeling, expressed in the words *mysterium*, *tremendum*, and fascination. Those who lack this experience are encouraged by Otto to cease reading the book.¹²

6. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, p. 6. Otto writes that 'holy' includes 'a clear overplus of meaning'. He continues that originally the word 'holy' only indicates this 'overplus'.

7. Otto (*Idea of the Holy*, pp. 25-30) states: '...the "void" of the eastern like the "nothing" of the western mystic is a numinous ideogram of the "wholly other"' (p. 30). Otto writes that the experience creates 'a peculiar "moment" of consciousness, to wit, the stupor before something "wholly other", whether such an other be named "spirit", or "daemon" or "deva", or be left without any name'. Otto's (p. 61) quotation of Goethe's *Faust* (Part 2, Act 1, Scene 5) is meant to illustrate this point. The numinous is the deeply felt 'monster' (*Ungeheuer*).

8. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, pp. 1-4.

9. Otto (*Idea of the Holy*, pp. 9-10) criticizes Schleiermacher as too psychological.

10. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, pp. 60-61.

11. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, pp. 60-61.

12. Otto (*Idea of the Holy*, p. 8) writes: 'The reader is invited to direct his mind to a moment of deeply-felt religious experience, as little as possible qualified by other

(3) *Holiness and Morality*. Although Otto's primary goal is to analyze the character and quality of religious feeling, he also presents an implicit view of religious evolution in relating the numinous to ethical action. Otto writes, 'holiness is a category of interpretation and valuation peculiar to the sphere of religion. It is applied by transference to ethics, but is not itself derived from this.'¹³ Thus Otto concludes that the theological use of 'holy' is derivative. Such concepts as 'the completely good', designating an absolute moral attribute, may be true, but, as we saw in the previous section, they do not probe the core of religion.¹⁴

The derivative nature of morality may give the impression that ethics is unimportant to the understanding of holiness for Otto. But nothing could be further from the truth. The process of rationalizing and moralizing actually completes holiness, according to Otto. But the passive reception of the numinous through religious feeling is the necessary presupposition for the proper construction of morality. The numinous is the essential 'daemon' that is neither a god, nor an anti-god, but a pre-god, which Otto defines as 'the *numen* at a lower stage...out of which the "god" gradually grows to more and more lofty manifestations'.¹⁵ The process of growth reaches its highpoint in the prophets. Otto writes, '[T]he capital instance of the intimate mutual interpenetration of the numinous with the rational and moral is Isaiah'.¹⁶ His reception of the numinous is immediate and personal, and his moral vision springs directly from his religious feeling. Consequently, the ethical demands of Isaiah, and the prophets in general, do not overcome the numinous, but provide its content and hence its consummation.

b. *Walter Eichrodt and the Theology of the Old Testament*

Rudolf Otto's study of the numinous is crucial for interpreting the nature of the covenant God in Walter Eichrodt's *Theology of the Old Testament*.¹⁷

forms of consciousness. Whoever cannot do this, whoever knows no such moments in his experience, is requested to read no farther; for it is not easy to discuss questions of religious psychology with one who can recollect the emotions of his adolescence, the discomforts of indigestion, or, say, social feelings, but cannot recall any intrinsically religious feelings.'

13. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, p. 5.

14. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, pp. 5-7, 50-59.

15. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, pp. 72-73.

16. Otto, *Idea of the Holy*, p. 75.

17. Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. J.A. Baker; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961, 1967) (a translation of the three-volume German original *Theologie des Alten Testaments* [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1933-39]).

A brief summary of holiness will illustrate that Eichrodt further develops the religious categories of Otto into a more detailed history of Israelite religion.

(1) *The Nature of Holiness.* Eichrodt follows Otto in stating that the holiness of God is of unique importance for the religion of the Old Testament. He quotes Otto approvingly. Holiness is the *mysterium*, 'that which is marked off, separated from ordinary use'.¹⁸ The separate quality of holiness could be conceived impersonally, according to Eichrodt, requiring ritual for access as is evident in many ancient Near Eastern religions.¹⁹ But such an impersonal view of holiness is not evident in ancient Israel. The reason is that holiness is dynamic and active for the Israelites. God is the Holy One in the Old Testament, signifying the entry of 'a personal element into the theory of holiness'.²⁰

(2) *The Transfer of Holiness to Humans.* The transfer of holiness to humans also remains charismatic for Eichrodt. He writes that the charisma of the 'personal divine will' in the free activity of God-inspired personalities becomes the essential way in which holiness is transferred to humans.²¹ It is direct and immediate, 'the operation of God's own activity'.²² Thus the act of revelation becomes a central topic of interpretation for Eichrodt.²³ The experience requires detailed description. Eichrodt elaborates, footnoting Otto: God's visitation of humans is a unique experience. Humans receive holiness passively through a spontaneous feeling of piety.²⁴ The feeling of divine nearness 'is essential if the divine reality is to be truly transcendent'.²⁵

18. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, p. 270. See also p. 263.

19. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, pp. 271-76.

20. Eichrodt (*Theology*, I, p. 272) writes, 'There can be not doubt that this (the title, "Holy One" for God) signifies the introduction of a personal element into the theory of holiness, which raises it out of the sphere of merely naturalistic power and the cultus of a non-personal reality on to a higher spiritual plane'. Thus Eichrodt later concludes, 'The uniqueness of the Old Testament definition of holiness lies not in its elevated moral standard, but in the personal quality of the God to which it refers' (p. 276).

21. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, p. 296.

22. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, pp. 271-76.

23. Eichrodt, *Theology* II, pp. 15-92 *et passim*.

24. Eichrodt, *Theology*, p. 389.

25. Eichrodt, *Theology*, p. 276.

(3) *Holiness and Morality*. Eichrodt greatly expands the idea of the evolution of holiness in Yahwism that is already implicit in Otto's work. He does so by further historicizing Otto's categories of the numinous and religious feeling.

Moses, the founder of Yahwism, is as close to numinous power within a human as is possible. Eichrodt writes that Moses is infused directly by the spirit of God.²⁶ And, as a result, the character of Moses cannot be defined any more than the numinous itself. Ordinary categories or specific offices (i.e. king, prophet, wonder-worker, priest) imprison him.²⁷ Moses' authority is in his marvelously equipped personality, which empowers his mission to bring forth a new understanding of the whole nature of God. Thus, 'at the very beginning of Israelite religion we find the charisma, the special individual endowment of a person; and to such an extent is the whole structure based on it, and that without it it would be inconceivable'.²⁸

The anchoring of Yahwism in the charisma of Moses does not mean that Eichrodt is anti-cult in his interpretation of holiness. He concludes that cultic activity is genuine and even indispensable for the transfer of holiness. The cult provides expression of religious experience in concrete external actions.²⁹ Eichrodt goes even further stating that the role and authority of the priest in administering the cult also emerges as a charisma, endowing the office and person with power to mediate the divine realm. The charisma of the priestly office is especially evident in the power of the word, conveyed through teaching, when the priest interprets the will of God.³⁰ But the cult remains a secondary medium of divine power for Eichrodt. It is inherently in opposition to the spontaneous feelings of piety. And, as a result, an over-emphasis on the limitations and constraints of the cult can 'become a very real drag on the full development of the content entrusted to it'—namely, holiness.³¹

Eichrodt concludes that the prophetic experience recaptures the original spirit of Moses. He writes, the prophetic encounter with God was 'numinous and terrible, definable in terms of personality and great to a degree that allows for no competitor'.³² The prophetic recovery of Moses' direct

26. Eichrodt, *Theology*, p. 292

27. Eichrodt, *Theology*, p. 290.

28. Eichrodt, *Theology*, p. 292.

29. Eichrodt, *Theology*, pp. 99-101

30. Eichrodt, *Theology*, pp. 402-403.

31. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, pp. 98, 101.

32. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, p. 351.

appropriation of holiness means that 'the idea of the God-dominated individual replaced all technical and impersonal methods of union as the supreme fact of the religious life'.³³ The prophetic moral vision of covenant is so powerful, according to Eichrodt, because it sprang organically from an encounter with the personal will of God, as it did originally for Moses.³⁴ And, as a result, holiness and morality are inextricably linked through the charismatic inspiration of prophetic words.

3. The Anthropological Study of Holiness in Jewish Biblical Theology

a. Jacob Milgrom and the Commentary on Leviticus

The research of Rudolf Otto also looms in the background of Jacob Milgrom's commentary on Leviticus. Milgrom provides a nod to the 'classic treatment of Otto', writing that the root meaning of holiness in Hebrew as applied to God is likely the 'numinous, irrational, and ineffable aspect of the deity'. He continues, 'the notion of separateness would then be derivative'.³⁵ But a closer examination indicates Milgrom's rejection of the phenomenological methodology of Otto for a more anthropological approach, in which the spatial dimension of holiness as a symbol system of sacred space provides the point of departure for interpretation. Within this symbol system, cultic ritual, not individual charisma or inspired speech, is the key for interpreting the nature of holiness, its transfer to humans, and its relationship to morality. The result is a distinctive theology in comparison with that of Walter Eichrodt. Milgrom writes, 'Theology is what Leviticus is all about. It pervades every chapter and almost every verse. It is not expressed in pronouncements (i.e., words) but embedded in ritual.'³⁶

(1) *The Nature of Holiness*. Like Otto and Eichrodt, separation is crucial to Milgrom's interpretation of holiness. But the nature and character of the separation is very different. Holiness is not a primal matrix or an 'over-plus of meaning' available directly to all humans through religious feeling.

33. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, p. 331.

34. Eichrodt, *Theology*, I, pp. 415-18.

35. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 3A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), p. 1606.

36. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 3A; New York: Doubleday, 1991), p. 42.

Rather, the separate quality of holiness is spatial. Holiness is the realm of the gods in distinction from the world of humans.³⁷ Milgrom concedes that already in the earliest forms of polytheism the realm of the gods was never wholly separate from the world of humans. Objects, places, and people were invested with supernal force making them dangerous, unapproachable, and even independent demonic forces.³⁸ The ancient Israelite conception of holiness indicates a rejection of the animism of polytheism, according to Milgrom. God is the source of all holiness; its presence in the world of humans is not independent of God, but requires a theophany.³⁹

Yet the spatial character of holiness and its supernal power are retained. Holiness is 'that which is withdrawn from common use', be it a place or precinct, along with objects and persons.⁴⁰ The power of holiness is identified with divinely created life, a force that is incompatible with physical decay and the impurity of the human world, embodied most sharply in death.⁴¹ The power of holiness is continually active, even dynamic.⁴² Milgrom writes, '[T]he *sancta* of the Bible can cause death to the unwary and the impure who approach them without regard for the regulations that

37. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 721; 976; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1397; 1364; 1711-26; and 'The Changing Concept of Holiness in the Pentateuchal Codes with Emphasis on Leviticus 19', in John F.A. Sawyer (ed.), *Reading Leviticus: A Conversation with Mary Douglas* (JSOTSup, 227; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 65-75.

38. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 42, 730, 981; *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1711; 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', p. 65.

39. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 42, 47, 730; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1711; 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', pp. 65-66.

40. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 42-47; *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1398; 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', pp. 65-66.

41. The incompatibility of holiness and impurity requires the distinction of four categories: sacred and common; and pure and impure. See the overlapping discussion in Milgrom's *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 616-17, 732-73; 977; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1711-26; and 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', pp. 72-75; and the section entitled 'The Rationale for Biblical Impurity', in his *Numbers* (The JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1990), pp. 344-46.

42. Holiness and impurity are dynamic in the sense that each seeks to extend control by transferring the content to the categories of common and pure. The latter two categories (common and pure) are static, meaning that they are unable to transfer their state to another category. Indeed, both categories lack content by themselves, and only acquire content from their paired opposite. The dynamic quality of holiness and impurity creates an antinomy between the two categories. They cannot occupy the same space.

govern their usage'.⁴³ As a result, holiness, with its life-giving power, must be safeguarded and quarantined from impurity through rituals, since contamination of sacred space would drive holiness from the world of humans. The danger of contamination provides a primary definition of holiness as 'that which is unapproachable except through divinely imposed restrictions'.⁴⁴ A Biblical Theology of holiness will require a description of sacred space, sacrament, *sancta*, and rituals of sanctification, not a phenomenological analysis of religious feeling.

(2) *The Transfer of Holiness to Humans*. The title of this section is too anthropocentric to capture the spatial interpretation of holiness. The transfer of holiness is not limited to humans. The invasion of holiness into the profane realm creates a separate environment from the impure world of humans. Holiness resides within the physical space of the sanctuary precinct. It radiates from a center point and is contagious by degrees in its adherence to objects and persons alike.⁴⁵ The spatial interpretation of holiness restricts its sphere of influence to clearly defined parameters, in which proximity, touch, sight, and even air quality become transfer agents. And, conversely, a holy precinct can also be polluted in the same manner. Such a view of contagion is decidedly non-charismatic.

Holiness is not the spiritual charisma envisioned by Otto and Eichrodt, available directly to all humans through religious feelings. Holiness is dangerous to humans, because it is incompatible with impurity. But that incompatibility does not create feelings of dread or awe in humans.⁴⁶ In fact holiness is not a direct and immediate awakening at all, since it is never transferred charismatically to humans. Mediation is always required in relation to a sanctuary precinct.⁴⁷ And, even then, the transfer of holiness to humans is restricted primarily to a priestly class, who must undergo rites of sanctification, including ablutions, sacrifices, oil, and proper vestments.⁴⁸ Once sanctified, priests become transfer agents between the

43. Milgrom, 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', p. 66.

44. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 730-31; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1398, 1711; 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', pp. 65-67.

45. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 718-36 *et passim*.

46. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, p. 60; *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1606; *Leviticus 23-27*, pp. 2445-46.

47. Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1433.

48. See the commentary on Lev. 8-10 (*Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 493-640) and Lev. 27 (*Leviticus 23-27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB, 3B; New York: Doubleday, 2001], pp. 2365-436 [2409-17]).

realms of the holy and the profane. Their core task is to perform restrictive rituals inoculating the sanctuary from impurities that would drive away holiness.⁴⁹ Thus, ritual, not words, is the primary way in which holiness is safeguarded from the impurity of human sin.⁵⁰ The central role of ritual rather than speech is captured in the phrase, 'sanctuary of silence', first advanced by Y. Kaufmann and adhered to with qualification by Milgrom.⁵¹

(3) *Holiness and Morality*. Holiness and morality are interrelated in ritual, according to Milgrom. The Priestly teaching on holiness prior to the mid-eighth century BCE stressed prohibitive over performative rituals and commands.⁵² The sphere of holiness was restricted to the sanctuary precinct and the priests who served within it. Holiness itself was viewed as being static, making the aim of the priestly ritual the protection of holiness against physical impurity.⁵³ Such restrictive purity rituals could function independently from ethical action in animistic religion. But in ancient Near Eastern religion pollution embraced both 'ethical as well as cultic violations', and this is also the case in the Priestly view of holiness, according to Milgrom.⁵⁴ The phrase, 'all of Yahweh's prohibitive commandments' (Lev. 4.2) embraces ethical and moral restrictions. And, in addition, an emerging monotheism transferred the demonic from independent forces to humans, further underscoring the power of immoral actions to pollute.⁵⁵ Sacrificial rituals performed by priests and dietary rituals observed by lay

49. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 52-57.

50. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, p. 60; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1426-28.

51. Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1427 *et passim*.

52. Milgrom (*Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1400) notes that prohibitive rituals include the abstention from Sabbath labor, eating carcasses, idolatry, and so on.

53. Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 46, 51) notes the reduction of impurity to three sources: corpse/carcass, scale disease, and genital discharges, of which the common denominator is death. The ethical implications for the reduction of *sancta* contagion are discussed on pp. 50-51.

54. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 13-35. See here especially Milgrom's disagreement with Israel Knohl (*The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995], pp. 175-80 *et passim*), who argues that the Priestly view of holiness is detached from ethics.

55. Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, p. 43) also writes that the 'evisceration of the demonic also transformed the concept of impurity. In Israel impurity was harmless. It retained potency only with regard to *sancta*', serving a theological purpose: 'The sanctuary symbolized the presence of God; impurity represented the wrongdoing of persons. If persons unremittently polluted the sanctuary they forced God out of his sanctuary and out of their lives.'

Israelites are essential for interrelating holiness and morality. Milgrom concludes that the fundamental premise of the Priestly teaching is that 'humans can curb their violent nature through ritual means'.⁵⁶

Changing economic conditions, along with a shift in land tenure, from the mid-eighth through the seventh centuries BCE gave rise to a prophetic critique of the Priestly teaching on holiness. Prophets judged the teaching as too focused on prohibitive rituals over performative commands. And, as a result, prophets such as Isaiah of Jerusalem stress the central role of ethics in achieving holiness, proclaiming, 'The Holy God shows himself holy by righteousness'.⁵⁷ The prophetic critique is accompanied by a new conception of holiness within the Priestly tradition (identified as 'H'). The spatial boundaries of holiness are expanded from the sanctuary precinct to the land, extending holiness to all Israelites.⁵⁸ Impurity is conceived more metaphorically to include more performative, ethical behaviors.⁵⁹ The result is that the 'otherness' of holiness includes both 'separation from' the impure (requiring rituals of restriction) and 'separation to' God (requiring the observance of performative commands).⁶⁰ And the quality of holiness itself also becomes dynamic so that ethical behavior (*imitatio dei*) by priests and lay Israelites can expand or contract its presence in the land and in the sanctuary.⁶¹ The result is the perfection of holiness through ethics. Milgrom writes of Lev. 22.32, 'though the text speaks of YHWH who sanctifies (*meqaddesh*) Israel, the reality is that Israel sanctifies itself. If it obeys YHWH's commandments, its sanctification is automatic, a built in result of the commandments'.⁶²

4. Reclaiming the Sacred in Christian Old Testament Theology

Two views of holiness emerge. One is charismatic, focused on the person, mediated through religious feeling and developed through the spoken

56. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, p. 47. Milgrom (p. 736) raises the question: Why a ritual and not a teaching? He then answers that ideal teachings are no more than abstractions rarely actualized, while rituals are pragmatic in their discipline: 'persistent rain makes holes in rocks'.

57. Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1379-86; see the summary in 'The Changing Concept of Holiness', pp. 65-75.

58. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 3-51; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1319-443.

59. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 37, 48 *et passim*; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1711-26 *et passim*.

60. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 48, 981; *Leviticus 17-22*, pp. 1397.

61. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 48, 731.

62. Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, p. 1439; see also Lev. 18.5b.

word. The other is non-charismatic, focused on sacred space, and mediated through ritual. The charismatic perspective targets the experience of revelation, while the non-charismatic turns its attention to the threat of impurity on sacred space. I have identified the former with the phenomenological study of holiness in Christian Old Testament Theology, and the latter with a more anthropological approach that informs Jewish Biblical Theology. A closer look at the history of interpretation in this century would certainly call into question my distinction. It is difficult to conceive of the phenomenological approach without the influential role of Martin Buber's 'I and Thou', or the *pathos* of the prophets in the work of Abraham Heschel. Conversely, the anthropological approach to holiness is equally inconceivable without the research of Mary Douglas or the biblical exegesis of Gordon Wenham.

Yet, when the lens is narrowed to the genre of Christian Old Testament Theology, the dominance of the charismatic approach to holiness in this body of literature is striking. The topic of holiness tends to be explored experientially, requiring extended discussion on the nature of revelation, often with an eye on the prophetic encounter or experience of God. The non-charismatic approach to holiness as sacred space, requiring priestly rituals for mediation or protection, is less developed or absent altogether.

In his JPS Torah Commentary on Leviticus, Baruch Levine compares the two approaches to holiness under discussion. He notes the presence of both perspectives in second temple Judaism. He concludes, it is Christianity, not Judaism, which embraced holiness as sanctifying space from the second temple period. Judaism, he continues, opted for non-sacral worship. Levine writes, 'Christian worship in the form of the traditional mass affords the devout an experience of sacrifice, of communion, and proclaims that God is present. The Christian church, then, is a temple,' as compared to a synagogue.⁶³ A Protestant would be quick to qualify the nature of the sacramental ritual in Christian worship. Yet the generalization within the history of religion is certainly true. At the heart of Christian worship is sacred space, with the infusion of God into physical objects of bread and wine. Thus the minimal attention to the non-charismatic approach to holiness in Christian Old Testament Theology is all the more striking.

An earlier draft of the present study was titled 'The Reclaiming of the Sacred: The Influence of Jacob Milgrom's Research on Holiness for

63. Baruch Levine, *Leviticus* (JSP Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1989), pp. 216-17.

Christian Old Testament Theology'. Ultimately, however, I decided that the title, 'Reclaiming the Sacred', to characterize Christian Biblical Theology was misleading, since even my brief summary of Eichrodt illustrates the central role of holiness in his work, where the emphasis is on charisma, religious experience, and the power of the word for worship and ethics. But we have also seen that his quest for holiness is one-sided. Further reading in the history of Old Testament Theology would underscore an even more narrow approach to holiness in subsequent writers. And in view of this situation, the anthropological study of holiness in Jewish Biblical Theology provides a complementary perspective on holiness, where sacred space, the silence of ritual, and the power of *sancta* inform worship and ethics.

The different emphases in the study of holiness within Jewish and Christian tradition illustrate the importance of inter-faith dialogue for probing the full fabric of Bible, even though each tradition must fashion its own unique Biblical Theology. I am reminded of the prayer in the Conservative Prayer Book, which begins, 'No religion is an island; there is no monopoly on holiness'. Yet, in the end, it remains for Christian theologians to shape an Old Testament Theology of holiness that embraces both word and sacrament in Christian worship and ethics. And for those who pursue this goal, I recommend Jacob Milgrom's commentary on Leviticus as an excellent resource for the journey. Christian sacraments play no role in his theology of sacred space. Yet, as a Christian reading the commentary, I found myself addressing the topic in nearly every chapter.

DELITZSCH IN CONTEXT*

Bill T. Arnold and David B. Weisberg

This study, dedicated to Simon De Vries, is written in conjunction with a paper entitled 'A Centennial Review of Friedrich Delitzsch's "Babel und Bibel" Lectures', presented at the November 2000 Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Nashville, by the authors.¹ In the present paper, the authors propose to examine further two aspects of Delitzsch's work:²

1. What was the direct impact of ideas of German nationalism affecting Delitzsch at a time when he spoke before Emperor Wilhelm II? and
2. What were some of Friedrich Delitzsch's Assyriological contributions as seen in their context of a century ago?

In his essay 'The "Babel/Bible" Controversy and its Aftermath', Mogens Trolle Larsen gives a taste of the political background in Germany one hundred years ago as Delitzsch was delivering his three lectures. Pointing out the 'significant element of nationalism behind the support given to these scholarly pursuits by the political leadership in Germany',³ Larsen

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1. *JBL* 121 (2002), pp. 441-57. That article contains many references relevant to this study as well. See also by the same authors, 'Babel und Bibel und Bias', *BR* 18.1 (2002), pp. 32-40.

2. A brief biography of Friedrich Delitzsch (1850-1922) by F. Weissbach can be found in the *RIA* 2 (1938), p. 198. This includes an evaluation of Delitzsch's scholarship as well as an overview of many of his publications.

3. Larsen, 'The "Babel/Bible" Controversy and its Aftermath', in J. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (4 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995), I, pp. 95-106.

stressed the 'element of global politics involved'⁴ in sponsoring German Oriental studies. Larsen noted 'The prestigious nature of the occasion in Berlin, with the emperor present along with some of the most prominent men of the German elite, gave a special significance to the evening's lecture...'⁵ The establishment of the German Oriental Society, before which Delitzsch delivered the first and second of his lectures, was one of only several aspects of German government patronage of Oriental studies in Delitzsch's day.⁶

On whose initiative did the invitation come?— In his Introduction to the English edition of *Babel and Bible*, C.H.W. Johns refers to the circumstances surrounding the invitation to deliver Delitzsch's first lecture: 'The announcement that Professor Friedrich Delitzsch, the great Assyriologist, had been granted leave to deliver a lecture upon the relations between the Bible and the recent results of cuneiform research, in the august presence of the Kaiser and the Court, naturally caused a great sensation'.⁷ The following year, in 1903, Delitzsch's invitation was renewed, as described by Johns with the following words: 'the great professor was once more bidden to deliver a lecture in the presence of the Kaiser and the Court'.⁸

It thus appears that these two lectures were a kind of 'command performance' of German élites (business, government and military leaders) to co-opt academics, but it also seems clear that the academicians willingly participated in these nationalist efforts.⁹ This phenomenon extended beyond the pre-World War I and World War I periods into the 1930's and on into the World War II period.¹⁰ Fritz Fischer is the author of *Germany's*

4. Larsen, 'The "Babel/Bible" Controversy', p. 96.

5. Larsen, 'The "Babel/Bible" Controversy', p. 97.

6. In *RIA* 2 (1938), p. 201, an entry reads: '*Deutsche Orientgesellschaft* s. *Gesellschaft, wissenschaftliche*'. However, in *RIA* 3 (1966), pp. 233-43 under, '*Gesellschaft*', there is no reference to modern learned societies like the German Oriental Society. The article by E. von Schuler deals with ancient societies only.

7. Johns, *Babel und Bibel* (New York: Putnam's, 1903), p. v.

8. Johns, *Babel und Bibel*, p. x.

9. See below, on Fischer's *Germany's Aims in the First World War*.

10. See Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999 [first published in 1946 by YIVO]). Many quotes from this volume from the pre-World War II and World War II days sound as if they could have originated back in the World War I era, as the following quote might show: 'A realistic picture of what happened in Germany, therefore, can be gained only if the words of her scientists are confronted with the deeds of her political, industrial, and military leaders. In doing so, by the way, we merely comply with the wish of the German scholars themselves, who ardently desired to be considered part and parcel of the German system' (p. 37).

Aims in the First World War,¹¹ a landmark book which Yale University scholar Hajo Holborn called 'not only the chief source on German foreign policy in World War I but also an invaluable introduction to the history of our own age'.¹²

In his book, Fischer demonstrated that on the subject of Germany's great power aspirations before the outbreak of World War I, there was no difference of objective between industry and the military on the one hand, and the labor movement and the academy on the other. It is this last mentioned component of German society, 'the academy', that we would like to examine here as forming the backdrop for Delitzsch's activities at that time. The two examples cited deal with (1) the Near East, and (2) the Baltic States.

Several instances of the geopolitical importance of the Near East in Germany's plans follow. In a chapter entitled 'The Vision of World Power', Fischer spelled out Germany's view of 'Turkey as an outpost against Britain'.¹³ Turkey would be revitalized as a state which would prevent Germany's enemies from erecting 'a barrier against [Germany's] eastward path'.¹⁴ Moreover, as a conference of representatives of German government offices in 1917 resolved, 'the Mesopotamian oil wells must... come within Germany's sphere of influence'¹⁵ because other sources 'would not suffice for Germany's needs'.¹⁶ In this regard, the security and extension of the Baghdad railway were major objectives related to the above-mentioned oil.¹⁷

These issues relating as they did to the Near East, must have impacted Delitzsch, an Assyriologist and biblical scholar, and undoubtedly bore on Delitzsch's desire to engage in some active way in Germany's 'Vision of World Power'.¹⁸

A second area of academics and the German nationalist movement, though not relating to the Near East, does tie in with the activities of German scholars in the service of their homeland. This is the area of German

11. *Germany's Arms in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), published in Germany in 1961 under the Title *Griff nach der Weltmacht*.

12. Hajo Holborn, 'Introduction to the American Edition' of *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. xv.

13. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 583.

14. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 586.

15. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 586.

16. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 586.

17. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, pp. 583-84.

18. See above, n. 12.

interest in the Baltic States. With respect to the Baltic States and Lithuania, Fischer informs us that

The original annexationist purposes of German policy survived in purest form in the attempts to 'attach' Lithuania, Courland, Livonia and Estonia.¹⁹

Two academic events, one occurring in 1913 and the other in 1918, are relevant to our investigation as illustrating the mood of German scholars of that time. The first relates to a summer university in Riga:

As early as 1913 a large number of idealistic and patriotic German savants from the Reich had met in a so-called summer university in Riga with the intention of promoting a 'movement of world philosophy' which should 'save from cultural isolation this part of the German people which politically is separated from us'.²⁰

The second event was the institution of 'lecture courses by German professors at Dorpat University (Tartu, in Estonia)... The leading figures of academic Germany took part.'²¹

We have no indication that Delitzsch participated in lectures in the Baltic States, but we think that the existence of such exercises at this time in all likelihood created a certain amount of pressure—as it were—for people to contribute their efforts to nationalistic causes. If so, we have a line stretching from Delitzsch's 'Babel und Bibel' lectures beginning in 1902, and continuing with the summer university in Riga in 1913, then to the Dorpat university 1918 and finally to activities of pre-World War II days.

Turning now to the second question raised at the beginning of our essay, we ask: What were some of Friedrich Delitzsch's Assyriological contributions as seen in their context of a century ago? Friedrich Delitzsch's contributions to scholarship are wide-ranging. We would like to examine some of them and assess them as to their value in his day and their value to scholarship today. By 'value' we do not necessarily mean that the work continues to be used today, being as useful as it was about one hundred years ago. Rather, what we mean is that in its time it was most useful and it played an important role as the field developed, in many cases, eventually to be superseded.

19. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 598. Courland is the southwestern part of Latvia and Livonia denotes the lands on the eastern coast of the Baltic north of Lithuania.

20. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 604.

21. Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, p. 604.

The four categories of Delitzsch's contributions have been summarized as follows:²²

1. 'purely Assyriological studies',
2. comparative studies such as 'the Hebrew language in its relation to Akkadian and the Semitic Languages in relationship to the Indo-European Languages',
3. studies solely 'in the field of Bible',
4. 'comparative studies of Babylonian culture and the world of the Bible'.

We shall try to show that the studies in the purely Assyriological and purely biblical areas are the ones that have had the enduring value, whereas the comparative cultural studies in languages and in Biblical and Babylonian culture have not endured, or indeed in the latter case, have become discredited.²³

1. 'Purely Assyriological Studies'

The first category consists of 'purely Assyriological studies'. We shall cite some of Delitzsch's works, representing major areas of Assyriological research, namely, lexicography, grammar, sign lists and chrestomathies.

a. *Lexicography*

In his review of events leading to the publication of *CAD*, I.J. Gelb mentioned the role that Delitzsch's efforts played in the development of a comprehensive Akkadian dictionary. According to Gelb, Friedrich Delitzsch, writing about 40 years after the earliest attempts in Akkadian lexicography were made, undertook 'to publish a smaller and much more useful dictionary, namely, the 728-page *Assyrisches Handwörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1896) (hereafter *AHw*). The new work by Delitzsch was a masterpiece of its kind [that] remained a basic tool of Assyriology for over half a century'.²⁴

The materials used for W. von Soden's *AHw* included among them 'an unpublished supplement to Akkadian Dictionaries published by Delitzsch and Meissner's annotated copies of Delitzsch's and Muss-Arnolt's dictionaries...'²⁵

22. Abraham Arzi, 'Delitzsch, Friedrich', in *EncJud*, V, p. 1475.

23. For example, Delitzsch's *Die Grosse Täuschung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1921).

24. 'History of Akkadian Lexicography', in *CAD*, I, A Part 1, p. x.

25. 'History of Akkadian Lexicography', p. xi.

Obviously, this dictionary could no longer be useful today, considering the stupendous progress in the field of Assyriology and especially in Akkadian lexicography during the past century. In R. Borger's words, it was 'very good but [it is] now out-of-date'.²⁶

b. *Grammars*

Delitzsch's *Assyrische Grammatik* was first published in Berlin in 1889. A second revised edition appeared in Berlin seventeen years later, in 1906.²⁷ Writing in *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik* (hereafter *GAG*), W. von Soden observed that 'Works that are totally dated are not cited'.²⁸ Consequently, Delitzsch's grammar is not cited in *GAG*. Moreover, we failed to find it referenced in any other modern grammars of Akkadian, especially grammars of Akkadian in the English language. However, Delitzsch's *Assyrische Grammatik* is cited in R. Borger's *Babylonisch-Assyrische Lesestücke*, who felt that in some respects, 'it still continues to be valuable'.²⁹

c. *Sign Lists*

Delitzsch produced sign lists in the second edition of his *Assyrische Grammatik* and the fifth edition of his *Assyrische Lesestücke* 1912,³⁰ but his lists would not be consulted by today's Assyriologists. Moreover, even in their own day, they could not have been considered the equivalent of René Labat's *Manuel d'Épigraphie Akkadienne*³¹ or R. Borger's 'Zeichenliste'.³²

d. *Chrestomathy*

The best known edition of the five that Delitzsch's *Assyrische Lesestücke* underwent was the fifth edition published in Leipzig in 1912. Selections

26. 'Sehr gut, aber jetzt veraltet': Rykle Borger, *Babylonisch-Assyrische Lesestücke* (hereafter *BAL*) (*Analecta Orientalia*, 54.2; neubearbeitete Auflage; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1994), p. ix.

27. R. Borger, *Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur* (hereafter *HAKL*) (3 vols.; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1967–75), I, p. 77.

28. W. von Soden, *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik* (hereafter *GAG*) (*Analecta Orientalia*, 33; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1952), p. xxii.

29. *BAL*, p. x.

30. See *HAKL*, III, p. 140.

31. R. Labat, *Manuel d'Épigraphie Akkadienne* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1948).

32. R. Borger, *Assyrisch-babylonische Zeichenliste* (*AOAT*, 33; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 2nd edn, 1981).

from the Chrestomathy were published by subsequent scholars, for example, 'Two Neo-Assyrian Letters' cited in Bergsträsser *Introduction*.³³ Borger has described it in the following words: 'In earlier times [it was] the standard Chrestomathy, [and it is] still valuable today...'³⁴

2. *Comparative Studies*

The second category consists of comparative studies such as the Hebrew language in its relationship with Akkadian and the Semitic Languages in relationship to the Indo-European Languages. Examples are *Studien über indo-germanisch-semitische Wurzelwandschaft* (1873) and *Prolegomena eines neuen hebräisch-aramäischen Wörterbuchs zum Alten Testament* (1886).³⁵

Not having encountered either of these works in our own research, we consulted a colleague in comparative Semitics, Stephen Kaufman, who expressed his unfamiliarity with both of them. They are works that are not quoted today, even as part of the description of the history of the field, and Professor Kaufman said that he was 'not really familiar with either' and that he had 'never seen either work referred to in a positive or negative way. In other words, Delitzsch is not cited in the area of West Semitic lexicography.'

3. *'Studies Solely in the Field of Bible'*

The third category consists of 'studies solely in the field of Bible'. Probably the best example to be cited is *Die Lese- und Schreibfehler im Alten Testament*,³⁶ which is still 'a valuable aid to textual criticism'.³⁷ Delitzsch used standard methods of categorizing errors in the biblical text such as errors due to lack of separation of words and phrases where such should

33. Gotthelf Bergsträsser, *Introduction to the Semitic Languages* (trans. Peter T. Daniels; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), p. 49 (= Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters belonging to the Kouyunjik Collections of the British Museum* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1896], Nos. 341 and 435).

34. *BAL*, p. x.

35. The authors were able to locate these works among the books from the library of Julius and Hildegard Lewy bequeathed to the library of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati.

36. *Die Lese- und Schreibfehler im alten Testament* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1920).

37. Arzi, 'Delitzsch, Friedrich', p. 1475.

occur; omission of certain letters where they should appear—or the reverse; errors due to misvocalization, and so on.

Usually overlooked by both Assyriologists and biblical scholars is a small but valuable collection of scribal errors culled by Delitzsch from cuneiform texts that could serve as parallels to the kind of biblical scribal errors he was classifying in the main part of his book. It is possible one might fail to notice this sort of comparison due to the obvious fact that the one language is written in cuneiform characters whereas the other is written in Hebrew letters. Nevertheless the comparison is illuminating. Delitzsch cited dittography of signs, omission of words and metathesis of signs and of words in close proximity in cuneiform writing.³⁸

4. *'Comparative Studies of Babylonian Culture and the World of the Bible'*

The fourth category is 'comparative studies of Babylonian culture and the world of the Bible', an area in which Delitzsch was perhaps less than scientifically objective.

Two of the parade examples cited by Delitzsch to show that the Israelites 'borrowed' key institutions or names from Babylonians are the tetragrammaton and the Sabbath. But in each case, it is clear that the original claim is false.

The personal name in which Delitzsch thought he saw the name of the Israelite deity has been interpreted differently since the writings of Landsberger, von Soden and Lewy—see *CAD*, I/J, p. 330, for the possessive pronoun *ja'u* ('mine') and the bibliography cited at the conclusion of the article.

For the accepted meaning of the personal name in which this pronoun occurs, note: 'Die innige Verbindung von Mensch und Schutzgott hat zum Inhalt der Name Iā'um-ilum "Mein ist der Gott..."'³⁹

As for the institution of the Sabbath, some scholars have accepted the link with the original Akkadian term—see *AHW*, p. 1172, for the noun *šapattu*, '15. Monatstag, Vollmond?' However, in an article by W.G. Lambert, the author argues that since *šapattu* has neither genuine Babylonian etymology nor Sumerian equivalent, and since it first appears sometime around the eighteenth century BCE, it must be Amorite in origin. Lambert

38. Delitzsch, *Die Lese- und Schreibfehler*, pp. iv-v.

39. Johann Jakob Stamm, *Die akkadische Namengebung* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1939), p. 211.

believes that both *šapattu* and שַׁבָּת were dependent on an Amorite source.⁴⁰ Thus we should no longer think in terms of simple borrowing, Hebrew from Babylonian or vice versa. Moreover, even if the Akkadian and Hebrew terms are from a similar Amorite source, many would grant that ‘its meaning was incontestably altered when the term was applied to the novel concept of the weekly rest day’.⁴¹

W.W. Hallo notes that the notion of the origin of the Sabbath as an unfavorable day ‘goes back at least to Friedrich Delitzsch’, but Hallo appears to side with U. Cassuto who favors the notion that

the Israelite Sabbath was instituted in *opposition* to the Mesopotamian system... Israel’s Sabbath day shall not be as the Sabbath of the heathen nations; it shall not be the day of the full moon...⁴²

With regard to the question of ‘Just when did this transformation in the meaning of the Biblical Sabbath take place?’, Hallo responds: ‘The question still awaits a clear answer’.⁴³

Finally, it is interesting to compare Friedrich Delitzsch’s permanent contributions to those of W. von Soden, who was the editor of the *AHW*, the author of the major Akkadian reference grammar in use today, and the Akkadian syllabary. In many ways their scientific work is parallel and both were towering figures in the international progress of the field of Assyriology.

In this study, the authors have attempted to place an important and influential scholar in his context of a century ago. By so doing, they hope they have made a small contribution to the two fields named in Delitzsch’s prominent lectures, and to the ongoing debate about the relationship between these fields.

40. W.G. Lambert, ‘A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis’, *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1965), pp. 287-300 (296-97); reprinted in R.S. Hess and D. T. Tsumura (eds.), *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), pp. 96-113 (106). See also Benno Landsberger, *Der Kultische Kalender der Babylonier und Assyrer*. 1. *Die altbabylonischen Lokalkalender* (Leipziger Semitische Studien, 6; Leipzig: A. Pries, 1914), pp. 131-35.

41. William Hallo, *Origins: The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Some Modern Western Institutions* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), p. 127.

42. Hallo, *Origins*, pp. 127-28. For a differing viewpoint, see Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 149-50.

43. Hallo, *Origins*, p. 128.

EMPIRE RE-AFFIRMED: A COMMENTARY ON GREEK PSALM 2

Albert Pietersma

It is a distinct pleasure for me to contribute to a volume celebrating the scholarly achievements of an esteemed colleague and friend, Simon De Vries.

The International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS) has decided to sponsor a commentary series on all the books of the Septuagint corpus. A Prospectus, published in 1999,¹ has delineated a set of principles for the series, and it is these I would like to cite as a context for what appears below. They are the following:

(1) the principle of original text, which is understood to mean that though for any given book the best available critical edition will form the basis of interpretation, commentators shall improve upon that text where deemed necessary, and thus assist in the ongoing quest for the pristine Greek text.

(2) the principle of original meaning, which is understood to mean that although commentators may make use of reception history in an effort to ascertain what the Greek text meant at its point of inception and may from time to time digress to comment on secondary interpretations, the focus shall be on what is perceived to be the original meaning of the text.

(3) the principle of the parent text as arbiter of meaning, which is understood to mean that though as much as possible the translated text is read like an original composition in Greek, the commentator will need to have recourse to the parent text for linguistic information essential to the proper understanding of the Greek.

(4) the principle of 'translator's intent', which is understood to mean that, since the language of the translated text is the only accessible expression of 'the translator's mind,' the linguistic information—whatever its source—embedded in the Greek text shall form the sole basis of interpretation.

1. *BIOSCS* 31 (1998), pp. 43-48. See also the website of the IOSCS: <<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ioscs/>>.

Stated differently, any linguistic information not already seen to be embedded in the Greek text, even though perhaps recognized as such, on the practical level, only by recourse to the parent text, shall be deemed inadmissible.

(5) the principle of linguistic parsimony, which is understood to mean that, as a general rule, no words or constructions of translation-Greek shall be considered normal Greek, unless attested in nontranslation writings.²

Be it noted further that Hebrew retroversions from the Greek, deemed to reflect a parent text different from the MT, have been included in the printed text but footnoted as to their deviation from MT. Third, since the Greek text is the point of reference, all primary numbers are those of the Greek psalms.

Synopsis

Psalms 2 describes the nations of the world as having boastfully conspired to rid themselves of servitude to their divine overlord and his anointed deputy (vv. 1-3). In response the Lord will treat them with derision and address them in anger (vv. 4-5). Meanwhile the Lord's anointed reveals that he has been duly appointed king by God and cites the decree of installation and universal lordship. As son of God this king is the logical heir to the empire (vv. 6-9). The psalm then issues a stern warning to the rebels (vv. 10-12c), and pronounces happiness on everyone who trusts in the Lord (v. 12d).

Psalms 2 as a Whole

Some commentators on the Hebrew text have suggested that Psalm 2, in its present location, was meant to function as an introduction to the Davidic Psalter which follows. Since, in the Greek, one of the actors, namely the Lord's appointed king, plays a more prominent role than in MT (vv. 6-7a), this view has seemingly received some added support. For Psalms 1 and Psalm 2 forming an inclusio see my discussion of v. 12d, below.

Though several witnesses (Sa 2151 R^s La Ga) make this psalm into an ode or psalm pertaining to David, thus adding it to the Davidic collection that follows, this ascription is clearly no more original than the notation in part of Bo that the psalm is a prophesy about Christ. As in MT so in LXX, Psalm 2 was originally without a title. Its absence seems to be confirmed by 11QPs^c and 4Q174 (Flint 148).

2. Prospectus, p. 44.

Sigla and Abbreviations

[The following abbreviations are specific to the present article. Additional and more general abbreviations can be found in this volume's List of Abbreviations.]

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- Kraus Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1988)
- L&N J.P. Louw and E.A. Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: Bible Society, 1988)
- Mozley F.W. Mozley, *The Psalter of the Church: The Septuagint Psalms Compared with the Hebrew, with Various Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905)
- NETS A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Old Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under that Title
- Smyth Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959)
- Thomson Charles Thomson, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and the New Covenant, Commonly Called the Old and the New Testament* (4 vols.; Philadelphia: Jane Aitken, 1808)

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- P.L. Kunz, 'Der 2. Psalm in neuer Sicht', *BZ NS* 20 (1976), pp. 238-42.
- A.A. Macintosh, 'A Consideration of Problems Presented by Psalm 2.11', *JTS NS* 27 (1976), pp. 1-14.
- F. Pili, 'Possibili casi di metatesi in Genesi 49.10 e Salmo 2.11-12a', *Augustianum* 15 (1975), pp. 457-71.
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- J. VanderKam, 'להב' in Ps 2.5 and its Etymology', *CBQ* 39 (1977), pp. 245-50.
- G. Wilhelmi, 'Der Hirt mit dem eisernen Szepter', *VT* 27 (1977), pp. 196-204.

*Commentary**Verse 1*

Hebrew Text

למה רגשו גוים ולאומים יהגו ריק

Greek Text

“ἵνα τί ἐφρύαξαν ἔθνη
καὶ λαοὶ ἐμελέτησαν κενά;

NETS Translation

Why did nations grow insolent
and peoples contemplate vain things?

The interrogative form of the opening lines underscores the utter folly of the rebels' act.

ἐφρύαξαν. Since the verbal form of רגש appears only here in MT, it is possible that G was not familiar with its meaning. The noun, however, occurs in both 54.15 (רגש), where G glosses it as ὁμόνοια, and 63.3 (רגשה) where πλήθος is given as its counterpart. But since the sense of ‘tumult, commotion’ is nowhere made explicit, it may be that G is simply contextualizing. Elsewhere in the LXX corpus, the verb, though as a medio-passive, occurs only in 2 Macc. 7.34 and 3 Macc. 2.2. Its derived noun φρύαγμα, however, appears in 3 Macc. 6.16 and as a counterpart for גאון in Hos. 4.18 (†); Zech. 11.3; Jer. 12.5; Ezek. 7.24; 24.21. If the Hebrew of Ps. 2.1 has the sense of ‘congregating in commotion’ (see Craigie), the Greek on the other hand quite clearly has to do with ‘insolent pride’. This surreal and futile challenge to divine power is then continued in l. 2. It may be noted, however, that since G sticks to his default (הגדה = μελετάω [ten times]), any notion of grumbling/growling in discontent, which the Hebrew verb may be said to have, is lost in the Greek, though, as is clear from Thucydides (LSJ *sub voce*), μελετάω is not unknown in military contexts.

As is clear from NETS, in accordance with G's default equation in v. 1a, the temporal reference becomes past throughout vv. 1-2.

Verse 2

Hebrew Text

יתצבו מלכי ארץ ורוזנים נוסדו יחד
על יהודה ועל משיחו

Greek Text

παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς,
καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ
κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ
διάψαλμα

NETS Translation

The kings of the earth stood side by side,
and the rulers gathered together,
against the Lord and against his anointed, saying^a,
Interlude on strings.

[^a Lacking in Gk]

παρέστησαν. The united action of the kings, implicit in the Hebrew, is made explicit in the Greek by the prefixed verb, which thus acts well as a balance to the final phrase of l. 2.

κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου. Since G relatively rarely articulates κύριος unless the Hebrew gives formal warrant (e.g. inseparable prepositions or the *nota accusativi*), the article, if original, may be assumed to have special significance. Since the entire Greek tradition supports its presence, it is best considered part of OG (Old Greek). The key to its understanding lies no doubt in the following, parallel phrase. Since χριστός functions as an epithet (rather than a personal name), κύριος is made to follow suit, even though as a rendering of the tetragram it is predominantly a name in Psalms (and predominantly anarthrous), rather than being a descriptive. As a result of G's interpretive move, the Greek text more explicitly than the Hebrew strikes the note of divine lordship over earthly rulers.

διάψαλμα. MT features no corresponding הַלְלָהּ, its only equivalent in G, and the originality of διάψαλμα is consequently not above suspicion. Rahlfs understandably opted for it, since its presence is broadly attested (B' Sa O-Ga, et La^R post 2²). Of interest is, however, that the entire L group, plus R^S, Sy, side with MT. To the latter can now also be added 2150 2151(uid.) of iv CE. But 2150 is probably a lectionary text which also dropped superscriptions; 2151, on the other hand, is seemingly a standard text and therefore better evidence.

Verse 3

Hebrew Text

ננתקה את מוסרותימו ושליבה ממנו עבתימו

Greek Text

Διαρρήξωμεν τοὺς δεσμοὺς αὐτῶν
καὶ ἀπορρίψωμεν ἀφ' ἡμῶν τὸν ζυγὸν αὐτῶν.

NETS Translation

Let us burst their bonds asunder,
and cast their yoke from us.

τὸν ζυγὸν αὐτῶν. Though the image of MT, in complementary clauses, is that of bondage and imprisonment (cf. 'bonds'), the Greek in the second line extends the emphasis of v. 2c on divine suzerainty (cf. 'yoke'). See further δουλεύω in v. 11.

Verse 4

Hebrew Text

יָשָׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁחַק לָמוֹ אִי אֲדָנִי יִלְעַג לָמִי

[^a Omit MT]

Greek Text

ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἐγελάσεται αὐτούς,
καὶ ὁ κύριος ἐκμυκτηριεῖ αὐτούς.

NETS Translation

He who resides in the heavens will laugh at them;
and the Lord will hold them in derision.

ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς. The notion that שׁב means explicitly 'to sit enthroned' (cf. Briggs ['one enthroned'], Craigie ['the Enthroned One'], Kraus ['he who is enthroned'], see KB) finds no support either here or anywhere else in the Greek Psalter. Moreover, that the following prepositional phrase should modify the finite verb rather than the participle, as Craigie has it, is scarcely possible in the Greek.

ἐγελάσεται αὐτούς. Briggs thought it likely that G's parent text had למו following the verb (see 36.13; 51.8; 58.9; 103.26). This receives further support from the copula which, in the Greek, begins the next line (καὶ < γ), which may then have been produced by dittography. One may also note that since the Hebrew imperfect is regularly rendered by a the Greek future (which continues through v. 5), the temporal contrast between the past action of the rebels and the future action announced by the Lord is more sharply drawn than in MT. The future reference, though only a default in G, would then lend itself to eschatological interpretation of the psalm as a whole, something taken full advantage of in reception history. Thus G may be said to have created the potential for such an interpretation.

ὁ κύριος. MT reads יהוה (cf. 11QPsc), though the T(argum) and many Hebrew mss (see *BHS*) have יהוה. Since G rarely articulated κύριος when it stands for the tetragram—unless his parent text gave explicit warrant (see my comment on v. 2)—but tended to articulate κύριος when it represented יהוה with or without such warrant (cf. 8.2, 10; 36.13; 38.8; 44.12; 53.6; 67.18; 129.6), it is likely that G here read with MT. In the present context it should be noted that the article nicely balances that of the first line, and the focus on κύριος as descriptive inadvertently or by design perpetuates the theme underscored in v. 2.

Verse 5

Hebrew Text

אז ידבר אלימו באפו ובחרונו יבהלמו

Greek Text

τότε λαλήσει πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐν ὀργῇ αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν τῷ θυμῷ αὐτοῦ ταραξεί αὐτούς·

NETS Translation

Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and trouble them in his anger.

ἐν ὀργῇ αὐτοῦ. Of interest but uncertain significance is that whereas ὀργῇ is anarthrous, its parallel (τῷ θυμῷ) in the structurally identical phrase is arthrous. Though the added long syllable obviously has a rhythmic effect, it is less sure that G's move was deliberate.

ὀργῇ. Flashar has argued that for G ὀργῇ is the central word for divine anger directed at the psalmist's and God's enemies, whereas he uses θυμός *vis-à-vis* the 'I' of the psalms, Israel or the individual pious person (see esp. p. 263). In order to account for the resultant inconsistencies in the Greek text, Flashar (pp. 259, 261) then cites G's concern for μεταβολή, stylistic variation. His central point is, however, too schematic and not borne out by the evidence, 2.12 being a case in point. Since there God's anger is clearly directed at his enemies and the Hebrew text (v. 12c) speaks of his אַף, for which G's default is ὀργῇ (twenty-one times), he nevertheless uses his secondary default θυμός (nine times) rather than his primary one (ὀργῇ). Why? Possibly—and on this matter Flashar's observation is valid—as was noted in comment on 1.1, G does show a slight degree of sensitivity to the Greek stylistic principle of variation (μεταβολή), and v. 12a has already featured the verbal form ὀργισθῆναι (cf. also 73.1; 105.40;

123.3, and further 26.9; 29.6; 36.8; 54.4; 68.25; 76.10; 77.21, 38, 49; 84.5-6; 89.7; 94.11).

ταράξει. If כהל means ‘to speak passionately’, as J. VanderKam has suggested, G was unaware of it, since throughout he renders it by ταρασσα (2.5; 6.3, 4, 11; 29.8; 47.6; 82.16, 18; 89.7; 103.29), a verb he uses for no fewer than twenty Hebrew roots. G’s choice in 2.5 produces a text that speaks of ‘disarray’ and ‘disorder’ inspired by divine anger, rather than of the ‘fear’ or ‘terror’ that would likely have caused it.

Verses 6-7a

Hebrew Text

ואני נסכתי מלכי על ציון הר קדשי
אספרה אל חק יהוה

Greek Text

Ἐγὼ δὲ κατεστάθην βασιλεὺς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ
ἐπὶ Σιών ὄρος τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ
διαγγέλλων τὸ πρόσταγμα κυρίου

NETS Translation

But I was established king by him,
on Sion, his holy mountain,
proclaiming the decree of the Lord:

Whereas MT has the Lord himself announce the installation of his anointed on Sion (v. 6), and then features the anointed to impart the precise wording of the Lord’s investiture, in the Greek it is the new king who first proclaims (to the rebels) his having come to power and then cites the Lord’s oracle. Dahood essentially sides with the Greek by pointing the verb in v. 6a as passive and reading the following first singular suffixes as third singular. Though it is not impossible that G derives from a parent text at variance with MT, it appears more likely that G was responsible for the changes. A number of interrelated interpretive moves have been made in vv. 6-7. First, the initial conjunction in v. 6a is rendered as an adversative (δέ), thereby signaling a contrast with what precedes. Second, the active statement of 6a is transformed into a passive, which entails not only a different vocalization of the verb (see Dahood) but, more importantly, the addition of an agent phrase (ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ). Surprisingly, in view of its standard use in Greek to express agency, ὑπό + genitive is virtually absent from the Greek Psalter. On the two other occasions where G does employ it, there are special reasons for doing so. In 73.22, in the absence of a

passive verb, G seemingly wants to make sure that ('your reproach from the fool') is understood as an act *by* the fool: ... τῶν ὀνειδισμῶν σου τῶν ὑπὸ ἄφρονος.

Similarly, in 106.2 he ensures that נִאֲוָלֵי יְהוָה ('the redeemed of Yahweh') is understood as 'those redeemed by the Lord': οἱ λευτερωμένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου. Consequently, it is clear that when G strictly translates from the Hebrew, he makes no use of ὑπὸ + genitive to express agency. Third, the two first person suffixes in v. 6 are dropped or rendered as third person respectively (see Dahood). Fourth, the first person finite verb (v. 7a) is translated by a circumstantial participle in concord with the subject of the main verb in v. 6, thus changing the reference from the Lord himself to the anointed. Fifth, the second verb in v. 7 (ἔϊπεν) is given an explicit subject (κύριος), reinforcing the contrast with what precedes.

There can be no doubt that, taken individually, several of these differences between our present Hebrew and Greek texts could have arisen accidentally in either tradition, but taken together they suggest not only a certain deliberateness in reinterpretation, but also that this reinterpretation was done by G. If that is in fact the case, and since G can scarcely be accused of frequently altering his parent text, it probably means that the new, more explicitly messianic understanding was already well established in Jewish exegetical tradition by the time Psalm 2 was translated into Greek. It is, furthermore, not without interest that in this relatively short psalm, the text has been rendered more explicit on, perhaps, six occasions: vv. 6a (+ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ), 7b and 12a (+ κύριος), 8a (+ σοι), 11b (+ αὐτῷ), 12b (+ δικαίως).

πρόσταγμα. G regularly translates קָהַל by δικαίωμα ('regulation, requirement', twenty-four times), on six occasions (2.7; 80.5; 93.20; 98.7; 104.10; 148.6) he opted for πρόσταγμα ('decree, injunction') instead. Since the basic sense of δικαίωμα is 'what is deemed right for one' while πρόσταγμα has more to do with 'what one is ordered to do, no questions asked', G's choice here is perhaps surprising. Nevertheless, πρόσταγμα would seem to entail a difference in addressee from the Hebrew. There can be little doubt that in MT the קָהַל is addressed to the newly enthroned king. As Kraus notes: 'קָהַל is a term from sacral law. It denotes the document of legitimacy, the royal protocol that was written down at the enthronement and thereafter identified the legitimate ruler' (pp. 129-30). But if the new king is the primary addressee in the Hebrew, the primary addressees of the Greek would seem to be the rebellious rulers; in other words, the docu-

ment of installation has become a decree issued to the rebels, though its contents have not changed.

Verses 7b-9

Hebrew Text

אמר אלי בני אתה אני היום ילדתיך
שאל ממני ואתנה גוים נחלתך ואחזקך אפסי ארץ
חרעם בשבט ברזל ככלי יוצר תנפצם

Greek Text

Κύριος εἶπεν πρὸς με Υἱός μου εἶ σύ,
ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε·
αἰτήσαι παρ' ἐμοῦ, καὶ δώσω σοι ἔθνη τὴν κληρονομίαν σου
καὶ τὴν κατάσχεσίν σου τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς.
ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ,
ὡς σκεῦος κεραμείως συντρίψεις αὐτούς.

NETS Translation

The Lord said to me, 'You are my son;
today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will give you nations as your heritage,
and as your possession the ends of the earth.
You shall shepherd them with an iron staff^b,
and shatter them like a potter's vessel.'

[^b Or *rod*]

Except for the initial four words, these lines constitute the Lord's decree of investiture, proclaimed by the Lord's anointed to the scheming rebels. The decree identifies him as the Lord's own son, invites him to state his resultant claim to territory and population, and predicts his irresistible and universal might.

Κύριος. Though it is possible that G accidentally read the tetragram twice (see MT), it is perhaps more likely that he did so deliberately (see my comment on v. 7a).

σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε. Though the adverbial qualifier in both texts makes clear that a present reality (rather than a past event) is in view—thought originally to refer to the day of coronation for the next in line of David's house—G's relatively rare use of the stative aspect does full and explicit justice to this.

καὶ δώσω σοι. *BHS* wonders whether the parent text may not have read ךָתַתֵּן in place of $\text{MT's } \text{ךָתַתֵּן}$. One might argue that since, on a number of other occasions in this psalm, G merely renders the Hebrew explicit, σοι need be nothing more than an explicit indirect object. Furthermore, the Hebrew syntax presupposed by *BHS* would seem to be problematic. While it is true that ךָתַתֵּן may take a suffix, that such a suffix then plays the role of indirect object (in an S-V-IO-O sentence), would seem unattested. Thus one would need to posit a prepositional phrase (לְכָל ?) for σοι.

ποιμανεῖς αὐτοῦ. Though, as vocalized by the Masoretes, MT's verb is עָרַב II ('to break'), a *hapax legomenon* in Psalms and said to be an Aramaism (cf. Kraus), G read it as עָרַב I ('to shepherd'). Most commentators favor the reading of MT , but Briggs, and more recently Wilhelmi (1977), prefer the Greek. Interestingly, as Wilhelmi notes, v. 9a in the Greek contains an oxymoron (to shepherd with an iron staff), but it is less clear that the second line does as well, and can therefore be used to validate the first, as Wilhelmi believes. For that to work, we should have had the potter smash his own creation, rather than have the newly appointed ruler do the deed. That being the case, one suspects that the reading of G is due to a mistaken derivation which has inadvertently given rise to the oxymoron. Not without interest, however, is Mic. 5.5: καὶ ποιμανούσι τὸν Ἀσσοῦρ ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ ('and they [the seven shepherds] will shepherd Assour with a sword'). The Hebrew verb there is derived from עָרַב II (KB) or עָרַב I (BDB). Thus, while G's reading of Ps. 2.9 may stand in tension with its context, the image per se appears viable.

Of further interest, as Wilhelmi notes, is *Pss. Sol.* 17.23b-41, which belongs to a prayer for 'a son of David': ἐκτρίψαι ὑπερηφανίαν ἀμαρτωλοῦ ὡς σκευὴ κεραμέως, ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ συντρίψαι πᾶσαν ὑπόστασιν αὐτῶν ('to destroy the sinner's pride like potter's vessels; with an iron rod, to smash their confidence'). It is difficult not to see here an explicit reference to Ps. 2.9, likely in its Greek form, since it features a unique equation of piel עָרַב and συντρίβω, precisely the verb we find in *Pss. Sol.* 17.24a. (The equation of piel עָרַב with ἐκτρίβω is not attested in the Greek corpus.)

Due to G's derivation of MT's verb in Ps. 2.9, MT's contrast between the breaking with an intrinsically strong weapon ('an iron rod') and the shattering of an inherently fragile potter's vessel (cf. Craigie) is lost.

Verses 10-11

Hebrew Text

ועתה מלכים השבילו הוטררו כלִי שפמי ארץ
עבדו את יהוה ביראה וגילו ברעה

[^a Omit MT]

Greek Text

καὶ νῦν, βασιλεῖς, σύνετε·
παιδεύθητε, πάντες οἱ κρίνοντες τὴν γῆν.
δουλεύσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν φόβῳ
καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε αὐτῷ ἐν τρόμῳ.

NETS Translation

Now therefore, O kings, be sensible;
be instructed, all you who judge the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear,
and exult in him with trembling.

The concluding section of the psalm (vv. 10-12) has a more educational tone in the Greek than it does in MT, where threat and ultimatum predominate.

παιδεύθητε. Since G consistently translates יָסַר by παιδεύω (2.10; 6.2; 15.7; 37.2; 38.12; 93.10, 12; 117.18 [twice]) and since the two words overlap in the notion of ‘discipline,’ it may well be that G intended no more. One can scarcely overlook, however, that the most common sense of παιδεύω has to do with ‘teaching,’ ‘training,’ and ‘educating,’ and it seems this notion that inspires G’s choice of παιδεία in v. 12. It is further of interest that in 89.10 MT’s כִּי גַז חַיִּשׁ וְנִעַפָּה (‘they are soon gone, and we fly away’, NRSV) is rendered by ὅτι ἐπῆλθεν πραύτης ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς, καὶ παιδευθησόμεθα (‘for meekness came upon us, and we shall become disciplined’, NETS). Here too the text refers more to the aim of παιδεύω (to become a disciplined individual) than to the tactics employed from time to time to make the pupil achieve that goal (i.e. punishment). A similar note is sounded in 104.22 where MT’s לְאַסֵּר שְׂרָיִי בַּנַּפְשׁוֹ (‘to instruct [‘bind’ = MT] his officials at his pleasure’, NRSV) by τοῦ παιδεύσαι τοὺς ἄρχοντας αὐτοῦ ὡς ἑαυτὸν (‘to educate his [Pharaoh’s] officials to be like himself’). The reference is here to Joseph and the context clearly one of ‘education’ and ‘training.’ The primary focus of παιδεύω is thus clear not only from general usage but also from the Greek Psalter itself.

πάντες. Like Rahlfs I have judged this reading to be original, even though several witnesses (Ga La^G et Cyp.) side with MT in lacking it. Not only is

the evidence weak, but it also has a hexaplaric hue, as a result of which an omission was likely caused by Origen's obelus. Of the two remaining options—different parent text from MT or addition by the translator—the former would seem the better one. *BHS* notes a Hebrew ms, in addition to G, and makes reference to Ps. 148.11 which, in a very similar context, features 'all' in parallel lines. While it is true that words of quantity are often added in text-transmission, this is scarcely unique to Greek. Though it has been suggested that G may have been responsible for the occasional 'fleshing out', it is not without interest that G makes no attempt at harmonizing vv. 2b and 10b, in spite of a number of factors that might be seen to favour it: (a) the ἄρχοντες of v. 2b and the κρίνοντες of v. 10b refer to the same group of rebels; (b) יָרַן of v. 2b is a *hapax legomenon* in Psalms and might thus have provided some flexibility in rendering; (c) κρίνοντες of v. 10b apparently narrows the focus of the parent text, since the Greek verb has a more strictly forensic sense than does טָפַשׁ. Instead, G sticks to his standard practice: since the Hebrew differentiates in vv. 2b and 10b (יָרַן vs. טָפַשׁ), G follows suit. Furthermore, he makes no attempt at deviating from his default equation of טָפַשׁ with κρίνω, even though the parent text would seem to favour it. We get thus a telling glimpse of G's typical *modus operandi*, one which is minimally interpretive. From that perspective, if 'all' in v. 10b serves to anticipate the concluding line of the psalm, its addition is likely to have occurred in the pre-Greek stage of development. That is to say, it might be argued that, ideally, 'all who judge the earth', admonished in v. 10b, would be co-extensive with all who are pronounced happy in the concluding line of the psalm.

δουλεύσατε. Only rarely does G deviate from his עָבַד with δουλ- equation. On the verbal side he opts for προσκυνέω in 96.7 (προσ. τοῖς γλυπτοῖς), and on the nominal side he prefers πᾶις in 17.1; 68.18; 85.16; 112.1, and ἐργασία in 103.23. As a result, in the Greek text, here as well as generally, the service rendered is more poignantly marked as that performed by a slave, than is the case in the Hebrew. (Cf. further the comment on κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου in v. 2.)

τῷ κυρίῳ. While articulation here might be perceived to highlight κύριος as an epithet, its presence is in the first instance simply due to G's desire for isomorphism. Since the parent text apparently agreed with MT in reading יְהוָה (יהוה), G articulates (cf. my comment on ὁ κύριος in v. 4).

ἀγαλλιᾶσθε αὐτῶ. Since in Hebrew Psalms לָגַל is always translated by ἀγαλλιάομαι (nineteen times) (cf. Classical ἀγάλλω) and since both can refer to the verbal expression of joy, no difference in meaning need be posited. Because ἀγαλλιάομαι also translates five other Hebrew roots, it is common throughout the Greek Psalter. It may in fact be labeled a psalmic word, since it appears more than twice as often in Psalms (fifty times) than it does in the rest of the LXX corpus (twenty times). In an effort to give the English reader a sense of its frequency it has been rendered routinely by ‘exult’ in NETS, even when the NRSV has an acceptable synonym.

What is of greater interest here is the presence of an explicit object in view of v. 11a. Though MT is not in need of emendation on this score, it is easy to see that at some point in interpretive tradition the text might be filled out. That αὐτῶ has no basis in Hebrew and thus must have come either from the translator himself or from subsequent Greek transmission history can be demonstrated from G’s *modus operandi*. Most often ἀγαλλιάομαι is used absolutely, that is, without verbal complement. When it does use a complement, the variety it admits is considerable though predictable, since G follows the Hebrew very closely. Thus it takes an accusative when the Hebrew has an unmarked form (50.16; 58.17; 144.7 [*contra* Rahlfs]), a dative when the Hebrew has a ל construction (80.2; 94.1), ἐν or ἐπί + dative when the Hebrew uses כ (9.3; 19.6; 32.1; 62.8; 88.13, 17; 91.5; 117.24; also 9.15; 20.2; 30.8; 34.9; 39.17; 69.5; 149.2), ἐπί + accusative or genitive when the Hebrew has ע (118.162; 149.5), ἐπί + accusative when the Hebrew has ל (83.3), ἐνώπιον [+ genitive] when the Hebrew has פני (67.4, 5). Since Hebrew לָגַל, however, is not attested with a ל-complement, and since only a ל-complement would give rise to the added dative in 2.11 ([ἀγαλλιᾶσθε] αὐτῶ), the addition in G is not attributable to the parent text—unless one be prepared also to argue that the parent text read a different verb (likely לָגַל) from MT. What can of course not be ruled out is that G mentally repeated the final consonants of לָגַל (לָגַל) (cf. Mozley, p. 4).

Verse 12a-c

Hebrew Text

נשקו בר פן יאנן והאבדו דרך צדקה כי יבער כמעט אפו

[^a Omit MT]

Greek Text

δράξασθε παιδείας, μήποτε ὀργισθῆ κύριος
καὶ ἀπολείσθε ἐξ ὁδοῦ δικαίας.
ὅταν ἐκκαυθῆ ἐν τάχει ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ,

NETS Translation

Seize upon instruction, or the Lord may become angry;
and you will perish from the righteous way,
when his anger quickly blazes out.

In both MT and LXX the first three lines of this verse continue the rebuke to the rebels begun in v. 10a.

δράξασθε παιδείας. Commentators commonly regard MT's counterpart to this phrase, נשקו בר, as corrupt. So, typically, Craigie (p. 64) calls it the *crux interpretum* of Psalm 2. It has further been suggested that G is based on a parent text at variance with MT. Thus while Mozley (p. 5) thinks the verb a paraphrase ('by a simpler figure'), Briggs (p. 23) suggests that both G and Targum (קבילי אור פנאי) had a different text. Dubarle goes a step beyond Briggs and argues that G presupposes נשקו קבל. Though MT may well be corrupt, there is reason to believe, with Mozley, that G is based on the same text. Dubarle's reconstruction, though possible in isolation (נשקובר < נשקובר), on closer scrutiny does not recommend itself. A nominal form of קבל (apart from the siege engine of Ezek. 26.9) is not attested in Biblical Hebrew. More importantly, had the text read a form of נשק, one would have expected λαμβάνω (seven times), ἀναλαμβάνω (three times), αἶρω (sixteen times), ἐπαίρω (eight times) or several less suitable equivalents, but not δράσσομαι, which in fact occurs only here in the Psalter (and three times elsewhere for קביל). While a unique Hebrew-Greek equation need not be ruled out of order *a priori*, it does indicate that one should perhaps have another look at the text we have in MT. We can begin by noting that G knew what the two words meant (or might mean) separately. Since he translates נשק by καταφιλέω in 84.11 he clearly knew its standard meaning. Similarly, that he had a viable meaning for בר is clear from 17.21, 25 (καθαριότης), as well as from 23.4 (καθαρός). Consequently, at issue is the combined meaning of נשק בר. Literally the phrase would mean 'to kiss purity' or 'cleanliness', and to gloss it thus would have been completely in character with G. But if G understood it as a metaphor for adopting improved behavior, and if he then decided to interpret the metaphor, as he sometimes does, rather than translating it literally, as he often does, and if he finally rendered the phrase contextually, as he is capable of doing, he might easily end up where he did. It would seem reasonably clear that, primed by παιδεύθητε of v. 10b, that is exactly what happened. That he has an interest in παιδεία has already become clear in comment on v. 10b. We can now further refer to 17.36,

49.17 and 118.66. The equation of παιδεία with מוֹר in 49.17 ('but you hated παιδεία') one might have expected (see Ps. 102). Unexpected, however, are 17.36 καὶ ἡ παιδεία σου ἀνώρθωσέν με εἰς τέλος ('your παιδεία set me straight completely', 17.36, for 'your help has made me great', NRSV), and χρηστότητα καὶ παιδείαν καὶ γνώσιν διδάξόν με ('teach me kindness and παιδεία and knowledge', 118.66, for 'teach me good judgment and knowledge' NRSV). That the Targum, as Dubarle notes, has a similar, interpretive rendering further suggests that behind both may lie a shared exegetical tradition. Of additional interest is the fact that, among the other Greek translators, none insisted on a fully literal rendering: καταφίλησατε ἐκλεκτῶς Aq ('kiss selectively'), προσκυνήσατε καθαρῶς Sym ('worship in purity'), ἐπιλαβέσθε ἐπιστήμης Anonymous ('lay hold of understanding').

κύριος. Since this divine name or epithet is often added in transmission history, one may regard it as secondary here, but since there is virtually no evidence for its absence, it might be accepted as original text, though like κύριος in 7b, it may be the contribution of G. As has been suggested, Psalm 2 is a relatively heavily interpreted psalm in the Greek.

ἐξ ὁδοῦ δικαίας. Briggs suggests that this derives from מִדְּרֹכֵי דִקְיָה, and that seems plausible.

ὅταν. The overwhelming default for ׀ is ὅτι (397 times), but in some eighteen cases G opts for a conditional, ὅταν (sixteen times) or εἰάν (three times). As a result of G's choice of ὅταν over ὅτι in v. 12c, the line is not an *assertion* about the Lord's quick temper, but rather a *projection* about what may happen, should his temper flare up. Rahlfs places a full stop at the end of v. 12b and thus links this clause with what follows. English translations such as Thomson, Brenton, Lazarus, and others, do likewise, to yield some such sense as, 'When His anger suddenly blazeth forth, happy are all they who have trusted in Him' (Thomson). Whatever merits this reading may possibly have had in Greek exegetical tradition, there is no reason to posit it for the OG. Though all except Brenton render ὅταν by 'when', one strongly suspects that a questionable understanding of the clause as a so-called General Condition (see Smyth §2295, cf. §1790-93) with reputed iterative/ repetitive force—cf. Brenton's 'whenever'—is responsible for the common rendering. To be sure, if one reads the text in the following way, the last line makes no sense, especially not if it be read eschatologically:

Seize upon instruction, or the Lord may become angry;
and you will perish from the righteous way,
whenever (i.e. on as many occasions as) his anger quickly blazes out.

In that light, it is scarcely surprising that the ὅταν clause is linked with what follows. If, on the other hand, it is simply read as 'if (i.e. in the event that)...'—as it should be read since ἄν is a modal, not aspectual, particle, the problem at once disappears. Interestingly, Swete, who, as Rahlfs notes, placed the stop after v. 12c, almost certainly reflects OG. (On modality in distinction from aspect see Chapter 8 of the first volume of Givon.)

ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ. Hebrew מִן is most often translated by ὀργή (twenty-one times), though θυμός is also used (nine times), notably when a second term is needed (77.49; 84.4). Since, however, θυμός typically implies a passionate outburst (Louw & Nida 88.178), it is possible that here his choice was influenced by the preceding 'quickly' (ἐν τάχει). (Cf. further my comments on v. 5 above.)

Verse 12d

Hebrew Text

אשרי כל חוסי בו

Greek Text

μακάριοι πάντες οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

NETS Translation

Happy are all who trust in him.

That the closing line of Psalm 2 and the opening line of Psalm 1 were at some interpretive stage thought to form an inclusio (see, e.g., Craigie, pp. 59-60) receives some support from the Greek text. Since Psalm 1 speaks overtly about the 'way of the righteous' vs. 'the way of the impious' (see especially Ps. 1.6) and since the rebels of Psalm 2 are portrayed as forsaking their former allegiance (i.e. abandoning the 'righteous way'), it comes perhaps as no surprise that in v. 12b G features δικαίας. I have assumed with Briggs that this addition precedes G, but that is not fully assured.

In sum, unlike Psalm 1, the Greek of Psalm 2 suggests a relatively rich interpretive history both in its pre-Greek stage and at the hands of G.

MIDRASH PSALMS SHOCHER TOV:
SOME THEOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FEATURES
AND A CASE STUDY—THE VIEW OF GOD

Isaac Kalimi

1. *Introduction*

Midrash Psalms Shocher Tov ('Seeking Good') is mainly a compilation of rabbinic exegesis, homilies and legends on most chapters of Psalms.¹ Though the Midrash probably contains some material from the 'Midrash Tehillim' mentioned in the Talmudim² and in *Midrash Gen. R.* 33.2,³ it is not identical to it.⁴

Midrash Psalms comprises two distinct sections: the first, oldest and main section contains midrashim on Psalms 1–118, while the second offers midrashim on Psalms 119–50.⁵ The primary editing on the main section

1. The name *Shocher Tov* derives from its opening verse, which draws on Prov. 11.27: ודרש רעה הבואו / ודרש טוב יבקש רצון ('Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favour / but evil comes to him who searches for it'). This name is similar to that of the Midrash on the Torah and Five Megillot called *Lekach Tov*, 'A Good Precept', whose opening verse comes from Prov. 4.2: כִּי לֵקַח טוֹב נִתְחַי לְכֶם תּוֹרַתִי אֵל תַּעֲזֹבו ('For I give a you good precept, do not forsake my teaching'). Some scholars call it *Aggadat/Haggadat Tehillim/Tillim*, acknowledging its literary genre. See, for example, Rashi in his commentary on Deut. 33.7; Judg. 6.1; Pss. 41.4; 64.2 (*Aggadat Tehillim*); Ps. 78.38; 86.2, 3; Eccl. 11.7 (*Aggadat Tillim*).

2. See *y. Kil.* 32b; *y. Ket.* 35a; *b. Qid.* 33a; *b. Avod. Zar.* 19a.

3. See J. Theodor (ed.), *Bereschit Rabba mit kritischem Apparat und Kommentar* (Veröffentlichungen der Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums; 2nd edn [with additional corrections by Ch. Albeck]; Jerusalem: Wahrmann Books, 1965 [1903]), p. 307.

4. Cf. J. Elbaum, 'Midrash Tehillim', in *EncJud*, XI, pp. 1519-20 (1520).

5. These two sections distinctively differ in their thematic, linguistic and stylistic features. Indeed, all eight manuscripts of the Midrash as well as its first printed edition (Constantinople, 1512), contain midrashim on Pss. 1–118 only (but mss 1 and 6 have midrashim on the opening verses of Ps. 119 as well). Either the editor(s) of *Midrash Psalms* did not compile midrashim on Pss. 119–50 at all, or he/they did so but they

(*Entstehungszeit*) was done sometime in the Talmudic period (c. the third to fifth centuries) and continued developing gradually for several centuries (*Wirkungszeit*). The editing process probably ended sometime in the eleventh century, however, before the compilation of *Yalkut Shimoni* (c. 1200–1300). Most of the midrashim in the second section were compiled and added to the earlier part some time after the compilation of *Yalkut Shimoni*.⁶

The names and origins of the editors of the Midrash as well as the exact place(s) of its composition are unknown. Nevertheless, the language, the style, the manner of sermonizing, the sources upon which the Midrash was based, the names of Amoraim mentioned in it, and the many citations from the Jerusalem Talmud all show that the main work was apparently edited in the land of Israel (presumably in the Galilee, for most Palestinian Jews lived there).⁷

This essay concentrates primarily on the first section of the book. It investigates the section as a whole, that is, from a *synchronistic* approach, and attempts to reveal some of the leading theological and methodological outlines of its editor(s), exemplifying them by a case study on the image of God. The investigation is based on the critical edition of Solomon Buber, which is based on eight old manuscripts and on the Abraham Provenciali

were lost over time. Nonetheless, the midrashim on Pss. 119–50 are added later to the Constantinople printed edition by an unknown compiler, with different type-font, for the first time in 1515 at Saloniki. Contrary to the midrashim from Pss. 1–118, these midrashim never mentioned any authors' names. See L. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden—historisch entwickelt* (Berlin, 1832 [2nd edn, Frankfurt am Main, 1892; reprinted, Hilesheim: Georg Olms, 1966]), pp. 278–80 (Hebrew translation with notes by Ch. Albeck, *Haderashot Beyisrael Vehishtalshelutan Hahistorit* [Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1974], pp. 131–32, 407–12); S. Buber, *Midrash Tehillim* (Wilna, 1891 [repr. Jerusalem: Ch. Wagshel, 1977]), pp. 8–9, 18, 109–10, 507–508 n. a; Elbaum, 'Midrash Tehillim', p. 1519; G. Stemberger, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1992), p. 315.

6. The midrashim on Pss. 122, 124–30 and 132–37 are drawn verbatim from the midrashic anthology *Yalkut Shimoni*, while the compiler of *Yalkut Shimoni* utilized *Midrash Psalms Shocher Tov* on Pss. 1–118 as one of his sources (for the list of the midrashim from *Midrash Psalms Shocher Tov* on Pss. 1–118 which were used by *Yalkut Shimoni's* compiler(s), as well as the character of the manuscript(s) that he/they used, see in detail Buber, *Midrash Tehillim*, pp. 60–66, 116–27). Furthermore, in the Thessaloniki edition, midrashim on Pss. 123 and 131 do not appear at all. The midrashim on these chapters in the Buber edition (pp. 509, 515) have been reconstructed by Solomon Buber himself: for Ps. 131 he drew material from the *Jerusalem Talmud* and *Numbers Rabbah*, for Ps. 123 from *Pesikta Rabbati* and *Sifre*; see Buber, *Midrash Tehillim*, pp. 9, 507–508 n. a.

7. See Buber, *Midrash Tehillim*, p. 4.

edition (itself based on six manuscripts) of about three hundred years earlier, and on the first printed editions of Constantinople (1512) as well as those of Venice (1546).⁸

2. Some Theological and Methodological Features of Midrash Psalms

Among the sixty-six or sixty-three tractates of Mishnah,⁹ which are comprised of six sections, only one single tractate, the so-called אבות ([*The Ethics of the Fathers*]),¹⁰ deals with theological, spiritual and ethical issues. In other words, over 98 per cent of Mishnah hardly deals with any theological themes. Accordingly, the importance of midrashic and aggadic literature, which was composed either as separate compiled works (e.g. *Midrash Psalms*) or as scattered Tannaitic and Amoraic passages, is clear. Here one can find a variety of proper theological topics. In order to achieve better understanding and render an accurate evaluation of the theological issues in Midrash generally, and in *Midrash Psalms* in particular, it is worthwhile for the contemporary reader to keep in mind several theological and methodological features of this form of rabbinical Bible interpretation:

1. First and foremost, the rabbis of the Midrash read each Psalm within the wide perspective of the whole book of *Tehillim*, on the one hand, and within the entire broad biblical perspective, on the other. They read the Hebrew Bible as a whole, as one comprehensive and complete corpus. They alternate from book to book, from passage to passage as well as from verse to verse, correlate some of them, interpret one in light of the other, and frequently harmonize contradictory laws, theologies and stories. The differences in genre (prose and poetry, historical writing, wisdom literature, etc.), style and language (Hebrew vs. Aramaic; Early Biblical Hebrew vs. Late Biblical Hebrew), do not play any role

8. On the quality and main characters of these manuscripts, see Buber, *Midrash Tehillim*, pp. 81-88. On Abraham Provencali and his edition of *Midrash Psalms*, see pp. 88-89. On these and other printed editions of the Midrash, see pp. 109-15.

9. The difference in the number depends on whether one counts *Baba Kama*, *Baba Mezia* and *Baba Bathra* as three tractates or as one; and whether *Makkot* and *Sanhedrin* comprise two tractates or one.

10. In the Mishnah it is named מסכת אבות ('The Tractate of the Fathers'). Only in the Siddurim was the word פירקי substituted (פרקי אבות, 'Chapters of the Fathers'), because one chapter was recited each Shabbat between Pesach and Shabuoth. That is, six chapters of the tractate for the six Shabbats.

in their exegetical activities. The span of time between texts and ideas, stories and laws (i.e. from the First Temple era vs. the Second Temple), makes no difference to them. All the Scriptures are interpreted as arising in one single phase of time. The concept of 'historical evolution' or 'chronological development' (i.e. *diachronistic* perspective) is absolutely remote to midrashic writers.

2. The concept of a so-called *Urtext*, or the search for something close to it, as well as any kind of textual development or evaluation, were far away from the horizon of the rabbis. They focus on the final text of Psalms (*der Endtext*) and the rest of the Bible as well. They attempt to interpret the Scriptures before them, the form which has been canonized. Furthermore, they did not distinguish between the various groups in the book of Psalms and its redaction stages, nor did they distinguish it from that of the other biblical books and traditions. They read, for instance, *Sefer Tehillim* but not 'the Eulogistic Psalms', 'the first and second of David's collections'. They interpreted the Five Books of Moses or the book of Kings, but not J, E, D, P, H, and so on, or the Deuteronomistic History. Accordingly, the rabbis make no distinction between the earlier and later stages of biblical beliefs, ideas and thoughts. Obviously, the historical-critical methods were foreign to their world and lines of thinking. Generally, they were not interested in what may or may not be the original source of any biblical composition.¹¹ They did not research the Bible as ancient literature, or as a potential historical document for the history of Israel in the biblical period.¹² They studied the book of Psalms and other parts of the Bible from the *synchronistic* viewpoint and formed some ideological and theological views, as well as some Jewish ethics, values and norms. They were not 'historians' but in some sense they were 'theologians'. They were not interested in the history of the Israelite religion but in a kind of theology of Hebrew Bible.
3. The usage of the final text of the Bible by the midrashic rabbis, as it is *canonized*, includes also *the mind* in which the final text

11. However, one must admit that sometimes—although very rarely did the rabbis inquire about the origin of a biblical book(/personality). For example, in *b. B. Bat.* 15a-b where, *inter alia*, the origin of Job is critically examined.

12. Of course, this does not mean that the rabbinical literature in general, and *Midrash Psalms* in particular, lack historical material, especially from their own periods.

became part of the Hebrew canon. It means, for instance, that the rabbis of *Midrash Psalms* interpreted the Song of Songs as an allegory of love between God and the nation of Israel and as a Scripture which was composed by King Solomon,¹³ exactly the reasons for which the book was accepted into the canon. However, they did not consider the Song of Songs as a collection of Israelite love poetry from biblical time. Furthermore, they studied the book of Psalms in the traditional sense in which it was accepted to the canon. That means, they accepted the whole book as written by King David (and ten elders),¹⁴ ברוח הקודש ('by the Holy Spirit'),¹⁵ and as a part of the authoritative *Holy Scriptures* of the Jewish people. Psalms was not considered a collection of various poems, prayers, and so on, composed by many writers during many generations in the biblical era.

4. As with most rabbinical exegetes of biblical texts, the rabbis of *Midrash Psalms* also had a lack of historical perspective. Many Psalms and beliefs were expounded in light of later events. Numerous paragraphs were actualized on the background of the contemporary history of various rabbis.¹⁶
5. As with the biblical book of Psalms, there is no main central theological theme (*die Mitte*) which unites the entire *Midrash*

13. See, e.g., *Midr. Ps.* 2.13; 5.6; 8.3.

14. See, e.g., *b. B. Bat.* 14b-15a; *Midr. Ps.* 1.1, and compare 2 Macc. 2.13, 'the Writing of David'. It is worth mentioning that the rabbis refer several times, not to 150 Psalms as in the printed Bibles, or 151 as in the LXX and at Qumran, but to 'the one hundred and forty-seven Psalms of praise in the Psalter'; see *Midr. Ps.* 22.19; 104.2. They counted Pss. 1 and 2 as one, Pss. 114 and 115 as one, and Pss. 116 and 117 as one, or possibly Pss. 9 and 10 as one; see W.G. Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 3rd edn, 1976), p. 457 n. 38.

15. See, for instance, *Midr. Ps.* 17.9: 'Five times in the Book of Psalms David asked the Holy one, blessed be He, to arise: four times against the four kingdoms, for by the help of the Holy Spirit David saw how the four kingdoms would oppress Israel...' See also *Midr. Ps.* 22.7 (at the end: 'since David saw by the Holy Spirit...'); 104.2. Indeed, David is described already in 2 Sam. 23.2 as a prophet: רוח יהוה דבר בי ומלתו על לשוני ('The spirit of the Lord has spoken through me, his message is on my tongue'). In *Midr. Ps.* 1.1, David was compared to Moses.

16. There are many examples of this feature in *Midrash Psalms*; see the instance given in my *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy: Studies in Scriptures in the Shadow of Internal and External Controversies* (Jewish and Christian Heritage, 2; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2002), pp. 61-103.

Psalms 1–118.¹⁷ This rabbinic compilation encompasses several theologies. The biblical book of *Psalms*, on the one hand, and the *Midrash Psalms*, on the other, are each an anthology, which have been composed by numerous authors and editors over centuries in different places and circumstances. This plurality of theologies altogether is somehow co-existent. Some of them are parallel, occasionally they even contradict each other. It is essential to define the relationships between these conglomerates of theologies and define how they are correlated; which of them are the main theological distinction of *Midrash Psalms* 1–118, and which have only secondary importance.

6. Many times the rabbis have a very narrow basis in Scriptures on which to form their theological viewpoints. Frequently one gets the impression that the Sages actually looked only for an excuse to stick their own exposition on the biblical verse(s). They read the Psalter and deliberately filled in its gaps, based either on other Scriptures which associatively they related to the text, or simply on their own imposed ideas.
7. To reveal the uniqueness of the theological aspects of the *Midrash Psalms* one must compare its midrashim with those which appear in the book of *Psalms* and in the Hebrew Bible, on the one hand, and with those which appear in other rabbinical literature, on the other. It is also beneficial to research the ideological and theological beliefs of the Midrash in the socio-historical and political context of the Jewish people and their cultural milieu.
8. Finally, various texts and statements in *Midrash Psalms* are important in order to understand the Jewish–Christian relationship. There are several midrashim which include essential information or some hidden polemical details with the Christian theological principles.¹⁸

Midrash Psalms shares most of these features with other midrashim on the biblical books.

17. This is contrary, for instance, to the New Testament in which Jesus Christ is the ‘center’ and everything relates to him, from him or surrounds him; see recently, C. Landmesser, H.-J. Eckstein and H. Lichtenberger (eds.), *Jesus Christus als die Mitte der Schrift* (BZNW, 86; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1997). Although the Epistle of James does not specifically mention Jesus, the author is clearly explaining Paul’s misunderstanding of him.

18. See my, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, p. 142.

3. A Case Study: The View of God in Midrash Psalms

In order to illustrate the theological and methodological features of *Midrash Psalms* I represent as a case study some thoughts on the image of God in this rabbinic compilation.

a. The View and Centrality of God

Although there is not one central theological point which the whole *Midrash Psalms* shares, all parts of this Midrash share common views of God. As a matter of fact, this feature is a common issue of the biblical book of Psalms in particular and of the entire Hebrew Bible in general.¹⁹ Nonetheless, God is not thought of in the abstract by the sages of *Midrash Psalms*, as well as by any biblical and classical rabbinic literature, as is the case, for example, in Philo of Alexandria or later on in the writings of Saadia Gaon (882–942) and Moses Maimonides (1138 [not 1135]–1204).

Like many other issues in rabbinical literature the rabbis do not have one picture of God. *Midrash Psalms* demonstrates many portraits of God, as does the Hebrew Bible itself. One after the other, each passage begins with the words דבר אחר (‘another interpretation/comment’), which actually represents another theological viewpoint. The plurality of opinions in *Midrash Psalms* shows that the final editor(s) of the Midrash probably had several views of God, and desired to include all or at least most of them in this midrashic collection. He did not—or could not—take the authority to decide which opinion contained the absolute truth (if there is such a thing at all). He let all the opinions stand beside each other, and support each other. No one opinion has ultimate priority, and only all of them together represents the entire truth. Let us turn our attention to the following example.

In *Midr. Ps.* 104.2 we read:

Another interpretation, [the verse is read] ‘And You [God] are exalted as head above all’ [1 Chron. 29.11]. Rabbi Simon taught: You above all the praises wherewith men exalt You; You are high above every blessing and every praise, as is said: ‘Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord?’

19. The books of Esther and the Song of Songs, however, do not mention the name of God at all; see, in detail, I. Kalimi, ‘The Task of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Theology—Between Judaism and Christianity’, *idem*, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, p. 142 n. 20; *idem*, ‘The Place of the Book of Esther in Judaism and Jewish Theology’, *TZ* 59 (2003), pp. 193–204 (200–201); *idem*, ‘The Book of Esther and Dead Sea Scrolls Community’ (forthcoming).

[Ps. 106.2], that is, Who can declare the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He? If a man endeavors to speak of the praise of the Holy One, blessed be He, he will forfeit his life.' As Elihu said: 'If a man speaks, surely he shall be destroyed' [Job 37.20].²⁰

According to this Midrash, if a man attempts to speak of the glory of God he will forfeit his life. God remains above all praises with which humans exalt him.

Now a different view is expressed in *Midr. Ps.* 89.1. Here we read that God can be praised by means of acts of his mercy, righteousness and justice:

'Maskil of Ethan the Ezrachite'—... When Ethan the Ezrachite said: 'I understand' hence 'Maskil of Ethan the Ezrachite'—the Holy One, blessed be He, replied: do you understand that 'In these things I delight' [Jer. 9.23], and that any man who would praise Me, must praise Me only with these things? Thus again Scripture says, 'For I desire mercy and not sacrifice' [Hos. 6.6]. Ethan the Ezrachite said to God: You desire mercy, and I shall praise You with mercy, as is said 'Also, unto You, O Lord, belongeth mercy' [Ps. 62.13], and not with one mercy alone, but with many mercies, for, as Isaiah said, 'I will make mention of the mercies of the Lord' [Isa. 63.7]. Hence is said, 'I will sing of the mercies and justice of God...' [Ps. 101.1].

It seems, therefore, that the final editor(s) might have liked to state that any long list of God's praises is unable to express precisely all of what he (God) is and what he really deserves. If a man claims that by doing so he could reach the ultimate description of God he is inaccurate and deserves punishment. On the other hand, no one is exempt from praising God. Thus, when a man wishes to praise God, he should utilize those praises which are based on God's acts as described in the Holy Scriptures. He should also be aware that even by doing so he states only partial praises of God.

b. 'Negative Theology'

In *Midrash Psalms* God is described also by what modern theological literature calls a 'negative theology' approach. In other words, he is distinguished by what he is not, by eliminative method. For example, *Midr. Ps.* 25.6 states that God's rules cannot be fathomed: 'When Moses said (to the Holy one, blessed be He) "Show me, I pray You, Your way" [Exod. 33.13], that is to say, "show me the rule whereby You guide the world", God replied: "my rules you can not fathom!"'²¹

20. Compare *Midr. Ps.* 19.2; 22.19; 106.2.

21. Cf. *Midr. Ps.* 139.1: 'His ultimate purpose cannot be discovered'; 149.2: God 'does not act like a tyrant towards His creatures'.

Midrash Psalms 106.1 says that God's extraordinary acts, miracles, are not limited to those which are numbered by mortals; rather, their number is so great that only God himself is able to account for them:

'O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever'. Who can express the mighty acts of God? [Ps. 106.1-2]. These are to be considered in light of what Scripture says elsewhere: 'Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful acts which You have done, and Your thoughts which are to us-ward' [Ps. 40.6]. What is meant by the words 'Many...are Your wonderful acts'? They mean that every day He does for us miracles and wonderful acts, of which no man knows. Then who does know? You, O Lord!'

In another instance—and there are several more—*Midr. Ps.* 5.7 states that nothing evil dwells with God: "Neither shall any evil dwell with you" [Ps. 5.5]—Nothing evil dwells with God—neither fire nor hail. All such things are of the earth, as is written [Gen. 19.24]... "Neither shall any evil dwell with you": You do not dwell with evil; nor does evil dwell with you.'²²

c. *The Oneness of God*

The rabbis made enormous efforts to present the idea of the exclusive unity of God.²³ The Oneness of God is expressed in the Midrash under review in several forms.

(1) God himself created the whole world and everything in it, without any help from anyone. Therefore, *Midr. Ps.* 86.4 stresses that the angels were not created on the first day:

Rabbi Chanina and Rabbi Jochanan taught: The angels were created on the second day, so that the nations of the world (אומות העולם) could not say: Michael stood in the north and Gabriel in the south, and together with God they stretched out the heavens.

This Midrash appears also in other rabbinical sources, for example *Gen. R.* 1.3; 3.8 as well as in *Midrash Tanhuma* (Buber edition), 1.1. However, another version of it, appears previously in *Midr. Ps.* 24.4. Here the rabbis

22. For this see also *Midr. Ps.* 149.1.

23. For instance, in *Midrash Tanhuma* (Buber edition) 1.7 which interprets Josh. 24.19, לא תוכלו לעבד את יהוה כי אלהים קדשים הוא ('You will not be able to worship the Lord, for he is a holy God'), as 'even though the plural *elohim* is modified by the plural adjective "holy", the Godhead is no plurality. The plural of "holy" simply means that God is holy in many aspects', see J.T. Townsend, 'How Can Late Rabbinic Texts Inform Biblical and Early Christian Studies?', *Shofar* 6 (1987), pp. 26-32 (29).

correlate and expound several different verses, but come to the same conclusion:

Another interpretation: Consider 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof' in light of the verse 'You, even You, are Lord alone, You have made heaven... with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein' [Neh. 9.6]. On which day were the angels created? Rabbi Jochanan said that they were created on the second day, for it is said 'The Lord...who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters' [Ps. 104.3], there follow the words 'Who makes His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire' (Ps. 104.4). Rabbi Simeon said [that the angels were created] on the fifth day, for on that day God said: 'Let the waters bring forth abundantly... fowl, that may fly (עופף) above the earth in open firmament of heaven' [Gen. 1.20]. Here, the word fowl is to be understood in its usual sense: but the words 'that may fly (עופף) in the open firmament of heaven' refer to the angels, for it is said 'With two wings he did fly (עופף)' [Isa. 6.2].

Nonetheless, the continuation of the Midrash includes a significant emendation. Here, instead of the words 'so *that the nations of the world* could not say' in *Midr. Ps.* 86.4 the Midrash utilizes the words 'lest heretics (המנינים) might say':

Rabbi Lulyani [Julianus] said: All agree that the angels were not created on the first day, *lest heretics* (המנינים) *might say*, 'while Michael was stretching out the heaven in the east, and Gabriel was stretching out the heavens in the west, the Holy One, blessed be He, was stretching the middle portion'. The fact is, that the Holy One, blessed be He, made all things: 'I am the Lord that makes all things; that stretched the heavens alone; that spread abroad the earth by Myself (באחזי)' (Isa. 44.24). באחזי when read as מי אחזי (who with me?),²⁴ is to say, in the work of creation, who was partner with Me? Therefore, David said to the Holy One, blessed be He: since You alone created the heaven and the earth, I shall call them after Your name alone: 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof'.

The term מינינים might include all the sectarians that opposed the main-stream of the Nation, that is, rabbinic Judaism,²⁵ but here it is intended

24. Here the rabbis split artificially one Hebrew word into two parts and expounded it as two words. For this sort of rabbinical interpretation, compare *Midr. Ps.* 9.7; 16.1: מכחם > תם > מכחם.

25. See, e.g., *Midr. Ps.* 1.21. On 'Minim' in rabbinical literature, see C. Thoma, *Das Messiasprojekt: Theologie Jüdisch-christlicher Begegnung* (Augsburg: Pattloch Verlag, 1994), pp. 345-50; W. Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), pp. 67-110, and there a review of the earlier bibliography.

specifically for the Jewish–Christians heretics, as we will see in the following. Similarly, it is expressed already in Mishnah *Sanhedrin* 4.5: ‘Therefore man was created alone... so that the *minim* should not say: There are many domains in Heaven’.

(2) God is always acting alone in history, by himself, without assistance from anyone. Thus, in the first part of *Midr. Ps.* 86.4, for instance, we read:

‘All nations whom You have made shall come and prostrate themselves before You’ [Ps. 86.9]—whether they want to, or do not want to... Rabbi Tanchum said: a mortal king—when he is praised to his face, the implication is that the governors of his provinces are praised with him. Why? Because they help him carry his burden, and so share with him the praise he receives. But it is not so with the Holy One, blessed be He, for no one helps Him carry His burden.²⁶

These viewpoints are associated with each other: since God created the whole earth alone, therefore he is also God of history. Indeed, *Midrash Psalms* itself relates the two views either by a literary proximity or by the sentence ‘you can see that this (i.e. God acting alone etc.) is true, for... God created the world alone’.

The historical socio-religious background for these midrashim is, most probably, the appearance and spread of Christianity. The rabbis attempted to negate the Christian ideas as in the following source:

In the beginning the Word already was. The Word was in God’s presence, and the Word was God. He was present with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be; without him not a thing came into being. (Jn 1.1-3)

Similarly we read in the Letter of Paul (or one of his students) to the Colossians (1.15-17), in the second half of the first century CE:

He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, his is the primacy over all creation; ...the whole universe has been created through him and for him. He exists before all things, and all things are held together in him.

The rabbis engaged in bitter polemics with the Christians on the Trinity doctrine, and on dogma that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,²⁷ as worded, for instance, in Phil. 2.6-10: ‘he was in the form of God...being born in human likeness’. Obviously, the rabbis could not accept the Christian

26. Cf. *Midr. Ps.* 149.1: ‘God needs no one to help him’.

27. See, e.g., Mt. 16.15-17; Mk 1.11; Jn 5.20–24.31; Heb. 1.1-14.

concept of monotheism which differs considerably from that which had been formed in Judaism.

(3) The Midrash offers an attack against all kinds of non-believers, for example, those that denied God as the creator of the universe. *Midrash Pslams* 1.21 reads:

'On account of the word "so" the ungodly shall not stand' [Ps. 1.5]. Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says: 'The lips of the wise disperse knowledge; but the heart of the foolish does not so' [Prov. 15.7]... Another interpretation, 'The lips of the wise disperse knowledge'—The wise are the children of Israel who by proclaiming His oneness every day, morning and evening continually enthrone the Holy One, blessed be He. 'But the heart of the foolish does not so': the foolish are unbelievers (*minim*) who say that the world is a machine that runs itself (αὐτόματος).

Another comment on 'The lips of the wise disperse knowledge', Rabbi Yudan and Rabbi Phinehas said: this means that the Holy One, blessed be He, declared to the wicked: I created the world by the command, 'It shall be so' (לֹא כֵן) Gen. 1.11). But you say that it was not so created (לֹא כֵן): by your lives not so (חַיֵיכֶם לֹא כֵן)! 'On account of the word "so", the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment (עַל כֵּן לֹא יִקְוּמוּ רְשָׁעִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט) (Ps. 1.5)'.²⁸

There is a sharp attack against all forms of idolatry in several midrashim, for example *Midr. Ps.* 31.4-6.

d. *Forgiveness*

God is the only authority able to forgive transgressions. Accordingly, *Midr. Ps.* 17.8, for example, states:

'Show Your marvelous lovingkindness' (Ps. 17.7). David said to the Holy one, blessed be He: 'Master of the world, give me of that marvelous balm which is Yours'. And what is that? It is pardon and forgiveness, as is said 'The Lord...who forgiveth all your iniquity; who healeth all your disease' (Ps. 103.3).

Although the main concept of forgiveness by God has already been expressed in the Hebrew Bible, as clearly emerges from Ps. 103.3, which was cited by the Midrash itself,²⁸ the rabbis stressed this point in their midrashim on the historical background of their own time.²⁹ Yet, this theological view is definitely different from that in Christianity. In the Letter to the Colossians (1.14), for example, it is worded: 'Through whom (Jesus)

28. Cf. also Ps. 86.4; 130.4: 'For with you there is forgiveness'; Mic. 7.18.

29. See also *Midr. Ps.* 30.4//86.2; 130.2: 'Rabbi Abba taught...forgiveness is held in abeyance by You'.

our release is secured and our sins are forgiven'. Complete forgiveness can be given by Jesus Christ (Mk 2.5-12 and parallels). Jesus' behavior shows that 'forgiveness is central and not peripheral to his ministry. He gave his life as a ransom for many (Mk 10.45). He was the Lamb of God (Jn 1.36)'.³⁰

4. Conclusion

The midrashic and aggadic literature are important for the study of rabbinic theology. Some theological and methodological features of this literature have been suggested in this essay: (1) the rabbis of the Midrash read each Psalm in the wide perspective of the whole book of *Tehillim*, and within the whole biblical perspective. The differences in genre, style and language between the texts as well as the span of time between text and ideas do not play any role in their exegetic activities. (2) The rabbis focus on the final text of Psalms and that of the entire Hebrew Bible as well. (3) The usage of the final text of the Bible by the rabbis, as it is *canonized*, includes also *the mindset* out of which the final text became part of the Hebrew canon. (4) The rabbis of *Midrash Psalms* had a lack of historical perspective. (5) There is not one essential theological issue which encompasses the whole of *Midrash Psalms* 1–118, rather there are several theologies. (6) Occasionally the rabbis have a very narrow basis in Scripture for the formulation of their theological views. (7) For demonstrating the uniqueness of the theological aspects of *Midrash Psalms*, one must compare them with those that appear in the book of Psalms and in the Hebrew Bible, on the one hand, and with those that appear in other parts of rabbinical literature, on the other. (8) Several texts in *Midrash Psalms* are important for understanding Jewish–Christian controversies.

In order to illustrate these theological and methodological aspects of *Midrash Psalms*, some thoughts on the image of God, as revealed in this rabbinic compilation, have been introduced. The common issue that all parts of the Midrash share is the same view of God. There is no abstract thought of God in *Midrash Psalms*. The rabbis represent many portraits of God. Various opinions stand side by side, while all of them support each other. *Midrash Psalms* describes God also by the so-called 'negative theology' (*Midr. Ps.* 5.7; 25.6). The Sages made an effort to present an

30. See C. Gestrich and J. Zehner, 'Forgiveness', in E. Fahlbusch *et al.*, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999–), II, pp. 330-34 (331-32).

idea of God's Oneness. They maintained that: (1) God himself created the whole universe without help from anyone; (2) God is acting alone in history; (3) this must be defended against all kinds of non-believers. Contrary to the Christians, the rabbis expressed that God is the ultimate authority in forgiving sins.

SINUHE, JONAH AND JOSEPH:
ANCIENT 'FAR TRAVELERS' AND THE POWER OF GOD*

Edmund S. Meltzer

The story—or, as now generally acknowledged, the narrative poem—of Sinuhe has long been regarded as one of the supreme achievements of Egyptian literature (e.g. Foster 1993; Parkinson 2001), and it has opened up interpretive possibilities that are seemingly inexhaustible (see bibliography). Publications of the Egyptian text have recently been presented by Koch (1990) and Foster (1993); readable translations can be found in Foster (1993, 1995) and Parkinson (1997). The present writer has never been able to read or teach the Sinuhe text without encountering some newly perceived beauty of language or narrative, some additional wisdom gracefully imparted, or yet another theme awaiting deeper examination. (To help to put the present article in context, the writer's explorations of various aspects of Sinuhe are listed in the bibliography.)

Foster, who has demonstrated the poetic nature of the text conclusively, considers its author the Egyptian Shakespeare. In the same vein, Tobin (1995) regards Sinuhe as someone who 'doth protest too much', and to this writer, Sinuhe's soliloquizing resonates considerably with Hamlet's (especially the latter's 'O what a rogue and peasant slave am I'). The dilemmas and crises of the two protagonists seem somewhat parallel—the sudden information of the death by murder of a revered king, though, unlike Hamlet, Sinuhe is not the son and heir. While these Shakespearean resonances of Sinuhe are very promising and will certainly repay further research, in the present study we are venturing down a somewhat different path, that of the interfaces between the Egyptian masterpiece and another pinnacle of the traditional Western literary 'canon', the Hebrew Bible. My hope is that this short exploration of Sinuhe's motivation and self-discovery, and of his interaction with the divine power as embodied in the

* I would like to thank Dr J. Harold Ellens for inviting me to contribute to the present volume.

Egyptian ruler Senwosret I, will be of interest to the distinguished biblical scholar to whom this volume is dedicated.

In order to present my proposal fairly, I must first deal with important points raised in other recent work on Sinuhe. While I am not convinced by Kitchen's (1996) detailed identification of Sinuhe as a 'real' biography rather than 'fiction', this distinction is not paramount for the present discussion, nor is the corresponding debate centering on the biblical narratives considered here. It suffices that it is appropriate to consider the literary qualities and characteristics of (auto)biographies. (Auto)biography has, moreover, always been an excellent vehicle for didactic themes, and indeed in Egypt the genre (auto)biography has a strongly didactic component. This in turn by no means detracts from its literary qualities.

In another important study, Morschauser (2000) rejects scenarios involving the panic, desertion, complicity or culpability—even as a lapse—of Sinuhe, preferring to regard the protagonist as a 'knight-errant' whose place in the scheme of things has been eliminated by the death of Amenemhet I, an event which has turned Sinuhe's world upside-down and forced him to seek another sponsor or protector. (Another possible comparison would be a *ronin* in medieval Japan.) Despite Morschauser's careful and detailed argumentation, I find his view ultimately implausible. Surely Sinuhe was not the only retainer to be put in this position, and they did not all go scrambling off to Syro-Canaan. According to the classical Egyptological scenario, Amenemhet I had taken pains to ensure the stability of the monarchy through coregency. The employment of coregency at that period has recently been questioned (Callender 2000, with literature), though in my view not at all conclusively. Moreover, and perhaps most tellingly, world literature and true-life history are full of people of the most admirable qualities and irreproachable integrity who nonetheless commit some egregious lapse, and they are as a rule more interesting than utter paragons, if indeed the latter really exist. Surely from the literary point of view it is reasonable to see Sinuhe as a man of loyalty and integrity who on one occasion acted or reacted out of character—or out of the weaknesses in his character—'and that has made all the difference'. The achievement of inner and outward reconciliation then becomes the overriding problem; by running away, Sinuhe has been trying on one level to run away from *himself*, as in a way has Gilgamesh in yet another classic narrative of adventure and introspection. Finally, I cannot concur in Morschauser's assertion that a pardon or amnesty would have to deny or rebut some specified accusation(s) or charge(s). President Ford, for instance,

pardoned Richard Nixon in advance for any crime for which he might be indicted. On the other hand, I agree strongly with Morschauser's comment that Sinuhe's 'redemption' includes the afterlife dimension of the cosmos, the grant of a tomb and a burial. In a way, Sinuhe is like a parable—a traditional Jewish one comes to mind in which a young man, dreaming of a treasure, runs off helter-skelter to seek it, thus ignoring the opportunities to discover and enjoy the true treasures of life.

Of course, Sinuhe is not merely trying to run away from himself. He is also trying desperately to escape from the power of the god (= the king), but he is always frustrated in this attempt. Wherever he goes, he finds that the power of the king has overtaken or preceded him, so he finds himself (reluctantly) lauding the king and his supremacy to foreign rulers. He invites comparison with another runaway, reluctant servant of the god in ancient Near Eastern literature, the Hebrew prophet Jonah. Finally, Sinuhe is forced to admit that it is the king who 'covers this horizon' (cf. also Ps. 139.7-9), and to acknowledge his twofold need: for the ruling, life-giving power of the god (king) and the nurturing, sustaining, resurrecting power of the goddess (queen). Paradoxically, the flight itself is 'like the plan of a (or the) god'. The god 'who ordained this flight' and who finally answers the abject Sinuhe's prayer and brings him home is none other than the king himself, who invites him to return. The king has brought about this ordeal—death/resurrection, a 'rite of passage' (also essentially what happens to Jonah)—so that Sinuhe can be re-integrated into Egyptian society and cosmos (*inter alia* Parkinson 2001).

It is illuminating to incorporate into our comparison another biblical protagonist who finds himself transported to a far-off land, namely Joseph. General points of contact between the Joseph and Sinuhe narratives are noted by Kitchen (1980) and Coats (1992). Joseph and Sinuhe present reversed or mirror-image examples of the same motif. Sinuhe is an Egyptian who flees to Syro-Canaan, 'goes native' as a member of the local ruling elite (in the process acquiring a wife and having sons), then returning to Egypt and being recognized by the royal family. Joseph, on the other hand, is a Syro-Canaanite who, by what he ultimately recognizes as an 'act of God' (also Sinuhe's characterization of his flight), is taken to Egypt, where he 'goes native' as a member of the ruling elite, acquiring a wife and having sons, then being reunited with and revealing himself to his Syro-Canaanite family. In Joseph's case, his family joins him in Egypt as he does not return to Canaan until much later, long after his death.

It is also worthy of note that Joseph absolves his brothers of both a real and a trumped-up crime against him. In this connection, let us consider once again the question of Sinuhe's 'guilt' and 'pardon'. Senwosret I, in his letter and later in their face-to-face encounter, affirms Sinuhe's innocence and expressly denies any guilt on the official's part. Was Sinuhe actually guilty of anything? Does the king's assertion necessarily mean that in fact Sinuhe did nothing treasonous? The point is that it does not matter what Sinuhe may or may not have done. The king's statements grant a blanket absolution and effectively annul anything that may have gone before. When the king declares from the throne that Sinuhe has not been accused, has done nothing culpable, and so on, who will contradict him? Senwosret can even be seen as daring anyone to do so.

One of the essential messages of the stories under discussion is that both the power and the mercy of the divine are unlimited and absolute. In our mundane world of human limitations, as George Bernard Shaw's aphorism notes, 'absolute power corrupts absolutely'. In the ordered cosmos of Egyptian Maat and of the Tanakh, absolute power enables a divine being to act with absolute mercy. The common resonances of the Egyptian and Hebrew narratives discussed here are to be expected in view of the profound kinship between the two traditions, a kinship emphasized in the Joseph narrative itself, where it is illustrated by the marriage of Joseph and Asenath, daughter of Potiphera the priest of Heliopolis.

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PROPHETS AND PROPHECY IN *TARGUM JONATHAN* TO THE PROPHETS

Moshe Aberbach

The *TJ* on the Prophets accords a major role to prophecy, and the function of the prophet as it appears in deviations from the literal meaning of the text is clearly outlined and often minutely defined. The basic task of the prophet is to prophecy,¹ and no matter what he does, this primary role is always in the foreground. The prophet is so suffused in his God-given mission² that he is incapable, as it were, of engaging in any other activity. When the prophet speaks, it is not just plain speech, but a word of prophecy.³ As soon as he opens his mouth, it is a prophecy that comes out.⁴ Whenever he cries out, proclaims the works of God, makes an allegorical pronouncement or utters lamentation, it is invariably a prophetic proclamation,⁵ allegory,⁶ or lamentation.⁷ Whatever he sees is a prophetic vision.⁸

1. Cf. Ezek. 3.5: MT '...you (viz. Ezekiel) are sent'—*TJ* '...you are sent to prophecy'. See also n. 2.

2. Cf. 1 Kgs 14.6: MT 'I am sent to you with a severe (message)—*TJ* 'I am sent to prophesy severe decrees (or words)'; Zech. 2.15; 4.9; 6.15: MT 'The Lord of hosts has sent me to you'—*TJ* 'The Lord of hosts has sent me to prophesy to you'. Cf. also Y. Comlosh, *המקרא באור התנ"ך* (Tel Aviv: n.p., 1973), p. 348.

3. There is a large number of passages where the prophet 'speaks' or is told by God to 'speak' in the MT while the *TJ* renders it 'prophesy'; cf. 2 Kgs 1.3 (according to Sperber's edition); Jer. 9.21; 20.8; 22.1; 25.2; 26.2, 7, 8, 15, 18; 43.2; 45.1; Ezek. 2.7; 3.1, 4, 11; 11.25; 12.23; 14.4; 20.3, 27; 24.27; 33.2; 37.21.

4. Cf. Ezek. 29.21: MT 'I will open your mouth' (literally, 'I will give you an opening of the mouth')—*TJ* 'I will open your mouth' (literally, 'I will give you an opening of the mouth in prophecy').

5. Cf. 1 Kgs 13.2, 21, 32: MT 'He cried out'—*TJ* 'He prophesied'; Jer. 2.2: MT 'Go and Proclaim'—*TJ* 'Go and prophesy'; 7.2: MT 'Proclaim there this word'—*TJ* 'Prophecy there this word'; 7.27: MT 'You shall call (or cry out) to them'—*TJ* 'You shall prophesy to them'; 11.6: MT 'Proclaim all these words'—*TJ* 'Prophecy all these words'; 20.8: MT 'I cry out'—*TJ* 'I prophesy'; Jon. 1.2; 3.2: MT 'Cry out (or proclaim)'—*TJ* 'Prophecy'; Zech. 1.4: MT 'The former (or earlier) prophets called to them'—*TJ* 'The former (or earlier) prophets prophesied to them'; 1.14, 17: MT 'Cry out (or proclaim)'—*TJ* 'Prophecy'.

When the prophet 'sets his face' in any direction, it is with a view to receiving a prophetic message.⁹ Indeed, his very heart is but the spirit of prophecy.¹⁰

When God wishes to communicate with humankind, he does so through his servants the prophets.¹¹ Whenever God speaks to the prophet, or, in biblical phraseology, when the word of the Lord comes to the prophet, it is through a word or spirit of prophecy 'from before the Lord'.¹² Indeed, the prophet is in a sense the very essence of the divine spirit.¹³ Similarly, 'the burden of the Lord' is correctly interpreted as a prophecy.¹⁴ The 'hand of

6. Cf. Ezek. 24.3: MT 'Utter (or speak) an allegory'—*TJ* 'Prophecy a prophecy'.

7. Cf. Ezek. 19.14; 32.16: MT 'This is a lamentation (or a dirge)'—*TJ* 'This lamentation is a prophecy'; 32.18: MT 'Wail'—*TJ* 'Prophecy'.

8. Cf. Ezek. 1.1: MT 'I saw'—*TJ* 'I saw in the vision of a prophecy that rested upon me'; 12.23: MT 'The fulfillment (literally, word) of every vision'—*TJ* 'The word of every prophecy'.

9. Cf. Ezek. 21.2, 7; 25.2; 28.21; 29.2; 35.2; 38.2: MT 'Set your face'—*TJ* 'Receive a prophecy'.

10. Cf. 2 Kgs 5.26: MT 'Did not my heart go along...'—*TJ* 'By the spirit of prophecy it was shown to me...'

11. Cf. Jer. 22.21: MT 'I spoke to you when you were prosperous'—*TJ* 'I sent to you all my servants, the prophets, when you were dwelling at ease'. For the idea that God acts only through, or with the knowledge of, his prophets, see Amos 3.7.

12. The 'Word of the Lord', as well as variations of that common biblical phrase, is almost uniformly rendered in *TJ* by 'a word of prophecy from before the Lord'. See, e.g., 1 Sam. 15.10; 2 Sam. 24.11; 1 Kgs 6.11; 12.32; 16.1, 7; 17.2, 8; 18.1; 21.17, 28; 2 Kgs 20.4; Isa. 38.4; Jer. 7.1; 13.3, 8, 12; 24.4; 25.1, 3; 28.12; 29.30; 30.1; 32.1, 6, 26; 33.1, 19, 23; 34.1, 8, 12; 35.1, 12; 36.27; 37.6; 39.1, 15; 40.1; 42.7; 43.8; 44.1; 45.1; 46.1; 47.1; 49.34; Ezek. 1.3; 3.16; 6.1; 7.1; 11.14; 12.1; 24.35; Hos. 1.1; Joel 1.1; Jon. 1.1; 3.1; Mic. 1.1; Zeph. 1.1; Hag. 1.1, 3; 2.1, 10, 20; Zech. 1.1, 7; 4.8; 7.1, 4, 8; 8.1, 18. See also Isa. 51.16; Ezek. 2.7; 3.4. See also n. 13, below.

13. Cf. 1 Sam. 19.20: MT 'The spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul'—*TJ* 'The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord rested upon the messengers of Saul'; 1 Kgs 22.24: MT 'How did the spirit of the Lord go from me?'—*TJ* 'At what time did the spirit of prophecy from before the Lord go away from me?'; Ezek. 11.5: MT 'And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me'—*TJ* 'And the spirit of prophecy from before the Lord rested upon me'; 11.24: MT 'By the spirit of God'—*TJ* 'By the spirit of prophecy that rested upon me from before the Lord'; 37.1: MT 'He brought me out by the spirit of the Lord'—*TJ* 'He brought me out by the spirit of prophecy that rested upon me from before the Lord'. See especially Hag. 2.5: MT 'My spirit abides among you'—*TJ* 'My prophets teach among you'.

14. Cf. 2 Kgs 9.25: MT 'The Lord uttered this oracle (literally, burden) against him'—*TJ* 'From before the Lord this burden of prophecy was raised concerning him';

the Lord', an anthropomorphic expression, usually becomes in *TJ* 'the spirit of prophecy from before the Lord'.¹⁵

It is the prophet to whom the spirit of the Lord is directed, and in his mouth the divine spirit becomes a plain prophetic message.¹⁶ By way of contrast, when the spirit of God takes hold of someone not recognized as a prophet, men like Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, *TJ*, always careful to emphasize the difference between prophets and non-prophets, transforms the divine spirit into 'might', rendering 'The spirit of might from before the Lord'.¹⁷

Armed with their lofty mission, the task of the prophets *vis-à-vis* the people is not only to bear divine messages but to act as the teachers of the people. Anachronistically, they are often depicted as סופרים (or singular, סופר), that is, scribes and elementary (Bible) teachers.¹⁸ They have to warn

Isa. 22.25: MT 'The burden that was upon it will be cut off'—*TJ* 'The burden of prophecy concerning him shall be null and void'; Jer. 23.33: MT 'What is the burden of the Lord?'—*TJ* 'What is the prophecy in the name of the Lord?'; 23.34, 36, 38: MT 'The burden of the Lord'—*TJ* 'A prophecy in the name of the Lord'; Hab. 1.1: MT 'The oracle (literally, burden) which Habakkuk, the prophet, saw'—*TJ* 'The burden of prophecy which Habakkuk, the prophet, prophesied'.

15. Cf. 2 Kgs 3.15; Ezek. 33.22; 37.1.

16. Cf. Isa. 11.15: MT 'With his mighty spirit (or scorching wind)'—*TJ* 'By the word of his prophets'; 63.16: MT 'His holy spirit'—*TJ* 'The word of his holy prophet'; Hag. 2.5: MT 'My spirit abides among you'—*TJ* 'My prophets are teaching among you'.

17. Cf. Judg. 6.34; 11.39; 13.25; 14.19; 15.14. Note also 16.20: 'the Lord had departed from him (Samson)'—*TJ* 'The might of the Lord had departed from him (Samson)'.

18. Cf. 1 Sam. 28.6: MT 'The Lord did not answer him...by prophets'—*TJ* 'The Lord did not accept his prayer...by teachers'; 28.15: MT 'God...no longer answers me...by prophets'—*TJ* 'The Memra of the Lord...no longer accepts my prayer...by teachers'; 29.10: MT 'Your heads, the seers'—*TJ* 'The teachers who taught you the instruction of the Torah'; 30.10: MT 'Who said...to the prophets "Do not prophesy to us what is right"'—*TJ* 'Who said...to the teachers, "Do not teach us the Torah"'; Jer. 18.18: MT 'The word (or oracle) from the prophet'—*TJ* 'instruction from the teacher'; 29.15: MT 'The Lord has raised up prophets for us'—*TJ* 'The Lord has raised up teachers for us'; Ezek. 22.25: MT 'Her gang (or conspiracy) of prophets'—*TJ* 'Her company (or band) of teachers'; 33.7: MT 'I have appointed (Ezekiel) a watchman for the house of Israel'—*TJ* 'I have appointed you a teacher for the house of Israel'; Hos. 2.7: MT 'For their mother has played the harlot; she that conceived them has acted shamelessly'—*TJ* 'For their congregation has gone astray after false prophets; their teachers are disgraced'. Note that הוורתם (she that conceived them) is connected by *TJ* with הוורתה (instruction). Cf. Zeph. 3.2: MT 'She (Jerusalem) has been disobedient and

the people against wrong doing and rebuke them for their sins.¹⁹ They are the eyes of the nation,²⁰ showing the people the right way,²¹ and saving them from their enemies.²² They pray for the people, especially in times of peril and war; speak in defense of the people, and perform good deeds for

has not accepted correction'—*TJ* 'She has not listened to the voice of his servants, the prophets, and she has not receive instruction'; Hag. 2.5: MT 'My spirit abides among you'—*TJ* 'My prophets teach among you'. Cf. also Isa. 6.8 where the divine question is raised as to who is to undertake the prophetic mission, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?', is interpreted by *TJ* as 'Whom shall I send to prophecy, and who will go to teach?'; 57.14: where the MT has 'Build up, build up, prepare the way' and *TJ* interprets it as a call to the prophets to 'teach and exhort (and) turn the way of the people to the right way'. Deutero-Isaiah's claim that 'The Lord God has given me a skilled tongue (literally, the tongue of those that are taught) to know how to speak timely words to him that is weary' (50.4) is given an unusual homiletical interpretation in *TJ*: 'The Lord God has given me the tongue of those that teach to let me know how to teach wisdom to the righteous ones who long (literally, faint) for the words of Torah'. Other passages where the MT has 'prophets' and *TJ* has 'scribe(s) include Jer. 6.13; 14.18; 23.11, 33, 34; Zech. 7.3. It is also noteworthy that 1 Sam. 10.12, 'And who is their (the prophets') father?', is rendered in *TJ*, 'And who is their master?' The original meaning that prophecy is not inherited is thus changed to a rendering more appropriate to the concept of the prophets being essentially teachers, so that the logical corollary would be to ask who is the master who taught them. According to Kimchi, *ad loc.*, the master is none other than God who teaches the prophets. In this connection it must be pointed out that the targumic transformation of 'prophets' into 'teachers' does not necessarily imply a downgrading of the prophets. See *b. B. Bat.* 12a, and n. 27, below.

19. Cf. Isa. 57.14: MT 'Build up, build up'—*TJ* 'Teach you and caution (or exhort)'; Jer. 1.17: MT 'Do not break down (or be dismayed) before them'—*TJ* 'Do not refrain from rebuking them'; Ezek. 16.2: MT 'Make known to Jerusalem...'—*TJ* 'Rebuke the inhabitants of Jerusalem'; 33.2, where the prophetic 'watchman' of the MT becomes 'one who warns' in *TJ*.

20. Cf. Isa. 29.10: MT 'The Lord...has shut your eyes, the prophets'—*TJ* 'The Lord...has hidden the prophets from you'. Since the context does not indicate that the prophets in question are false, *TJ* may also have been anxious to soften the implication of the verse that even true prophets can sometimes be spiritually blind. See also n. 37.

21. Cf. Isa. 57.14: MT 'Clear the road'—*TJ* 'Turn the heart of the people to the right way'; Jer. 6.27: MT 'Assay (or examine) their ways'—*TJ* 'Show them their ways'.

22. See 2 Sam. 22.17-18 (= Ps. 18.17-18), where the Psalmist describes how God 'reached from on high' and rescued him from his enemies. *TJ* renders the first part of v. 17, 'A mighty king who dwells in (his) stronghold on high (other versions: "in the highest heavens") sent his prophets'. The prophets are thus God's agents to deliver the Psalmist—and presumably those who share his religious ideals—from the surrounding foes.

the benefit of the people.²³ Sometimes a prophet would go so far as to mortify himself because of the sins of the people,²⁴ such self-abnegation being perhaps designed to make atonement for the people and thus avert, or at least reduce, divine retribution.²⁵ All in all, the prophets are like life-giving clouds for the nation.²⁶

Possibly with an eye to the relationship between the Palestinian Patriarchs and the scholars, the latter were regarded as the legitimate successors of the prophets and, indeed, as their superiors.²⁷ *TJ* indicates or at least implies that the prophet was not to be subjected to any secular authority.²⁸

23. See Ezek. 13.5: MT 'You [namely, the false prophets] have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel that it [or: they] might stand up in battle in the day of the Lord'—*TJ* 'You did not stand up in the gates, neither did you do good deeds for them by praying for the house of Israel, by arising to ask for mercy for them at a time when warriors [literally, those that do battle] came upon them, on the day of the Lord's anger'. This clearly implies that true prophets do all these things for the people.

24. See Amos 7.14: MT 'I (i.e. Amos) am a tender copse of sycamore trees'—*TJ* 'I have sycamore trees in the Shephelah (i.e. the lowlands between the mountains and the coastal plain). Because of the sins of my people (other versions: "the people of Israel") I am afflicting myself'. The targumic reference to sycamore trees in the Shephelah is no doubt due to the well-recorded abundance of sycamore trees in that region (1 Kgs 10.27 = 2 Chron. 9.27; see also 1 Chron. 27.28) as well as to the fact that Tekoa, Amos' birthplace is too high in altitude for sycamores to be grown there; see further T.K. Cheyne, 'Amos', in *EncBib*, I, 1899, and 'Sycamore', in *IDB*, IV, p. 471; W.R. Harper, *Amos and Hosea* (ICC, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), p. 172; R.S. Cripps, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edn, 1955), pp. 234ff.; E. Hammershaimb, *The Book of Amos: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 118.

25. The Targumist may have had the example of R. Zadok in mind who was said to have fasted for 40 years to prevent the destruction of Jerusalem, a calamity which he foresaw but could not avert; see *b. Git.* 56a.

26. See Isa. 5.6: MT '...I will command the clouds to drop no rain on it'—*TJ* '...I will command the prophets that they should not utter (literally, prophesy) a prophecy concerning them'. For a simile comparable to the metaphor in our verse, see Deut. 32.2: 'May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew'.

27. See *b. B. Bat.* 12a: 'R. Abdimi from Haifa said: "Since the day when the Temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to the sages". Is then a sage not a prophet (as well)? This is what he meant: Although it has been taken from the prophets, it has not been taken from the sages. Amemar said: "A sage is superior to a prophet".'

28. See 1 Sam. 1.11: MT 'No razor shall touch his head'—*TJ* 'The fear of man shall not be upon him'). While *TJ*'s rendering may have been suggested by the etymology

On the contrary, all the people were expected to consult and obey the prophet,²⁹ and provide him with the gifts properly due to him.³⁰ This may be a reflection of the claims of the talmudic sages for public support.³¹ The

and, indeed, the identical sound of the Hebrew words, מורדה ('razor'), and מורא ('fear'), it should be noted that the same phrase in Judg. 13.5, is rendered literally in *TJ*. There are sound reasons for this difference in translating an identical phrase in different contexts. In Judg. 13.5 the allusion is to Samson who was certainly no prophet, and hence subject—at least in theory—to the authority of prophets and sages. Since he was expected to 'fear', that is, 'revere', the prophets and sages, it could not be said of him that 'the fear of man shall not be upon him'. In 1 Sam. 1.11, the reference is to Samuel who was indeed fearless of secular authority which he repeatedly defied (see, e.g., 1 Sam. 13.13; 15.17-29; 17.1ff.). Note also that Samuel was raised above ordinary prophets to the level of Moses and Aaron; see Ps. 99.6; Jer. 15.1; *Sifra* on Lev. 9.7 (Weiss edition), 43b; *b. Ber.* 31b; *b. Ta'an.* 5b; *y. Hag.* 11.1, 77a; *Tanh.* 13, 13.

29. See Isa. 30.1: MT '(Woe to the rebellious children)... who are weaving schemes against my will (literally, but not of my spirit)'—*TJ* '... Who take counsel but do not consult my prophets'; Isa. 30.2: MT 'They do not ask of my counsel (literally, inquire of my mouth)'—*TJ* 'They do not consult the words of my prophets'; Isa. 50.10: MT '...obeying (or: heeding) the voice of his servant'—*TJ* '...that obeys the voice of his servants, the prophets'; Zeph. 3.2: MT 'She (i.e. Jerusalem) has been disobedient'—*TJ* 'She has not listened to (or: heeded) the voice of his servants, the prophets'; 1 Sam. 15.23: MT 'Defiance (or stubbornness) is as iniquity and idolatry (literally, teraphim)'—*TJ* 'like the sins of the people who go astray after idols, so is the sin of every man who diminishes from, or adds to, the words of the prophets'). Note that in *TJ* prophetic instruction is given equal weight to that of Moses whose divine message was not to be added to or diminished; see Deut. 4.2; 13.1.

30. See 1 Sam. 9.7: MT 'There is no present to bring to the man of God (i.e. Samuel)'—*TJ* 'There is nothing that is fit to bring to the prophet of the Lord'. *TJ* does not accept the simple meaning of the text, namely, that Saul did not have money or an object of value to pay 'the man of God' (correctly understood by *TJ* as being not merely a saintly man, but as equivalent to 'the prophet of the Lord'). According to *TJ*, what Saul meant was that he did not have a reasonably valuable gift fit for a prophet. From this it should not be inferred that the Targumist did not share the biblical view that prophets must not abuse their prophetic gift for personal profit (see, e.g., Ezek. 13.18ff; Mic. 3.5, 11). Rather, *TJ* implies that, irrespective of the prophet's self-denial, it was the obligation of those who consulted him to demonstrate their appreciation and gratitude by donating a present suitable for a great prophet. More important, however, was the contemporary inference that scholars, who were the successors of the prophets and superior to them (see n. 27), were entitled to claim communal support. See n. 31, below.

31. See *b. Ber.* 34b; *b. Sanh.* 99a: 'R. Hiyya bar Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: "All the prophets prophesied (i.e. their predictions of consolation and a glorious future) only with reference to one who gives his daughter in marriage to a scholar

superior respect to be accorded to the prophet did not imply the bestowal of anything resembling divine honors³² on someone who in the last resort was no more than a servant of God.³³ The visions granted to the prophet are not visions of God (even if the biblical text might support such a view), only of prophecy.³⁴ At all times the proper difference between God and his prophet must be given due emphasis.³⁵

On the other hand, the respect and honor in which the prophet was held required the omission of any derogatory reference to the prophet. Prophetic

or who conducts his business on behalf of a scholar (i.e. allows him to share in his business as a silent partner) or benefits a scholar from his estate"; *b. Ket.* 111b: 'Whoever gives his daughter in marriage to a scholar or who conducts business on behalf of a scholar or benefits scholars from his estate, to him it is accounted by Scripture as if he had cleaved to the divine presence'; *b. Ber.* 63b: '...Is this not an a fortiori argument?... How much more will it be (a blessing) for one who entertains a scholar in his house and gives him to eat and drink and benefits him with his possessions'; *b. Yoma* 72b: 'The fellow townsmen of a scholar are in duty bound to do his work for him'; *b. Šab.* 114a: 'R. Johanan said: "Who is a scholar whose work it is the duty of his fellow townsmen to perform? He who abandons his own affairs and occupies himself with religious affairs"; *b. Pes.* 53b: 'Whoever casts merchandise into the pockets of scholars (i.e. provides them with business opportunities) will be privileged to sit in the heavenly academy; *b. Ket.* 105b: 'Whoever brings a gift to a scholar, it is as if he had offered first-fruits (i.e. to a priest; see Exod. 23.19; 34.26; Num. 18.13; Deut. 26.1-12)'; *b. Ned.* 62a: 'Just as a priest receives (i.e. his portion) first, so, too, does a scholar'; *b. Sanh.* 92a: 'Whoever does not benefit scholars from his estate will never see a sign of blessing'.

32. See 1 Sam. 15.24: MT 'I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandments of the Lord and your instructions (literally, words)'—*TJ* 'I have sinned, for I have transgressed the Memra (literally, word) of the Lord and treated your word(s) with contempt'. It is noteworthy that the same distinction between God and the prophet is observed in *Targum Onqelos* on Exod. 14.31: MT 'They believed in the Lord and in his servant, Moses'—*TJ* 'They believed in the Memra (word) of the Lord and in the prophecy of his servant, Moses'.

33. See Isa. 50.10: MT 'Who among you fears the Lord and heeds (obeys) the voice of his servant?'—*TJ* 'Who is there among you, of those who fear the Lord, that has heeded (obeyed) the voice of his servants, the prophets?'. *TJ* first avoids the loaded question, 'Who among you fears the Lord?' implying as it does that some do not fear the Lord. While this may be true enough, it is derogatory to the honor and glory of God to put a question which might result in near-blasphemous responses. Second, *TJ* identifies the servants of God with the prophets who are indeed to be obeyed, but only in their capacity as God's servants, not because of any independent merits.

34. See Ezek. 8.3: MT '...in visions of God'—*TJ* '...in a vision of prophecy which rested upon me from before the Lord'.

35. See n. 32, above.

‘madness’, even when stated or implied in the Bible, is regarded by *TJ* as a contradiction in terms. The genuine prophet is neither mad nor foolish nor does he represent falsehood or evil³⁶ or spiritual blindness.³⁷ On the other hand, a ‘prophet’ whose claims are fraudulent is clearly defined as false, and *TJ* is extremely careful to draw an unequivocal distinction between true and false prophets. Even where the biblical text does not explicitly denounce certain ‘prophets’, they are invariably referred to as ‘false’ in *TJ*,³⁸ with evil attributes neither mentioned nor implied in the MT.³⁹

36. See 1 Sam. 18.10: MT ‘He (i.e. Saul) raved (וַיִּהְיֶה) within his house’—*TJ* ‘He behaved like a madman within his house’. Since it was ‘an evil spirit from God’ which caused Saul to behave as he did, he could not be depicted as ‘prophesying’, even if it were granted that he was occasionally endowed with prophetic charisma; see nn. 71 and 72, below. See also Jer. 29.26: MT ‘...over every madman who prophesies (or: who wants to play the prophet—מְהַנְבֵּא)’—*TJ* ‘...over every man who lets himself go (or: who leads himself into error) and behaves like a madman’. Significantly, in the following verse (27), where Jeremiah is described as מְהַנְבֵּא, *TJ* renders literally מְהַנְבֵּא (who prophesies). A similar distinction is observed in *TJ* on Hos. 9.7 (MT ‘The prophet is a fool, the man of spirit is mad’—*TJ* ‘True prophets were prophesying to them, and false prophets were stupefying them (or: making them dull)’. Similarly, in 1 Kgs 18.29, the prophets of Baal, according to the MT ‘prophesied’ (or ‘raved’, וַיִּהְיֶה) on Mt Carmel. *TJ*, however, presents them as behaving like mad men (אִישׁ תְּבוּרִיָּא). See also 1 Kgs 18.26: MT ‘They (i.e. the prophets of Baal) limped (or: performed a hopping dance) about the altar’—*TJ* ‘They behaved like madmen upon the idolatrous altar’. By way of contrast, in Num. 11.25-27, where the same Hebrew verb (וַיִּהְיֶה) is used in the MT with reference to the elders chosen by Moses and, especially, to Eldad and Medad, the *Targum Onqelos* renders literally, ‘prophesied’; for they were regarded as giving expression to a genuine prophetic spirit. See also Ezek. 13.2, where the MT ‘the prophets of Israel who prophesy’ is rendered (in Sperber’s preferred *TJ* text) ‘The false prophets of Israel who behave like madmen (דְּמַשְׁתַּנְנִי)’. Most MSS, however, render literally (דְּמַהַנְבֵּא).

37. See Isa. 29.10: MT ‘For the Lord has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has shut your eyes, the prophets’—*TJ* ‘For the Lord has cast among you a spirit of error, and has hidden the prophets from you’. It should be noted that in *TJ* it is not the prophets whose eyes are closed to the truth, but the people who are afflicted with the spirit of error, so that the true prophets are hidden from them. See n. 20, above.

38. There is a large number of instances, too many to be cited in full, in which the ‘prophets’ of the MT become ‘false prophets’ in *TJ*. See, e.g., 1 Kgs 18.20; 22.6, 10, 12, 13; Jer. 5.13; 8.1; 23.15, 16, 21, 25, 26, 30, 31; 27.9, 14-16; 37.19; Ezek. 13.2-4, 16; 14.10; Zech. 13.2, 4. It is noteworthy that ‘lying words’ in the MT (Jer. 7.4, 8) are identified in *TJ* as ‘the words of false prophets’. See also Jer. 23.17: MT ‘They say continually to those who despise me...’—*TJ* ‘They (i.e. the false prophets) say by their false (or: lying) prophecy to those who cause anger before me...’; 23.27: MT ‘by their

According to *TJ*, false prophets are impudent in expecting their bare-faced lies and false predictions to be fulfilled.⁴⁰ They are inherently evil⁴¹ and guilty of making innocent people seem false.⁴² They have no magic power over the life and death of the people,⁴³ and their prophecies, which lack all validity, are always false and will not be fulfilled.⁴⁴ Moreover, they shall be punished for their lying prophecies.⁴⁵ Finally, false prophets are compared to unfaithful 'lovers',⁴⁶ possibly an allusion to sectarian

dreams'—*TJ* 'by their lies'. Here, too, the context clearly shows that the reference is to false prophets; but *TJ* makes sure that there should be no possible misunderstanding.

39. *TJ*'s persistently uncomplimentary description of biblical 'prophets' who aroused the ire of the canonical prophets may have been directed against sectarian-Christian neo-prophetic propaganda (see, e.g., Acts 2.1-4; 4.31) and, in particular, the prophetic claims made for Jesus. Since the Christians regarded Jesus not only as the greatest of the prophets, but as the ultimate fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy (see, e.g., Mt. 1.22ff.; 2.14ff., 23; 4.14-16; 8.14-17; 12.15-21; 13.34ff.; 21.1-5; 26.56; Lk. 4.16-21; 24.44; Jn 12.38-41; 13.18; 15.25; 18.8ff.; 19.23ff., 36; Acts 3.18), synagogue audiences, to whom *TJ* was primarily addressed, had to be warned to distinguish between the true prophets of the Hebrew Bible and those who merely pretended to be prophets.

40. See Ezek. 13.6: MT 'They expected [or: hoped] their word to be fulfilled'—*TJ* 'They have the impudence [to say or expect] that their word will be fulfilled'.

41. See Jer. 23.21: MT 'I did not send the prophets, yet they ran'—*TJ* 'I did not send the false prophets, yet they ran to do evil'. In Zeph. 3.4: MT 'Her prophets are reckless'—*TJ* 'The false prophets that are within her are evil'.

42. See Ezek. 13.22: MT 'Because you have cowed (or: distressed) the hart of the righteous one with lies. . . . '—*TJ* 'Because you have saddened (or: denounced) the heart of the innocent to be false. . . . '

43. See Ezek. 13.18: MT 'Will (or: can) you hunt down lives among my people while you keep alive your own persons (or: while you preserve your own lives)?'—*TJ* 'Can you destroy or preserve the lives of my people? Surely you cannot preserve your own lives!'. Ezek. 13.19: MT 'Announcing the death of persons who will not die, and the survival of persons who will not live. . . . '—*TJ* 'Putting to death persons for whom it is not fitting that they should die, it is not you who are putting to death, and keeping alive persons for whom it is not fitting that they should be preserved, it is not you who are keeping alive. . . . '

44. See Jer. 5.13: MT 'The prophets shall be mere wind; the word is not in them. Thus shall it be done to them!'—*TJ* 'The false prophets shall become nothing, and their lying prophecy shall not be fulfilled. This punishment shall be wrought upon them'.

45. See n. 44, above.

46. See Hos. 2.7: MT 'For their mother has played the harlot'—*TJ* 'For their congregation has gone astray after false prophets'.

Christian blandishments urging Jews to 'go astray' and follow the new dispensation.

Biblical personalities regarded by the rabbis as prophets are accorded prophetic titles in *TJ*. For instance, Elkanah, Samuel's father, is described in *TJ* on 1 Sam. 1.1 as one 'of the disciples of the prophets',⁴⁷ which agrees with the rabbinic view that Elkanah was endowed with the spirit of prophecy,⁴⁸ though *TJ* evidently does not consider him in the same class as a full-fledged prophet.⁴⁹ King David, who is acknowledged in both the Jerusalem and the Babylonian talmudim to have been one of the *Nevi'im* Rishonim (Former Prophets),⁵⁰ is also depicted as a prophet in *TJ*. Thus, where in 2 Sam. 22.1 the MT reads, 'David spoke unto the Lord...', *TJ* renders it, 'David praised by prophecy before the Lord...' Similarly, in 1 Sam. 16.13 the MT has 'The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David', while in *TJ* this becomes, 'The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord rested upon David'.⁵¹

Even King Solomon, whose hedonistic lifestyle and tolerance of idolatry⁵² hardly marked him as a prophetic figure, is recognized in *TJ* as a

47. See 1 Sam. 10.10ff.; 19.23ff. *TJ*'s interpretation is based upon 'Ramathaim-zophim' in the MT (see 1.1), the name of Elkanah's home town (or native village), which is homiletically interpreted, in *b. Meg.* 14a to mean 'one of two hundred (רמאתים) prophets' (צופים), literally, 'watchers', 'seers'; on the prophet as watchman, see Ezek. 3.17; 33.7). *TJ* is in general agreement with this Aggadic interpretation. See also *Seder 'Olam* 20 and 21. It is noteworthy, though, that *TJ* reduces the צופים to the rank of 'disciples of the prophets'; in contrast to 1 Sam. 9.5, where the MT 'in the land of Zuph' is rendered by *TJ* as 'in the land wherein there is a prophet'. The difference was probably due to the fact that Elkanah, about whose prophetic activity (if any) nothing is known, was considered to have been at most a minor league prophet, not comparable to the major prophets of the Hebrew Bible.

48. See n. 47, above.

49. See n. 47, above.

50. See *y. Šot.* 9.14, 24b; *b. Šot.* 48b. See also *m. Tannaim* 10.

51. There is, to be sure, another version, preferred by Sperber, which replaces 'the spirit of prophecy' with 'the spirit of might'. If this is authentic, it would indicate that David's prophetic status was not universally acknowledged. It is, however, likely that we have here a case of reversed dittography; for in the following verse (16.14) the MT, 'The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul' is rendered in *TJ* 'The spirit of might from before the Lord that had been with Saul departed from him'. Somehow, in one MS, this rendering seems to have been transposed to the previous verse.

52. So according to rabbinic attempts to exculpate Solomon from the charge made in 1 Kgs 11.5ff. and 2 Kgs 23.13 that he promoted and followed the cults of Ashtoreth, Milcom, and other foreign deities. That the reputed author of three books of the sacred

prophet,⁵³ no doubt because of the two divine revelations granted to him.⁵⁴ Despite severe rabbinic criticism of Solomon,⁵⁵ he was recognized as a prophet endowed with the 'holy spirit'.⁵⁶ There were also so-called prophets whose legitimacy as recipients of divine revelation was doubtful. Such were the anonymous 'old prophet' of Bethel;⁵⁷ Baruch, Jeremiah's disciple and secretary; and Hananiah, son of Azur, who falsely predicted liberation from Nebuchadnezzar's yoke.⁵⁸

The 'old prophet' of Bethel is three times described in *TJ* as a 'false prophet', where the Masoretes have merely 'prophet'.⁵⁹ Yet, when God conveys a message of doom to the anonymous prophet from Judah through the 'false prophet' from Bethel, *TJ* relents and depicts him as a genuine prophet who is indeed the recipient of 'a word of prophecy from before the Lord', and who correctly 'prophesied' the divine message.⁶⁰ The paradox of a manifestly lying 'prophet' receiving a prophetic message from God evidently aroused the concern of the rabbis; for they attributed the unprecedented 'prophetic spirit' manifesting itself through a 'prophet of Baal' (which is what the prophet of Bethel is assumed to have been) to the

scriptures, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes, should have been an idolater was more than the rabbis were able to swallow. Accordingly, Solomon's offense was reduced to having failed to restrain his wives from pursuing idolatrous cults. This was accounted to him as if he himself had participated in such reprehensible practices. See *b. Šab.* 56b.

53. See 1 Kgs 5.13: MT 'He discoursed about trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of a wall, and he discoursed about beasts...'—*TJ* 'He prophesied concerning the kings of the house of David who were in future to rule in this world, and he prophesied concerning beasts...'; 6.11: MT 'The word of the Lord came to Solomon'—*TJ* 'The word of prophecy from before the Lord was with Solomon'.

54. See 1 Kgs 3.5-14; 9.2-9; 11.9.

55. See, e.g., *b. Šab.* 56b; *b. Sanh.* 21b; 70b; 101b; *Lev. R.* 12.5; *Num. R.* 10.4; *Ecccl. R.* 1.1.2; *Midrash Mishle* on Prov. 32.1ff. (Buber edition, pp. 107ff.).

56. See *b. Šot.* 48b; *Cant. R.* 1.1, 5-9; *Ecccl. R.* 1.1.1-2.

57. See 1 Kgs 13.11-32.

58. See Jer. 28.1ff.

59. See 1 Kgs 13.11, 25, 29.

60. See 1 Kgs 12.20-21: MT 'The word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back, and he cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah'—*TJ* 'A word of prophecy from before the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back, and he prophesied concerning the prophet of the Lord who had come from the tribe of Judah'.

hospitality he had displayed toward the prophet from Judah.⁶¹ 'Great is the importance of a little refreshment (given to wayfarers) since it... causes the divine presence to rest (even) upon the prophets of Baal'.⁶² *TJ* and the rabbinic tradition are thus in essential agreement that the old prophet of Bethel, though he was a liar and even, according to the rabbis, an idolater, was nevertheless rewarded for his hospitality with a genuine divine message.

Jeremiah's disciple, Baruch, was, according to *TJ*, unable to obtain the gift of prophecy. Thus, on Jer. 45.3, where Baruch laments, 'I have found no rest', *TJ* has 'I have found no prophecy'. While this agrees with the *Mekilta*,⁶³ other rabbinic sources include not only Baruch but also his father Neriah, as well as other relatives of Baruch, among the prophets.⁶⁴ Another of Jeremiah's contemporaries, Hananiah, son of Azzur, is depicted in *TJ* as a 'false prophet' no less than six times, where the MT simply describes him as a prophet.⁶⁵ The predominant rabbinic view, represented by Rabbi Akiba, was that Hananiah had originally been a true prophet, but had eventually degenerated into a false one.⁶⁶ The first-generation Amora, Rabbi Joshua, son of Levi, went even further in rehabilitating Hananiah by claiming that he had been a true prophet who, in the episode related in Jeremiah 28, happened to suffer an 'intermission' or temporary loss of prophetic revelation.⁶⁷

Of special interest is *TJ*'s description of Hananiah's death as mentioned in Jer. 28.16-17. The Masoretes report, without comment, that Jeremiah

61. See I Kgs 13.13-19.

62. See *b. Sanh.* 103b-104a.

63. *Mekilta* on Exod. 12.1 (Lauterback edition, I, p. 14). There Baruch is represented as complaining bitterly about the discriminatory treatment accorded him: 'Why have I been treated differently from other disciples of the prophets? I am weary with my groaning and I have found no rest' (Jer. 45.3). 'Rest' here is but a designation of prophecy...

64. See *Seder 'Olam* 20; *Sifre Num.* 78 (Horovitz edition, p. 74); *Sifre Zuta* on Num. 10.29 (Horovitz edition, p. 263). See also L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), VI, p. 411 n. 65.

65. See Jer. 28.1, 5, 10, 12, 15, 17.

66. See *Sifre Deut.* 84; *b. Sanh.* 90a.

67. See *y. Sanh.* 9.7, 30b. It should be borne in mind that R. Joshua, son of Levi, was a mystic and patriot who (as seems clear from the tendency of the story) bitterly regretted having advised a Jewish anti-Roman rebel to surrender to the Romans in order to save the Jewish community of Lod from destruction; see *y. Ter.* 8.10, 45b; *Gen. R.* 94.9 to the end.

told Hananiah, 'You shall die this year...and the prophet Hananiah died that year in the seventh month'. The targum renders this as follows: 'You shall die this year, and you shall be buried in the following year... And the false prophet Hananiah died that year and was buried in the seventh month'. This targumic interpretation can be understood only with the aid of a passage in the *Jerusalem Talmud*, according to which Hananiah died on Rosh Hashanah, so that Jeremiah's prediction that he would die 'this year' was fulfilled. However, prior to his death, Hananiah, wishing to discredit Jeremiah, had asked his sons to conceal the news of his passing and to have him buried only after Rosh Hashanah in the month of Tishri (the seventh month, counting the months from Nisan). In this way he hoped to have a posthumous revenge on Jeremiah whose prediction that Hananiah would die 'this year' would ostensibly appear to have been inaccurate.⁶⁸ The targum, reflecting this legendary tradition, accordingly renders the passage in such a way as to present the precise fulfillment of Jeremiah's prediction.

A particularly complicated problem was that of King Saul who, in the rabbinic tradition, is never listed among the prophets,⁶⁹ but is accorded somewhat ambivalent treatment in the targum, probably because in the Bible Saul is described as 'prophesying'.⁷⁰ Moreover, the question, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?',⁷¹ is, in the context, implicitly given a positive response.⁷² 1 Samuel 10.10, where the MT reads, 'The spirit of God came mightily upon him (Saul)' is rendered by the targum, 'The spirit of prophecy from before the Lord rested upon him'. Nonetheless, as if to balance this concession, *TJ* immediately reverses itself and translates the end of the same verse (MT '...and he prophesied among them'), '...and he praised among them'.⁷³ The same ambivalence is repeated in 1 Sam. 19.23, where

68. See *y. Sanh.* 11.7, 30b. Prophets were expected not only to make generally true prophecies, but to be one hundred percent accurate in their predictions; see *b. Ber.* 3b-4a.

69. Only in *Pseudo-Jerome*, 1 Sam. 10.6 and *Pseudo-Philo* 57, 62.2, is Saul credited with prophetic gifts; cf. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, IV, p. 232 n. 54 and p. 269 n. 113.

70. See 1 Sam. 10.10ff.; 19.23ff.

71. 1 Sam. 10.11ff.; 19.24.

72. See 1 Sam. 10.12: 'And who is their father?' This evidently means that other prophets are not of prophetic descent either, so that Saul's prophetic ecstasy was nothing to be surprised about.

73. So also 1 Sam. 10.11 where MT 'he prophesied' is rendered 'he praised' in *TJ*.

the MT reads: 'The spirit of God came upon him (Saul) also, and as he went he prophesied'. In the targum this becomes, 'On him also the spirit of prophecy from before the Lord rested, and as he went he praised'.

This trend, denying in effect that Saul could have been a prophet, is given added emphasis in *TJ*'s rendering of the question, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?'⁷⁴ There the 'prophets' become 'Sifraya', that is, scribes or teachers, implying on the one hand that the 'prophets' or prophetic disciples among whom Saul was numbered were really scribes or teachers, not necessarily inspired prophets, and, on the other, that Saul himself was not a prophet (biblical evidence to the contrary notwithstanding). Elsewhere we also find in *TJ* a strong tendency to deny Saul any prophetic powers. Thus, in 1 Sam. 11.6, the Masorettes have 'The spirit of God came mightily upon Saul', while the targum translates it, 'The spirit of might⁷⁵ from before the Lord rested upon Saul'; comparably, in 1 Sam. 16.14 in MT 'The spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul' becomes 'The spirit of might from before the Lord that had been with Saul departed from him'.

Once Saul was afflicted by 'an evil spirit from God',⁷⁶ so ויִהְיֶה נָבִיא (literally, 'he prophesied'; better, 'he raved') inevitably became ויִהְיֶה נָבִיא ('he behaved like a madman').⁷⁷ With the divine spirit having departed from Saul, and only an evil spirit sent by God to torture the rejected king, his ecstatic raving could no longer be regarded as having anything in common with prophecy.⁷⁸

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that the targum, representing as it does a patriotic Palestinian tradition, considers prophecy to be the prerogative of the Holy Land. Where it, nevertheless, occurs in other countries, it is

74. See n. 71, above.

75. Only one version listed in Sperber's edition has 'prophecy' instead of 'might'.

76. 1 Sam. 18.10.

77. Similarly, in Ezek. 13.2: MT 'The prophets of Israel who prophesy'—*TJ* 'the false prophets of Israel who behave madmen' (this is Sperber's preferred text; most MSS, however, read דַּמְתוּבָּן, 'who prophesy'). Likewise also in Ezek. 13.3, where MT has הַנְּבִיאִים הַנְּבִילִים ('the foolish [or: degenerate] prophets'), *TJ* renders, 'The false prophets who behave like madmen'.

78. *TJ* is, however, not very consistent; for, as we have seen in 1 Sam. 19.23, *TJ* has once again, though in a different context, 'the spirit of prophecy from before the Lord' resting upon Saul.

merely a continuation of a prophetic revelation which began in the land of Israel.⁷⁹ It is this concept that prophecy is limited to *Eretz Israel* which underlies the targum's interpretation of Jonah's flight from God. Since the very thought of trying to escape from divine proficiency was manifestly absurd, the targum explains Jonah's attempted flight as having been designed to escape from 'prophesying in the name of the Lord'.⁸⁰ Jonah's idea was therefore that once he was outside the Holy Land prophecy would be impossible because divine revelation was confined to the Holy Land. That Jonah had intended to flee not from God but from the 'land of prophecy' is also the accepted rabbinic view.⁸¹

It is noteworthy that, according to the Midrash,⁸² Jonah was called a 'false prophet' because his prediction that Nineveh would be destroyed was not fulfilled owing to God's compassion for his people. It was probably

79. See Ezek. 1.3: MT 'The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel...in the land of the Chaldeans'—*TJ* 'The word of prophecy from before the Lord had [already] come to Ezekiel...in the land of Israel. It returned a second time...in a province [or: city] of the land of the Chaldeans'). See also Jer. 29.15: MT 'The Lord has raised prophets for us in Babylon'—*TJ* 'The Lord has raised teachers for us in Babylon'. It is thus implied that prophets cannot arise in Babylonia or, for that matter, anywhere outside 'the land of prophecy'. The rabbis concurred with the view that 'the divine presence does not reveal itself outside the Land (of Israel)' (*Mekilta* on Exod. 12.1 [Lauterbach edition], I, pp. 6-7); unless the prophet had already received a divine revelation in the Holy Land. See *b. M. Qat.* 25a, where we are told that the Babylonian Amora, Rab. Huna, had been worthy that the divine presence should abide with him; only his living in Babylonia had prevented it.

The idea that all the prophets, irrespective of their origin or place of residence, had prophesied concerning Jerusalem is implied in *TJ* on Isa. 22.1 (MT 'The oracle concerning the valley of vision'—*TJ* 'The oracle of prophecy concerning the city that dwells in the valley about which the prophets have prophesied'). In the Midrash, *Lam. R.* Proem 24 (beginning), it is explicitly stated that it is 'a valley about which all the "seers" prophesied; a valley from which all the "seers" originated'.

The paradox that some prophets, including Moses, had in fact prophesied exclusively in the Diaspora is discussed by Yehuda Halevi in his *Kozari* (11.13-14 [trans. Y. Even Shmuel; Tel Aviv: n.p., 1972], pp. 53ff.), where the view is expressed that 'Whoever prophesied did so only in the Land (of Israel) or for its sake'.

80. See Jon. 1.3: MT 'to flee...from the presence of the Lord'—*TJ* 'to flee...from [before] prophesying in the name of the Lord'. Similarly, Jon. 1.10: MT 'He was fleeing from the presence of the Lord'—*TJ* 'He was fleeing from prophesying in the name of the Lord'.

81. See *Mekilta*, *ibid.*

82. *Tanhuma* נחמיה, 8.

to counter such views that the *Jerusalem Talmud* states unequivocally that 'Jonah was a true prophet'.⁸³ No such affirmations or even allusions regarding Jonah's prophetic status are to be found in *TJ* on the book of Jonah. There his being a true, though wayward, prophet is taken for granted.

83. See *y. Sanh.* 11.7, 30b.

ISRAELITES, JUDEANS AND IRANIANS IN MESOPOTAMIA
AND ADJACENT REGIONS*

Ran Zadok

The purpose of this paper is to update the documentation on Israelites and Judeans in pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia and to assess the Iranian presence in Babylonia as a possible source of interrelationship between the Iranians and the Judeans there. The ever-increasing corpus of cuneiform documents enables us to evaluate and to some extent quantify the prosopographical evidence.

1. *More Documentation on Israelites and Judeans in Assyria*

Most of the Israelites/Judeans in Assyria (between 720 and 600 BCE), that is, 50 out of 68 (73.52%), are recorded in Assyria proper (with various degrees of plausibility). The remainder (18 = 26.47%) are contained in

* Abbreviations as in A.L. Oppenheim *et al.* (eds.), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago-Glückstadt, 1956–), unless otherwise indicated: PNA 1 = K. Radner, S. Parpola, and R.M. Whiting, (eds.), *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. I. A–G* (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki, 1998–99); PNA 2 = H.D. Baker, S. Parpola and R.M. Whiting (eds.), *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. II. H–N* (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki, 2000–2001); RECA = *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie der Klassischen Altertümer* (Stuttgart, 1893–). Non-bibliographical abbreviations are atyp. = atypical, d. = daughter, desc. = descendant, OInd = Old Indian, OIran = Old Iranian, MT = Masoretic Text, s. = son, OPers = Old Persian, and WSem = West Semitic. All the asterisked forms are Old Iranian unless otherwise stated. The months are the Babylonian ones. I should like to thank the Trustees of the British Museum and Mr C.B.F. Walker for permission to quote from unpublished BM tablets and to consult the Bertin copies, as well as Professors P. Steinkeller, S. Cole and P.-A. Beaulieu and the Harvard Semitic Museum for permission to quote from unpublished HSM tablets. Dr Mimi Bowling, curator, Manuscripts and Archives Division, the New York Public Library, kindly allowed me to quote unpublished tablets, for which I am very thankful.

documents from the Habur region or near it (see R. Zadok, *The Earliest Diaspora: Israelites and Judeans in Pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia* [Tel Aviv: Diaspora Research Institute 2001], pp. 20-26). There is no doubt that this ratio is due to the nature of the Neo-Assyrian documentation which originates mostly from the urban centres of Assyria proper. To the 23 Israelites/Judeans, who are recorded in documents from Calah, one may add the queens (sg. *ša ekalli* or *issi ekalli*, MUNUS.É.GAL)^f*Ia-ba-a* (wife of Tiglath-Pileser III) and ^f*A-ta-li-a* / ^f*A-tal-ia-a* (wife of Sargon II), who are buried together in Calah/Nimrūd (A. Kamil, 'Inscriptions on Objects from Yaba's Tomb in Nimrud', *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums* 45 [1998 <1999>] 16-18.6 and 7 respectively; cf. K. Radner, 'Atalia', PNA 1.433). Their names are definitely West Semitic. Regarding their specific ethnic affiliation, S. Dalley, 'Yabâ, Atalyâ and the Foreign Policy of Late Assyrian Kings', *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 12 (1998), pp. 83-98, argues that both were of Judean extraction without overlooking the possibility that ^f*Ia-ba-a* can be homonymous with ^f*Ia-PA*², queen of ʿIhrāni in Bāzu (eastern Arabia, time of Esarhaddon, R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Assarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien* [AfO, 9; Graz: Weidner's Selbstverlag, 1956], p. 56, iv, 64). ^f*A-ta-li-a* / ^f*A-tal-ia-a*, which is the same name as MT *ʿtlyh(w)/LXX Γοθολια*, has no homonym in Arabian, but '-T-L and to a lesser degree '-Ṭ-L are productive in the Arabian onomasticon (cf. G.L. Harding, *An Index and Concordance of Pre-Islamic Arabian Names and Inscriptions* [Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1971], pp. 405 and 407, respectively), in which case the ending may be the same as that of ^f*A-d/ṭi-ia-a*, queen of Arubu and wife of Uayte' (time of Ashurbanipal, see M. Weippert, 'Die Kämpfe des assyrischen Königs Assurbanipal gegen die Araber', *WO* 7 [1973], p. 42 n. 17; cf. I. Eph'al, *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Borders of the Fertile Crescent 9th–5th Centuries B.C.* [Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982], pp. 143, 152-53). At least one letter may refer to Israelites in the Habur region: *A-ri-hi*, an official based in Laqê, asks Nabû-dūra-ušur whether to tax the grain of the Samaritans (S. Parpola, *The Correspondence of Sargon II. I. Letters from Assyria and the West* [Helsinki: Helsinki University, 1987], p. 220, 2, time of Sargon II). Eph'al, "'The Samaritan(s)" in the Assyrian Sources', in M. Cogan and I. Eph'al (eds.), *Ah Assyria: Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor* (Scripta Hierosolymitana, 33; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1991), pp. 44-45, cautiously assumes that 'Samaritans' here refer to deported Israelites rather than inhabitants of the province of Samaria. The ethnic affiliation of neither *A-ri-hu*, a bodyguard (qurbūtu) from the court of Nineveh (some-

time after Ashurbanipal's reign; his estate was handed over to the princess of the New Palace, F.M. Fales and J.N. Postgate, *Imperial Administrative Records*, II (SAA, 11; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995], p. 221, r. 17), nor Šarru-lū-dāri son of *A-ri-hi* (probably from Nineveh, date lost; responsible for three farmers from Saqamānu, F.M. Fales and J.N. Postgate, *Imperial Administrative Records*, I, (SAA, 7; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1992], p. 30 r. ii, 10) is known (cf. Ph. Talon, 'Arihu', PNA 1.131a; for homonymous individuals in N/LB see below, 4). The name is apparently related (if not identical) to 'rh in 1 Chron. 7.39, which is rendered as Ορεχ in the LXX whereas the occurrences in the earlier Census List are rendered as Αρες, Ηράμ, cf. R. Zadok, *The Pre-Hellenistic Israelite Anthroponymy and Prosopography* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 28; Leuven: Peeters Press, 1988), p. 70 with n. 120 and Ph. Talon, 'Arhê', PNA 1.130a, s.v. Arhê who rejects the Akkadian derivation of K.L. Tallqvist, *Assyrian Personal Names* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1914], p. 28a). N/LB fAr-ha-' may be linguistically related (principal Marduk-šākin-zēri s. of Taqīš-Gula desc. of Nūr-Sîn; Babylon, -.XII'.13' (?) Nbk. II, i.e. perhaps 592/1 BCE; G. Contenau, *Contrats néo-babyloniens*, I (TCL, 12; Paris: Geuthner, 1927], pp. 32, 8, 28).

On the whole, the 70 individuals from Assyria (720–600 BCE), who can be regarded as Israelites/Judeans, amount only to c. 0.7% of the general prosopographical sample of over 10,000 different individuals living in Upper Mesopotamia during the Sargonid period.

2. Israelites in Media

2.1. General Considerations

The pertinent cuneiform material confirms the biblical account of the resettlement of the Israelites (and later on, Judeans) in Assyria proper and the Habur region. So far there is no extra-biblical confirmation for the account of the resettlement of the Israelites in the cities of the Medes (2 Kgs 17.5-6). The lack of Assyrian documentation for Israelites in Media is not surprising, since almost all of the legal and administrative documents of Sargonid Assyria originate from the urban centres in Assyria proper and other parts of Upper Mesopotamia. Therefore, there is relatively little information on any Westerners in the eastern provinces of Assyria. However, the rationale for deporting Israelites and other Westerners to Media, the easternmost part of the Assyrian empire as well as that of resettling Manneans and other Easterners in Syria-Palestine, is clear. Easterners

were found also in Upper Mesopotamia: Ku-re-e-nu is recorded at Dūr-Katlimmu in 631 BCE (H.D. Baker ‘Kurēnu’, PNA 2: 640b). It is perhaps an -aina-hypocoristicon based on OIran *kura- ‘family’ (cf. I. Gershevitch, ‘Amber at Persepolis’, *Studia Classica et Orientalia Antonino Pagliaro Oblata* 2 [Rome: Università di Roma, 1969], p. 201; M. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica persepolitana. Das altiranische Namengut der Persepolis-Täfelchen* (SÖAW, 286; Vienna: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973] 183.8.865). If my etymology is correct, then the presence of an individual bearing an Iranian name at Dūr-Katlimmu is not surprising as individuals from Iran were found there a generation later. A field of Elamites is recorded at Magdalu (the deed was found in Dūr-Katlimmu) in 603/2 BCE. They might have been deported by Ashurbanipal after his campaigns against Elam in the 640s BCE (cf. J.N. Postgate, ‘The Four “Neo-Assyrian” Tablets from Šekh Ḥamad’, *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 7 [1993], p. 110). It should be remembered that the population of Elam already included an Iranian component by then.

My survey of the meagre evidence for westerners in the eastern provinces of the Assyrian empire (R. Zadok, ‘Foreigners and Foreign Linguistic Material in Mesopotamia and Egypt’, in K. van Lerberghe and A. Schoors [eds.], *Immigration and Emigration within the Ancient Near East* (Festschrift E. Lipiński; Leuven: Peeters Press, 1995], pp. 434-35; Hi-ba-za-me from the time of Tiglath-Pileser III or Sargon II has a Luwian name, see D. Schwemer, PNA 2: 471a) can be slightly expanded: Kubābusa-tar (time of Sargon II), who was active in Western Media, is not explicitly ‘a Median chieftain’ (R. Pruzsinszky, ‘Kubābu-satar’, 1, PNA 2: 631), but might have originated—judging from his hybrid name—from northern Syria or southeastern Anatolia. I.M. Diakonoff (‘*ry Mdy*: The Cities of the Medes’, in Cogan and I. Eph’al [eds.], *Ah Assyria*, p. 19) considered the possibility that Luwians from Carchemish, where the goddess Kubaba was worshipped, were deported to Harhar. Another westerner, who was active near the eastern border of the Assyrian empire, is Ad-di-iq-ri-tú-šú, a fugitive sent by the governor of Dēr, if the Greek identification (‘Adakrutos, suggested by E. Lipiński, ‘Addiqritušu’, PNA 1: 52a) is correct. Hašū ša Gur-A+A, an Assyrian outpost on the Mannean border, is named after a West Semitic (presumably Aramean) tribe whose members served in the Assyrian armed forces.

Diakonoff (‘*ry Mdy*: The Cities of the Medes’, pp. 17-18) was of the opinion that the Israelites were deported to the provinces of Harhar and Kišesi. However, the possibility that some of them were resettled in Parsua,

a nearby province which can also be reckoned as Median, should be considered in view of the possible presence of westerners there. Tabalean captives are recorded in Nikkur according to a recently re-edited letter from Sargon II's time (A. Fuchs and S. Parpola, *The Correspondence of Sargon II. III. Letters from Babylonia and the Eastern Provinces* [Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki Press, 2001], p. 54). If this town was located in the province of Parsua, then it may be surmised that also other Westerners were deported to that province. A short digression on the localization of Parsua is in place here.

2.2. Parsua

Parsua was on the way from Laruete (in Allab/pria) to Missi according to the itinerary of Sargon II's eighth campaign (F. Thureau-Dangin, *Une relation de la huitième campagne de Sargon* [TCL, 3; Paris: Geuthner, 1912], pp. 37-40). It can be concluded that Parsua bordered on northern Zamua, notably Sumbi (a tribal territory where no rulers are ever mentioned; Parsuan Nikippa/Nīgibe was adjacent to Sumbi), and on Mannea, and was situated west of Gizilb/punda. The localization of Parsua more to the south, in the region of modern Suleimaniya (Diakonoff, 'ry Mdy: The Cities of the Medes', p. 14 n. 5), cannot be maintained (see R. Zadok, 'On the Location of NA Parsua', *NABU* 2001/28). Tiglath-Pileser III annexed the two provinces of Parsua and Bīt-Hamban to Assyria in 744 BCE (see Diakonoff, 'ry Mdy: The Cities of the Medes', p. 15; H. Tadmor, *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III King of Assyria* [Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994], p. 166 ad Summ. 7, 37 and 98: St. I B, 9'f.), that is, over twenty years before the deportation from Samaria. From the first section of Sargon II's itinerary in 716 BCE, viz. Mannea → Karalla → Šurta/Patta → Nikkar (= Nikkur) → Šurgadia → Hundir (→ Kišesi, L.D. Levine, *Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae from Iran* (Royal Ontario Museum, Art and Archaeology Occasional Papers, 23; Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1972), pp. 36-37, ii, 26-30), it may be surmised that the province of Parsua was not far from two other, more southerly, Assyrian provinces, namely Kišesi and Harhar. If Qal'eh Paswē not far from Solduz is a survival of the name Parsua (see V. Minorsky, 'Mongol Place-Names in Mukri Kurdistan', *BSOAS* 19 [1957], pp. 78-79), its hypothetical precursor may be just a homonym of Parsua (for such homonyms referring to several regions of the Iranian Plateau cf. Diakonoff, 'ry Mdy: The Cities of the Medes', p. 14 with n. 4), which did not form part of the loose entity of Parsua, but was on Hubušian territory as implied by J.E. Reade, 'Kassites and Iranians in Iran', *Iran* 16 (1978), p. 140, Fig. 2

and M. Liebig, 'Zur Lage einiger im Bericht über den 8. Feldzug Sargons II. von Assyrien genannter Gebiete', *ZA* 81 (1991), pp. 33-34. Two toponyms referring to places in Parsua or near it may be typically Persian (*Uštassa* < **Višta-aça-* < **Višta-asp-*) or based on a hypothetical homonym of *Pārsa-*. Both are recorded in an inscription from the end of the 820s or beginning of the 810s, presumably sometime between 821 and 819 BCE (^{kur}*Pa-ar-sa-ni-A+A* and ^{kur}*Uš-ta-áš-šá-A+A*, A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium B.C.* II. [858-745 B.C.] [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996], p. 186: Šamši-Adad V, A.0.103.1, iii, 46 and 49 respectively). *Pa-ar-sa-ni-A+A* is a gentilic of a form ending in *-a/āna-*, which may be based on either *pārsa-* (cf. W. Eilers, 'Der Name Demawend', *ArOr* 22 [1954], pp. 356-57 n. 192) or **parša-* ('ear of grain') or **Parša-* (see E.A. Grantovskiy, *Rannyaya Istoriya Iranskikh Plemen Peredney Azii* [Moscow: Nauka 1970], pp. 219-20.36). If the analysis of *Uštassa* is correct, then the existence of a typically Persian form (**Višta-aça-*) in Parsua would be interesting.

2.3. *The Ethno-Linguistic Character of Greater Media*

The lack of any typical Israelite names in the NA documentation related to the Iranian Plateau has no significance bearing in mind that this documentation refers almost exclusively to the ruling class.

The calculations are based on 209 anthroponyms out of which 207 are recorded in NA sources. The remaining two are the kings of pre-Achaemenid Media, viz. N/LB *Ú-ma-ku-iš-tar* (E.N. von Voigtlander, *The Bisitum Inscription of Darius the Great, Babylonian Version* [Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, 1, 2/1; London: Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum; Lund: Humphreys, 1978], DBa 43.58.61.93 [bis]; DBe, 4; DBg, 3), *Ú-ma-kiš-tar* (A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* [Texts from Cuneiform Sources, 5; Locust Valley, NY: Augustin, 1975], pp. 93.29: *[-ma-ki]š-*; 94.40: *[ú-m]a-*, 47), *Ú-ma-ki-iš-tar* (Grayson, *Chronicles*, 93.30: *[Ú-ma-ki-i]š-*), OPers *U-v-x-š-t-r- /^hUvaxštra-* = Cyaxares and NB *Iš-tu-me-gu* (S. Langdon, *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften. Vorderasiatische Bibliothek*, IV [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1912], p. 220: Nbn. 1, cf. P.-R. Berger, *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften. Königsinschriften des ausgehenden babylonischen Reiches (626-539 a.Chr.)* (AOAT, 4.1; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1973], pp. 371-74: Nbn. Cyl III, 2, i, 32; Grayson, *Chronicles*, p. 106, ii, 1, 53, i, 31 = Langdon, *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, p. 220: Nbn. 1) = Ἀστουαγης. The definitions 'Iranians', 'Hurro-Urartians', and so on are merely ad hoc as they simply refer to individuals bearing Iranian, Hurro-Urartian and other names.

There is little doubt that Greater Media underwent a process of Iranianization during the Neo-Assyrian period. The bearers of Iranian anthroponyms were the largest group (maximum 45.37–minimum 32.36%) in Greater Media. All the other discernible ethno-linguistic groups (non-Iranians) are far behind. Next come the Kassites (7.72–5.31%) and the Hurro-Urartians (6.74–0.96%). The Iranians were the largest group in all the Median regions. Only in Kurdistan (excluding Zamua) were the Hurro-Urartians (with various degrees of plausibility) the largest group (22.21–7.4%). Elsewhere the Kassites were the second-largest group ('Inner' and Western Media: 18.18–15.15% and 12.24–6.12% respectively; Northwestern Media and Parsua: 6.66% and 6.88–3.44% respectively). Only in Mannea and its environs, which were on the Urartian border, were the Hurro-Urartians the second-largest group (14.8–3.7% compared with 3.7% Kassites). The ethnic characterization of Mannea naturally refers only to its ruling class, as very few commoners' names are mentioned in the sources. R.M. Boehmer ('Volkstum und Städte der Mannäer', *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 3 [1964], pp. 11–24) is of the opinion that the Manneans were a Hurrian group with a slight Kassite admixture. It is unlikely that there was any ethno-linguistic unity in Mannea. Like other peoples of the Iranian Plateau, the Manneans were subjected to an ever increasing Iranian (i.e. Indo-European) penetration. The northwestern-most expansion of OIran anthroponymy reached Muşaşir and Hubuškia. The names of the Hubuškian rulers are heterogeneous: one is Iranian, two are atypical, and one (Ianzû) is Kassite. The latter is actually a title, which was common among Kassites, but I.M. Diakonoff ('Media', Chapter 3 in *The Cambridge History of Iran 2: The Median and Achaemenian Periods* [ed. G. Gershevitch; London: Cambridge University Press, 1985], p. 61) was of the opinion that it might have been originally a Qutian title. However, there is no evidence that this title was in use before the middle of the second millennium BCE. M. Liverani (*Studies on the Annals of Ashurnasirpal II. II. Topographical Analysis* (Quaderni di Geografia Storica, 4; Rome: Università di Roma 'La Sapienza', Dipartimento di Scienze storiche, archeologiche e antropologiche dell'Antichità, 1992), p. 139) points out that Hurrian anthroponyms seem to be confined to Urartu and its immediate vicinity. This includes Kumme, a region where there is good reason for thinking that dialects related to Hurro-Urartian were spoken. Neither Iranian anthroponyms nor Iranian toponyms are recorded in Kumme and other parts of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Altogether there are 451 toponyms referring to places in Greater Media: 447 toponyms are classified in Zadok, *The Ethno-linguistic Character of*

Northwestern Iran and Kurdistan in the Neo-Assyrian Period (Tel Aviv: Archaeological Center Publications, 2002) *passim*. The relationship between the anthroponymy and the toponymy of each region is not without interest. The Iranian toponymy prevails in Eastern Media (54.54–27.27%), ‘Inner’ Media (32.2–12%), Western Media (18.7–14.58%) and Parsua (10.4–4.16%). It has the same percentage as the Kassite toponymy in Gizilb/punda and environs (16–4%). The Hurro-Urartian toponymy prevails in Mannea and Northwestern Media (10.95–2.43% and 22.63–3.77% respectively) which bordered on Urartu. In both regions the Iranian toponymy is the second-largest group (9.72–1.21% and 7.54–5.66% respectively; Kassite toponymy has 7.29–3.65% and 5.65–0% respectively), whereas in the regions with dominant Iranian toponymy Kassite is almost everywhere the second-largest group (Parsua: 4.16–2.08%; ‘Inner’ Media 12–4%; Western Media 11.46–7.29%). The Zamuan toponymy has limited Kassite and Hurro-Urartian components (5.95–2.38% and 3.57% respectively). Iranian is the second-largest group (4.76–2.38%). On the whole there is a fairly high degree of accord between the toponymy and the anthroponymy of most regions. There is a certain persistence of pre-first millennium toponyms (8–4.23%). In addition, there is a remarkable representation of toponyms which seem to be intrinsic to the region under discussion. There is some reason to suspect that they are residues of pre-(Indo-)Iranian dialects. As expected, the pre-Iranian substratum is better represented in the toponymy than in the anthroponymy. No less than 16.55% of the toponyms are linguistically unaffiliated, but have parallels mainly in neighbouring regions, including Hurro-Urartian ones. The low percentage of Akkadian anthroponyms and toponyms accords well with the Babylonian influence, which was already a thing of the past. Does ^{kur}*A-ra-ti-iš-ta*, ^{kur}*A-[ra]t-is!-ta*, ^{uru}*A-rat-is!-ti*, ^{kur}*A-ra-ti-iš-ta* (716 BCE; Levine, *Stelae*, 42, ii, 58), ^{uru}*A-rat-is!-ti* (Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième campagne*, p. 49; see A. Fuchs, *Die Annalen des Jahres 711 v. Chr. nach Prismenfragmenten aus Niniveh und Assur* [SAAS, 8; Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, University of Helsinki, 1998], p. 41 n. 120), ^{kur}*A-[ra]t-is!-ta*, 711 BCE (Fuchs, *Annalen*, p. 41, vi.b, 28) render **Raθaištar-*, a hypothetical ancient West Iranian cognate of Avestan *raθaē-štar-*, *raθaē-štā-* (*raθoi-štā-*) (‘warrior, war hero; military profession, class, rank’) (C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch* [Strasburg: K.J. Trübner, 1904 (reprinted Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1961)], pp. 1506–507; ‘mounting a chariot’ as a designation of the Median aristocracy; cf. E.A. Grantovskiy, *Iran i Irancy do Akhemenidov. Osnovnye Problemy. Voprosy Xronologii* [Moscow: Nauka, 1998], p. 339; Pahlavi translation

[mot savant] *aradēštar*)? If this is the case, then the NA form may begin with NA *a-*, for which see M. Streck, 'Das Gebiet der heutigen Landschaften Armenien, Kurdistan und Westpersien nach den babylonisch-assyrischen Keilschriften', *ZA* 14 (1899), p. 139 n. 1; R. Zadok, 'West Semitic Toponyms in Assyrian and Babylonian Sources', in Y. Avishur and J. Blau [eds.], *Studies in Bible and the Ancient Near East Presented to S.E. Loewenstamm* [Jerusalem: Rubinstein, 1978], pp. 164-65 n. 3 and cf. ^{uru}*É-a-šil-a-ni* (G. Frame, 'The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var', *OrNS* 68 [1999], p. 47 < *Bit-Šīlāni*), *A-hu-ru* (see [A. Berlejung and] R. Zadok, 'Ahūru', *PNA* 1: 87a), and *A-ši-ha* < Eg. *Šiha* (left unexplained by Radner, 'Ašīha', *PNA* 1: 139b). Another four NA toponyms (all non-Iranian) are contained in Fuchs and Parpola, *Correspondance*, viz. ^{lu}*Ir-ti-a-šá-A+A* (gentilic, 91 r. 9), ^{uru}*I-zu-zi* (89, 5), ^{uru}*Pi-ú-si* (58 r. 6), and ^{uru}*Zab-ga-ga* (260a with refs.). *B/Pu-uš-tu*, *B/Pu-su-ut/tú* is not homonymous with *B/Pu-us-ti-is*, *B/Pu-us-tu-us*, *B/P^ou-uš-tu-u[s]* (pace Diakonoff, 'ry *Mdy*: The Cities of the Medes', p. 14 n. 5). On the face of it, *Pu-us-ti-is* looks like a rendering of the OIran hypothetical equivalent of OInd *puṣṭti-* ('prosperity, abundance, growth') (with a possible Pashto cognate, see M. Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* [Heidelberg: Winter, 1963], II, p. 318, s.v. *pūṣyam*), but this seems unlikely in view of the spelling *Pu-us-tu-us*.

3. Evidence for Migration from Upper Mesopotamia to Babylonia

Israelites/Judeans lived in Dūr-Katlimmu on the Habur under Babylonian rule (see Zadok, 'On the Late-Assyrian Texts from Dūr-Katlimmu and the Significance of the NA Documentation for Ethno-linguistic Classification', *NABU* 1995/3). There is ample evidence for immigration from Upper Mesopotamia to Babylonia: so far over 150 individuals with Assyrian names or explicitly defined as Assyrians are recorded in Chaldean and Achaemenid Babylonia (see R. Zadok, *Assyrians in Chaldean and Achaemenid Babylonia*, *Assur* 4/3 [June 1984]; Zadok, 'More Assyrians in Babylonian Sources', *NABU* [1998–55]; P.-A. Beaulieu, 'The Cult of AN.ŠÁR/Aššur in Babylonia after the Fall of the Assyrian Empire', *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 11 [1997], pp. 55-73). A cohesive group of Assyrians is recorded in the archive of Iššar-tarībi from Sippar (see Zadok, 'Contributions to Babylonian Geography, Prosopography and Documentation', in O. Loretz, K. Metzler and H. Schaudig [eds.], *Ex Mesopotamia et Syria Lux. Festschrift für Manfred Dietrich* [AOAT, 281; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2002], pp. 890-91, F, cf. A.C.V.M Bongenaar, 'Private Archives

in Neo-Babylonian Sippar and their Institutional Connections', in Bongenaar [ed.], *Interdependency of Institutions and Private Entrepreneurs (MOS Studies 2). Proceedings of the Second MOS Symposium (Leiden 1998)* (Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul, 87; Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 2000], pp. 89-90), the Babylonian temple city which was close to Upper Mesopotamia, with connections to Hindānu and Rušāpu (see A.C.V.M. Bongenaar, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple, Sippar: Its Administration and Its Prosopography* [Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul, 80; Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1997], pp. 101, 107, 138, 274). Therefore it stands to reason that the family of Ṭābat-Iššar daughter of the Judean Ia-še-'-ia-a-ma, who is recorded at Sippar (531/0 BCE, R. Zadok, *The Jews in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods according to Babylonian Sources* [Haifa: University of Haifa, 1979], p. 44), might have arrived from Upper Mesopotamia.

4. More Documentation on Judeans in Babylonia

T.L. Thompson (*Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992], pp. 356-57) doubts the historicity of the exile. Yet, at least the deportation of Jehoiachin and his entourage is confirmed by extra-biblical sources including the appearance of Yahwistic names in N/LB sources. Moreover, There is an undeniable association of Yahwistic names with the individuals recorded at ^{uru}Ia-a-hu-du (cf. F. Joannès and A. Lemaire, 'Trois tablettes cunéiformes à onomastique ouest-sémitique', *Transeuphratène* 17 [1999], pp. 18-26).

Regarding the geographical distribution of the 163 Judeans from pre-Hellenistic Babylonia (a minimum number; see Zadok, *The Earliest Diaspora: Israelites and Judeans in Pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia* [Tel Aviv: Diaspora Research Institute, 2001], pp. 27-45, 51-63), no less than 64.12% are recorded in documents from Nippur and its region. I have long suspected that this may be just an accident of documentation and it does not necessarily mean that their largest concentration was in the Nippur region. This somewhat one-sided picture is about to change with the forthcoming publication of more documents from uruIa-a-hu-du and other settlements in the Babylon-Borsippa region. The Murašû archive, which covers Nippur and its countryside, consists of no more than 5% of the pertinent Neo/Late-Babylonian documentation. Contrary to the other private archives,

where over 97% of the individuals are Babylonian, the Murašû archive has an exceptionally fair representation of non-Babylonians (about 30%). On the whole, no more than 2200 individuals bearing West Semitic names are recorded in the general prosopographical sample of no less than 100.000. The percentage of non-Babylonians in the general sample probably does not exceed 4%.

The segregation of the urbanite Babylonians can be empirically proven. The parties to the numerous transactions (recorded in approximately 10,000 deeds published so far) are mostly Babylonian. In the few N/LB transactions (no more than 200, i.e. just 2%), where one party is non-Babylonian, the other party is almost always Babylonian. Exceptions are very few. Intermarriage between Babylonians and foreigners seems to have been rare (cf. R. Zadok, Review of K.G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* [SBL Dissertation Series, 125; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992], in *JAOS* 116 [1996], p. 598).

(1) *Ia(?)*-*a-hu-nu-û-ri* s. of *Za-ab-di-ia* is the debtor in A. Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der königlichen Museen zu Berlin* 3 [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1907], p. 6 (line 4) from Bīt-Nabû-le' (presumably not far from Babylon or Borsippa, cf. presently), 20.VII.583/2 BCE (creditor Mušēzib-Bēl s. of Bēl-ušallim desc. of Tunā). The debt (one *kor* and three *pānu* of barley) is to be repaid without interest in II, i.e. within seven months. It is exceptional that a Judean like *Ia(?)*-*a-hu-nu-û-ri* (if the reading of the first sign is correct) has the paternal name *Za-ab-di-ia* (< Aram. *Zabdî*), less than 15 years after the first deportation of Judeans to Babylonia (597 BCE). Names deriving from Z-B-D are not recorded in epigraphic sources from pre-exilic Judea and all their biblical occurrences can be attributed to post-exilic sources (see R. Zadok, 'Notes on Syro-Palestinian History, Toponymy and Anthroponymy', *UF* 28 [1996], pp. 725-26). The first witness is (a) *A-re/ri-hi* s. of *Di-nu-û-a* and the second one is *Būr*^{(d)AMAR}-*aba-uballit* (or *-ad-din*, in which case it would be West Semitic?) s. of Rēmūtu. The debtor of Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*, pp. 3, 39 (same place, 28.VIII.- Nbk. II) is the same *A-ri-ih*-hu** whose brother, Nergal-da(?)*-an*(?), acts as the guarantor. The debt is eight(?) *kors* of barley with his cow as pledge. The creditor is Marduk-šāpik-zēri s. of Mušēzib-Bēl (a harrānu transaction with Mušēzib-Marduk desc. of Ēpeš-ili). The same creditor is also recorded in Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*, pp. 3, 7 (*harrānu*, 23.-.583/2 BCE) and Ungnad,

Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler 3, 37 (co-creditor, -I.- Nbk. II), both from the same place. The co-creditor in both deeds is Ṭābiya s. of Bēl-ušallim desc. of Sīn-ili (between 583/2 and 543/2 BCE) who was based in Babylon with landed property on Nār-Bānītu (near Babylon), Kār-Tašmētu (on the Euphrates) and Borsippa. He was also active in settlements where he had no landed property: Kish, Marad and Sippar (see M.A. Dandamayev, 'Economy of Ṭābiya, a Babylonian of the Sixth Century B.C.', *Oikumene* 5 [1986], pp. 51-53, and C. Wunsch, 'Zur Entwicklung und Nutzung privaten Grossgrundbesitzes in Babylonien während des 6. Jh. v.u.Z. nach dem Archiv des Ṭābiya', in P. Vavroušek and V. Souček [eds.], *Šulmu: Papers on the Ancient Near East Presented at [the] International Conference of Socialist Countries [Prague Sept. 30- Oct. 3, 1986 (Prague: Oriental Institute, 1988 <1989>], esp. p. 365 with n. 22; 367-68). A-re/ri-hu is never recorded in filiations with a surname and therefore there is some reason for thinking that his name is not genuine Akkadian (although at least A-ri-hi is amenable to an Akkadian etymology, namely arihu, a kind of milkweed, SB, A.L. Oppenheim et al. [eds.], *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* A/2 [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968], p. 267), the more so since it is recorded in the Old Testament (cf. above, 1). The following twelve homonymous individuals are recorded in N/LB: (b) [...]da-ak son of (! DUMU) A-ri-hi' (O. Krückmann, *Neubabylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungstexte* [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1933], p. 265, 7', probably a witness; fragment of a deed of immoveables), presumably from the Nippur(-region), early NB in view of the format (*Ha-di-a-ni*, likewise a paternal name, is mentioned in line 9'). (c) A-ri-hu worked on the *mušannītu*-dam of Gi-lu-šú on 29.IV.542/1 BCE (M. Jursa, *Die Landwirtschaft in Sippar in neubabylonischer Zeit* (Vienna: Institut für Orientalistik der Universität Wien, 1995], p. 222: BM 78157, 20, and T.G. Pinches and I.L. Finkel, *Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Economic Texts* (London: British Museum Publications, 1982], p. 65, 10). (d) Balātu s. of A-ri-hi, fifth = last witness (the preceding witnesses and their fathers have Akkadian names and surnames; the fourth witness and his father have both Akkadian names, but no surname); Uruk, 30.III.523/2 BCE (A. Tremayne, *Records from Erech, Time of Cyrus and Cambyses [538-521 B.C.]* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925], pp. 192, 19). (e) A-ri-hi (no filiation) acted as a principal, Egibi archive (creditor), Babylon, 18.XI.519/8 BCE (A.T. Clay, *Babylonian Business Transactions of the First Millennium B.C.* [New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1912], pp. 75, 10). The duplicate J.N. Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Darius, König von Babylon (521-485 v.Chr.)* (Babylonische Texte, 10-12; Leipzig:*

Pfeifer, 1897), p. 93, has *A-ra-hi* (l. 9, presumably an acquaintance of the debtors, see J. Kohler and F.E. Peiser, *Aus den babylonischen Rechtsleben* 3 [Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1894], p. 23). He may be the same individual as *A-ra-hu* s. of Nabû-aha-ušur/-nāšer-ahi, first witness; Egibi archive, Šušān, 22.I.509/8 BCE (Strassmaier, *Darius*, p. 346, 9). His sons, (f) Nabû-kāšer (s. of *A-ra-ah-hu*) and (g) Ilu-iddina (s. of *A-ra-hu*), acted as the third and fourth witnesses respectively (Strassmaier, *Darius*, p. 346, 9-10). (h) *A-ri-hu* is also recorded in G.J.P. McEwan, *Late-Babylonian Texts in the Ashmolean Museum* (OECT, 10; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) 293, 5'-6' (found in Kish; place and date lost). *A-ri-hi* is not listed in K.L. Tallqvist, *Neubabylonisches Namenbuch zu den Geschäftsurkunden aus der Zeit des Šamašxumukin bis Xerxes* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1905), p. 10a, which has only *A-ra-hu/hi*, *A-ra-ah-hu* and compares Old Testament 'Arah. (i) *A-ra-ah-hu* s. of Bāni(D)-[...] acts as a creditor in Kish (concerning a palm grove on Nār-mašenni) in -.VII.474/3 BCE (McEwan, *Late-Babylonian Texts*, 178). (j) Mardukā s. of *A-ra-hu* held a bow land in Bīt-Zabīn according to a deed drafted at Nippur on 1.XII.425/4 BCE (H.V. Hilprecht and A.T. Clay, *Business Documents of Murashū Sons of Nippur Dated in the Reign of Artaxerxes I. (464-424 B.C.)* [BE, 9; Philadelphia: Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1898], p. 81, 2). (k) *A-ra-ah* is the brother of Šamaš-kāšer, the foreman of the scroll makers (concerning bow lands in Bannēšu; Nippur, 14.VIII.417/6 BCE, A.T. Clay, *Business Documents of Murashū Sons of Nippur Dated in the Reign of Darius II* (Philadelphia: Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania, 1912), p. 136, 9, u.e.). (l) *A-ra-ah-hu* s. of Ba-rik-ki^a-il-ta₅-miš is recorded at Huš-Šagībi on 1.IX.10 Artaxerxes II/III (395/4 or 349/8 BCE, G.J.P. McEwan, *The Late-Babylonian Tablets in the Royal Ontario Museum* [Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1982], p. 35, 23, u.e.). Like *A-re/ri-hi*, *A-ra-(ah)-hu* is never recorded in filiations with a surname. Moreover, (m) *A-ra-ha*, OPers Ar(a)xa-, Elam. Ha-rak-ka4 (s. of Haldita, mār-bānūti), is the name of a Babylonian pretender (Nbk. IV) of Armenian extraction (cf. P. Briant, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, 1, 2. [Achaemenid History, 10; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996], p. 129). It is clear that Arah (the given or paternal name of three NA and 14 N/LB individuals) is interchangeable with Arihu. Arah/ihu is a West Semitic rather than an exclusively Israelite-Judean name.

(2) Ma-la-ku-'-a-ma (Mlkyh) s. of Ilu-ú-šur acted as a messenger of Milke-e-ra-am (WSem Mlkrm with a plene spelling like ^fA-be- e'-su-uk-ku <

*Abi-saukā-, below, 5.3), the royal official (lúSAG LUGAL) according to a deed from Marad (archive of Tabnea s. of Zērūtu desc. of Dannēa) on 11.VIII.[1/2/3] Nergilissar (sometime between 559 and 557 BCE; New York Public Library Box 43, '4(?)', r. 14). The fourth = last witness, (3) Ha-na-na-a-'ma'(?), s. of Nabû-balāssu-iqbi (d+AG-TIN-su-iq-bi), may also be Judean (Ḥnnyh).

Dr M. Jursa collated the marriage contract M.T. Roth, *Babylonian Marriage Agreements, 7th–3rd Centuries B.C.* (AOAT, 222; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1989), p. 26 (BM 65149), as well as the related fragmentary deed BM 68921, and kindly communicated to me his results, for which I am very grateful. He is due to publish a full treatment of this important deed, which is dated by him to Cyrus' time (figures refer to lines): 3. [m]'A-mu-še-e; 28. mA-ri-ih lúDAM.G/R LUGAL; 30. mŠá-am-ri!-a-ma l[úDA]M.G/R LUGAL; 33. l[ú]DAM.G/R LUGAL; 39. [md]'UTU''-MU; 40. (left out by Roth) md+AG-it-t[an-nu] A-šú šá mA-mu-še-e (another son of A-mu-še-e).

BM 68921 has: first witness [IGI mŠEŠ-i]a'-a-ma A-šú šá mA-ri-ih lúDAM.G/R LUGAL, 6. [mD]-ia] A-šú šá md+EN-PAP A m<R-dGIR4-K>; 7. 'md]+AG-D'(?)-NUMUN A-šú šá mre-mut-d+EN A lúPA.ŠEki; fourth witness: 8. m<R-dGu-la A-šú šá mŠá-am-mar-ia-a-ma. The doubling of the -m- is not phonematic, but just in order to avoid an orthographic ambiguity, for inervocalic <m> renders both /m/ and /w/, whereas <mm> renders only /m/ (simple—as in this case—or geminated). Two brothers of the fKaššā, viz. (4) Šamaš-iddina and (5) Nabû-itannu sons of A-mu-še-e, acted as the two last (sixteenth–seventeenth) witnesses. They are preceded by the royal merchant (6) Šamaš-apla-ušur s. of Ra-pe-e'' (fifteenth witness). Another royal merchant is (7) Niqūdu s. of Mu-šal-lam-mu (eighth witness). It is very likely that not only the two royal merchants (or commercial agents, sg. tamkāru) who bore Yahwistic paternal names, but also 6 and 7 were of Judean extraction. (8) Nabû-šarra-ušur s. of Mīnu-eššu (Mi-nu-eš-šú) acted as a co-debtor in Humbāyu/Hummāyu (tithe of uruHum-'ba/ma-A+A') according to a deed which was issued in Sippar (Ebabbarra archive) on 27.IX.521/0 BCE (T.G. Pinches and I.L. Finkel, *Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Economic Texts* [London: British Museum Publications, 1982], p. 74, 6; cf. M. Jursa, *Der Tempelzehnt in Babylonien vom siebenten bis zum dritten Jahrhundert v.Chr.* [AOAT, 254; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1998], p. 91). Mīnu-eššu is a rare name in Sippar. He may be identical with the son of Ia-hu-ú-ra-am who is recorded in the same archive between 551/0 and 545/4 BCE (Jursa, *Landwirtschaft*, 141.47;

T.G. Pinches and I.L. Finkel, *Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Economic Texts* [London: British Museum Publications, 1982], p. 132, 3). Bēl-iddina s. of Mu-na-hi-im-mu (Canaanite-Hebrew rather than Aramaic, but not exclusively Judean), acted as the creditor in a deed from Babylon, 2.II. 483/2 BCE (J.N. Strassmaier, 'Einige kleinere babylonische Keilschrifttexte aus dem Britischen Museum', *Actes du 8^e congrès international*, 2/1 B [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1893], pp. 281-300: 20, 7; debtor Bēl-iddina s. of Ana-bītišu).

5. *Connections between Judeans and Iranians in Achaemenid Babylonia*

5.1. *General Considerations*

It is very likely that the Judean diaspora in Babylonia had close and continuous contacts with the Iranian population there (see S. Shaked, 'The Influence of the Iranian Religion on Judaism', in H. Tadmor [ed.], *The Restoration—The Persian Period: The History of the Jewish People* 1/6 [Tel-Aviv: Masada, 1983], pp. 236-37, cf. 246). There is good reason for thinking that the non-Iranian population in Achaemenid Babylonia became acquainted at least with certain manifestations of the OIran notably Zoroastrian, religion, due to the presence of Persians and Medes, including Magi, there (see M.A. Dandamayev, *Iranians in Achaemenid Babylonia* [Columbia Lectures on Iranian Studies, 6; Costa Mesa, CA/New York: Mazda Publishers, 1992], pp. 54, 144, 166-67; cf. Shaked, 'The Influence', p. 245). The presence of these Iranians is discussed below. The Judean upper echelon probably had more intensive relationship with the Persian ruling class: four Judeans acted as royal merchants (or commercial agents, see above, 4).

Apparently Roth, *Marriage Agreements*, where the deed was first published in 1989, was not yet available to Dandamayev, whose statement (M.A. Dandamayev, 'The Neo-Babylonian *tamkāru*', in Z. Zevit, S. Gitin and M. Sokoloff [eds.], *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995], p. 527) 'the title 'royal merchant' does not appear in texts of the Achaemenian period' is to be corrected accordingly. These Judeans are the only royal merchants who are mentioned by name in the Achaemenid period, in fact in the very beginning of this period. Their three colleagues in the preceding ('Chaldean') period (Dandamayev,

‘Neo-Babylonian *tamkāru*’, pp. 524-25, 528-29), practically in the same generation (1, 2 are from Sippar like the Judean merchants), were also of non-Babylonian extraction, viz. (1) *Sîn-aha-iddina* s. of *In-nu-da-i-na-’ / I-ni-da-A+A-’* *lúDAM.GR LUGAL*, co-creditor, 569–544 BCE. The debtors, *Bēl-erība* s. of *In-za-ra-hi-eš* and *fUm-ma-a-an*, were also foreigners in view of the former’s hypothetically Elamite paternal name (cf. perhaps *Elam. inzu-*, R. Zadok, *The Elamite Onomasticon* [Supplemento n. 40 agli *Annali dell’Istituto Orientale di Napoli*, 44; Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1984] 17.72) and the latter’s Elamite name. (2) *Ab-di-Sîn(dXXX, WSem)*, 21.I.562/1 BCE (BM 63854 = Bertin 1162, unpubl., cf. Bongenaar, *Ebabbar Temple*, 138-39); and (3) *Ip-pa-A+A*, Babylon, 560/59 BCE (Dandamayev, ‘Neo-Babylonian *tamkāru*’, 526), which is homonymous with MB (from Alalah?) *Ip-pa-ia* (G. Wilhelm, ‘“Verhafte ihn!”’, *OrNS* 59 [1990], pp. 309-11). Only (4) *Kīnā* s. of *Bēl-iddina* (Babylon, 2.VI.544/3 BCE; first witness out of two, Zadok ‘Contributions’, †C) has no foreign filiation, but lacks a surname, in which case he presumably does not belong to the Babylonian urbanite élite. The same applies to the another five or six royal merchants from the ‘Chaldean’ period (all listed in M.A. Dandamayev, ‘Die Rolle des *tamkārūm* in Babylonien im 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v.u.Z.’, in H. Klengel [ed.], *Beiträge zur sozialen struktur des alten Vorderasien* [Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients, 1; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1971], pp. 69-78), viz. (4) *Ina-tēšī-ētter* s. of *Nādinu* (Babylon, 28.IV.584/3 BCE, J.N. Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Nabuchodnosor, König von Babylon (604–561 v.Chr.)* [Babylonische Texte, 5-6; Leipzig: Pfeifer, 1889], p. 127, 1-2), (5) *Nabû-na’id lúdam-gar LUGAL* (*ælu-ša-Nādinu*, 2.VI.568/7 BCE, Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*, p. 3, 18 = M. San Nicolò and A. Ungnad, *Neubabylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden übersetzt und erläutert. I. Rechts- und Wirtschaftsurkunden der Berliner Museen aus vorhellenistischer Zeit* [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1935] 400, 1-2), and (6) *Ardiya* s. of *Nabû-aha-iddina* (second = last witness; Šahrīnu, 30.XII.556/5 BCE, J.N. Strassmaier, *Inschriften von Nabonidus, König von Babylon (555–538 v.Chr.)*. *Babylonische Texte, 1-4* [Leipzig: Pfeifer, 1889] 17 = C. Wunsch, *Die Urkunden des babylonischen Geschäftsmannes Iddin-Marduk* [Cuneiform Monographs, 3; Groningen: Styx, 1993], p. 90, 17-18), all with Akkadian given and paternal names, as well as to (7) *Lu(? or Ur?)-NIN(?)-KAL(? subject to collation)* s. of *Arrabu* (Akkad [Dilbat?], 22.III.555/4 BCE, listed fourth = last of the *mārē bānūti*, i.e. ‘free citizens’, A. Ungnad,

Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der königlichen Museen zu Berlin [Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1908], pp. 6, 63 = San Nicolò and A. Ungnad, *Neubabylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden*, p. 709), (8) Šin-šarra-ušur rab-tamkārē [ša šarri?], probably Sippar or its region, 13.X.546/5 BCE (Strassmaier, *Nabonidus*, 464, 5-6), and (9) Ahu(ŠEŠ)-nu-ú-ru (Akkad-WSem) s. of Šulum-Adad (fragment; place and date lost, probably 'Chaldean' or early Achaemenid; Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*, p. 6, 252 = San Nicolò and Ungnad, *Neubabylonische Rechts- und Verwaltungsurkunden* p. 885, 9'-10'). Ha-nu-nu, the chief royal merchant in the time of Nebuchadnezzar II's reign has a West Semitic (not necessarily Phoenician) name. Very little is known about the means of communication between members the various ethno-linguistic groups. The term lūti-ir-gu-ma-nu ('interpreter') is recorded only once in N/LB, namely in BM 109365 (unpubl., the title of the second = last witness, see below, 6) from Borsippa, 9.X.517/6 BCE. This deed is a receipt for rations ('x' 'P[ADh]i.a' (?) šá hu-un-zu, i.e. presumably 'one fifth'), which are assigned to [f]Tu-tu-bé-e-su, the Carian woman (uruKa-ar-sa-'-i-<tu>) until the end of the same month (X). They consist of unspecified quantities of flour, cress, oil and salt. The receipt belongs to the archive of Ardiya s. of Šulā desc. of Iliya, who distributed the rations, and was written by the same scribe as that of BM 26756 (unpubl., issued in Borsippa half a year earlier, on 9.IV.517/6 BCE, see Zadok apud A. Fantalkin, 'Mezad Hashavyahu: Its Material Culture and Historical Background', *Tel Aviv* 28 [2001], pp. 130-31 n. 59, where much of the evidence concerning Carians in Babylonia is summarized by me). The interpreter Tatannu, whose name is Akkadian, is described as Carian. The title is recorded in NA, SB and earlier, as well as in Aram. trgm'n' (probably late-Achaemenid according to Ch. Müller-Kessler, 'Eine aramäische "Visitenkarte". Eine spätbabylonische Tontafel aus Babylon', *MDOG* 130 [1998], p. 190).

According to A.L. Oppenheim ('A New Look at the Structure of Mesopotamian Society', *JESHO* 10 [1967], p. 14 n. 1), it is quite likely that overland trade was a royal privilege, but as we happen to know members of the private Egibi firm, as well as other entrepreneurs, went from Babylonia to western Iran (Media, Persis and Susiana) on business. The Judean Tā-ga-bi-ia-a-ma travelled from Sippar to Humadēšu in Persis presumably for the same purpose according to a deed from the private archive of Iššar-tarībi (26.X.523/2 BCE, M. Weszeli, 'Eseleien', *WZKM* 86 [1996], pp. 472-73: 2, 17).

5.2. Direct Evidence for Persians and Medes in Babylonia: Additional Material

(Cf. Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 153-59)

Anonymous Persians (lúPar-sa-A+A) are mentioned at Bīt-Zēriya near Borsippa in 511/0 BCE (archive of Ardiya s. of Šulā desc. of Iliya; HSM 1904.6.025).- Par-si-A+A ('Persian') s. of Marduk-šuma-ušur (or -nādin-ahi, dAMAR.UTU-MU-ŠEŠ/ >RU) desc. of Ba-bu-tu from Šá-bi-il, 7.XII. 497/6 BCE (BM 30819 = Bertin 2575, 1) is originally Babylonian in view of his surname.

lúKar-ma-na-A+A, i.e. 'Carmanians', are mentioned in an undated LB administrative record (BM 54043 = 82-3-23, 5198, 7; unpubl., courtesy of S. Zawadzki), cf. Qrmm'ny in the *Babylonian Talmud* (A. Oppenheimer, B. Isaac and M. Lecker, *Babylonia Judaica* [Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1983], pp. 484-85; based on *Qrmm < Kirmān). I still think that the possibility that Ki-ra-man-ni-e may render a form originating from OIran *Krmāniya- (R. Zadok, 'Iranian and Babylonian Notes', *AfO* 28 [1981-82], p. 138a) cannot be dismissed: R. Schmitt ('Zu den "Germanioi" bei Herodot', *Historische Sprachforschung* 109 [1996], p. 48 n. 15) strongly doubts my interpretation, but this non-Semitic name is from the early Hellenistic period and may reflect a post-OIran form.

Medes are recorded in BM 108543 (unpubl.; 10.XI and 10-11.XII, year not indicated; script late 'Chaldean'-early Achaemenid), an account of daily rations for anonymous Mede(s), lúMa-da-A+A, one *seah* presumably of flour and perhaps three S<LA of milk), as well as for recipients bearing Babylonian names, such as Nabû-tappūta-alik (two *seahs* of flour), Nabû-aha-rēmanni (three *seahs*, presumably of flour), PA-da-a (fourteen loaves of bread) and Nabû-kāšir ([x kor?], one *pānu* and four *seahs* of barley). uruBīt(É)-Ma-da-A+A is the place of issue of a deed with a duplicate from 8.vii. 496/5 BCE It is to be sought near Borsippa, seeing that the deed belongs to the archive of Inšabtu of the Borsippian clan of Naggāru (see C. Waerzeggers, 'The Records of Inšabtu from the Naggāru Family', *AfO* 46-47 [1999-2000], p. 192 with n. 9 ad 184-85: 2, 24; 3, 26).

Am-mar-da-' son of Bi-mi-ia acted as a creditor (rašūtu concerning silver) in Borsippa, time of Darius I (archive of Nabû-uballīt s. of Nabû-nādin-ahi desc. of Kudurānu, debtor; HSM 1909.6.601, unpubl.). A connection with the hypothetical OIran source of the Median tribal name 'Amardoi (see F.W. Andreas, 'Amardoi', RECA 1: 1729-34, especially 1733 and F.H. Weissbach, 'Márdoi', RECA 14: 1649, 3; cf. Grantovskiy, *Rannyaya Istoriya*, pp. 74-75 with n. 7) cannot be proven. W. Barner ('Zu

den Alkaios-Fragmenten von P. Oxy. 2506', *Hermes* 95 [1967], pp. 14-15) ad Ammardis states 'man möchte ihn mit der Amardoi verbinden'. He notes Amardiakos (L. Zgusta, *Die Personennamen griechischer Städte der nördlichen Schwarzmeerküste: die ethnischen Verhältnisse, namentlich das Verhältnis der Skythen und Sarmaten im Lichte der Namensforschung* [Prague: Tschechoslovakische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1955], pp. 114-15, 187), but he does not etymologize the anthroponyms. Am-mar-da-' is hardly based on *A-mrta- ('immortal, eternal') (LB intervocalic <mm> can stand for /m/; for the meaning compare 'nwšh, perhaps <*An-auša- 'immortal', cf. Zadok, 'On the Onomasticon of the Old Aramaic Sources', *BiOr* 48 [1991], p. 39 and Ph. Gignoux, *Noms propres sassanides en moyen-persé épigraphique* [Iranisches Personennamenbuch, 2/2; Vienna: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986], pp. 42-44.101-15, cf. also 41.95). The difficulty is that OIran /t/ is rendered by LB <d> only when it is intervocalic or preceded by n (i.e. /VtV/, /-nt/ = LB <V-dV>, <-nd>, cf. R. Zadok, Review of W. Hinz, *Altiranisches Sprachgut der Nebenüberlieferungen* [Göttinger Orientforschungen, 3.3; Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975], in *BiOr* 33 [1976], pp. 217-18), but not after /r/ (sonant r). A derivation of Am-mar-da-' from an OIran equivalent of OInd a-mardhant- ('not becoming indolent, lazy, idle' or 'not making weary, tired', a further possibility is 'not a despiser, not scornful') is equally uncertain as the forms are different.

5.3. Individuals Bearing Iranian Names

(References are to Dandamayev, *Iranians*, Unless otherwise indicated.) The number of Iranians (presumably Persians and Medes) in pre-Achaemenid Babylonia is negligible. The earliest individual bearing an Iranian name is Ag-nu-par-nu from the late-Assyrian period (c. 650–646 BCE). He presumably was a functionary of the Assyrian king in Babylonia. He received sealed orders from Bēl-ibni at Ashurbanipal's request (see P. Lapinkivi and R. Schmitt, 'Agnu-parnu', *PNA* 1: 56a). Since Bēl-ibni was active in the Sealand und Elam, it is not impossible that Agnu-parnu was a Persian. Four Persians (the fourth one is recorded in an unpublished document) and one Mede are recorded in ration lists from the beginning of the sixth century BCE (see Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 153-54, 156-57). Ba-gi'-a-zu from the very end of 'Chaldean' period is defined as a Mede by Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 54.86a, 154, but this specification seems oversimplified. He might have alternatively been a Persian.

No less than 410 individuals bearing Iranian names and/or Iranian paternal names, or with non-Iranian names but explicitly described as

Iranians, are recorded in Achaemenid Babylonia. This number is obtained by bringing Dandamayev, *Iranians à jour* (cf. Zadok, Review of Dandamayev, *Iranians*, in *BSOAS* 58 [1995], pp. 158-59 and below, passim) as well as by leaving out the individuals from Iran (Susa, Humadēšu and Ecbatana) and the 22 individuals bearing Iranian names from Hellenistic Babylonia. The latter group includes an anthroponym which is contained in a microtoponym, viz. Pu-ru-ha-ti-i (P.'s gate near in Borsippa, 123 Seleucid era = 189 BCE; both gates are not known from other sources, D.A. Kennedy, *Late-Babylonian Economic Texts* [London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1968], p. 136 = R.J. van der Spek, *Grondbezit in het Seleucidische Rijk* [Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1986], pp. 232-34: 9, 5, cf. 234 *ad loc.*) < *Paru-hāta- 'with much richness' (see W. Eilers, *Iranische Beamtennamen in keilinschriftlicher Überlieferung* [Leipzig: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1940] 15, A.6; Hinz, *Altiranisches Sprachgut*, p. 182), homonymous with Par-ru-ha-a-tú, Pu-ru-ha-a-tú, Pu-ur-ha-a-tú, and Pu-ur-ha-at (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 111-12: 232a-c). No less than 80 individuals bearing Iranian names were absentee landlords (with various degrees of plausibility) or owners of real estate (houses in Babylon and Borsippa, see below, 5.3.1, 5.3.2). However, this definition can easily be relativized, for magnates and other prominent absentee landlords administered their manors in the Nippur region and elsewhere in Babylonia while probably residing at least several months per year in Babylon (the Achaemenid winter capital like Susa). On the other end of the ledger it is possible to draw up a list of 68 witnesses, who are explicitly described as Persians/Medes or bear Iranian anthroponyms and/or Iranian paternal names (below, 5.3.3). They were scattered in many Babylonian regions. These witnesses are often relegated to the end of the witnesses' lists in deeds from the private archives (excluding Murašû). However, unlike the other non-Babylonians, this does not happen in the majority of cases presumably because of the prominent position (which is often not explicit) of certain Iranians. Many individuals bearing Iranian names occur in ranked witnesses' lists. The deed where fA-be-su-uk-ku (Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*, pp. 4, 152, 2, 6, 8: -fA-be-e'-su-uk-ku [plene], 12, 14), d. of Rēmūtu, acted as the creditor (Babylon, 23.II.502/1 BCE; Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 25.1) is witnessed also by Bēl-ēteranni servant of Tattannu, the satrap of Transpotamia (last witness; most of the other witnesses and their fathers bear Akkadian names with surnames). Is it an indication of fA-be-su-uk-ku's prominence? It is reasonable that most of the bearers of Iranian names in Babylonia are

Persians and Medes, unless there is evidence to the contrary (members of hatru-organizations of Scythians and Arumāyu people, as well as individuals who are described as Choresmians, Arimeans and other groups). Še-ta-' s. of Bi-ra-ak-ka-' (Iran.) is the creditor in a deed from Sippar (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 70.127). Does the first witness, the Scythian (lúsak-ka-a-a) De-e-mi-ši s. of Tu-mu-nu, have a special relationship with the creditor?

5.3.1. Absentee landlords (57)

5.3.1.1. Achaemenid princes and princesses (at least 15)

Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 26-27.5; 28-29.10; 30.16; 31.18; 33f..26; 36-37.33; 41.43; 68.121; 70-71.130; 86.158; 96f..185; 105.210; 119.263; 141.336a, b, d.

5.3.1.2. Other Persians (1)

Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 107.216 (cf. below, 5.3.3.1.2.1, 5.3.3.1.2.2).

5.3.1.3. Others (41)

5.3.1.3.1. Included in Dandamayev, *Iranians* (29)

31.21; 32.23, 24; 38.35; 44-45.47, 48, 49, 51, 52; 45-46.57; 60-61: 97, 98a; 63.102; 70.129; 86.159; 88.166b, c; 98.187a; 100f..197d; 105f..211a; 110f..229; 114.248; 118.258b; 121.273a; 124.285a; 130f..303a, 306; 135.322; 143.344a.

5.3.1.3.2. Additional (12)

A-ra-e-uš-tu, owner of a house in Babylon and master of Bēl-ēṭteru; Borsippa, 2.VI.501/0 BCE (BM 25690, 2, unpubl.) < *ærya-ušta- 'welfare of the Iranians' (see R. Zadok, 'Some Iranian Anthroponyms and Toponyms', *NABU* [1997/7]) or *æryā-vahišta- 'The best of (among) the Iranians' (Zadok, 'Geographical, Onomastic and Lexical Notes', *AfO* 46-47 [1999-2000], p. 211) rather than 'As Iranian the best' (for this name type cf. R. Schmitt, 'Die iranischen Namen in den "Hellenica von Oxyrhynchos"', in F. Heidermanns [eds.], *Sprachen und Schriften des antiken Mittelmeerraums: Festschrift für Jürgen Untermann zum 65. Geburtstag* [Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, 78; Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck, 1993], pp. 397-98). Ar-ia-a-pa-nu, master of Bēl-ittannu and [...]; Babylon, 8.II.37 Artaxerxes I/II (428/7 or 368/7 BCE; M.W. Stolper, 'Late Achaemenid Texts from Dilbat', *Iraq* 54 [1992], p. 137, 29, 31). dBa-ga-'-par/pir-da-(a-)tū, proprietor

and master of Ma-a-ri-li-ti-'; Nippur, 3.X.24 Artaxerxes I (441/0 BCE, M.W. Stolper, 'Iranians in Babylonia', *JAOS* 114 [1994], p. 622a.UM 29-13-729, 6, 8) < *Baga-fradāta- 'created, brought forward/forth, promoted by (the) god' (see Zadok, 'Some Non-Semitic names in Akkadian Sources', *NABU* [2000] 7). Ba-g[a]-'pa'-a*-tú, master of Bēlšunu; central Babylonia, -.XI.20 or 21 Artaxerxes I/II/III (445/4, 444/3, 385/4, 384/3 or 339/8, 338/7 BCE, BM 17126, unpubl.). Ba-ga-pi-du, owner of a house, probably in Babylon, and master of [...]; [Babylon], 29.IX.424/3 BCE (S. Zawadzki, 'The Circumstances of Darius II's Accession in the Light of BM 54557 as Against Ctesias' Account', *JEOL* 34 [1995-96 <1997>], pp. 45-46, 1, 7.-'du'). Ma-si-iš-tu4 master of Hannanī; Nippur, 30.IX. 430/29 BCE (R. Zadok and T. Zadok, 'LB Texts from the Yale Babylonian Collection', *NABU* 1997/13, NBC 6157, 8). dMit-ir-[...], master of Bēl-ēreš; [Babylonia], --.33 Artaxerxes I/II (432/1 or 372/1 BCE; E.W. Moore, *Neo-Babylonian Documents in the University of Michigan Collection* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1939], p. 15, 3: ir?-[...]), 7).—Unda-pa-ar-na- (*Vinda-farnah-), master of Ba-ga-un-du; Sippar, 19.-.515/4 BCE (BM 79541, 2, unpubl., courtesy of M. Jursa) < *Bagāvant- presumably 'fortunate, prosperous, illustrious, venerable' (see Zadok, 'On the Connections between Iran and Babylonia in the 6th Century B.C.', *Iran* 14 [1976], p. 67; cf. Gershevitch, 'Amber', p. 216, s.v. Bakunda).—fŪ-par-na-ak-ka, landlady of Ab-di- [ia?]; found in Kish, time of Artaxerxes (I rather than II or III? McEwan, *Late-Babylonian Texts*, 229,2, cf. Stolper, 'Iranians in Babylonia', 623a ad 130). Uš-ta-nu, master of Kî-Sîn; Babylon, undated (Eilers, *Iranische Beamtennamen*, 34-35.A. 2: VAT 15617, 3, unpubl.). Za-ta-e-šá (collated), master of [xx]-MU s. of Zababa-ahaidina; Nagabnu (found in Kish), [x]+8.V.469/8 BCE (McEwan, *Late-Babylonian Texts*, p. 181, 23). R. Zadok, 'Iranians and Individuals Bearing Iranian Names in Achaemenian Babylonia', *Israel Oriental Studies* 7 (1977), p. 101: 1.3.51.

5.3.2. *Absentee landlords?* (perhaps acted through their servants or subordinates; 23)

5.3.2.1. *Included in Dandamayev, Iranians (15)*

30.15; 31.18; 32-33..23b, 24; 35.28 (satrap?); 38-39.36a; 40.41; 46.58; 49.77; 60-61..98d; 95-96..181; 103.205b (satrap?); 105.209; 121.271; 144.345.

5.3.2.2. *Additional (5)*

Ba-ga(?)-k[am(?)-ma(?)], apparently owner of a field; perhaps northern or central Babylonia, --.487/6 BCE (K.R. Nemet-Nejat, *Late-Babylonian Field Plans* [StPohl, Major Series, 11; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1982], Pl. 6, 6, North) < *Baga-kāma- (if the reading is correct). Da-da-ara (collated; mistake for -šá? in which case it would be homonymous with *Dādrša-?) s. of Si-ia-ma-nu; owner of a field in Til-Bēlti near Dilbat, time of Darius (presumably I, 522-486 BCE, BM 92990 = Bertin 2968, unpubl.). In-du-ka-', land owner; place and date not preserved, probably late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic (M.W. Stolper, 'A Late-Achaemenid Lease from the Rich Collection', *JAOS* 114 [1994], p. 627, 4, 8, 12: In-[...]). Iš-ta-bu-za-na-', lessor of landed property in the Nippur region belonging to the manor of the queen; Nippur, --.31(?) Artaxerxes I (c. 455-434/3 BCE, V. Donbaz and M.W. Stolper, *Istanbul Murašû Rexts* [Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul, 79; Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1997], p. 2, 7, 14: -[za-na-'], 15: [...], see 79, and Stolper, 'Iranians in Babylonia', p. 623a ad 89). Pa-ar-šá-gu-ú, holder of a crown grant; Dilbat, 1(?).II.5 Artaxerxes I/II/III (460/59, 400/399 or 354/3 BCE, F. Joannīs, *Les tablettes néo-babyloniennes de la Bodleian Library* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1990], AB 243, 2).

5.3.2.3. *Only their landed properties are mentioned (2; generally as neighbours)*

Hu-me-e-šú, concerning landed property in the Nippur region (deed damaged), --.430/29 BCE (M.W. Stolper, *Entrepreneurs and Empire: The Murašû Archive, the Murašû Firm, and Persian rule in Babylonia* [Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul, 54; Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1985], p. 119, 4). Mar-za-an-[na?]-', owner of a field in the Sippar region, Ebabbarra archive (Sippar), 544/3 BCE (Jursa, *Tempelzehnt*, 103.BM 75502, 15).

5.3.2.4. *No details (1)*

Ma-ar-du-ni-[ia], owner of a field (W. Eilers, 'Kleinasiatisches', *ZDMG* 94 [1940], p. 222 n. 3: VAT 15633, unpubl., see Stolper, 'The Estate of Mar-donius', *AuOr* 10 [1992], p. 211 n. 1).

5.3.3. *Witnesses (68)*5.3.3.1. *With Iranian names and Iranian fathers' names (21)*

5.3.3.1.1. In the Murašû archive (10; references are to Dandamayev, *Iranians*, unless otherwise indicated)

Last: 40.39; 80.136b (eighth); 40.41 (seventh). Last but one: 59-60.96 (eighth); 100-101.197b (fifth); 105.208a (second). Third out of five: Ba-ga-'-da-at-ta-[' s. of A-dak-ka-'; [Nippur], 23.VIII.- Artaxerxes I (before 423/2 BCE; Donbaz and Stolper, *Istanbul Murašû Texts*, p. 44, 16). Third out of eight (138.330). Second (first preserved) out of at least five (ranked; 69f..126a). Recurrent (139.335).

5.3.3.1.2. *In other archives (11)*

5.3.3.1.2.1. In Stolper, 'Late-Achaemenid Lease', p. 627 (place and date not preserved, probably late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic; 4).

Ba-ga-ha-A+A s. of Ar-bu-ka-' (14; first); [Da(?)]-ha-ka-' s. of Ba-ga-am-ma-' (16; third); [P]a(?)-ar-nu-ma-' s. of Ar-tu-ru-ú (17; fourth); Ba-ad-ra (-pa-ar-sa-) s. of Pi(?)-ri-ia (19; seventh).

5.3.3.1.2.2. *In other deeds (7)*

Last (thirteenth): Te-ri-'-a-ma s. of At-ta-x''-šá; Bāš, 12.VIb.503/2 BCE (BM 74604 = Bertin 2424, 22, unpubl.). Last but one: Tah-me-e (based on either *Taxma- ['capable, brave, valiant' or *Tauxma- 'family'], cf. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica Persepolitana*, 8.340-41, 344, 348 and 8.376 respectively) s. of Ra-mi-'-ia; Babylon, 495/4 BCE (BM 74551 = Bertin 2636, 11, unpubl.). Seventh (ranked; Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 27-28.7a). Second out of five (54.85d); second out of nine preserved (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 107.215); first out of four (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 138.332a); order not reported (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 28.7b).

5.3.3.2. *With Iranian names and unexplained fathers' names (1)*

Third: Ti-ri-ra-a-du (*Tīrī-rāta- 'given by Tīrī-' or 'accordé par Tīrī-', cf. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica Persepolitana*, 8.503 with lit.) s. of Ti-ma-ti-la?-ma-'; Dilbat, 4.VIII.24 Artaxerxes I/ II (441/0 or 381/0 BCE; BM 49944, 16f., unpubl.).

5.3.3.3. *With Iranian names (8; without filiation)*5.3.3.3.1. *Functionaries (6)*

Last (third, after the judge; ranked, Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 57.92). Last but one and last: Ru-uš-na-pa-tu4, senior official (lúparastamu), mentioned

together with his colleague [...]as-pi (eleventh and twelfth); [Babylon], 11+x.-7 Artaxerxes I/II/III (458/7, 398/7 or 352/1 BCE; M.W. Stolper, *Late Achaemenid, Early Macedonian and Early Seleucid Records of Deposit and Related Texts* [Supplemento n. 77 agli Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli 53/4; Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1993], p. 9, 18). Second: [A]r(?)-še-ek-ka-, major domo (lúGAL É = rab-bīti) of fAr-de-e-si; place and date not preserved, probably late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic (Stolper, 'Late-Achaemenid Lease', p. 627, 15). Fourth out of seven (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 44.46); first (ranked, Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 56.91b).

5.3.3.3.2. Context damaged (2; both in the Murašû archive)

Ru-uš-na-pa-a-tú, third out of at least seven (alternatively a paternal name); Nippur, -.V.- Darius II (c. 423-413 BCE; Donbaz and Stolper, *Istanbul Murašû Texts*, p. 32, 18). Ti-ri-'-a-[ma], third preserved witness out of five; [Nippur (-region)], c. 445-421 BCE (Ellil-šuma-iddina is mentioned, F. Joanniš, 'Fragments de Nippur d'époque néo-babylonienne', *Anatolica* 14 [1987] 128.75 + Stolper, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 25, r. 4').

5.3.3.4. Members of tribal groups (at least 13; all in the Egibi archive)

Four Arimeans (kurA-ri-ma-A+A rather than kurA-ri-ba-A+A in view of NA kurA-ri-ma-A+A, where the shape of MA is different than that of BA, see just below) are mentioned in deeds from the archive of the Egibi sons who were based in Babylon. A promissory note for 7.33 minas of silver (creditor Nabû-šumu-līšir s. of Tabnea desc. of Æpeš-ili; debtor Marduk-nāšir-apli s. of Itti-Marduk-balāttu desc. of Egibi) has at least twelve witnesses (eight with Akkadian names of whom several have surnames), the sixth-ninth witnesses are:

A-ta-ri-ba/ma-a-ni, [Ku?]-ut-tak-ki kurA-ri-ma-A+A, Sa-si-šá-ku [x]-na-uš-man-nu kurA-ri-ma-A+A (BM 31530 = Bertin 2805,r. 4'f., unpubl.). Only the second may have an Iranian name (*Kauta-ka- [cf. R. Zadok, 'On the Location...', *in fine*] if the restoration is correct). The witnesses' list is damaged so it is impossible to establish the exact order of the witnesses with Akkadian names. The deed is dated to 15.XII. Darius I (presumably in the last decade of the sixth century BCE when Marduk-nāšir-apli was active). In Strassmaier, Darius 458 and its duplicate BM 30856 (Bertin 2799, unpubl.; Babylon, 23.XI.505/4 B. C.E.) Me-e-gi-maš-šú lúlm-b/puku-A+A is the creditor and Širku s. of Iddina desc. of Egibi the debtor. The debt is to be repaid to Me-en-na-' the messenger of of Me-e-gi-maš-šú.

The first witness and the last two witnesses (fifth and sixth) are Ú-di-ia, Ú-ma-ar-za-na-’ (the only undoubtedly Iranian name) and Ka-áš-šu-tu lúImb/pu-ku-A+A. They are preceded by a Choresmian (third) and Sa-ak-kit-ta lúGi-ma-ra-A+A (‘Cimmerian’, i.e. Scythian; fourth); only the second witness bears an Akkadian name with a surname. BM 30818 (= Bertin 2837, unpubl.; [Š]u-up-pa-tu4, -.VII.- Darius I) lists several witnesses with a mixture of Iranian and pre-Iranian names, like those of the Imb/pukeans. The sixth–tenth witnesses of BM 30877 (= Bertin 2773, unpubl.; Huššēti-ša-Bēl-ētter, 17.XIIa.- Darius I) are Imb/pukean, viz. Sa-as-su-ú, Me-e-ga-ra-ma-áš-šú, Ka-tu-tu (same person as Kaššutu? subject to collation!), Me-na-’, and B/Pu-ri-ú-qu (tenth = last witness). They are listed after four witnesses with Akkadian names, Akkadian fathers’ names and surnames and a fifth witness bearing an Akkadian name and an Akkadian father’s name (see W. Eilers, ‘Kleinasiatishes’, *ZDMG* 94 [1940], pp. 213-19). The Arimeans and perhaps the Imb/pukkeans are members of pre-Iranian tribal groups in view of the fact that most of their anthroponyms are not certainly Iranian (the sample is admittedly restricted). The Arimeans (NA kurA-ri-ma-A+A) are recorded in Northwestern Media in an inscription from the end of the 820s or beginning of the 810s, presumably sometime between 821 and 819 BCE (Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers*, p. 186: Šamši-Adad V, A.0.103.1, iii, 51). The tribal name may be linguistically related to the MB anthroponym A-ri-im-mu (< Hurrian according to I.J. Gelb, A.A. MacRae and P.M. Purves, *Nuzi Personal Names* [Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1943], p. 204a, cf. 28a, also recorded at Nippur, 18 Kurigalzu II = 1309 BCE; L. Sassmannshausen, *Beiträge zur Verwaltung und Gesellschaft Babyloniens in der Kassitenzeit* [Mainz: von Zabern, 2001], p. 93, i, 3; the same list has strange names, such as I-gu-us-si, Ta-gu-us-si and Pa-pa-assi, i, 6f., 10).

5.3.3.5. *With Babylonian names (16)*

5.3.3.5.1. *In the Murašû archive (10)*

Last (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 88-89.167a). Last but one: Bēl-iddina s. of Ka-ku(copy KI)-nu (same as KI [6 wedges] of Is-KI-du-ru-’-ú in the same document [line 5], which is elsewhere always spelled Is-ku-); Nippur, 6.VIII.434/3 BCE (Hilprecht and Clay, *Business Documents*, 28a, 14). One expects an Iranian name for the father of a member of the hatru-organization of Arumāyu (in all probability an Iranian group). *Skudra- (originally non-Iranian) seems less suitable than OIran *Skauqra- (‘serious, grievous’) > Sogdian šqwrq, Bactrian askwro (cf. N. Sims-Williams, *Bactrian*

Documents from Northern Afghanistan. I. Legal and Economic Documents (Studies in the Khalili Collection, 3; Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, 2/6; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], p. 182a s.v.). Iqīšā s. of Kár(? , subject to collation!)-s/šak-ka-', fifth; Nippur—24.VII.425/4 BCE (= R. Zadok, 'Iranians...', 103: 1.3.80; Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 93.171: 'Kán-s/šak-ka- < *Kašaka-'). Fourth out of six (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 94.175). Perhaps the first out of at least six (122.603). First out of five: Êāb-šalammu s. of Pa-ra-gu-šū; [Nippur(-region)], 17.I.432/1 BCE (Stolper, *Entrepreneurs*, p. 35, 10). Fifth out of seven (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 121.273b). Recurrent (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 128.294a). Second out of nine (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 132.312). Fourth out of eight: Bēl-šumaidīna s. of Ú-na-pa-'; Nippur, 14.VI. 424/3 BCE (Donbaz and Stolper, *Istanbul Murašû Texts*, pp. 103, 14-15). The paternal name is homonymous with Ú-na-ap-pi (M.W. Stolper, 'Achaemenid Legal Texts from the Kasr: Interim Observations', in J. Renger [ed.], *Babylon: Focus mesopotamischer Geschichte, Wiege früher Gelehrsamkeit, Mythos in der Moderne. 2. Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 24.-26. März 1998 in Berlin* [Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei & Verlag, 1999], p.375) < *Hu-nāfa- (see Donbaz and Stolper, *Istanbul Murašû texts*, 151 ad 103, 14f.; cf. Hinz, *Altiranisches Sprachgut*, p. 125), which is not devoid of parallels in Greek transcriptions. Compare perhaps Ὀνοφᾶς, Ἀναφᾶς, Ἀναφᾶς (R. Schmitt, 'Die Wiedergabe iranischer Namen bei Ktesias von Knidos im Vergleich zur sonstigen griechischen ueberlieferung', in J. Harmatta [ed.], *Prolegomena to the Sources on the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia* [Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1979], pp. 125f. with an alternative explanation: *Vana-f-a-) in view of Ἰταοσα/ Hu-taosā- < *Hu-tausā-, Ἀμοργῆς (< *Ὀμοργῆς with a reciprocal metathesis in distance according to R. Schmitt, *Iranische Namen in den indogermanischen Sprachen Kleinasiens (Lykisch, Lydisch, Phrygisch)* [Iranisches Personen-namenbuch, V/4; Vienna: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1982] 22.13 in fine) and perhaps Ἀμυτις.

5.3.3.5.2. In other archives (6)

Last (ninth; Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 101.198a). Last but one Bēl-ušuršu s. of Pat-ti?-ri (second; < *Pāthra-? ['protection'] with anaptyxis if the reading is correct); Bāb-surri, 10+x.XI.[late Achaemenid], (Qašr archive, C. Wunsch, 'Neu- und spätbabylonische Urkunden aus dem Museum von Montserrat', *AuOr* 15 [1997] 186.37: 10'); Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 35.30 (fifth). Second out of four (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 62.99). Fourth out of

nine preserved (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 50f.82d). Sixth: Nidinti-Bēl s. of Gu-ni-ia; place and date not preserved, probably late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic (Stolper, ‘Late-Achaemenid Lease’, 627, 19).

5.3.3.6. *With Babylonian fathers’ names (3; references are to Dandamayev, Iranians, unless otherwise indicated)*

Last: 25.3 (sixth) and 101.199a (twelfth). Perhaps the first of at least eighteen (46.59).

5.3.3.7. *With doubtful names (3)*

Last but one: *Man-bar-ia* s. of Par-tu(?)⁻ (second; the paternal name renders Olran **Parθava-* ‘Parthian’, if the reading is correct, cf. MPers. *Pahlav*, Gignoux, *Noms propres sassanides*, 143.731); Ālu ša Rēmūtu, 28.V.508/7 BCE (McEwan, *The Late-Babylonian Tablets*, 26, 12). Perhaps last but one (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 85.155; fifth preserved). First out of eight (Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 47.65).

5.3.3.8. *With an Egyptian father’s name (1)*

Ba-ga-pa-a-ta s. of Pi-sa-mi-is-ki (Egyptian; *pace* Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 114.246 hardly Pi-ir-mi-iz-di!), fifth out of twelve (marriage agreement among Egyptians); Babylon, 2.V.511/0 BCE.

5.3.3.9. *With an Egyptian name and an Iranian father’s name (1)*

Har-ma-hi-’ s. of ^ˆBa-ga-’-da-ta-’ / ^ˆBa-ga-’-da-a-tú (second; Dandamayev, *Iranians*, 51.82h) and f. of Puhhūrā (third out of six).

6. Appendix I: A Receipt Recording Rations for Carians Witnessed by a Carian Interpreter

BM 109365 (unpubl.)

1. qé-m[e] ‘sah’-le*’-’e šam-ni MU[Nhi.a]
2. ‘x’ ‘P[ADh]i.a’ (?) šá hu-un-zu šá a-d[í qi-it]
3. šá itiAB MU 5 mda-ri-iá-mu[š]
4. [f]tu-tu-bé-e-su uruka-ar-sa-’-i-<tu> (perhaps deliberately erased)
5. [Aš] ŠUII m<R-ia A-šú šá mšu-la-a
6. [A] mDINGIR-iá mah-ra-at
- r.7. [lú]mu-kin-nu md+EN-DUMU.NITA-MU
8. [A-š]ú šá md+AG-NUMUN-SI.S; A mé-sag-íl-man-[s]um
9. [m]ta-at-tan-nu lúkar-sa-A+A
10. lúti-ir-gu-ma-nu

1. lúDUB.SAR md+AG-NUMUN-[B]Ašá A-šú
2. [š]á' mkab-ti-ia A mmu-še-zib
3. [bá]r-sipaki itiAB U4 9 KAM
4. MU 5 KAM mda-ri-'iá'-m'u'š
- ie.e. 15. L[UGAL Eki (there seems to be not enough room for TIN.TIR)
LUGAL KUR.[KUR]].

*7. Appendix II: The Perpetuation of a Babylonian Practice
in Jewish Tradition*

McEwan, *Late-Babylonian Texts*, 10, 113 = 1924.1476 (promissory note for barley found in Kish; collated 8/2001); Bīt-Sîn-māti, -.X. 541/0 BCE.

1. [...x+]DIŠ(=[M]A?)-NA (hardly GUR) ŠE.BAR šá mba-laṭ! (the fourth wedge in the copy is just a scratch, cf. the last sign of line 6!)
2. [A-šú šá mxxx] A mlÚ-ú
3. [AŠ UGU(hi) mx(x)]-'ri?-hi A-šú šá
4. [m... AŠ] itiGU4 ŠE.BAR-'
5. [(quantity) AŠ ma-ši]-'hu AŠ É dXXX-ma-ti
6. [...] 'i-nam-din
- r.7. lúmu-kin-nu mdan-nu-dU.GUR
8. 'A-šú šá mdU.GUR-A+A mAD-ra-am
9. A-šú šá mdXXX-LUGAL-→RU mDI.KU5-dAMAR'.UTU'10. A-šú
šá md+EN-MU A mdIŠKUR-MU-KAM
11. u lúUMBISAG md+AG-MU-DU A-šú šá mla-a-ba-ši
12. A lúŠU.KU6 É dXXX-ma-ti
13. 'šá'(!) UGU ri-gil itiAB
14. [U4 x KAM] MU 15 KAM md+AG-I
- u.e. 15. LUGAL TIN.TIRki

Line 8. -ra (8 wedges) resembles its MB form.

Line 13. The context (settlement name ša/ina muhhi hydronym, cf. Zadok, *Geographical Names according to Neo- and Late-Babylonian Texts* [Répertoire géographique des textes cunéiformes, 8; Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1985], s.vv. Aballi, ælu-eššu, ælu-ša-Bēl-ittannu, ælu-ša-Marduk-nāšer-apli, ælu-ša-Nabū-uballiṭt, ælu-ša-Nērebāyi, ælu-ša-Šamaš, ælu-ša-Ubāru, Attiki'a, Bīt-rab-kāšir, Bīt-Rahimmu, Dūr-Šamaš, Huššēti-Kīnā(?), Kurbat, Lannē and Akkad on Nār-Sîn, Zadok, 'Foreigners', p. 446: 10, 1, 16-17) suggests a watercourse and this is indeed supported by etymology: *rigl (CVC signs like -gil may render CC; cf. G. King, 'The Basalt Desert Rescue Survey and some Preliminary Remarks on the Safaitic Inscriptions and Rock Drawings', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 20

[1990], pp. 59-60, and R. Zadok, 'Notes on Syro-Palestinian Toponymy and Anthroponymy', *UF* 27 [1995], p. 627, A, 1.1.1) as well as the practice of indicating a watercourse in Jewish deeds (also the absence of a watercourse is indicated in such deeds, for example, Jūlis in western Galilee whose inhabitants drink water of cisterns). This Jewish practice must have originated in the Babylonian diaspora.

JEW AND NON-JEW IN THE ROMAN PERIOD
IN LIGHT OF THEIR PLAY, GAMES, AND LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES

Joshua Schwartz

Introduction

Leisure-time activities have always been of importance in every society: each society with its own pastimes and its games, and Jewish society is not exceptional in this respect.¹ At times, these recreational activities created behavioral norms and led to forms of behavior that generated cultural patterns. However, along with the entertainments that distinguish one society from another, we also find ‘universal’ pastimes that appear in the same or similar form in every society.

Play is one of the most important leisure-time activities. Many scholars are of the opinion that participation in play, both in the society of children and adolescents and in that of adults, is one of the most significant elements in the development of a society, both in terms of the relationships between individuals and the society and from a national and ethnic perspective.² They maintain that play is so significant that a culture or society can be examined on the basis of its common types of games and pastimes; what the game contains is present in the society.³

The study of play has presented us with many approaches regarding the development of various games and their socio-cultural significance,⁴ not

1. See R.D. Crabtree, ‘Leisure in Ancient Israel (before 70 A. D.)’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A & M, 1982 [UMI, Ann Arbor, Michigan]), esp. p. 56.

2. See, e.g., J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element of Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955); R. Caillois, *Man, Play and Games* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962); T.L. Goodale and G.C. Godbey, *The Evolution of Leisure: Historical and Philosophical Perceptions* (Philadelphia: Venture Publishing, 1988), p. 168.

3. Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*, p. 64.

4. There is extensive literature on this. A fine summary is to be found in M.J. Ellis, *Why People Play* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973); see pp. 80-111 for the ecological factor.

all of which are pertinent to the present article. The approach, however, that will be of considerable help regarding our understanding of the socio-cultural meaning of play is dependent in great measure upon developments and progress in play research. I shall briefly mention, therefore, some of the approaches that preceded that which serves as a basis for our work. Thus, for example, some scholars regarded play as a means of 'burning up' excess energy and of averting the destructive power inherent in this unexploited energy. Others saw the reverse, that is, that play enables the player to increase the receptive power of his or her activity. Some stressed the inherent enjoyment in the act of playing while other scholars considered it to be a reflection of seriousness, and a means of providing a way of learning and practicing how to apply hereditary traits in social behavior, or how to pass through society's 'evolutionary stages'. There were also those scholars who turned to psychoanalytical or developmental theories of play, both in relation to the individual as well as to national and/or social levels of interpretation. Alongside these established views, there developed a new school of thought embodying an ecological approach that sought to examine the influence of environment on the history of play and game behavior. Thus, for example, it was argued, according to this view, that cultural and symbolic reflections change in accordance with the changes in the environment, or that a game that is accepted in one environment could be rejected under new ecological circumstances. This method will aid us in understanding the approach of Judaism in the Mishnah and Talmud periods regarding various games and forms of amusement. However, first we must clarify a number of background details concerning the history of play.

Play is universal; it is found at all times and among all peoples of all ages and all types.⁵ It is an activity that, by its very nature, is conducted in society and is based on social ties, even though a person may also play alone.⁶ The circle of players is dependent upon many factors, including the ecological element; at times play permits contact or proximity during playtime that is not permitted in normative social relations.⁷ Players, especially children, may have been sensitive to external, artificial, ironic, or political messages that were directed at them in the course of play, but,

5. See G. Chanan and G. Francis, *Toys and Games of Children of the World* (Barcelona/Paris: Unesco, 1984), p. 13.

6. See Caillos, *Man, Play and Games*, p. 40.

7. See E.M. Avedon and B. Sutton-Smith, *The Study of Games* (New York/Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1971), p. 151.

undoubtedly, some of these may have been determined by contemporary events, or, in other words, by ecological circumstances (and are thus extremely important for our purposes).⁸ Finally, attempts to direct the game or to take control of its rules by non-players have little influence on the players themselves. True play is dependent upon the will of the players, and only they are entitled to change its rules.⁹

Based on these initial assumptions, we are of the opinion that Jews, like everyone else, engaged in play, and indeed enjoyed it, and that there was at least a theoretical possibility of contact between Jews and Gentiles during the course of play and games in accordance with the age and gender of the players. Also, we believe that 'universal' games in which Jews and Gentiles participated, together or separately, were influenced by contemporary events and by their surroundings and that the players were often sensitive to these developments.

We will now study several games that were widespread in antiquity, and shall examine whether there were environmental influences on the development of these game and whether they had an impact on Jewish-Gentile relations in the Mishnah and Talmud periods. It is important to state that although within the framework of our discussion we shall concentrate on children's games, the ecological-environmental element undoubtedly also fashioned the play of adults.

Games and the Environment

The ethnic-religious settlement map of Palestine made possible, on the one hand, contact between Jews and Gentiles, mainly in the large mixed cities, but also in the rural sphere, while, on the other hand, it allowed for cultural-religious autonomy to develop in more closed settlement units. As regards the history of play, this demographic situation might possibly have

8. See F.N. Jackson, *Toys of Other Days* (London: Country Life, 1908), p. 1; K. Groeber, *Children's Toys of Bygone Days: A History of Playthings of All Peoples from Prehistoric Times to the XIXth Century* (London: F.A. Stokes, 1932), pp. 41-42; F. Grunfeld, *Games of the World: How to Make Them, How to Play Them, How They Came to Be* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975), p. 11.

9. See J. Levy, *Play Behavior* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978), pp. 6-12. Levy mentions three external factors that pose difficulties for control of a game: (1) intrinsic motivation; (2) the negation of the real world; and (3) internal control. A distinction must be drawn between play in particular and leisure-time activities in general, both past and present, in relation to political, social, and other such aims.

enabled contact and mutual influence, along with independent development.¹⁰ Universal games were common in both non-Jewish and Jewish society, making it at times difficult for the scholar to draw clear conclusions regarding contact between Jews and Gentiles by a study of such games, but these difficulties are by no means insurmountable, as we shall see below. I shall now cite a few examples of universal games or pastimes in which both Jews and Gentiles engaged.

Thus, in the Greco-Roman world locusts and other insects were often considered playthings or toys. They were generally kept in cages, but they were also taken out of them, with a string tied around their necks to prevent their escape. Adults were usually interested in the pleasant 'song' of several of the insects, while children, as is their wont to the present, simply liked to play with these creatures. There are even instances in which locusts or other insects were eulogized in inscriptions on special gravestones set up for them.¹¹

Jewish children also enjoyed playing with locusts. *Mishnah Šab.* 9.7 states that it is forbidden on the Sabbath to take out (from one domain to another) 'a living, "clean" locust, however small', because adults keep them as toys for children. Rabbi Judah adds, in the continuation of the *Mishnah*, that 'unclean' locusts also were played with: 'R. Judah says: Even if a man took out a living, unclean locust, however small, (he is culpable on account of carrying from one domain to another) since it is kept as a child's plaything'. If so, then according to the *Mishnah*, parents were accustomed to look for locusts to serve as toys for their children.¹² This is not to say that children did not hunt or search for locusts on their own, but rather that since the *Mishnah* is concerned with Sabbath prohibitions which apply to adults, the *Mishnah* addressed the case in which adults searched out these insects for their children. Especially intriguing is the

10. See R. Yankelevitch, 'The Relative Size of the Jewish and Gentile Populations in Eretz Israel in the Roman Period', *Cathedra* 61 (1992), pp. 156-75 (Hebrew).

11. See, e.g., I. Beavis, *Insects and Other Invertebrates in Classical Antiquity* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1988), pp. 76, 103, 167.

12. My interpretation is dependent upon the existence of the word 'af', meaning 'even' in the statement by Rabbi Judah. According to this wording he would not disagree with the first view in the *Mishnah*, but rather adds to it; see *y. Šab.* 9.7 (12[b]). According to the Palestinian Talmud, Rabbi Judah does disagree with this first view; for our purposes, this implies that, according to this first view, people played with clean locusts and not with impure ones, while according to Rabbi Judah they played with impure ones. See A. Goldberg, *Commentary to the Mishna Shabbat* (Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1976 [Hebrew]), p. 194.

version of the Munich manuscript of the Mishnah, as it appears in the Babylonian Talmud (*Šab.* 90b): 'to cause him to laugh (*le-tzahek lo*) with it (*bo*)', that is, the adults play with the locust in order to amuse the child. Here as well, we cannot rule out the possibility that children played by themselves with locusts without adults, and there were apparently Jewish children who became so attached to their locusts that they eulogized them upon their death and dug graves for them.¹³

Clearly, there were similarities here between practices in the Gentile world and those in Jewish society; the question that arises is whether the phenomena were related. Did the rabbis, for instance, know about the prevalence of playing with locusts in the Greco-Roman world and this did not at all disturb them, or perhaps do the Jewish traditions reflect an independent Jewish reality? The following source may possibly aid in answering this question. *Tosefta Sof.* 6.6 (Lieberman edition, pp. 184-85) describes what, according to the rabbis, Ishmael did to Isaac, and what aroused the ire of Sarah: 'Sarah saw that Ishmael built a high place, hunted locusts, and offered incense to idolatry'.¹⁴ We have shown in another study that the portrayal in this tradition of Ishmael's play was based on the background of games common in the Greco-Roman world, and possibly also in the early Arab world.¹⁵ In this instance, the playing with locusts is not innocent, certainly not by Jewish criteria. Children's play in the non-Jewish world was frequently based on the religious rite of adults, and just as they played at the offering of sacrifices, they similarly played at the hunting of locusts and their sacrifice.¹⁶ We are of the opinion that as long as games did not conflict with halakhah or Jewish law, the rabbis did not object to them. In the case just described above, though, the innocent play with locusts entered the realm of the forbidden, and, therefore, the rabbis had Sarah utter a rebuke that led to Ishmael's eventual expulsion. We learn from all this, however, that the rabbis were quite familiar with other types of innocent play with locusts in the Gentile world, that they did not reject

13. See the discussion in *b. Šab.* 90b: 'But Rabbi Judah [maintains] that if it [the locust] dies, the child will mourn it'. See also Rashi, *Yevamot* 121b, *q.v.* '*Kamza be-Alma*': 'The children caused the death of a locust or ant, and they named it so-and-so, as is the practice of children at play'. Here, although the play ended in 'disaster', they nevertheless engaged in an act of 'burial'.

14. Cf. also *Sifre Deut.* 31 (Finkelstein edition, pp. 49-50).

15. See J. Schwartz, 'Ishmael at Play: On Exegesis and Jewish Society', *HUCA* 66 (1995), pp. 203-21.

16. See Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, pp. 26-27; Caillos, *Man, Play and Games*, p. 62.

these, and as long as they did not seem to clearly conflict with Jewish practice.

A similar situation apparently existed regarding other common games as well. It is known, for example, that Jewish children played with types of small carts that were popular in the Greco-Roman world, and there were apparently no halakhic reasons to forbid play with them. In non-Jewish society, however, some children drove almost authentic chariots. These were of the type related to races held in a hippodrome and that might have been sufficient reason for the rabbis, and probably for many Jewish parents as well, to regard this form of play as unacceptable.¹⁷

As regards these two games, playing with locusts was common in the Greco-Roman world, but play with them in Jewish society need not have been connected to this. There were also many ways of playing with carriages, both toy-size and real, that were widespread in the Greco-Roman world, but which were not essentially linked to it. There were, however, also additional universal games common in the Greco-Roman world that came to be identified with the culture of that society. This happened, for example, with regard to certain types of ballgames. In general, ball play was one of the most widespread pastimes in the Greco-Roman world, and second only to gambling. Everyone played ball games: the Emperor, slaves, men and women from infancy to old age. Almost every location was suitable for playing: special fields, or even public places where passersby might have been bothered by these games.¹⁸

The high standing enjoyed by ball playing in the non-Jewish society seemingly posed no hindrance to such play in Jewish society. Talmudic sources mention both the physical properties of the ball and several methods of play.¹⁹ Jews even played ball in the public domain on the Sabbath, albeit in accordance with halakhic limitations.²⁰ Fundamentally, therefore,

17. See J. Schwartz, '“A Child’s Cart”: A Toy Wagon in Ancient Jewish Society', *Ludica* 4 (1998), pp. 7-19.

18. See J. Schwartz, 'Ball Playing in Ancient Jewish Society: The Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods', *Ludica* 3 (1997), pp. 16-39.

19. For the physical form of the ball, see, e.g., *m. Kel.* 23.1; 28.1; *Miq.* 10.2, and more. For ball games in Jewish society, see *y. Sanh.* 17.1 (28[a]); *Eccl. R.* 12.11; *Pes. R.* 3, *Ba-Yom ha-Shemini* (p. 8a). For additional details, see my article 'Ball Playing in Ancient Jewish Society'.

20. See, e.g., *t. Šab.* 10(11).10 (Lieberman edition, p. 43): 'Such as those who play with a ball in the public domain, and the ball went from the hand of one of them beyond [a distance of] four cubits, he is liable', implying that he is not liable for less than four cubits. This is one of the many forms of 'catch'.

there was nothing wrong with ball playing, although it is doubtful that the rabbis would have boasted of their skill at playing, as did Roman leaders, or that they would have exerted efforts to create a literature on the subject, as occurred in the Roman world.²¹

However, some contexts of ball playing, not necessarily directly connected to the game itself might have been problematical. Thus, for example, the ball games that were held in the gymnasium that Jason built in Jerusalem in the Hellenistic period probably aroused negative feelings, but this was probably the result of the Hellenistic milieu of the gymnasium and not on account of the games themselves.²² This type of feeling probably persisted during the Roman period as regards ball playing in gymnasia, in arenas, in *palaestrae*, and in similar locations. Venue, therefore, often seemed to be of more importance than the nature of the game. Consequently, the halakhic problem could often be remedied by changing the venue of play. This would explain the different attitudes toward public ball playing that might occasionally arouse negative feelings, while in private or within the family the same game might be acceptable. Indeed, such activity within the family circle could draw children and parents closer together, and there was no reason for the rabbis to oppose such a form of play.

But there were also other external problems. Ball playing had other flaws: modesty of attire was not always observed while playing, at least according to Jewish norms, and mixed games between the sexes would have been considered undesirable.²³ These objections, however, were probably weaker regarding playing within the family or in private.

As just stated, problems related to the venue of the game or behavior during it could often be solved by a change of location. Political circumstances that influenced play were more difficult to resolve. Thus, *y. Taan.* 4.5 (69a) relates regarding the destruction of Mt Simeon: 'And why was it

21. See J. Väterlein, *Roma Ludens: Kinder und Erwachsene beim Spiel in antiken Rom* (Amsterdam: Grüner, 1976), p. 39.

22. For the construction of the gymnasium, see 1 Macc. 1.14-15; 2 Macc. 4.7-17. A discussion of the attitude of Judaism to sport, and especially to the competitions held in the gymnasia and the *palaestrae*, would exceed the scope of the current article, and I intend to examine this elsewhere. See H.A. Harris, *Greek Athletics and the Jews* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press for St David's University College, Lampeter, 1976).

23. For detailed discussions, see Schwartz, 'Ball Playing in Ancient Jewish Society'.

destroyed? Some say, because of licentiousness, and others say, because they played with a ball'. This tradition posed difficulties for commentators and scholars, and the parallel in *Lam. R.* 4 (Buber edition, p. 106) adds 'on the Sabbath', in order to explain the destruction of the settlement on account of ball playing. In my opinion, there was no need for the addition. This tradition reflects the reality of the Bar-Kokhba War.²⁴ During peacetime there was no opposition to games that were common in the Roman world. During time of war, however, the situation was different. It was not fitting to engage in leisure-time activities characteristic of enemy culture, especially if this was a pastime of which the foe was especially enamored. This game, which was permitted in various forms, and even on the Sabbath, was invalidated under special political circumstances that were connected with the attitude of the Jewish people to the non-Jewish environment.

Thus, this play was not intrinsically wrong, but ecological circumstances intervened and what was permitted and even innocuous became forbidden. It is, however, not always easy to determine the ecological environment of other games. Children, for example, tend to imitate in their play the behavior of adults, and thus the spirit of the game frequently reflects the manner in which adults comported themselves.²⁵ Unfortunately, we do not always know exactly which adults they are imitating. Thus, in the course of a description of a priestly robe, there is mention of 'cones of *kenasot* (*kolsot*) that were on children's heads'. Medieval commentators and scholars understood these to be a sort of helmet or military headgear that children wore while at play.²⁶ The Talmudic discussion assumes that Jewish children engaged in war games similar to those that were very common in the non-Jewish world.²⁷ Also, Jewish children played with *ditzat ha-Aravi'in*, that is, a small shield that was widespread among the

24. Schwartz, 'Ball Playing in Ancient Jewish Society'.

25. See G. Lillehammer, 'A Child is Born—The Child's World in an Archaeological Perspective', *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 22 (1989), pp. 89-105; Caillos, *Man, Play and Games*, p. 64.

26. See *b. Zeb.* 88b. For a discussion of the meaning of the term, see Rashi, *Yevamot*, q.v. 'U-ke-Min Konaot'. See also S. Krauss, *Talmudische Archaeologie* (Leipzig: F. Fock, 1912 [Hildesheim: Georg Olm, 1966]), III, p. 109; *idem*, *Paras ve-Romi ba-Talmud u-va-Midrashim* (*Persia and Rome in the Talmud and the Midrashim*) (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1948 [Hebrew]), p. 209. The *koles* (helmet) was uniquely Roman.

27. See, e.g., J.K. Evans, *War, Women and Children in Ancient Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 167.

Arabs and this too seems to have been a toy used in war games.²⁸ The question now arises regarding the role model implicit in these traditions. Did the Jewish child imitate Jewish soldiers, obviously in accordance with a tradition of the past, or did he or she copy that with which they were more familiar, that is, Gentile soldiers in the Roman army, certainly figures over whom no love was lost? The rabbis seemingly made no effort to prevent war games, but simply established limits regarding this type of play.²⁹

The relationship of other games to their environment cannot be assessed, because of the difficulty in determining if they were innocent or not. This is the case, for example, regarding playing with nuts. Mishnah *B. Meş.* 4.12 mentions a disagreement between Rabbi Judah and the Sages, as to whether a shopkeeper is permitted to distribute nuts or parched corn to children, since he thereby influences the children to return to his store and prefer it over others. It is difficult to determine whether the children played with the nuts or ate them, or perhaps both, because nuts, parched corn, and other types of fruits and foods are played with, before being eaten at the end of the game.³⁰ The nut is mentioned in the rabbinic sources as a plaything of children, women, and even kings, and these sources contain no hint of anything wrong with playing with nuts, nor of any external influence on such games.³¹

28. See *m. Kelim* 24.1; see J.N. Epstein, *Perush ha-Geonim le Seder Taharoth (Der gaonische Kommentar zur Mischnaordnung Teharoth)* (Berlin: Mayer & Miller, 1921; Jerusalem: Devir/Magnes, 1982), p. 65.

29. See *t. Sof.* 6.6 (Lieberman edition, pp. 186-87) for the game of 'bloodshed' that Ishmael played with Isaac. See the extended discussion in 'Ishmael at Play'.

30. The nut could be eaten, while one continued to play with its shell. See, e.g., *m. Kel.* 17.15; *b. B. Meş.* 60a: 'What is the Rabbis' reason? Because one can say to another: "I distribute nuts; you distribute plums". The plums are eaten, and their pits become game pieces.

31. For women playing with nuts, see *b. Erub.* 104a, with a discussion of the halakhic problems entailed by this game (and by playing with apples) on the Sabbath. See Rashi, *q.v.* 'Ha-Mesahakot be-Egozim': 'To roll them along a board'. For a precise description of this type of play in the Roman world, see A. Baumeister, *Denkmaeler des klassischen Altertums zur Erlaeuterung des Lebens der Griechen und Roemer in Religion* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1885), I, p. 249 Fig. 228. The conservatism characteristic of the development of games imparts special import to the statements on such matters by medieval commentators such as Rashi, even though they lived hundreds of years after the events. See Schwartz, "'A Child's Cart'". See also *Song R.* 6.7 (Dunskey edition, p. 149): 'What is this nut? Laughter for children, and an amusement

However, games with nuts were not always innocent. There were various forms of gambling games with nuts in the Greco-Roman world. Nuts, therefore, posed a particular problem in respect to children. They were a handy and convenient toy, but they could easily be used for gambling and this gambling could easily be camouflaged as innocent play. Children could gamble with nuts, and claim to their parents that they were engaged in children's games.³² The question then arises as to whether playing with nuts and the like in the Jewish world was an innocuous type of play, or whether the game drifted, most likely under the influence of the game as played in the Greco-Roman world, into the realm of gambling, and especially gambling by children.

Talmudic literature does not provide a clear answer to this question. Talmudic discussions concerning the professional gambler state that his testimony as a witness is not accepted until he smashes all his implements of gambling. Mention is made, among others, of 'one who plays with *pesifasin* (gaming pieces), and another, with nut shells and pomegranate peels'.³³ Nut shells and pomegranate peels were gambling pieces for the habitual gambler, who was willing to make use of whatever came into his hands as an implement for gambling. The fact that such husks are mentioned only in reference to such an extreme case of gambling, and not in the context of the games of children and women, indicates that children wagering with nut shells and the like was not a common phenomenon. If this had been a widespread occurrence, its halakhic contexts would have been specified, just as the halakhic implications of the shunning of the professional gambler are clearly stated. If my presumption is correct, then this is an example of the lack of external influence upon the Jewish society.

An interesting question is whether the lack of external influence was only in the realm of gambling by children, while adults were open to such

for kings.' In *Pes. R.* 11 (Friedmann [Ish-Shalom] edition, p. 42a): 'and enjoyment for kings'.

32. For an extensive and detailed discussion of games with nuts and gambling games, see J. Schwartz, 'Gambling in Ancient Jewish Society', in Martin Goodman (ed.), *Jews in the Greco-Roman World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 145-68. For simple games with nuts, see, for example, Ovid, *Nux* 73-86. Games, such as *capita aut navia* (head or tails) or *par impar* (odd or even) enabled one playing with nuts to wager or to play innocently, as he or she might wish. For attempts by Roman parents to prevent their children from gambling with nuts, see Martial 14.18.

33. So *t. Sanh.* 5.2 (Zuckerman edition, p. 423); *y. Sanh.* 3.6 (21[a]); *b. Sanh.* 25b.

influence as evidenced by their wagering in games with astragals, dice, and the like, or whether there was little in the way of such external influence on adults and what gambling that there was among them was not particularly associated with the Greco-Roman world.³⁴ An analysis of the Jewish sources and archaeological remains shows that there was a certain incidence of gambling games in Jewish society, mainly among the urban, wealthy strata,³⁵ among whom it was more likely to find professional or obsessive gamblers,³⁶ but such gaming, it appears, did not spread to dimensions that would have endangered Jewish society, at least according to the rabbis.³⁷

The explanation for this phenomenon is apparently related to the Jewish attitude to the two ecological levels of gambling activities. Betting in the non-Jewish world was frequently conducted in inns or houses of prostitution, was accompanied by violence, corruption, and pornography, and was also plagued by other negative social phenomena. If the dice or game pieces were not illustrated with pornographic motifs, they frequently presented subjects connected with idolatry. All this undoubtedly hindered

34. See N. Purcell, 'Literate Games: Roman Urban Society and the Game of *Alea*', *Past and Present* 147 (1995), pp. 3-37, and the bibliography there. See also the literature in n. 32, above.

35. For the die found in Jason's Tomb, see L.Y. Rahmani, 'Jason's Tomb', *IEJ* 17 (1967), pp. 61-100 (90, 96, Pl. 24d). Interestingly, the manner in which the spots were painted on the die made possible the cheating that was characteristic of gambling in the Roman world. For the die found in the Armenian Garden in the Upper City, see A.D. Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem 1961-1967* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1985), I, p. 58. For another die that was discovered in the Upper City and for disks or tesserae that were uncovered there and that were used as gaming pieces, see N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Shikoma Publishing, 1980 [Hebrew]), p. 193 Fig. 224, p. 200 Fig. 239.

36. See *m. Sanh.* 3.3: 'Rabbi Judah said: When [are dice-players unfit for testimony]? When they have no other trade, but if they have some other trade than that, they are not disqualified.' See also the possible parallel in *m. Rosh Hashanah* 1.8, and our discussion of this mishnah in 'Gambling in Ancient Jewish Society'. On the '*kuvyustos*', who apparently is a professional gambler, see, for example, *b. Hul.* 91a; *b. Bek.* 5b. Cf. *y. Ned.* 5.4 (39[b]).

37. Apparently, the rabbis initially were extremely stringent in matters related to gambling, but later became more lenient with the occasional gambler, while becoming even stricter with the professional gambler. See my article, 'Gambling in Ancient Jewish Society'. In the medieval period Jewish society was plagued by serious gambling problems. See L. Landman, 'Jewish Attitudes Toward Gambling: The Professional and Compulsive Gambler', *JQR* 57 (1966-67), pp. 298-318; 58 (1967-68), pp. 34-62.

the spread of gambling in Jewish society. Mention should also be made of an additional mitigating factor: gambling was forbidden in the Roman world except for the time of the Saturnalia, although it is doubtful whether this ban was ever successfully prosecuted in Rome, or anywhere else.³⁸ The extent of gambling was not only limited by the general negative influence of the non-Jewish gambling milieu, but also by the opposing, positive influences of the Jewish environment. Both of these factors combined to hinder the spread of gambling in Jewish society, but regarding the second one, scholars have demonstrated that strong ties to home and the family and consequently leisure pastimes linked to family and work (to support that family) were likely to prevent excessive gambling. The connection to home and family in Jewish society is well known and the stress on Torah study in that society might have also provided a 'recreational' pastime serving to prevent interest in questionable pastimes like gambling. All of this contributed to the limited presence of gambling in Jewish society.³⁹

The Jewish attitude to gambling shows that at times a response to negative external phenomena is insufficient, and positive alternatives must be presented. The rabbis understood that they could not prevent negative phenomena relying solely on official institutions such as schools,⁴⁰ or by taking advantage of the natural tendencies for play within the family circle.⁴¹ Rather, there was a need to attempt to establish 'Jewish' norms as regards play and amusements. As we have seen, they did not establish these as compulsory norms. The rabbis were cognizant of the limitations on their power to enforce their will on the majority regarding popular use of leisure time. Unfortunately, rabbinic literature does not include all their discussions and thoughts concerning 'game theory', but there are a number of extant testimonies relating to the type of games preferred by the rabbis. Thus it is related, for example, that the 'final letters' in the Hebrew alphabet (*khaf, mem, nun, peh, tzaddik*) were determined by the 'watchers': 'And who are these watchers? It happened that on a stormy day, when the rabbis did not enter the academy, the children did enter. They said, Let us

38. See Purcell, 'Literate Games'.

39. See D.M. Downes *et al.*, *Gambling, Work and Leisure: A Study Across Three Areas* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), pp. 89-95.

40. See, e.g., *Num. R.* 2.15: '...a prince whose father told him, "Go to the school". He went to the marketplace, and he began playing with the youth.' The marketplace was always a source of negative external influences in relation to play. See, e.g., *Exod. R.* 1.1 (Shinan edition, p. 35). See also 'Ishmael at Play'.

41. See, e.g., *Midr. Teh.* 92.13 (Buber edition, p. 412); *b. Šab.* 155b.

“play school”, so that in the academy we will not be idle.⁴² The children played at being teachers or rabbis in their play academy or school, imitating adults as is common in every society. The children, according to that tradition, grew up to become ‘great’; their actions as children reflected their potential and direction as adults.

According to the rabbis, the preferred play was educational and Jewish, and, if at all possible, devoid of any ties to the outside world. Such play could withstand external influences or interference, and at the same time strengthen Jewish heritage. An additional example of such a game is that of the Jewish children in Rome who played at heave-offerings and tithes.⁴³ In this instance, the game seemingly served as a method of remembering the temple, reinforcing Jewish consciousness, and even of withstanding the temptation of the ‘negative’ games in Rome.

Summary

Jewish society in the time of the Mishnah and Talmud was not alienated from its surroundings, or even from the neighboring Gentile environment. This non-Jewish environment influenced Jewish society in the realm of play. The rabbis preferred to inhibit this influence, but they realized how difficult that was. Generally they did not oppose such pursuits if the outside influence did not contradict Jewish halakhah or law. At times, however, an innocent game in a non-Jewish environment posed difficulties for the Jews, or changing political or social circumstances might effect Jewish society and its attitude toward a certain game. In any event, the study of play in any society, including Jewish society, must be undertaken within the framework of both immediate and more distant surroundings.

42. *y. Meg.* 1.11 (71[d]); *Gen. R.* 1.11 (Theodor-Albeck edition, p. 10); cf. also *b. Šab.* 104a.

43. See *y. Sanh.* 14.19 (25[d]).

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY:
A COMPARISON OF SEBASTIAN MÜNSTER AND DAVID GANS

Dean Phillip Bell

Introduction

Much recent research on the interaction between Jews and Christians in late medieval and early modern Europe has stressed, though not often seriously tested, the important relationships between Judaism and Christianity. It has become increasingly clear, however, that at both formal and informal levels, in social structure as well as religious development, Jews and Christians interacted with one another and helped to form the identity and understanding of each other in significant ways. The purpose of this article is to explore the extent to which Jews and Christians shared historical discourse, historiographical methodology and interpretation, and subject matter in the sixteenth century.

In what follows I will consider the actual engagement in and discussion of Judaism and Christianity and of larger ‘world’ historical events as presented in both Jewish and Christian European histories composed in the sixteenth century. In particular, I will examine the important and cosmopolitan *Cosmographia* of Sebastian Münster (1488–1552), which was first published in 1544 and then went through eight editions during the author’s life and thirty-five more by 1628. Münster was eminently familiar with both Jewish exegesis and Jewish history, frequently borrowing from the works of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Nahmanides, Gersonides, Kimhi and Ibn Daud. In fact, Johannes Eck disparagingly referred to Münster as ‘Rabbi Münster’.¹ Given his great familiarity with Jewish thought and its assessment in his grammatical, theological, and geographical-historical works, this

1. See Erwin I.J. Rosenthal, ‘Sebastian Muenster’s Knowledge and Use of Jewish Exegesis’, in I. Epstein, E. Levine and C. Roth (eds.), *Essays in Honor of the Very Rev. Dr. J.H. Hertz* (London: E. Goldston, 1944), pp. 351-69.

article explores his assessment of Jews and Judaism in his broader universal history.²

By way of comparison I also examine *Zemah David* by David Gans (1541–1613), a writer who was simultaneously a chronicler, astronomer and mathematician. Gans was born in Westphalia in 1541. He studied Talmud at Bonn and Frankfurt. Later he learned under Moses Isserles in Cracow, and he held the rabbinic title *morenu ha-rav*.³ After 1564 he settled in Prague, where he engaged in business. *Zemah David* was first published in 1592 but was also extensively developed during the course of the seventeenth century. Gans's chronicle is comprised of two parts, one on Jewish history and one on general history.⁴ Although Gans studied with a number of prominent rabbis and, like Münster, relied heavily upon the work of earlier Jewish scholars such as Ibn Daud and Zacuto, he was also very familiar with several German and Czech chronicles and he stands at the crossroads of what Yerushalmi has described as the beginning of Jewish historical thinking.⁵

In comparing these works and assessing the development of historiography in the sixteenth century I am interested in Jewish and Christian historiographical similarities and differences, the extent to which Jews and Christians borrowed from each other's historical sources, and the ways in which the conception and structure of their histories belie serious interaction with and understanding of each other's religious and cultural discourse. Along the way, I will assess the position taken by these historians as described in their histories, as well as broader issues of great importance in

2. For a general overview of Münster's relationship to Judaism and his use of specific sources, see Karl Heinz Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster: Versuch eines biographischen Gesamtbildes* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1969), pp. 72–86.

3. Mordechai Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism in Sixteenth-Century Jewish Historiography: A Study of David Gans' *Zemah David*', in Bernard Dov Cooperman (ed.), *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 49–88 (54); see also Mordechai Breuer, 'Introduction', in *Zemah David* (ed. Mordechai Breuer; Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1983).

4. Gans argues that the study of general history is important for a number of reasons, including his belief that it is important that Jews will not seem to non-Jews 'like cattle that cannot distinguish between their right and left, or as though we [Jews] were all born but the day before yesterday' (cited in Michael A. Meyer, *Ideas of Jewish History* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987], p. 131).

5. See Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982).

the study of Jewish and Christian symbiosis. It is hoped that this initial comparison will broach a much larger investigation into both Jewish and Christian historiography in Europe between 1400 and 1800.

Sebastian Münster and the Cosmographia

Sebastian Münster was one of the most important figures in the study of the Hebrew Language—then a ‘young science’ in the German schools.⁶ Münster appears to have had personal academic relations with individual Jews, to whom he turned for Hebrew manuscripts and translations, as well as for discussions of translations from Hebrew to Aramaic. His extensive correspondence with some Jews, most notably Elia Levita, is well known and reveals a heavy influence of Judaism on his work.⁷ But Münster’s relationship to Judaism revolved around not only his scientific inquiry into linguistics and rabbinics; it seems to have had a rather more personal relationship as well. According to Karl Heinz Burmeister, Münster had attended synagogue services frequently,⁸ was familiar with the practices of German Jews,⁹ and studied Jewish gravestone inscriptions in both Heidelberg and Basel.¹⁰ A reconstruction of Münster’s library reveals that he was well-acquainted with rabbinic works, including approximately forty theological-philosophical tractates, fifteen lexicographical-grammatical works, three histories, three astronomical works, two mathematical works, and one geography.¹¹

And yet Münster’s position toward Judaism was rather complex. His stance on conversion of the Jews, a central theme of many Christian

6. Sebastian Münster was born in early 1488 in Ingelheim. The son of a farmer, he belonged, unlike most other (urban) humanists, to a poor family. His education and career took him from Ingelheim to Rufach, Heidelberg, Löwen, Freiburg, Pforzheim, Wurstein, Tübingen and Basel. Münster was often grouped with the Protestant ‘heretics’, and he did have contact with Pellikan, Capito, Melanchthon and Reuchlin, even though his own opinions did not necessarily echo those of other scholars, particularly Reuchlin. See Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 73. He also had correspondence with the most important Christian Hebraists, including Schreckenfuchs, Andreas Masius, Jakob Jonas and Nikolaus Wynmann (see Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 76).

7. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, pp. 75-76.

8. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, pp. 73-74.

9. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 74.

10. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 74.

11. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 76; for a list of his extensive sources from antiquity, the Middle Ages and contemporary writers, see pp. 152-53.

Hebraists and official Church policies, was one of resignation.¹² Münster frequently met attempts at expulsion of Jews with one side of the Augustinian argument that Christ had himself wanted the Jews to remain unbelievers until the end of the world as an example for true believers.¹³ Even in his remarks regarding the polemical *Sefer Nizzahon*, Münster's comments were more polemical and apologetic than missionary.¹⁴ His reverence for Hebraica and certain aspects of rabbinic literature, as well as his personal relations with individual Jews and Jewish communities, intertwined with more contemporary and frequently less friendly views of Jews and Judaism.

The *Cosmographia*, on which he worked between 1524 and its first printing in 1544, is perhaps Münster's most magnificent work. It is a historical work, but not as one might traditionally conceive of history and not one that is strictly chronological. The work is rather encyclopedic, covering a variety of aspects of geography, history, botany, zoology, archaeology, and ethnography. It has often been viewed as more a geographical treatise than an historical work, or at least a geography that is historically oriented,¹⁵ and Münster himself noted that history was grounded in geography and that without geography an orderly history could not be written.¹⁶ Münster in fact saw the relationship between geography and history as inseparable. In his preface to the *Cosmographia* he noted that his 'task in this book is to describe the entire world, which requires a diffuse and healthy disposition...so that one might distinguish the true from the false, the certain from the uncertain'. For Münster, histories are nothing other than 'examples of what one secures, how this or that matter developed, how human wit and providence is oftentimes uncertain, indeed blind, and [evidence] that everything depends upon the hand of God, who effects everything in everything. All of our advice is hindering where there is no measure of the design of God.'¹⁷ Everything happens because of the order that God establishes in both the heavens and on earth, not *ex fortuna vel*

12. On the Christian Hebraists of early modern Germany, see Stephen G. Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996).

13. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 81.

14. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, pp. 83–84.

15. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 163.

16. Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographia* (Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1578), p. iiii.

17. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. iif.

causa.¹⁸ Given this emphasis, Münster's presentation of the lands and customs of different peoples takes on something of an ecumenical tone.

Münster marshals a host of biblical,¹⁹ ancient, medieval, and contemporary sources throughout the six books of the *Cosmographia*.²⁰ Throughout, he includes extensive genealogies of ruling (secular and ecclesiastical) families (as for example the Christian kings in France until the time of Charlemagne,²¹ and subsequently an entire page on Charlemagne himself),²² major historical and political events (including the Christianization of Germany²³ and a litany of German urban histories throughout book three), customs and dialects (as in the common practices and customs of the various German people²⁴), as well as the host of maps and woodcuts of cities and personalities, for which the work is famous. Münster cites a minimal amount of Hebrew in the work, largely in support of his assertion that Germany was named a very long time ago, citing Genesis 19, when 'the children of Noah were scattered throughout the entire earth'.²⁵

While much of Münster's presentation seems rather noncommittal, as for example his discussion of John Hus,²⁶ and even somewhat scholarly (utilizing diverse sources), he frequently repeats the historical tales of other sources, and at times interweaves them with handed-down fantasies and his own theological issues. Münster is not slow to take up rather fantastic descriptions—verbal and pictorial—especially regarding the marvels of Africa, for example.²⁷

Early on in the *Cosmographia*, Münster articulates his general understanding of the Jews as a people who rejected Jesus and who were conse-

18. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. iir.

19. See, for example, his discussion of Jerusalem, Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. mcccxcviii-mcccxcix.

20. The first book is a discourse about more formal elements of geography; the subsequent books treat geographical regions at both the local, territorial, and national levels, beginning with known Europe (Ireland, England, Spain, France and Italy) in book two, Germany in book three—which is the longest and most involved treatment in the work—the remainder of Europe (including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, Russia, Greece and Turkey) in book four, Asia in book five, and Africa in book six.

21. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. ccccxi.

22. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. ccccxi.

23. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. ccccxx.

24. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. ccccxxviii.

25. Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. ccccxi-cccxcv.

26. Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. mcxx-mcxxi.

27. Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. mcccxciii.

quently scattered and persecuted. He writes that 'the Jews and after them the pagans wanted to excise Christ and his holy teaching against the advice of God, but what has happened to them? The Jews have been run into the ground and the pagans took on their [own] error and false religion.' Münster concludes that 'in times of old the Holy Land flowed with milk and honey, but now it is a fuming, bitter and uncouth ground'.²⁸ Münster also criticizes what he sees as the fantastic lie of the Jews regarding the location of Paradise in an earthy garden. Instead, he counters with an interpretation that the Empire of Christ, or Paradise, is not in this world.²⁹ Like other Christian Hebraists of the sixteenth century, he clearly offers a divergent theological stance that is willing to incorporate Hebraica while criticizing Judaism.

At times Münster presents a rather even hand in his descriptions of persecutions of Jews; in these incidents he notes that cries arose against the Jews, but he does not give details or offer any credence to the accusations. This seems particularly true for the more recent cases he cites, for example in his discussion of the Jews in Lisbon in 1506,³⁰ and to a somewhat lesser extent, in his representation of the ritual murder accusation of Simon of Trent.³¹ On the other hand, Münster frequently recirculates traditional anti-Jewish accusations, as for example in the secret murder of a Christian child by the Jews leading to their expulsion from France in 1182 at the hands of Philip,³² or in the accusations of well-poisoning in 1322 that were first directed against the lepers and then the Jews.³³

Overall, then, Münster's *Cosmographia* is an impressive work that combines incredible detail, flourishes of innovative methodology in selection and organization of material, with very traditional historical accounts. The nature of the organization and the relation of customs and geography to historical incidence marks an important contribution to historical thinking in the sixteenth century. The *Cosmographia* appears to be a more 'scientific' study, and its emphasis on common development underlying regional variation and divergence represents an important sixteenth-century change. The focus on geography forces a somewhat universal and comparative perspective that downplays religious difference, even if

28. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. iif.

29. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. xxxvii.

30. Münster, *Cosmographia*, pp. lxxvi-lxxvii.

31. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. ccclii.

32. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. cxci.

33. Münster, *Cosmographia*, p. cxcii.

Münster sets the parameters for fundamental difference in his Preface. Münster does not seem to have shared the rather more radical stance of Sebastian Franck (c. 1499–1542), who, in his *Weltbuch* of 1534, criticized external ceremonies and customs, maintaining instead that true belief was internal.³⁴ Indeed, Münster stresses the order of God as manifest both in heaven and the world. The customs that Franck describes to dismiss out of hand, Münster offers as central content in his work. Münster does have something like a fundamental historical philosophy that is basically theological: lands, even the Holy Land, and civilizations change over time, but God alone is unchangeable.³⁵ This is a somewhat different orientation from that of Franck: the universalization for Münster is in God's ordering not in man's internal belief. Münster's work did receive a good deal of criticism; yet it became a very popular work as noted above and seems eventually to have appealed to a broader burgher audience, almost as a *Hausbuch*.

David Gans and Zemah David

The Hebrew chronicle of David Gans, *Zemah David*,³⁶ shares some significant qualities with the *Cosmographia*, even though it is in many other ways an extremely different work. Like Münster and his Jewish contemporary Azariah de' Rossi, Gans displayed a deeply rooted interest in geography and science.³⁷ Like Münster, he balanced traditional sources and outlooks with new ways of organizing and conceiving history and the world around him.³⁸

34. For a discussion of Franck, see Dean Phillip Bell, *Sacred Communities: Jewish and Christian Identities in Fifteenth-Century Germany* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001), pp. 235–37.

35. Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster*, p. 161.

36. Breuer, 'Introduction', p. xxx.

37. See Salo Baron, *History and Jewish Historians: Essays and Addresses* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), p. 181.

38. Indeed the tensions in Gans's project and his outlook in general have been well stated with regard to his relation to science. According to André Neher: 'Three ways, then, opened up for David Gans: that of submission to the authority of the Gentiles and acceptance of the Ptolemaic system, whose chief Jewish representative was the great Moses Maimonides; that of the Maharal, who also recognized the scientific supremacy of Gentile astronomy, but placed above it a purely Jewish astronomy which, however, is not scientific and is the only one to possess the absolute truth. And, lastly, there was that of the Rema, with his very vague and generalized approach of a simultaneous

Gans combined Jewish and non-Jewish history and historical sources, though he was aware of the tensions in combining them, and offered two parts to his book, one treating Jewish historical accounts and the other profane history.³⁹ Given his own nature and interests in astronomy—fueled by his contacts with great non-Jewish thinkers of the time such as Tycho Brahe⁴⁰—and the environment of Prague with its rich Jewish intellectual tradition and personalities and the resplendent and eclectic court of Rudolph II, Gans combined Jewish interest with European stimuli.⁴¹

Although well-read in both Hebrew sources and German and Czech chronicles, Gans apparently knew little Latin.⁴² Particularly in regard to his reading and use of the Czech chronicles, it has been argued that his work is not always chronologically accurate, that material pertaining to different historical episodes are at times taken together, that complex historical accounts are frequently summarized and details of folk tradition omitted, and that Gans did not always fully understand his sources.⁴³ Still, the sources utilized by Gans are diverse, if not as broad as those used by de' Rossi, who culled the ancient philosophers, a variety of early Church Fathers (such as Augustine, Justin Martyr and Origen) as well as medieval Christian authorities.⁴⁴ Gans cites Jewish historians, talmudic, biblical as well as non-Jewish sources.⁴⁵ Often Gans states his sources clearly, and at

respect for Jewish tradition and the Ptolemaic system, ended in a state of painful anxiety': see André Neher, *Jewish Thought and the Scientific Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: David Gans (1541–1613) and his Times* (trans. David Maisel; Oxford: The Littman Library, 1986), p. 214. On his conciliatory role between de' Rossi and Maharal, see Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 58, and *idem*, 'Introduction', p. vii.

39. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', pp. 77-78; B.Z. Degani, 'The Structure of World History', *Zion* 45.3 (1980), pp. 173-200 (173) (Hebrew). See also Baron, *History and Jewish Historians*, p. 192, for de' Rossi's argument regarding the use of sources of Gentile origin. For de' Rossi's rationalizations, and their inherent flaws, see Lester A. Segal, *Historical Consciousness and Religious Tradition in Azariah de' Rossi's Me'or 'Einayim* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1989), pp. 55-56.

40. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 57.

41. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', pp. 50-53.

42. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 56.

43. See Jiřina Sedinová, 'Old Czech Legends in the Work of David Gans (1592)', *Judaica Bohemiae* 14.2 (1978), pp. 89-112.

44. Baron, *History and Jewish Historians*, pp. 178, 226-30.

45. See, e.g., Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 200.

times seems to weigh them with some rigor, while at other times accepting the information they relay as a matter of course.⁴⁶ His method is one of chronological and annalistic compilation, rather than critical historical interpretation, which serves an apologetic attempt to establish the traditional Jewish position on the dating of the world since creation.⁴⁷

Gans's work is more a universal or world chronicle than the majority of the works of his German colleagues, who wrote much narrower territorial histories.⁴⁸ Unlike de' Rossi, who placed little value on the practical use of history, at least for Jews, and so had little concern for contemporary events,⁴⁹ for Gans historical events serve as examples of human behavior to be emulated or avoided, even when his moralism seems to possess a markedly more secular⁵⁰ than theological tone when compared with other Christian or Jewish writers of the time, especially Josel of Rosheim.⁵¹ *Zemah David* was intended for a lay audience and the items that it reports may reflect the popular tastes of the period, including interest in natural disasters and portents, such as the volcanic eruption of Mt Vesuvius in 82 CE,⁵² which is described rather technically, mentioning the destruction of cities and the death of people and animals, without attributing the causality to divine punishment for sins.⁵³ Wars, rebellions and violence, technology and the geography of distant lands, especially those newly discovered are all discussed in *Zemah David*.⁵⁴

46. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 62, *idem*, 'Introduction', pp. xxiii-xxv, for Hebrew sources, and pp. xv-xxvi, for German sources.

47. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 60.

48. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', pp. 61-62.

49. Baron, *History and Jewish Historians*, p. 196.

50. See Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', pp. 68-69, for his assessment of Gans's practical and secular attitude and his critique of the typical Ashkenazic rabbi of his time and the institution of ordination.

51. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', pp. 65-67. See also Bell, *Sacred Communities*, pp. 218-23.

52. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 218.

53. This despite the general view that the import of celestial and earthly phenomena and their reflection of divine providence appear frequently throughout the work. For other natural disasters, see Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 225, 226, 305 (blood from heaven, in 1006), 308 (snow), 405-406 (a comet in 1572).

54. It is after his brief description of the discovery of the new world (1533, Amerigo) that he mentions Münster and his *Cosmographia*. See Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 391; Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 65; and, *idem*, 'Introduction', p. xiv.

Jewish suffering and internal schism are often downplayed in *Zemah David*. The destruction of the Second Temple is retold rather unemotionally.⁵⁵ The description of the first crusade of 4856 (1096) is presented with details of the massacres of the Jews, and the decrees against the Jews are attributed to the sins of the Jews themselves,⁵⁶ but there is seemingly little enmity toward Christians in the passage.⁵⁷

An even briefer and more detached presentation is given for 4946 (1186) for the expulsion of the Jews from France and for the great expulsion from Spain in 5152 (1492).⁵⁸ On the other hand, throughout the end of the first book there are mentions of persecutions, in the period of the later Middle Ages—including reference to another expulsion from France in 5066 (1306)⁵⁹ and even the martyrdom of individual Jews—such as Mordechai bar Hillel, the student of Moshe ba'al haSemag in Nürnberg.⁶⁰

By comparison, Gans is perhaps the only Jewish historian to focus on the history of Christian martyrology and internal schism among Christian sects; unparalleled are his discussions of the murder of Christians at the hands of Nero in 64,⁶¹ or the murder of members of all the Christian sects by Trajan in 111.⁶²

Gans's discussion of kings and emperors frequently begins by mentioning their skill, glory, wisdom, or power. According to Gans, 'Emperor Julius', for example,

was a powerful soldier and warrior, like none other since the day that Hashem created Edom on the earth. And from the womb of his mother he grew to study every wisdom, all that Hashem gave prosperous in his hand, and he walked and grew from day to day until he became the ruler of the Rome and he subdued all of France in great and terrible wars...⁶³

55. Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 85 and 217.

56. The moral argument is not absent in Gans, but, according to Breuer, the fate of the Jews, however, is not seen as in direct theological relationship to their behavior in *Zemah David*. See Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 65.

57. Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 117-18.

58. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 136.

59. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 129.

60. Gans, *Zemah David*.

61. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 215.

62. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 219. See also pp. 222-23 (Antoninus), 233, 237, and 287 (the attacks of the Norsemen).

63. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 206. Other rulers are presented in the same rather formulaic way: Tiberius Nero, for example, was 'one of the elders and important men of Rome' (p. 209); Augustus was a man of pious deeds, who did justice and charitable

Gans's emphasis on Christian martyrdom and imperial rulers is due in part to his strong messianism,⁶⁴ which focuses on the motif of the Four Empires.⁶⁵ A number of sources for his messianism have been suggested, including: the messianism of contemporary German chronicles and Protestant historiography;⁶⁶ the increasingly favorable position of the Jews in at least some Christian lands—as indicated in the economic usefulness of the Jews to the burgeoning State; and the renewed appreciation of Christians for Jewish culture as evidenced in the work of a growing body of Christian Hebraists.⁶⁷

Zemah David is somewhat different from the other major German Jewish chronicle of the sixteenth century, that of Josel of Rosheim. Gans presents events within a broad political context that examines the connections between various events. Josel, on the other hand, focuses on the persecutions of Jews, presenting historical context that emphasizes the central and undermining role of converts and informers in the attacks on Jews and Jewish communities. For Josel, the moral state of the Jews, their own sins, and the problems within their communities are directly linked to their persecution. As Elisheva Carlebach has demonstrated for the case of Josel's narrative on the expulsion of the Jews from Regensburg, Josel focused on a moral lesson rather than historical events; his emphasis on the evil actions of converts to Christianity allowed him to maintain the moral purity of the ideal Jewish community while only indirectly confronting the Christian authorities responsible for the actions against the Jews.⁶⁸ While

deeds and who loved Israel (p. 211); see also pp. 231, 236, 238, 282 (Charlemagne), 300 (Otto), 385 (Maximilian in 1519). Of course he also presents negative qualities as well, as in Tiberius, of whom it was noted, 'they wrote that this emperor was a master of evil *midos*' (p. 211); Wenzel, around the year 1400, is described as evil (p. 363).

64. See the discussion of Molkho and Reuveni, *Zemah David*, pp. 138-39; for a discussion of Solomon Luria see p. 142.

65. See Gans, *Zemah David*, (book 2) p. 163.

66. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 74; see Degani, 'The Structure of World History', particularly pp. 179-80. On the topic more generally, see Elisheva Carlebach, *Divided Souls: Converts from Judaism in Germany, 1500-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 67-87.

67. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 78. See also Allison P. Coudert, *The Impact of the Kabbalah in the Seventeenth Century: The Life and Thought of Francis Mercury van Helmont (1614-1698)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999).

68. See, Elisheva Carlebach, 'Between History and Myth: The Regensburg Expulsion in Josel of Rosheim's *Sefer ha-miknah*', in Elisheva Carlebach, John M. Efron and David N. Myers, *Jewish History and Jewish Memory: Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1998), pp. 40-53.

the moral state of the Jews does appear in *Zemah David*, it plays a very marginal role in Gans's understanding of historical development.

The Introduction to *Zemah David* notes that the work chronicles the time from Adam until contemporary times, 'until the time of our lord Rudolph...'⁶⁹ or 'from the beginning of the creation until our time'.⁷⁰ Gans is clearly writing with contemporary events and situations in mind, and a phrase that turns up time and again throughout the text is 'up until this day...' Gans intends to cover 'all of the periods of the four monarchies, namely, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome, and all of the kings who ruled them from the time of Nimrod ben Kush...until the time of our lord emperor Rudolph (may his glory be exalted) and the many things that happened in their days...'⁷¹ But, Gans continues here, 'I have set aside for them a section from this book in order to distinguish between the holy and the profane and not mix matters of the living God in matters of dried hay...'⁷² Throughout, Gans is careful to note that any statements he makes 'are not against our holy Torah and not against the sayings of the sages'.⁷³

Gans's historiographical orientation is perhaps best revealed in the introduction to book two of *Zemah David*. There he notes that 'the words of this second part from the writings of the books of the Greeks and from other books of foreigners', were not meant to be equivalent to or, worse, to uproot Jewish law and tradition.⁷⁴ Gans saw clearly that he would be attacked for his use of non-Jewish sources: 'I see in advance that many will speak out against me, condemn me, and consider me sinful because I have taken material from non-Jewish writers'.⁷⁵ Gans responds that other Jewish writers have utilized non-Jewish sources, and he asserts that Scripture itself 'has allowed us to search in non-Jewish books for accounts of events which can be of some use to us'.⁷⁶ There are, according to Gans, at least ten benefits to be derived from the accounts of this section,⁷⁷ including: evidence of Divine Providence and that God's justice punishes the wicked even in this world; that a person should be on his guard against

69. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 1.

70. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 6.

71. Gans, *Zemah David*.

72. Gans, *Zemah David*.

73. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 15.

74. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 163.

75. Meyer, *Ideas of Jewish History*, p. 128; Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 164.

76. Meyer, *Ideas of Jewish History*, pp. 128-29; Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 165.

77. Meyer, *Ideas of Jewish History*, pp. 129-31; Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 165-67.

a minor as well as powerful enemy and should not oppose powerful rulers; the admonition to be humble as well as moral maxims from the emperors, which because of their source leave a greater impression on the masses (for instance, he said 'the faithful shepherd is satisfied with the fleece of his sheep and does not desire the extended hide');⁷⁸ the ability to derive evidence for dates and the sayings of our Sages; to understand the meaning of celestial signs; the ability to respond to those nations among whom we travel; and, that we will pray to God 'to restore our judges as of old and to bring about the messianic redemption', when we see that we have neither king nor ruler while in exile.

Gans begins his narrative in book two with the year 2245 and the reign of King Kenan,⁷⁹ whose father was Enosh, the eldest son of Seth.⁸⁰ Frequently Gans gives both Hebrew and Christian dates, and he discusses the position in antiquity of the geographical areas that most interest him, particularly Bohemia and Germany. He gives details of Alexander of Macedon,⁸¹ as well as of the Goths.⁸² Throughout, Gans offers a portrait of Christianity that is seemingly 'scientific' and detached. Regarding the birth of Jesus, Gans notes simply that

Yeshua the Nazarite was born in Beth Lehem...in the year 3761 of the creation, that is the 42nd year of the emperor Augustus, therefore this reckoning was according to their knowledge in the days of Rabbi Shimon ben Hillel and in the days of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakai, and from that time is the beginning of the sects of the Christians.⁸³

Gans follows this general statement with citations of other historical works. A similarly detached presentation is given for the conversion of Constantine to Christianity.⁸⁴ While Gans identifies emperor Henry IV as a wise man, who feared God and who was a warrior, he presents the conflict between Henry and the Pope very succinctly, with no attacks against either.⁸⁵ John Hus is described as a great scholar among the Christians, but his conflict with the Church is described quickly and impartially.⁸⁶ Gans

78. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 212.

79. Gen. 4.26; 5.6; 9.1; 1 Chron. 1.1-2.

80. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 168.

81. Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 194-95, in his discussion of the Four Monarchies.

82. Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 192-93.

83. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 210.

84. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 239.

85. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 319.

86. Gans, *Zemah David*, pp. 364-65.

does, however, characterize Bohemia as a land full of violence in this period, with every faction seeking to consume its enemies.⁸⁷ Gans also describes the anti-Jewish preaching of John of Capistrano, who was sent to Silesia by Pope Nicholas V. He notes, however, that despite John's diatribes, 'the inhabitants of Breslau did not want to listen to the voice of the preacher and they protected the soul of the Jews and sent them from the land [instead]'.⁸⁸ Luther is similarly mentioned quickly and uneventfully,⁸⁹ and the Anabaptist experiment in Münster, which is called the 'new faith', is briefly recounted, focusing on its destruction.⁹⁰

Of course Jewish history is also wrapped up in the presentations of book two, as for example in the construction of the *bet hakaneset* in Prague in 997,⁹¹ or, in the mention of emperor Henry V, who allowed Jews forcibly converted to Christianity to return to Judaism in 1090.⁹² The First Crusade description focuses on the Christian rulers in Israel, and quickly refers to the attacks on the Jews, sending the reader back to the description in book one.⁹³ The 1541 expulsion of the Jews from the kingdom of Bohemia is mentioned as well.⁹⁴

The Transformation of Historiography in the Sixteenth Century

Caught between the lines of medieval and modern historical scholarship, Mordechai Breuer has seen in Gans the beginning of a new period of Jewish intellectual history, that he designates early modern.⁹⁵ But some modern scholars, with different ideological orientations, have seen in Gans a truer representative of the medieval than the modern. For Ismar Schorsch, for example, Gans offered a 'classical formulation' of 'a venerable dogmatic type of historical thinking', one that hermetically sealed Jewish and Gentile history, and that drew information about Jewish history purely

87. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 366.

88. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 371.

89. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 390.

90. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 392.

91. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 303.

92. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 317.

93. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 318.

94. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 394.

95. Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', p. 50; See also Degani, 'The Structure of World History', p. 200. Even de' Rossi fits into this category given the strong traditional and 'medieval' elements identified by Baron (*History and Jewish Historians*, p. 225).

from Hebrew sources written by Jews. The historical thinking reflected in Gans's work was shattered only by the ideology of *Wissenschaft*, 'the profound experience of intellectual dissonance created by the vast educational opportunities of the emancipation era'.⁹⁶

Nevertheless, many historians have recognized and/or argued for a transformation of Jewish historiography in the sixteenth century. Corresponding to long-standing models of periodization, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries represent a continuum that is still medieval but that is moving closer to the modernity of the nineteenth century. As such, sixteenth-century Jewish historiography has been seen as at once a revival of Jewish historical thinking and a continuation of notions of the past imprinted with traditional religious sensibilities.⁹⁷ In only a few isolated figures, particularly Azariah de' Rossi, have some historians found the precursors to modern critical historical scholarship that seem to have been forged from the Renaissance.

Underlying this sense of something new and something old in the sixteenth century has been a kind of lachrymose interpretation of history, which although it admits external influence through the Renaissance, gives even greater significance to the forced changes brought about by the Spanish expulsion.⁹⁸ One of the most important proponents of this theory has been Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi. In his popular and influential *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, Yerushalmi asserts that 'the resurgence of Jewish historical writing in the sixteenth century was without parallel earlier in the Middle Ages'.⁹⁹ He notes that ten major historical works were produced by Jews in this century. Although these works manifest genuine historiographical tendencies they also reflect a cultural and historical continuum, the majority of them written by exiles from Spain and Portugal or descendants of exiles. For Yerushalmi, then, 'the primary stimulus to the rise of Jewish historiography in the sixteenth century was the great catastrophe that had put an abrupt end to open Jewish life in the Iberian peninsula at the end of the fifteenth'.¹⁰⁰ Yerushalmi points out a 'highly articulated consciousness among the generations following the

96. Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1994), p. 178.

97. See Breuer, 'Modernism and Traditionalism', as well.

98. See Meyer, *Ideas of Jewish History*, pp. 17-18; Segal, *Historical Consciousness and Religious Tradition*, p. 3.

99. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor*, p. 57.

100. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor*, pp. 58-59.

expulsion from Spain', which seems to have little to do with direct influence of the Italian Renaissance, and which goes far beyond the chronological and geographical scope of previous works. According to Yerushalmi, a new element on this sixteenth-century historiography is a new emphasis on post-biblical Jewish history, and underlying such a new orientation, a new attitude toward the history of Jewry in exile. Such an attitude is reflected in a new interest in the history of non-Jewish nations, especially contemporary nations, since it is recognized that Jewish destinies are greatly affected 'by the interplay of relations between certain of the great powers'.¹⁰¹ While Yerushalmi finds that the historiography of the sixteenth century marks a 'leap forward when compared with what had preceded it', he rues that 'it never reached the level of critical insight to be found in the best general historical scholarship contemporary with it'.¹⁰² In a certain sense, for Yerushalmi it is only with the secularization of modernity that true Jewish historiography begins. The historical scholarship of the sixteenth century, on the other hand, continues to be unable to break away from 'conceptions and modes of thought that had been deeply rooted among Jews for the ages'.¹⁰³ This traditional view included causality based on biblicism (biblical prophecy) and messianic tumult, for example. One of the real aspects of de' Rossi's innovative history was not, therefore, his critique of rabbinic legends, but rather his 'attempt to evaluate rabbinic legends, not within the framework of philosophy or Kabbalah, each a source of truth for its partisans, but by the use of profane history, which few, if any, would accept as truth by which the words of the sages might be judged'.¹⁰⁴ But Yerushalmi's position, resting as it does on the notion of exilic identity and modern secularization, needs to be revisited, particularly given the similar context of development in sixteenth-century Christian historiography and the diversity of Jewish experiences.

In European historiography, the sixteenth century has been recognized as a pivotal period, in which numerous strands of historiographical development intermingled. Renaissance criticism like that of Valla and the discursive sensitivity of Petrarch combined with general trends toward

101. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 63.

102. Gans, *Zemah David*.

103. Gans, *Zemah David*, p. 64; See my review of *Jewish History and Jewish Memory: Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi*, 'Is There Jewish History? A Review Essay', *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 18.3 (2000), pp. 125-30 (126).

104. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor*, p. 72.

national and imperial history, travel literature, and Christian universalism, particularly as stimulated by encounters with the New World abroad and religious conflict at home. According to one recent opinion, which places Jean Bodin at the height of the science of history at the end of the sixteenth century:

As history was assuming global form in the sixteenth century, through the expansion of the horizons of universal history, it was also attaining scientific status, at least in the eyes of some reflective authors. In that age history became, literally and conceptually, a science because it was organized according to a systematic method, oriented toward universals rather than particulars, and so raised above the arts.¹⁰⁵

Still, as with standard interpretations of sixteenth-century Jewish historiography, European Christian historiography has been presented as extremely political, on occasions radically sectarian, and often rather unscientific.¹⁰⁶

Conclusions

There were a number of parallels and divergences in sixteenth-century Christian and Jewish historiography represented in the works of Münster and Gans. The very fact that we find shared discourse and concerns raises significant questions about common Jewish and Christian social, cultural, intellectual and religious experience, and suggests that we need to consider broader cultural changes in the sixteenth century as well as transformations within individual religious traditions. This is particularly the case regarding a handful of themes. First, the nature of the audience for historical works seems to have been shifting toward a lay audience, explaining perhaps the increased interest in contemporary events, common moral maxims and customs, as well as increasing emphasis in secular subjects and science. Second, the trend toward broader national and universal histories, which in some cases remained nothing more than glorified territorial histories, may be explained in part by the burgeoning of national identity, and the growing accessibility of information from reports of the

105. Donald R. Kelley, *Faces of History: Historical Inquiry from Herodotus to Herder* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 193.

106. See, e.g., R.E. Asher, *National Myths in Renaissance France: Francus, Samothès and the Druids* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), and Haya Bar-Itzhak, *Jewish Poland—Legends of Origin: Ethnopoetics and Legendary Chronicles* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001).

new world, especially through travel literature. In part, this trend may also have had something to do with increasing territorialization in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the fate of a broader community became ever more relevant. In addition, the messianism of the sixteenth century as well as the shattering of homogenous Christian culture may have made it easier for interest in more universal social and theological concepts to take root. Finally, the interweaving of biblicism and science, tradition and challenges to authority, and critical historiography and more traditional approaches to and uses of historical narratives reveals the sixteenth century as the cusp of medieval and modern historical thought, and raises the question of the relationship between religious and secular thought, and of the cultural and intellectual relationship between Christianity and Judaism. In the end, comparison of Jewish and Christian developments promises to offer a powerful tool for a new approach to the history of early modern Europe.

MINJUNG THEOLOGY'S BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS:
AN EXAMINATION OF MINJUNG THEOLOGY'S APPROPRIATION
OF THE EXODUS ACCOUNT

Wonil Kim

Introduction

Traditional Christian theology, at least in its claim, has been a Bible-based theology. It is a theology built on, among other things, but first and foremost, the Bible. Whether or not it should have been that way, it has been that way. As has been the case with Liberation theologians of the Americas, it is therefore not surprising that Minjung theologians do their work by showing that the theology they are constructing is rooted in the Bible in some significant way, and therefore credible. While we can hardly label them as biblicists, their reliance on the Bible as an indispensable primary source of their theology is unmistakable.

Again, as has been the case with Liberation theology,¹ one of the founding biblical narratives for Minjung theology is the Exodus story. Ahn Byung Moo, one of the first and the most influential Minjung theologians, sums up well what Minjung theology takes for granted in this regard: 'From the perspective of Minjung theology, the Exodus is after all the most important event, and this perspective corresponds to the Bible's own perception which takes the Exodus as the root of everything that is in the Bible'.² And we regularly encounter the same sentiment expressed by the second generation Minjung theologians. Chae Hyung Mook and Jo Ha Mu, for instance, assert that 'the Old Testament texts most preferred [by Minjung theology] are the ones related to the Exodus event'.³ Likewise, Kim

1. Arthur McGovern, 'The Bible in Latin American Liberation Theology', in Norman K. Gottwald (ed.), *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984), p. 462.

2. Chang Rak Kim, Young Jin Min and Byung Moo Ahn, 'Methodology of Minjung Theology's Biblical Hermeneutics', *Symposium 57* (year unknown).

3. Hyung Mook Chae and Ha Mu Jo, 'Biblical Hermeneutics of Korean Christian Minjung Community', *Shin Hak Sa Sang* 63 (1988), p. 818.

Ji Chul maintains that 'the Bible witnesses to the God who reveals the divine will and carries it out in the concrete historical realm. And the defining moment of God's involvement in history in the Old Testament is the Exodus event.'⁴

Exposition

As is evident in this last statement by Kim, the *modus operandi* for Minjung theology's biblical hermeneutics is the notion that history, and not the conceptual world, is the chief medium of divine revelation. This hermeneutical approach has underpinned Minjung theology's reading of the Bible from its inception. Suh Nam Dong, one of the founding Minjung theologians, is already very clear about this methodological footing. In his groundbreaking book, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*,⁵ the chapter that deals with Minjung theology's biblical connection is titled '*minjung shinhageui seang-sea-jeak jean-gea*', and not '*minjung shinhageui seang-sea-jeak geun-gea*', that is, 'Biblical Reference of Minjung Theology', and not 'Biblical Basis of Minjung Theology'.⁶ He explains this deliberate choice of the word 'reference' over 'basis' in a way that is diametrically and programmatically opposed to the conceptual discourse of the traditional theology:

The reason for using the word 'reference' over the more usual 'basis' is as follows. The word 'basis' implies philosophical [= conceptual] grounding. But here we choose 'reference' because we do not mean to say conceptual discourse but historical thinking. And the reason we must engage in historical thinking rather than in philosophical conceptuality is because that is the way the Bible thinks. The Bible does not inquire philosophically [= conceptually]. It only presents historical evidence. Historical referencing is the logic and the language of the Bible.⁷

4. Ji Chul Kim, 'A Critical Observation on Minjung Theology's Bible Reading', *Shin Hak Sasang* 69 (1990).

5. Nam Dong Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu* (Seoul: Han Kil Sa, 1983).

6. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 221-44 (my emphasis). Also see the chapter 'Historical References for a Theology of Minjung', pp. 155-82, especially the section, 'Biblical Paradigms', pp. 158ff.

7. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 231-32. Hee-suk Cyris Moon is therefore less than precise when he says that Suh 'regards the Exodus event as the biblical *basis* for the people's movement for liberation': Hee-suk Cyrus Moon, 'An Old Testament Understanding of Minjung', in the Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (eds.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*

Echoing this view, Kim Chang Rak insists that 'the biblical text does not so much convey concepts and ideologies as it addresses historical reality and witnesses the event that stands behind the text'.⁸ He then argues that 'the Exodus event unmistakably shows that the Hebrews were a social class that was liberated', and therefore it is 'unnecessary even to elaborate [the Exodus] as a liberation event'.⁹

This history- and event-oriented approach of Minjung theology to the Bible has taken on another methodological route in the form of narrative theology. From early on, Suh Nam Dong secures a clear methodological position that takes narrative as *the* fundamental and authentic medium of communicating and transmitting historical event. He stipulates methodological terms for narrative that are equally anti-conceptual discourse as they are when he speaks of the category of history:

According to the biblical traditions and precedents, the primary, chief medium of God's self-revelation is salvific act, namely, historical event... [It is not] a revelation through a theologian's hermeneutics. Laws, doctrines, theology, or even the Bible, which was edited according to a specific theological perspective, are not the primary media of divine revelation... The primary mode of God's self-revelation is the salvific, historical event, and the authentic transmitting medium of such an event is 'story'. For this reason, most of the Old and the New Testament materials consist of narrative. God's language is [a language of] narrative... [Contrary to what the traditional theology would have us believe], the authentic medium of divine revelation is narrative, inductively bearing the real and concrete experiences and cases... Narrative theology is [therefore]... a counter theology (Gegen-theologie).¹⁰

There is of course an extensive and divergent spectrum of what Minjung theologians mean by 'narrative', 'narrative theology', or 'narrative methodology'. But the primacy of narrative over conceptual discourse as a fundamental method of Minjung theology in general, and of Minjung theology's biblical hermeneutics in particular, emerges as a common axis.¹¹

(Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 124 (my emphasis). Curiously, however, Suh himself uses the word 'basis' in the title of a section of his *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, p. 231.

8. Kim, Min and Ahn, 'Methodology of Minjung Theology's Biblical Hermeneutics', p. 417.

9. Kim, Min and Ahn, 'Methodology of Minjung Theology's Biblical Hermeneutics', p. 423.

10. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 304-305.

11. Thus, we have, among others, Ahn Byung Mu, who speaks of 'Minjung Shinhak Yiagi' ('Minjung Theology Story'): see Ahn Byung Mu, *Minjung Shin Hak*

The most distinctive characteristics of the history-, event-, and narrative-oriented biblical hermeneutics of Minjung theology then is the methodological primacy of history, event, and narrative over conceptual analysis. We may call it an action-oriented, anti-conceptual-discourse streak. Kim Yong Bok's call for narrative as virtually the only self-defining category of Minjung itself clearly echoes the fundamental import of this underlying methodological assumption: 'Minjung cannot, must not, be defined objectively and conceptually. Only Minjung can define itself—but again, not in an abstract category. Minjung can define itself [only] by its story that it owns and constructs.'¹² And according to Kim Chang Rak, the 'story' of 'Minjung theology story' is 'not an object of study by Minjung theology but Minjung theology's method of narrating'.¹³ He distinguishes Minjung theology even from Liberation theology in this regard:

The traditional theology can be defined as 'an academic endeavor that systematizes the Christian religion through critical examination', and Liberation theology as 'a critical self-examination of the praxis of liberation'. There remains thus a common denominator between these two theologies that is academic. Minjung theology, on the contrary, emphasizes witnessing the Minjung event from a faith perspective. Minjung theology places its theological task in the *confessional*, rather than *academic*, realm.¹⁴

By 'academic task' ('Hak-mun-jeak Gwa-je') Kim apparently means a conceptual discourse, and by 'confessional task' ('Gobaekjeak gwaje') a narrative task.

When Minjung theologians construct their narrative Minjung theology they are modeling their hermeneutics after a biblical paradigm. They build their case on what they perceive to be the central hermeneutics found in the Bible which does not inquire conceptually but only references to historical reality, as we hear Suh Nam Dong say in his programmatic statement. For Suh and subsequent Minjung theologians, then, historical event

Yiagi (Seoul: Han Kook Shin Hak Yeanguso, 1987); Kim Yong Bok who proposes 'Minjung-eui Sahwe Jeon-giwa Shin Hak' ('Minjung's Social Biography and Theology'); see Yong Bok Kim, 'Minjung-eui Sahwe Jeongiwa Shin Hak', *Shin Hak Sa Sang* 54.1 (1979), pp. 58-77, and also, *Social Biography of Korean Minjung* (Seoul: Han Kil Sa, 1987); and Kim Chang Rak who looks at 'Yiagi Shinhageuroseaeui Minjung Shin Hak' ('Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology'): see Chang Rak Kim, 'Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology', *Shin Hak Sa Sang* 64.1 (1989), pp. 5-24.

12. Yong Bok Kim, 'Minjung-eui Sahwe Jeongiwa Shin Hak', p. 61.

13. Chang Rak Kim, 'Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology', p. 6.

14. Chang Rak Kim, 'Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology', p. 7.

and its narrative have an indisputable and irrevocable methodological primacy over conceptual approach.

What then is Korean about this biblical hermeneutics that we have surveyed? Before answering this question, I would like to take a detour and look at a few aspects of Liberation theology. Long before liberation theology emerged, Ernest Wright's phrase had become a truism: 'history is the chief medium of revelation'.¹⁵ This famous phrase, of course, reflects the long-established tradition of *Heilsgeschichte* out of which Wright speaks. As Albrektson,¹⁶ Childs,¹⁷ and a host of others have pointed out, 'revelation in history' has long been stressed by this school of thought in contrast to an alternative view of how revelation takes place, namely, through the word, or through a static, propositional doctrine of eternal truth. The classic Protestant view of the divine word in the Bible has given way to this other concept of revelation that emphasizes the action of God in history, his revelation in events.

Gerhard von Rad, the main player in this school of thought, therefore does not hesitate to call the Old Testament 'a history book'.¹⁸ And Bernhard Anderson finds the most distinctive feature of the Jewish people in their 'sense of history',¹⁹ and maintains that 'biblical faith, to the bewilderment of many philosophers, is fundamentally historical in character'.²⁰ Anderson then asserts that 'if historical memory were destroyed, the Jewish community would soon dissolve'.²¹ This historical memory, simply put, is the memory of what God has done for and in the community. The Old Testament, according to Anderson, is therefore 'the narration of God's action'.²²

Among many of God's actions, the event of the Exodus stands out as by far the most important occurrence in Israel's history. And the chief task of

15. G.E. Wright, *The Book of the Acts of God* (New York: Doubleday, 1957), p. 13.

16. B. Albrektson, *History and the Gods* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1967), pp. 11-13.

17. B. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), pp. 39-40.

18. Von Rad, 'Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament', pp. 25ff.

19. B. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 2. In his later edition (1986) he changed 'history' to 'tradition' in this phrase.

20. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (1986), p. 13

21. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (1966). He changes 'destroyed' to 'erased' in the 1986 edition.

22. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (1966).

biblical theology is not to study it in conceptual terms but simply to narrate it because that is what the Bible does. Thus notes Ernest Wright:

...at the center of Israel's faith was this Supreme act of divine love and grace. The very existence of the nation was due solely to this act; the beginning of Israel's history as a nation was traced to this miraculous happening. In confessions of faith it is the central affirmation... Who is God? For Israel it was unnecessary to elaborate abstract terms and phrases... It was only necessary to say that he is the 'God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage'. (Exod. 20.2)²³

Thus, by the time of the Medellin conference,²⁴ and by the time Cone²⁵ and Gutierrez²⁶ first published their works, 'history' as the main category of biblical theology had been well established. And Liberation theology's affinity to this legacy of the *Heilsgeschichte* school is more than obvious.²⁷ We note, for instance, James Cone's assertion that 'in the Bible revelation is inseparable from history', and 'history is the arena in which God's revelation takes place... The God of the Bible is a God who makes his [*sic*] will and purpose known through his [*sic*] participation in human history'.²⁸ And directly relying on von Rad's notion that even 'creation is a work of Yahweh in history',²⁹ Gutierrez maintains that 'biblical faith is, above all, faith in a God who reveals himself through historical events',³⁰ and 'the God of Exodus is the God of history'.³¹ Liberation theology thus enters into dialogue with biblical theology already permeated with the vocabulary

23. Wright, *The Book of the Acts of God*, p. 77.

24. The Second General Conference of the Latin American Bishops held in Medellin, Columbia, in 1968, considered not only the official beginning of liberation theology but also one of the most important events in the history of Latin American Christianity. See Enrique Dussel, *History and the Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976), p. 113.

25. James Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970).

26. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973).

27. This affinity has been well recognized. See, e.g., Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, pp. 92-106. See also, J. Severino Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom* (trans. Salvador Attanasio; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981), p. v. For a defense of this affinity, see Christine E. Gudorf, 'Liberation Theology's Use of Scripture: A Response to First World Critics', *Interpretation* 41.1 (1987), pp. 5-18 (10).

28. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, p. 93.

29. Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. D.M.G. Stalker; 2 vols.; New York: Harper & Row, 1965), I, p. 139.

30. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 154.

31. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 157.

of 'history' as the main theological lingo, and predicates its theology on that nomenclature from the beginning.

It is immediately evident that the history- and event-oriented biblical hermeneutics of Minjung theology has a Western counterpart in this long trajectory of *Heilsgeschichte* School. It is the trajectory that stretches at least from, if not before, J.C.K. von Hofmann of the nineteenth-century Germany to Gerhard von Rad of twentieth-century Germany, and on to the same school of thought as represented by Richard Niebuhr, Ernest Wright, Bernhard Anderson, and others in the US, and finally reaching the shores of Liberation theology, and in my opinion, of narrative theology as well. The Minjung theologians' focus on the Exodus event as a foundational text, and their focus on historical event as *the* locus of revelation, clearly echo the main thrust of this trajectory, which, not coincidentally, has the same built-in streak of anti-conceptual discourse as we shall see later.

In addition to history as the primary hermeneutical category, narrative also plays a significant role in Liberation theology's biblical hermeneutics, sometimes elaborated in detailed methodological studies. J.S. Croatto's works are a case in point.³² As would be expected, the 'God of history' provides the 'hermeneutic key' for Croatto. Like other Liberationists, he takes 'salvific happening' as the point of departure for theology, and insists that theology born of praxis is the starting point for biblical theology itself.³³ Croatto's objective, however, is a narrative epistemology. Salvific events are, of course, most important to Croatto. But he concentrates on the question of 'how the kerygma of liberation is treated as a theme in the Bible'.³⁴ In other words, he wants to know how the Exodus account works as a narrative. To accomplish this goal, Croatto turns to the field of *signs*, that is, narrative semiotics. And in doing so, he fully subscribes to the tenets of the Gadamar-Ricoeurian axis of hermeneutics.³⁵

Croatto's methodological articulation is of course part of another long Western trajectory of hermeneutical discourse traversing the spectrum that includes, in addition to Gadamar and Ricoeur, Wilhelm Dilthey of nineteenth-century Germany, Karl Barth and Gerhard von Rad of twentieth-century Germany, Richard Niebuhr of twentieth-century America, and

32. Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*. See especially his later work, *Biblical Hermeneutics: Toward a Theory of Reading as the Production of Meaning* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987).

33. Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*, p. v.

34. Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*, p. v.

35. Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*, pp. 13-35.

Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanley Hauerwas of present-day America, to name just a few. In that spectrum, James Barr of England also has argued for story as a better-suited category than history for the discourse on the Bible.³⁶

Almost two decades after Suh Nam Dong declared narrative to be the most fundamental category of Minjung theology hermeneutics, Minjung theologians were admitting that for them there was as yet neither a clearly defined methodology of biblical hermeneutics in general,³⁷ nor of the narrative aspect of that methodology.³⁸ In this milieu some second generation Minjung theologians attempted to move toward a more precisely rendered methodology, and in doing so they unabashedly and without reservation resorted to the discourse on narrative taking place in the West.

Kim Chang Rak, for example, concludes with W.G. Stroup that narrative is the only resource for establishing the Christian community's identity; that the God of the Bible is revealed through historical events and their narratives; that the defining biblical events—the Exodus and the Cross—are thus most naturally and most effectively transmitted by the genre of story; and most importantly, that the language that Christian theology must adopt for its authentic task is the language of narrative.³⁹ Chae Hyung Mook and Jo Ha Moo, in their 'search of a methodology for biblical hermeneutics by Minjung', rely heavily on Croatto whose methodology we have briefly described above.⁴⁰

At this point we may ask what is specifically Korean about Minjung Theology's biblical hermeneutics. Our survey above seems to lend itself to an unequivocal answer: Korean Minjung theologians directly and extensively rely on Western theology as they construct their biblical hermeneutics in general, and their hermeneutics of the Exodus account in particular. Both Suh Nam Dong⁴¹ and Ahn Byung Moo⁴² in fact acknowledge their methodological and substantive dependence on the West. To the criticism that he is too dependent on Western trends to claim his own (Korean)

36. James Barr, 'Story and History in Biblical Theology', *Journal of Religion* 56 (1976), pp. 1-17.

37. Chae and Jo, 'Biblical Hermeneutics of Korean Christian Minjung Community', pp. 811-12.

38. Chang Rak Kim, 'Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology', pp. 6-7.

39. Chang Rak Kim, 'Minjung Theology as a Narrative Theology', p. 7.

40. Chae and Jo, 'Biblical Hermeneutics of Korean Christian Minjung Community', pp. 828-38.

41. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 202ff.

42. Ahn, *Minjung Shin Hak Yiagi*, pp. 21ff.

theology, Suh admits unabashedly that his theological journey reflects the footsteps of the general trajectory of theology in the West. At the end of that trajectory he encounters Liberation theology and engages it because the Korean situation of Minjung demands it. The result of course is his Minjung theology.⁴³

In response to his critics Suh insists that theology is never a solo performance. One does theology by participating in the global discourse, and that means one develops her/his theology within the flow of that discourse. This argument reminds us of a similar charge levied against Liberation theologians and the subsequent debate. Admonishing Liberation theology for what they see as its over-reliance on North America, some critics, such as William P. Lowe,⁴⁴ have demanded that it draw its theological material from Latin sources in total independence from the North. In defense against this criticism, Christine E. Gudorf argues that the northern theology would not have taken Liberation theology seriously enough had it relied solely on Latin sources.⁴⁵ Suh would only concur in response to the similar criticism of his Minjung theology. But Suh's response above shows that for him the issue is more than just a practical matter of securing a global audience. It is the matter also of the substantive formation of his theology. He does not seem daunted at all by the idea that his own theology should be shaped by the global dialogue, because 'a theologian must have an open attitude toward truth [regardless of its source]. One's [originality] is not [more] important [than one's openness].'⁴⁶

This defense of course does not mean that Suh has nothing to say about indigenous material as a source of Minjung theology. On the contrary, he makes a rather bold suggestion that there is a methodology of Minjung theology that is 'developed uniquely in Korea, and therefore is in a position to make a singular contribution to global theological discourse', and that that methodology comes from '*mindam*', Korean folktale.⁴⁷ Observing that 'there is a confluence of the Minjung tradition in Christianity and the Korean Minjung tradition', Suh argues that 'a task for Korean Minjung theology is to testify' to that confluence. Then, using poet Kim Chi-ha's folktale plot of *Chang-il-dam*, he develops what can be considered a

43. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*.

44. William P. Lowe, Review of Sobrino's *Christology at the Crossroad, America* (5 August 1978), p. 67.

45. Christine E. Gudorf, 'Liberation Theology's Use of Scripture: A Response to First World Critics', *Interpretation* 41.1 (1987), pp. 10-11.

46. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, p. 202.

47. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, p. 228.

germinal programmatic statement for his 'pneumatological historical interpretation'.⁴⁸ But, for him, this obligation of 'testifying to the confluence' is not the paramount task of Minjung theology. He would have developed Minjung theology with or without Korean indigenous material. He uses Korean indigenous material in the service of Minjung theology, not vice versa.

Many of the later generation of Minjung theologians take a similar position. While not rejecting the label bestowed upon Minjung theology as a 'Korean theology', they nonetheless ask what is 'Korean' about Minjung theology and conclude that the adjective 'Korean' should mean not so much a theology 'of' Korea as a theology 'for' Korean Minjung (Song Gi Deuk).⁴⁹ The unique identity of Minjung theology therefore does not lie in its theological originality arising ontogenically out of Korean soil but in a theological thinking that has converged with the tradition of Korean Minjung liberation (Pak Jae Soon).⁵⁰ Furthermore, unlike their first generation predecessors many second generation Minjung theologians openly and programmatically borrow from Marxist theories as they construct their version of Minjung theology (Kang Won Don,⁵¹ Pak Sung Joon,⁵² and Suh Jin Han,⁵³ to name a few). Kim Ji Chul fittingly summarizes the thrust of this self-perception of Minjung theology when he calls Minjung theology a 'situation theology':

...Minjung theology is better understood as a situation theology [than as a Korean theology] because its 'Koreanness' does not depend on its theological and hermeneutical originality so much as on its ability to deal sensitively with the Minjung reality in Korean situation. Therefore the label that suits Minjung theology best is perhaps 'the situation theology of Korean Minjung'.⁵⁴

48. Suh, 'Historical References for a Theology of Minjung', pp. 177ff.

49. Gi Deuk Song, 'The Identity of Minjung Theology', *Christian Thought* 33.2 (1988), pp. 139ff.

50. Jae Soon Pak, 'Minjung Theology: What is its Task?', *Christian Thought* 34.1 (1990), p. 37.

51. Won Don Kang, 'A New Search for Theological Method: Theological Understanding and Praxis', in *Theology and Praxis* (Seoul: Minjung Sa, 1989), II, pp. 131-53.

52. Sung Joon Pak, 'Changing Korean Christianity and the Task of Christian Movement', in *Theology and Praxis*, II, pp. 154-89.

53. Jin Han Suh, 'The Scientific Nature and the Grass-Root Nature of Minjung Theology of the 80s', *Korean Church in Travail* (Seoul: Center for Studies of Problems in Christianity and Society, 1990), pp. 103-43.

54. Ji Chul Kim, 'A Critical Observation on Minjung Theology's Bible Reading', p. 442.

It appears, then, that to our question, 'What is Korean about Minjung theology's appropriation of the Exodus narrative?', most Minjung theologians would answer: 'It is Korean because, and to the extent that, Koreans are using the Exodus account in the Korean situation of Minjung'.

My critique of Minjung theology's hermeneutics of the Exodus story is not that it plugs directly into the trajectory of Western discourse to adopt its methodological lingo and categories. My criticism applies primarily to the schools of thought of which Minjung theology partakes, then secondarily to Minjung theology to the extent that it does not exercise a critical acumen in one important aspect as it adopts the Western idiom.

We have noted that Minjung theology, like its Western counterpart, evidences an unmistakable streak of anti-conceptual discourse. For both Minjung theology's biblical hermeneutics of the Exodus and that of its Western counterpart which influences it, the Exodus is not an object of conceptual description, much less an object of conceptual analysis. Rather, it is a historical *referent* couched in narrative. The Exodus is not for us to analyze conceptually but to narrate as a historical event, as a narrative referent.

This methodological approach finds its earliest explicit precedent⁵⁵ in the nineteenth-century German theologian J.C.K. von Hofmann who sees the Scripture 'not [as] a text book teaching conceptual truths but rather a document of an historical process...[which] has originated within the history recorded therein'.⁵⁶ This methodological turn marks the beginning of the *Heilsgeschichte* school in which others follow suit: for all his difference from von Hofmann, von Rad continues with the same methodological motif. As James Crenshaw describes him, von Rad has a 'deep-seated fear of a rational system'⁵⁷ and always resorts to history, insisting that '...the Old Testament believes that God always and for "glorified himself" in his acts, that is to say...the *doxa* of his activity [in history and not in the conceptual world]...';⁵⁸ Wright likewise contends that 'for Israel it was

55. Some may argue that it begins with Blaise Pascal who says that the God of the Bible is not the God of the philosophers and the sages but 'the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob'.

56. Von Hofmann, *Interpreting the Bible* (trans. Christian Preus; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959 [originally published as *Biblische Hermeneutik* (Nördlingen: C.H. Beck, 1860)]), as cited in John H. Hayes and Frederick Prussner, *Old Testament Theology: Its History and Development* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 83.

57. J. Crenshaw, *Gerhard von Rad* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1978), p. 33.

58. Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, II, p. 358; cf. p. 379.

unnecessary to elaborate abstract terms and phrases [in order to explicate the question of God]... It was only necessary to say that he is the "God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (see above, pp. 164-65); and the liberationists on their part insist that '[conceptual] wisdom and rational knowledge...[take] praxis [in history] as their point of departure', and that conceptual reflection at best follows historical praxis, not vice versa.⁵⁹

This methodological line continues with narrative theologians such as MacIntyer, Hauerwas, Stroup, and others who insist that narrative, and not conceptual analysis, is the most, in fact the only, authentic language of theology and ethics. Hauerwas,⁶⁰ for instance, rejects the standard account's assumption that language describes conceptual reality in and of itself. He then speaks of skill, the know-how of proper utility, as a main narrative concern. The question for him is not if our moral notion conforms to an objective theoretical norm, but if the narrative language describing the notion does the job skillfully, thus enhancing its utility and purpose in a given context. He believes that conceptual analysis is not necessary because narrative structure lends itself to rational discourse that would lead us to a 'reasoned act', and argues that narrative structure does not become rational discourse of necessary logic. Hauerwas does not exaggerate, therefore, when he says the rules governing narrative structure 'are not those of logic but stem from some more mysterious source'.⁶¹ Story does not derive its assessing, evaluative function from its logical implication, but from its 'grammar of actions'. We do not gain moral insight by extrapolating a theory or a moral from the story. The story with its structure *is* insight. Narrative *is* the rational form on which ethics should depend. The reason lies within the narrative structure.

And as for Croatto, after a book-length discourse on the indispensable role of narrative semiotics to show how the Exodus event becomes the effective Exodus narrative, he declares, in the language strongly reminiscent of von Hofmann, von Rad, Wright, Anderson, and Hauerwas:

...the biblical God is not the God of the Sources (an object of study and of reason) but the God-of-history of which the Sources speak to us as a kerygmatic 'memory' [i.e. narrative] that sheds light on the God in action... The

59. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 3-15.

60. Stanley Hauerwas, with Richard Bondi and David B. Burrell, *Truthfulness and Tragedy: Further Investigations in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), pp. 15-39.

61. Hauerwas, *Truthfulness and Tragedy*, p. 28.

biblical message wells up from the [narrated] salvific happening—this is the hermeneutic key...⁶²

And as we have seen, Minjung theology absorbs this entire trajectory of von Hofmann, von Rad, Wright, Anderson, Hauerwas, Gadamar, Ricoeur, and Croatto, and reads the Exodus account from their methodological standpoint, placing history, event, and narrative over conceptual and logical analyses and arguments.

Despite all the well-known merits of history- and narrative-oriented hermeneutics, however, its methodology manifests a fundamental flaw in its reading of the Exodus account. And this flaw is built in its methodological assumption that is very much in the spirit of the Kierkegaardian axiom: 'Live forward and understand backward'.

No matter how much we may wish simply to narrate the Exodus event and re-enact it—not as a conceptual construal but only as a historical and narrative referent—we cannot ignore one of its most fundamental elements that is constitutive of narrative: its *conceptual basis*. It is a story to be sure, but a story with, and *not* without, a concept. In fact, there is no such thing as a story, a narrative, without a concept. And in the case of the Exodus, we cannot help but ask what the concept of its story is. Is it liberation, the beginning of a conquest, or a strange hybrid of both?⁶³ What about 'the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites' of Exod. 3.8 into whose land Yahweh is about to lead the Israelites, as stated programmatically in the same sentence structure that announces the plan for liberation?⁶⁴

Rolf P. Knierim, who counts himself solidly among the Liberationists, has acknowledged this problem, and gives it a systematic treatment by scrutinizing Exod. 3.7-8 in the context of the Pentateuch narrative.⁶⁵ While

62. Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*, p. v.

63. Croatto does not answer these questions because he does not raise them to begin with. Neither do the majority of critics. Strangely, many 'faulty' aspects of the Exodus model preoccupy them, but not this. We encounter some exceptions, such as Klaus Nürnberger, who criticize liberation theology for its silence on this question: see Klaus Nürnberger, *Power and Beliefs in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 1988), pp. 218ff. See also, M.B.G. Motlhabi, 'Liberation Theology: An Introduction', in P.G.R. de Villiers (ed.), *Liberation Theology and the Bible* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 1987), p. 8. Also see Naim Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), especially his chapter 'The Bible and Liberation: A Palestinian Perspective', pp. 74-114.

64. Exod. 3.8 (RSV).

65. In 1978 Knierim gave a lecture on this problem which was subsequently pub-

acknowledging that Yahweh's programmatic statement in this text is part of a 'story' that 'refers [not to an abstract idea but] to a real impending event',⁶⁶ he nonetheless strives to find the 'concept' of the story. By moving beyond the hermeneutical categories of history and narrative he engages the story in its relation to its 'concept'. He asks: '...without a concept, the story would be without clarity. What is the theological concept of the story?'⁶⁷ After a meticulous conceptual analysis of the text in its literary environment⁶⁸ he concludes that:

The theology of Exodus 3.7-8 is the theology of the land of Israel as Yahweh's own people. All other notions, including the notion of liberation from oppression, stand in the service of this theology... [The] story of liberation is not self-evidently based on a concept or theology of liberation... [I]t is [therefore] not automatically clear in a given case whether liberation aims at nothing but the removal of injustice, or whether it serves an alien purpose

lished as 'Israel and the Nations in the Land of Palestine in the Old Testament', *Bulletin* 58.4 (1978), pp. 11-21, and now in *The Task of Old Testament Theology: Methods and Cases* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 309-21. For a fuller understanding of Knierim's treatment of this question, see his arguments in his Brazil lecture (*Task*, pp. 130ff.).

66. Knierim, *Task*, p. 130.

67. Knierim, *Task*, p. 130.

68. Knierim distinguishes between the 'cause' and the 'reason' for the Exodus. On the most immediate level, the oppression is the cause for the liberation, but the *reason* for the liberation lies elsewhere: the need for the Exodus. Read within the context of the entire Pentateuch narrative, it can even be argued that 'the need for Israel's exodus is in the first place the reason for their oppression'. He substantiates this notion by observing that Yahweh considers no alternatives for solving the problem of the oppression. Not all the Pharaohs were oppressive. Taking care of this one Pharaoh, therefore, could have solved the problem. Nor does Yahweh introduce any of 'the viable alternatives also [found] in the Old Testament'. In other words, 'the intention to lead Israel away from Egypt is at the outset the conceptual reason for the liberation of Israel for which the oppression is the actual cause'. And finally and most importantly, the reason Yahweh has his mind set on the Exodus is the Promised Land. He notes 'how directly our text connects Israel's departure from Egypt with the goal of its subsequent immigration... No alternatives are considered, not even Sinai.' Knierim notes the two aspects that comprise the text's depiction of this goal, the land: permanent settlement (land with milk and honey) and the conquest (the six peoples occupying the land). To confirm the second of these, he refers to the text's place in the tradition-history of the conquest, and to its Deuteronomic-deuteronomistic language. Furthermore, this conquest theology is based on the theology of the land. And the ultimate rationale for the theology of the land comes from another theology on which it stands: the theology of election. See Knierim, *Task*, p. 130ff.

which itself involves oppression of others by the liberated, and which discredits the credibility of liberation itself.⁶⁹

In other words, the entry into the land of conquest, and not the departure from Egypt, is the main concept of our text. Both the oppression in Egypt and the liberation from it serve this concept. When we read the narrative of the Exodus conceptually and analytically, we can only conclude that the conquest theology is already embedded in the language of liberation.

As far as I can surmise, Minjung theologians in general have embraced the hermeneutical trajectories of the West without addressing this problem.⁷⁰ It appears that Minjung theologians overlook this conceptual aspect of the Exodus narrative because they, too, are caught up in a flawed methodological premise characteristic of the Western trajectories they adopt. Historical event rarely, if ever, becomes a narrative without a conceptual basis on which it is cameoed. Our theological task, therefore, is not simply to narrate it but also to examine its concept, and do so not only within but

69. Knierim, *Task*, p. 133; see also pp. 309-21 (318-19).

70. Sometimes they turn to the sociological model of Gottwald *et al.*, and refers to it as the evidence of God's revelation through the Exodus (Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 236ff.). Suh Nam Dong thus tells us that the peasant revolt 'is God's revelation... With this the God who protects Minjung emerges through the revelation of the Old Testament' (p. 240). In saying this Suh mixes two incompatible methodologies. Gottwald himself is very clear about the methodological incompatibility between biblical theology and biblical sociology: see Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 665-709. After an extensive exposition of Croatto's methodology, Chae and Jo seem to commit a similar error. They fully accept Croatto's methodological premise that 'every textual interpretation has to begin with *the text*... [and] must strive to be a reading of the received *text*... hence the supreme importance of any reading as a *reading of a text*' (Croatto, *Exodus: A Hermeneutics of Freedom*, pp. 29-30; treated in Chae and Jo, 'Biblical Hermeneutics of Korean Christian Minjung Community', pp. 834ff.). Yet they make a methodological jump and fall back on Gottwald's revolt theory and his socio-religious model of 'mono-Yahwism' to make a case for Minjung's privileged hermeneutical stance regarding the Bible (Chae and Jo, 'Biblical Hermeneutics of Korean Christian Minjung Community', pp. 836ff.). For them, the liberation of *habiru* (= the Minjung of the Old Testament) forms the central axis of the Old Testament which coincides with the life conditions and experiences of Korean Minjung. This correspondence gives the Korean Minjung a privileged hermeneutical position which 'provides the only hermeneutical key for the interpretation of the Bible by Minjung' (p. 838). Yet again, the biblical text does not render a simple picture of liberation. The Hebrews of the Exodus, *habiru* or not, do not simply constitute Minjung as Chae and Jo define it, and identify it with Korean Minjung.

outside its narrative structure. As Habermas rightly observes, history writing as narrative is 'action-oriented knowledge'. We should of course expect history writing to continue in a narrative form, as does Habermas. Without returning to medieval scholasticism or Protestant Orthodoxy, however, we must argue, as does Habermas, that the theory and the argument regarding the moral validity of the narrative are found in a discursive moment outside the narrative. Thus notes Habermas: 'The flow of the narrative would [therefore] be interrupted by argumentations; for history writing does not comprise theoretical knowledge, it is a form of application of theoretical knowledge'.⁷¹

Just on the form-critical ground alone, the language of the Bible in general is already more than a language of historical/narrative referencing. But even when the language it uses is the language of historical/narrative referencing, as is the case with the Exodus narrative, it is only deceptively so—at least by the generic definition of narrative as such because narrative hides the conceptual reality that regulates it, consciously or unconsciously⁷². If Minjung theology simply does historical/narrative referencing without doing any conceptual grounding, believing that is what the Bible does, it does so at its own peril because biblical/historical narrative, to which Minjung theology references, never does historical/narrative referencing without doing conceptual grounding of its own. Suh Nam Dong is apparently aware of this when he comes short of accepting the Bible as the ultimate authority because of its redactional biases.⁷³ Despite this awareness, however, his affiliation with the lingo of the history and narrative schools

71. Jürgen Habermas, 'History and Evolution', *Telos* 39 (1979), pp. 5-44 (41).

72. Habermas offers a penetrating analysis of our act of narrating in a manner analogous to psychoanalysis. Narrative does not just serve a parochial purpose as MacIntyre and Hauerwas suggest. Habermas agrees with U. Anacker and H.M. Baumgartner's claim that narrative is indeed conceivable only with a totality of history in view as a regulative principle: 'The interest in narrating... conceals the interest in totality in the sense of the whole of temporal reality, which though not realizable is nonetheless necessarily presupposed and for whose very sake narrative structures are intended... The "subject" of history is precisely in this sense a regulative idea like history itself: both have the positional validity of a principle of organization for constructions, a principle stemming from the practical interest in construction, i.e., in knowledge and action. But history is, therefore, necessary as a regulative principle' (U. Anacker and H.M. Baumgartner, 'Geschichte', in Hans Michael Baumgartner and Christoph Wild [eds.], *Handbuch philosophischer Grundbegriffe* [Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1973], II, pp. 555-56, as cited in Habermas, 'History and Evolution', p. 42).

73. Suh, *Minjung Shinhaageui tamgu*, pp. 304-305.

of the West seems to prevent him, and the subsequent Minjung theologians, from seeing the concept of conquest that accompanies, and is served by, the concept of liberation in the Exodus account. I do not believe this is so much an oversight as a result of a methodological flaw that puts a premium on history, event, and narrative at the expense of necessary conceptual analysis of history, event, and narrative. The sad irony is that, as a result, Korean Minjung theology's hermeneutics of the Exodus history, event, and narrative unwittingly sidesteps the history, event, and narrative of the impending plight of the other 'Minjung'; on the other side of the Reed Sea.

Conclusion

As was noted earlier, the question of the 'Koreanness' of Minjung theology's biblical hermeneutics does not appear to have preoccupied the Minjung theologians themselves. They appear neither to think its methodology has to be uniquely Korean, nor to hide their extensive reliance on the biblical hermeneutics of the West. The issue they seem to consider more pertinent is how well Minjung theology is served by its own biblical hermeneutics, without agonizing over how Korean such a hermeneutics is or should be.

I wonder if the Minjung theologians have been relatively unperturbed by their reliance on Western methodology because Minjung theology at its core is not dealing with the problems of culture, race, and ethnicity so much as with the problems of class struggle, which are often related to, but also fundamentally distinct from, those of culture, race, and ethnicity. Just as Korean Marxists do not give a second thought to the fact that Marx was German or Bolsheviks were Russian, Minjung theologians do not consider it problematic that their methodology of biblical interpretation depends so heavily on that of the West.

Perhaps the more pertinent question then is not how Korean but how 'Minjung' Minjung theology's appropriation of the Exodus account is. And the answer is, as I have tried to show, that Minjung theology's hermeneutics of the Exodus is not as Minjung as we would have hoped it to be because the text does not really lend itself to such a hermeneutics. Minjung biblical hermeneutics has misread the text just as the Western hermeneutics it imports has misread it.

The issue here is not just one of theory and method. At issue is not only Minjung's liberation, but Minjung's '*logos*' of '*theos*' in its struggle for

liberation. We are therefore ultimately faced with the question of whether or not we can trust this god of the Exodus to liberate Minjung as the universal God of universal justice. The conceptual analysis of the account raises a serious doubt that we can. It shows that the god of the Exodus is capable not only of liberating his own elected people, but also of turning them into a group of oppressors. No righteous Minjung, a phrase I hope is tautological, will ever trust such a god. This is not to suggest that we jettison the story of the Exodus or the Bible. On the contrary, it is to suggest that we keep searching for the God of Minjung in, through, and beyond the god of the Exodus, and that we search for that God dialectically in, among many places, the Bible.

REVISITING ASPECTS OF BULTMANN'S LEGACY

Rolf P. Knierim

1. *Introduction*

In order to protect myself against the impression of pretense, let me begin with some disclaimers:

Since 1958 I have not spent my professorial specialization in the field of New Testament studies. Nor did I personally study under Professor Bultmann as a 1950–55 student. I never even saw him in person.

Of course, having studied in the lectures and seminars of Professors Conzelmann and G. Bornkamm at Heidelberg I was expected, as everyone else wanting to take the comprehensive faculty exams, to have translated the entire Greek New Testament on my own and, next to publications by other New Testament scholars, to have especially studied Bultmann's work, all in German of course. His book about Jesus, his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, his *Theology of the New Testament* and some seminal essays as far as they were accessible at that time were, at the risk of flunking that exam, absolutely and frightfully mandatory. I was familiar with his *History of the Synoptic Tradition* only through lectures and seminars, and less familiar with it than with Dibelius' *Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* which I studied because I had been able to buy it.

To whatever extent I have remained familiar with the course of New Testament studies during the last five decades, I am not prepared to speak about Bultmann's legacy in the light of that course. That remains for the experts in this field to do.

Any discussion of Bultmann's legacy would have to confront not only the immense range but also the historical context of his life's work. The range of his major publications is staggering. There is his 1921 *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (3rd edn, 1957); his 1926/51 *Jesus*; his 1941/50 *Commentary on the Gospel of John*; his 1953 *New Testament Theology*; the 1957 publication of *History and Eschatology*, resulting from his 1955 Gifford Lectures; his 1967 *The Johannine Epistles: A Commentary*; and

beginning with 1933, an endless series of essays which were later published together in at least six volumes under the title *Glaube und Verstehen* (*Faith and Understanding*). Among these were his 1941 essay about New Testament and Mythology which became from the outset the most universally and controversially debated, in addition to his own contributions to other works, and volumes of published works about his work as well.

I cannot afford to discuss the legacy of this total work. I am confining myself to some aspects of Bultmann's legacy which appear to me especially noteworthy in the light of the task of biblical exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic, as I have come to understand these tasks over the decades. I am therefore particularly focusing on some exegetical, theological, and hermeneutical aspects in Bultmann's work. One thing is thereby clear. The agenda of the time to which Bultmann belonged, two generations ago, was very different from our agenda today.

This paper has two sections. The first is 'On Bultmann's Method of Interpretation', with a special discussion of his method for his *New Testament Theology*; and the second is 'On the Substance of Bultmann's Hermeneutic'. Method and substance affect each other, which, I hope, will become transparent in each section despite my two different approaches.

2. *On Bultmann's Method of Interpretation*

a. *The Method*

As a New Testament scholar, Bultmann belonged to the forces of German-speaking Protestantism which after World War I began to reshape the landscape in theology and especially in biblical interpretation. In this historical context, his work, as I see it, developed gradually along three methodological lines which eventually became synthesized. He operates exegetically, initially especially as a form critic. That is, he operates in terms of the established historical-critical method, which by his time had become solidly connected with the study of the environment of the biblical texts as established by the religio-historical school.

He operates as a New Testament theologian of the theologies of the New Testament literatures. His work is based on the exegesis of these literatures. And he operates as an interpreter in biblical hermeneutic, the field that focuses on the validity of the texts and their theology for our present time, indeed, for any present time. In the fruition of this total system of interpretation, each of these three avenues is clearly distinct, while none is separated from the others.

His work on the Gospel of John and the Johannine letters can serve as an example because we have not only his *New Testament Theology* but also his two commentaries on that corpus. In these two commentaries, he works as an exegete. He moves through the texts, one after the other, from the beginning to the end of each book.

In his *New Testament Theology*, which is based on his exegesis of these books, he works systematically by assembling their concepts, their 'theological thoughts', he says (*Epilegomena*, p. 577). These he ferrets out from across the texts, wherever they occur, 'explicitly or implicitly', by penetratingly clarifying their distinctiveness and by ordering their relationship within the overall theological system of this, in our case, the Johannine corpus, including the order of its main concepts, their sub-concepts and the sub-concepts to the sub-concepts.

Thus, his order for the theology of Gospel of John is: 'A. Johannine Dualism', with sub-concepts; 'B. The Krisis of the World', with sup-concepts; and 'C. Faith', with sub-concepts. Under 'A. Johannine Dualism', he then distinguishes between the three sub-concepts of: 'World and "Man"' (*Mensch*), 'Johannine Determinism', and the 'Perversion of Creation into "World"', with the latter again subdivided into the two aspects of the concept of 'Truth' and 'the World as Perverted Creation'.

He proceeds throughout by organizing his *New Testament Theology* systematically, as a systematized interpretation of the theologies of the books of the New Testament. When we come to the aspect of hermeneutic in his work on John, the aspect of the abiding relevance of the Johannine corpus, we observe a different picture. We can observe that all three methods—exegesis, systematizing theology, and hermeneutic—already appear, however directly or indirectly, on the level of exegesis in his commentary.

Of course, one may wonder if his exegesis is not controlled by his hermeneutical stance. But one should allow for the impression that this total system of interpretation shows consistency, in that the hermeneutic appears to be the last step in a straight line of interpretation which begins with the exegeted texts and moves through the theology toward that last step. The hermeneutical agenda appears already to be laid out in the agenda of the texts. By discerning and verifying the theological concepts of God, world, and human existence as the proprium of the texts, he can demonstrate that their interpretation in his Theology and Hermeneutic is the consistent outgrowth of what the texts themselves contain and project out of their own

matrix. His total method of interpretation looks highly objectified or, as we might say, intersubjectified.

b. *Problems*

I need to turn to a few problematic aspects regarding the consistency of this system.

(1) *Thoughts or ideas and story.* Bultmann has emphasized again and again that the proper presentation of a New Testament theology has nothing to do with the category of abstract thoughts or ideas. But then, he nevertheless says that New Testament theology has to present the thoughts of the New Testament Scriptures. He was certainly aware that he did not contradict himself. He must have distinguished between two kinds of thought, appropriate and inappropriate ones. Which kind of thought is appropriate?

I think he assumes that the kinds of thoughts which are part of the reality of the texts themselves, which are operative within the texts and controlling their story, are appropriate, as opposed to inappropriate kinds of thoughts which are perceived as a world of ideas that exists apart from the texts, as reality as such, true reality. And regardless of whether one assumes a world of ideas as true reality or not, he wants to make sure that even the attempt to use the texts for the purpose of 'abstracting' ideas from them is false, because the texts and their ideas would in such 'abstractions' be stripped of their all-important own reality and function as nothing more than commodities through which to traverse to the vision of the real reality.

It becomes clear that Bultmann does not reject the reality of thoughts or ideas or concepts as such. He recognizes the category of ideas as intrinsic to the reality of the texts, and uses their presence in the texts as the methodological foundation for constructing the texts' theology. For this reason, he rejects the understanding of ideas as in Platonism, and also in Idealism, along with the use of the New Testament's theology in that sense and for that purpose, because this understanding would pervert the very foundation on which the New Testament rests.

But why is Bultmann's insistence on the recognition of the reality of the texts in their own right so all-important in the first place? I think that the reason for this insistence lies not in arguments based on the phenomenology or psychology or philosophy of language and thought, much as he is aware of these arguments, but rather in his understanding of the nature of the kerygma which consists of two inextricably connected elements: the act of proclamation and the story proclaimed. This means that whatever is

proclaimed is known only through the act of proclamation which happens in and through enacted language, as text. Moreover, the text consists of the story which represents the event told. The texts in their own right are all-important. Without them, the reality of the proclamation would be lost, and with it the proclaimed story and the event it tells.

Still, if the story proclaimed, even as unfolded in the written texts of the New Testament's gospels and letters, is all-important, why can Bultmann afford to switch from the genre of story (as in his exegesis) to the genre of a treatise based on thought in his own New Testament theology? As far as I see, the answer to this question lies, again, in the understanding of the kerygma; this time not in the act of its proclamation but in what is proclaimed. What is proclaimed is not just any kind of story, simply for the purpose of telling, but a specific story for which its thought, or concept, is constitutive. It is a conceptualized story. This does not mean that the thought, now again, could be abstracted from the story and its proclamation. It means that the story cannot be understood without its thought. That is already the case in the essentially oral kerygmatic formulae of early Christianity. And it is also inevitable for the understanding of the New Testament texts. The consistency in Bultmann's overall method appears to lie in his consistent focus on the agenda of the same subject, his focus on the two aspects in the kerygma. In the light of this focus, and because of it, the use of different genres is flexible, and serves particular purposes. Bultmann operates as a theologian. Said more succinctly, he is a theologian because he is a kerygmaticist.

(2) *Dogmatic vs. story in Bultmann.* A second observation on his method shows more of a problem than a persuasive answer.

In the *Epilegomena* to his *Theology* he says that it would be inappropriate to present the theological thoughts of the New Testament 'as a systematically structured unity, as a New Testament Dogmatic so to say' (p. 577). There can be no *Christian Normaldogmatik* because the theological task cannot be solved definitively. The thoughts of the scriptures, individually or as groups, are diverse, and the right way is to present each Scripture or group individually, and in such a way that all can be understood as links in their historical connectedness. The thoughts, linked thus, are not formulated once and for all times, but reflect the constant liveliness of the faith which in every new historical situation demonstrates itself ever new in the explication of God, world, and persons, 'from its origin' (*von seinem Ursprung her*) (pp. 577-78).

Accordingly, his entire Theology of the New Testament is structured according to the history of the theologies in the New Testament, as reconstructed by him and others: first, of Jesus' proclamation and the kerygmata of original (*Urgemeinde*) and Hellenistic Christianity; secondly, of the theologies of Paul and John, which he entitles 'Theology', his Theology proper; and thirdly, of the development toward the early church, whereby the first part is entitled 'Presuppositions [!] and Motifs for New Testament Theology'.

One might ask at once, why he did not give his work a title such as 'The Theologies [plural] of the New Testament as the Historical Connection of Their Faith', rather than using 'Theology' in the singular and not including its presupposition, faith. To be sure, the diversity of the New Testament's thoughts has for a long time been irreversibly acknowledged, as is the diversity of its historically different times, contexts and conditions.

I also think that the fault lies with the attempt to overcome the diversity of the New Testament's thoughts by unifying, even homogenizing, those thoughts as elements of an underlying yet discernible, intrinsically coherent system which could be understood as *the* New Testament dogmatic whose statements are fixed for all times and therefore foundational for all following dogmatics. I see no sufficient rationale for such a New Testament dogmatic. Of course, I am not familiar with any claim to a Protestant dogmatic system during the last two hundred years, after such claims by the Lutheran orthodoxy in the seventeenth century that its statements are to be taken as fixed and true for all times. But different things are at stake.

In his two theologies of Paul and the Johannine corpus, themselves for more than historical reasons the mainstay of his work, Bultmann does not just collect and juxtapose the thoughts of these theologies at random. He clearly systematizes them, obviously without the fear of doing dogmatics. And by systematizing these theologies, he certainly must assume that he represents their own systemic nature, and correctly so, as it can be observed in these corpora in innumerable respects at any rate.

Again, as in the case of the 'abstract ideas', the danger of a dogmatic system does not mean that the New Testament's theologies must not be perceived as systems within which their particular thoughts or concepts or notions have their place, function, and degree of significance. And again, Bultmann does not systematize these theologies because scholarly argumentation requires logical coherence, which it does have at any rate. He represents their system because the proclaimed kerygma is itself conceptually systemic.

I need not discuss at length how the particular New Testament notions are related in the main and sub-ordinate and sub-sub-ordinate chapters of Bultmann's own system. His interpretations of each of these notions have to me always seemed to be superb. That he considers them related is clear. Whether they are always adequately related is at least an open question, which would have to be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

Especially important is the question of whether or not some of his systematizations are in accord with his own presuppositions. For example, Bultmann says that the texts and thoughts of the New Testament express the views of God, world, and humans, which unfold among the Christian believers through their faith experience. They presuppose this faith, and are the knowledge gained from this vantage point. This view of reality, through the eyes of faith, is impossible for any view of reality through natural insight. It is characterized by and thematized by Bultmann as 'Revelation'. In light of this understanding, why, for example, in his theology of Paul, does he discuss the subject of 'the humans before the revelation' first, in his section 'A'; and only then, in his section 'B', the subject of the 'the humans under the *pistis*'? It seems that the sequential order in the discussion of these subjects is relevant. A point can be made for a reversed order in the sense that the truth of reality before faith can only be recognized by the believers on the basis of their knowledge of their eschatological condition, of their salvation or *soteria*, their knowledge arrived at through faith. The concept of that eschatological condition is, by the way, scarcely indicated in this outline at all.

In his discussion of 'the humans under the *pistis*', in section 'B', he discusses faith only in the third place, in terms of its characteristics, after the chapters on God's righteousness and on grace and before the chapter on freedom. Yet, since there is no knowledge of God's righteousness and of grace without the condition of faith and its characteristics, why is this condition not put first, so that the other concepts appear as the outgrowth from it?

I could go on and on. The problem is not that Bultmann systematizes, but whether his systematizations sufficiently reflect the relationship of the thoughts or concepts with the systems found in the New Testament, and especially whether they are in accord with his own assumptions about the epistemological priority of faith. This problem involves more than the need for logical coherence. It involves the question of the stratification of the significance, or of the values, in the way the New Testament's thoughts are related to each other. It involves the question of what depends on what, or what presupposes what.

The charismata serve different needs, but are said to have the same degree of validity. Yet, according to 1 Corinthians 13, they are nothing without *agape*, and, regardless whether this comes from Paul or not, are not as high as faith, hope, love, of which love is again the greatest. One may study the language of the comparative and superlative forms. Values appear gradated according to higher or lower degrees of validity, seen as mutually relative while none is irrelevant. Not everything is valid equally or equally all-inclusive. The stratification of validities involves *Sachkritik*, substance criticism, which is no invention of modern scholars. It has been taking place throughout the transmission history within the biblical traditions. In his critique of the Corinthians and the Galatians, for example, Paul subjects their theological positions to *Sachkritik*, the criticism of the substance of those positions by comparing and, where necessary, contrasting different positions in the light of the 'Sache', that is, the substance.

It thereby becomes clear that at issue is not simply the fact of diversity alone, which has always been a truism. At issue is the question of the evaluation of the diverse thoughts, of their validity, or the degrees of their validity, in light of their own relatedness, and that precisely because the faith-statements or faith-thoughts of the New Testament writers are not meant simply to describe what they believe but to claim, or proclaim, that their thoughts are true.

For Bultmann, too, *Sachkritik* is, for the sake of the 'Sache', inevitable and operative already in his own exegesis and theology. The question is whether, for the sake of his *New Testament Theology*, he went far enough. The question can be demonstrated by two points. First, Bultmann confronts the New Testament in its entirety, rather than only some of its segments; whereby it is of only relative significance whether or not one expands the body by accepting more books, such as the Didache and others. In view of his inclusion of all the New Testament's books, why does he not apply his method of systematization which he uses for each book or corpus, by explicitly relating and critically comparing all?

We know that he holds Paul and John higher than the others, and why. But how would an executed comparison even of these two look, and how would an executed comparison of all others to them look? Why did/does he not compare and evaluate by critical comparison, for example, his titles and sub-titles for the 'thoughts' in the theology of Paul with those in the theology of John, and with those in the books which represent the development toward Early Christianity? It seems to me that his avoidance of extending his method of systematization to all books in the New Testament constitutes a significant shortfall in his program to present a Theology of

the New Testament. Of course, we know his reasons: to avoid a dogmatic and to acknowledge the priority of the different historical contexts of the books. The former reason is not good enough. Is the latter good enough? Is it good enough that a Professor of Biblical Theology gives their 'concretizations' in their historical and societal contexts, or by the change as such of situations or by their newness?

Are concretizations true by virtue of being concretizations? Are they for the same reason not also false? What if the basic concepts contained especially in the kerygma are not only recontextualized, a truism, but reconceptualized in such a way that they are replaced by concepts incompatible with the kerygma, especially if one assumes, as Bultmann does, that the kerygma is not only true for one but for all generations? One should not doubt that the faith expresses itself in new historical contexts and different societal situations through ever-new and different explications. Could the fact of these different explications mean, according to Bultmann, that they may also amount to the change, even replacement, of the foundational conceptual structure of the faith itself, foundational because the understanding of the faith itself is intrinsic to its emergence, 'its origin?' I do not see how Bultmann could have answered positively to this question.

Historians do not only say that one must interpret each situation in its own context. They also say that no situation, including its context, is beyond the need for critical scrutiny simply because it exists. No epoch is self-evidently true as such. To affirm the necessity and legitimacy of the changing formulations and concretizations of the faith, faith's imbeddedness in historical and societal realities, is one thing. To demonstrate that the faith remains the same in these ever-changing concretizations, as in and from its origins, is a very different thing, which can in no way be assumed to be guaranteed automatically by faith's concretizations or its 'liveliness'. Indeed, the question of whether or not faith remains the same is precisely necessitated by the changes in its articulations.

I want to avoid trivializing Bultmann. But I do not find enough evidence in his program for including the critique, substance-critically (*sachkritisch*), of the concepts of all books of the New Testament, including the critique of their historical development. It seems to me that his Theology of the New Testament is still so much influenced by the legacy of the Religio-Historical School that he was not able to bring the theological principles, derived from his exegesis and which he assumes, to bear on the New Testament and the religio-historical factors in it.

In his hermeneutic the picture is different. Here, he seems to me to uphold the foundational theological principals and for this very reason to subject in important respects explications of the faith in the New Testament to conceptual critique.

3. *On the Substance of Bultmann's Hermeneutic*

a. *On the Kerygma*

Bultmann distinguishes between the New Testament and the kerygma, or between the New Testament's theologies and, if you will, the theology of the kerygma. And the kerygma is the yardstick for the theologies of the New Testament as well as for his hermeneutic. What is the kerygma?

Said in a nutshell, the kerygma is the proclamation of the revelation of the reign of God, in the sense that this reign has, in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, eschatologically, that is, ultimately, arrived and been fulfilled, and is therefore once and for all times present. Through the proclamation, this revelation of God is made known to humans, and humans are called to respond to the proclaimed revelation in a decision of faith. Without the proclamation this revelation cannot be known, and without the decision of faith it cannot be existentially appropriated. This means that the proclamation transmits the new knowledge, while the transmitted knowledge is the reason for the call to faith, for the faith-decision, and even for the proclamation in the first place. The message proclaims the revelation of God's righteousness in unconditional grace and love as God's gift to the humans. This gift consists of ultimate freedom (from the reality of sin; from 'law' or subjectedness of human existence to the conditions of this world in the past, present, and future; and from the fate of death) and of the transposition of the believers from the old world into God's already new creation which is manifested in the ever-present Holy Spirit and in the call to live in this newness of eschatological love and joy. The offer to humans of a new understanding of human existence is therefore revealed. This new understanding is, in contrast to any other, not an abstract idea but the reality of radical, that is, eschatological, or ultimate existence. To be sure, this understanding can only be appropriated by those who believe in the message, which requires the decision of each individual.

b. *Aspects of Bultmann's Hermeneutical Interpretation*

(1) *Eschatology.* The offer of new understanding of human existence and of the actual existence in it means that the believers exist eschatologically.

Eschatology is the decisive aspect in Bultmann's hermeneutic. What does he mean?

He says that the myth of the cosmic apocalyptic eschatology in the New Testament, understood temporally as the final replacement of the old creation by the new, even as the new has already dawned in the coming of Christ and the existence of the believers, must be abandoned. The New Testament must be demythologized by its interpreters, above all because its mythology stands in the way of the proper, the true understanding of eschatology in it, which is an anthropologically rather than a cosmologically based understanding.¹

Understood truly, eschatology is ultimate existentially, not apocalyptically. This also means that the concept of the delay of the parousia is also apocalyptic. The concept also belongs to the already-eschatological present in the work of Christ and the existence of the believers in the sense of the dawn of the future consummation of the world. The eschaton is not present because, or as, it comes, but because it has come and is therefore always present, regardless of any kind of the world's future.

Bultmann softens the radicalism of his own demythologization saying at one point that already Paul himself, while still speaking in apocalyptic terms, nevertheless 'decisively modified' the apocalyptic eschatology by his idea that eschatological salvation in righteousness and freedom is oriented in the individual.² I wonder, though, why Paul did not in that case realize that he remained stuck in old concepts while articulating a new one which did not only 'modify' those concepts but inevitably had to replace them.

If Paul's apocalyptic statements were intrinsic to his thoughts, rather than the result of an intellectual inconsistency, one would have to ask why this was so. It could have to do with the idea that at issue is not just the focus on the eschatological salvation of the individual, but the focus on the salvation of the world to which the individual belongs. In such a case, the real issue in the apocalyptic statements themselves would be the eschatological salvation of the world, rather than its apocalyptic depictions. And the task would be to interpret the need for demythologization in light of this real issue, rather than to switch from the issue of mythology to the issue of human existentiality. Such a task would still amount to a massive reinterpretation of the New Testament. At any rate, I find it difficult to assume that the New Testament scriptures would even have been written

1. *History and Eschatology*, p. 48.

2. *History and Eschatology*, p. 48.

without the mythological outlooks of its authors. Take this outlook away, and the New Testament would not exist.

I agree with Bultmann without reservation that the mythological depiction of the world in the Bible is, as such, for the biblical hermeneutic of today a non-issue, just as it was already on the wrong track during biblical times. Also, I find eminent sense in his understanding of the significance of his notion of eschatology, as ultimacy, for the existence of each individual.

When one ponders this understanding, one cannot ignore what it means for each individual human being to assume that he/she is free from the claim by any of the powers or influences in this world to have the right to subject her/his life to their conditions in an ultimate sense, especially if those powers are destructive, divisive, even deadly, and in the way of the individual's freedom to unconditional love of others. One cannot ignore what this means for each individual, even if all around her/him exist differently and he/she stands alone. One has to realize that Bultmann developed this work from the catastrophic time already after World War I onward, and then especially during the Nazi time in Germany. Whatever it must have meant for him personally and for those who shared this kind of specifically Christian understanding, I cannot imagine that the Nazis would not see in this sort of existentialization a fundamental opposition, and danger, to the politics of their own ideology.

As far as I am concerned, the problem in Bultmann's biblical hermeneutic is not one of eschatology vs. mythology. When Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison was recently confronted with the challenge to superstition, which has certainly to do with apocalypticism, she said, in essence: "So what? "There is many a superstition that helps us to cope with life".³ I think it is not worth being fanatical about this issue, although I can only shake my head about the ongoing demand for using the Bible as a textbook for classes in science. I also think that the problem does not lie in her emphasis on the aspect of eschatological ultimacy in human existence as such.

(2) *The problem.* To say it summarily, the problem lies in the relationship of the aspect of ultimacy to the aspect of the non-ultimacy of the world and of human existence in the world. I am trying to demonstrate this in four cases. These cases affect not only Bultmann's own hermeneutic, but also what is found in the Bible itself.

3. *Der Spiegel* 42 (18 October 1999), p. 247.

(a) *Christ and the life of Jesus*. It is well known that all New Testament books are written from the christological vantage point, namely, of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Paul's theology is based on the Christology of the risen Christ, the eschatological Kyrios (even at the expense of the Jesus of the flesh). And the Gospels, each in its own way, see the resurrected Christ revealed even in the life of Jesus itself. In all cases, foremost in the Gospel of John, the paradigm for human existence is the eschatological Christ.

But what does this have to do with the conditions of human existence in a non-ultimate sense, with a paradigm for their lifestyle in the imperfectly existing and indefinitely ongoing 'old' world? Already the Jesus of Q lived 'eschatologically' (in Bultmann's sense), calling the people whom he visited not just to believe an idea but to follow him into a lifestyle guided by the absolute reliance on the reign of God. One must add that this call was meant for all humans, regardless of Jesus' limited territorial range and regardless of who was willing to listen to him, and for the humans of all generations (if he did think non-mythologically). If the radical message of this Jesus about God's reign had anything to do with his own actual personal lifestyle as a paradigm for this reign, apart from his social lifestyle, what would the consequences have been, or be, if all humans were to adopt this lifestyle by faith? Everybody would evangelize everybody, expecting to be fed by everybody, and nobody would be able to produce the food for anybody. Moreover, no longer would anyone strive for genealogical continuance by marriage and procreation. The lack of food production for the living and the cessation of procreation would bring the human race to an end within one generation. The human race would procure its own demise, before any coming of God's new creation or second coming of Christ or any expectation of such comings. Such a demise, the result of absolute faith in God, would, in any biblically based hermeneutic, be irreconcilable with the thought of the reign of God, then and today. For any theology of the Bible it is unthinkable that the protection of life on earth is not secured by God. In stark contrast to this view, however, stands the fact that we, today, for the first time in the history of humanity, possess the ability to end human existence. We can destroy this life ourselves.

I think that the sole focus on the eschatological aspect of the condition of the individual believers, including all human individuals, is not enough for the understanding of their existence and of human existence in this non-ultimate world, even as the New Testament is aware, just as Bultmann is, that the believers exist in this old world too, be it passing or forever

on-going. What is not sufficiently considered, especially in light of a non-mythological understanding of the possibility for radical human existence, is the truth and validity of human existence also in the conditions themselves of this ongoing, non-ultimate world.

What I have just said can be extended to the aspect of the role of the non-ultimate world as such in the New Testament and its hermeneutic by Bultmann.

(b) *The role of the original, non-ultimate world.* Much of what is said in the New Testament about the world and human life is said not because it is originally, genuinely Christian. It is adopted from the knowledge of the societies in which the early Christians lived.

The genre of the *Haustafeln*, collections of instructions for proper and against improper human behavior, is a case in point. They were not the products of faith, but of the wisdom of the 'secular' societies. And the Christians adopted them because they considered them as important for the practice even of their eschatological faith in this non-ultimate world. As for the extent to which these instructions lent themselves as guidelines for personal behavior, the Christians shared them with the non-Christians on the common ground of human wisdom rather than on the ground of their own eschatological existence. Indeed, their eschatological stance must have only confirmed and even intensified the validity of these instructions recognized by the societies as common human property.

Even so, it is striking to realize how much from the life of the surrounding world plays essentially no role in the New Testament. With the exception of some marginal references, the prominent areas of the life of the Roman empire, such as the many forms of its political, social, military, and legal organization and administration, of philosophy and the arts and sciences at the time, and of much, much more, have received no attention and discussion in the New Testament. The Bible of the Jewish people portrays in many of its parts a very different picture in this regard.

Of course, the writers of these texts were aware of the reality of this, as of any, empire. But the reason for the absence of their attention to and discussion of it and all empires lies, in my opinion, in the fact that their structures are considered as belonging to the old world which, in light of the coming reign of God and Christ, is seen as passing. Christians may have any function in these structures, but important for them is only what belongs to their personal apocalyptic ethos, whereas what belongs to the structures of the passing world even in their own lives is to be set aside

because it will perish when the kingdom comes. And when we come to the aspect of demythologized eschatological existence, as with Bultmann, the expressed outlook is still the same. What is constitutive for the eschatological existence of the humans as individuals is what is decisive. The non-ultimate world is not decisive as such. It may as well not be discussed. The question about the involvement of the believers in, and as inevitable parts of, the structures of the non-ultimate world, of the validity and not only the invalidity of the concreteness of these structures in their own right, is moot. However inevitably the individual believer lives in the structures of this old world, he/she is free of them because they are not the issue for this individual. At issue is exactly whether the eschatological stance of the individual believer may, and can, function as a mechanism for one's self-isolation from the concrete structures of this non-ultimate world.

The debate about the role of the German, particularly the Christian population in Hitler's rise and rule often focuses on the question of how much they supported Hitler actively, and collectively so. Good historians from all camps know that this focus provides no monolithic answer. The answer becomes clearer when the focus shifts from the question of their active to that of their passive role, not about what they did but what they failed to do. A widely spread stance in the population was that they did not rise against Hitler as long as it benefited them and they themselves could live. Similarly, a widely spread stance among the Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, was that they would not rise against his terror as long as he did not attack their own Christian Church directly (as he attacked the Jews), and did not burn their churches (as he burned the synagogues). 'If he attacks us directly, we will directly resist', it was said. Thus, while the next-door neighbor or synagogue was destroyed, one remained passive as long as one's own group was not yet persecuted. It is very difficult to escape the conclusion that, with the exception of the few who literally went to the concentration camps and gallows because of their active intervention on behalf of others, the German society of the time, even as it was itself increasingly terrorized, bears the responsibility for Hitler's crimes collectively through this kind of passivity, namely, its self-isolation from those who have fallen under the robbers, as long as they were not robbed themselves.

How much will the believers' eschatological self-understanding allow them to rest secure within their faith and behind their doors, and thus to avoid going into the streets and joining the fight and suffering of God in the streets of the non-ultimate world? If *agape* is not practiced in action

there, it and the eschatological Christ with it become indeed an abstract idea. If it is only practiced at home and not also in the total arena of the secular affairs, in the streets, and whether joined by or joining the non-believers or not, Christ is not represented as the Kyrios of the present world, and neither is faith existential.

On 9 November 1989, forty years after the establishment of the East German Communist state, the Berlin *Mauer* was opened, without violence. From its beginning in 1948, the communist regime had either absorbed or prohibited all formerly independent organizations. The only remaining independent organization was the Christian Church, which had to be allowed to conduct its affairs within the walls of its sanctuaries. The members of the Politburo always knew that even this confined existence of the Church represented a permanent challenge to the Party's claim to possess the monopoly on truth. But the demise of the system began when what had been confined to the sanctuaries began to pour out into the streets. The churches were not the only acting forces, but they participated with others. In these developments, the ministers of many churches played a pivotal role. They made their church buildings available for the prayers of the masses, agnostics as well as believers, and exhorted these masses to remain peaceful as they poured into the streets for public demonstrations. The resulting disintegration of the totalitarian communist regime would most probably not have happened as it did without the transaction or transfer (literally) onto the streets of the theology of these ministers—whether their theology was apocalyptic or existential or non-ultimate—and without their involvement in political affairs.

(c) *The Old Testament of the Christians in Bultmann's hermeneutic.* For Bultmann, the Old Testament of the Christians was, in its entirety, the document of a religion in which they must not believe. Of course, Bultmann was not a Marcionite. The Old Testament was for him neither the document of an evil religion, as it was for Marcion, nor would the Christians be allowed to discard it, as demanded by Marcion. It had to be retained precisely as a permanent reminder for how not to believe. Like any other, this religion, too, fails in everything it says when compared to the faith of eschatological fulfillment. It is at best a promise of the fulfillment, whereas the believers exist in the fulfillment itself and therefore no longer in the state of promise.

Interestingly, Bultmann speaks about 'The Significance of the Old Testament for the Christian Faith', which is not beyond the suspicion of being a

circular argument. The Old Testament is significant for this faith, while this faith is the criterion for the recognition of its significance. What is to be proved is already presupposed. This sort of faith only proves, and is in dialogue with itself. It exists in self-isolation. Of course, when seeing it, the others should realize that they merely exist in the non-ultimate world, and become motivated to step into eschatological existence, through faith, and conversion.

By comparison, the Bible of the Jewish people contains in part prophecy which is partly inner-historical and partly apocalyptic. Both kinds of predictions have not materialized as expressed. Yet as even its inner-historical predictions are concerned with the presence of God in the affairs of this non-ultimate world, that Bible also contains to a significant extent texts which focus on endless aspects of the realities of this non-ultimate, indefinitely ongoing world; on cosmos, the earth, imperfect human history, the nations and Israel's election in their context; on society and its institutions; and on the endless aspects of the lives of individuals.

The big question is whether the validity of the Hebrew Bible's message about the presence of God in the structures of God's non-ultimate, indefinitely ongoing imperfect world can justifiably be set aside because, at the outset, they do not meet the solely decisive criterion of the believers' faith in the presence of the eschaton in this world on the basis of their own eschatological existence. This question is important for the Christian self-understanding before it is first of all important for all human self-understanding. I do not think that this question is adequately acknowledged by Bultmann, and I consider this deficit as one of the foremost problems in his, and by far not only his own, legacy. After all, considered hermeneutically, we ourselves live decisively in, and are essentially part of, an indefinitely ongoing imperfect world; we should be aware of the challenge to this world by the criterion of ultimacy. And, of course, I think that for better reasons than normally assumed by Christians, the Jewish people have not been persuaded to believe that their Bible represents at best a religion that teaches how not to believe. Theologically and hermeneutically, our understanding of the relationship of the Jewish Bible and the Christian New Testament and, hence, the question of a theology of both, remains an open problem.

(d) *God and Jesus Christ.* Bultmann's hermeneutic, like the New Testament's hermeneutic, is not Christo-monistic, as if Jesus Christ had replaced God. Both definitively distinguish between God and Jesus Christ. Also,

Bultmann knows everything that the Bible, the history of religions, and philosophy say about God. That is not under discussion. Under discussion is the question of the decisive access to the knowledge of God in Bultmann's hermeneutic.

In this regard, his understanding is clear. He says that one can know about God's acting as creator and sustainer in nature and history, within which also human life takes place. But this knowledge can 'never' be ascertained in the sense of an objectively provable phenomenon, as a general truth, as in the theories of natural science or of philosophy of history. It can be 'only' a confession of faith which itself is the result of one's own being impacted existentially (*existentialles Betroffensein*). The existential self-understanding of the individual is the basis for any statement about God as creator and Lord.⁴

Thus, faith, for example, the eschatological faith of the believer in Christ is exclusively the presupposition for the knowledge of God the creator and sustainer, a knowledge which can never be ascertained objectively because God itself is not objectifiable. It is thus evident that the believers for Bultmann will not only affirm the reign of Jesus Christ but also the reign of God. It is also evident, however, that as far as the notion of an 'objectively provable phenomenon' is concerned, Bultmann's assumed impossibility of such proof pertains just as much, if not more, or at least in the first place, to the fact of faith in Christ, as knowledge of Christ, as it pertains to the knowledge of God. As far as the criterion of objectifiability is concerned, both knowledge of God and faith in Christ are equally either objectifiable or not.

Concerning the New Testament, one may ask, however, if it does not presuppose the general, traditional religious knowledge of God when it affirms that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this reign, though in very distinct perspectives, qualifications, and reconceptualizations. Clearly, the knowledge of the reign of God fulfilled in Jesus Christ adds specific aspects regarding the reign and identity of God, which are not contained in any general knowledge of God. These aspects are already encapsulated in the conceptualized contents of the proclaimed kerygma. They are unfolded in those christological aspects in the New Testament by which God is understood in ways not known in general religious knowledge, whereby God is just as much known through the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Jesus Christ is said to be subject to the reign of God.

4. *Glauben und Verstehen*, IV, p. 135.

But why should the christological perspective preclude the general knowledge of God by representing the 'exclusive' access to such knowledge? How can faith be the sole condition for knowing what is to be known? And why should being personally, existentially impacted be the sole condition for knowing what is true universally, whether one is personally impacted by this truth or not? Nevertheless, one has to be careful with one's understanding of the picture in this respect in the New Testament, and also of Bultmann's interpretation of it.

At issue is the question of whether the notions of a general knowledge of God and of the knowledge of God through the existentially impacted faith of individuals are mutually exclusive, or whether God is not only known through faith but also by way of general experience.

It seems to me that the faith of individuals and their impactedness by this faith function ill as the basic criterion for deciding this question. The question of the exclusivity or the complementarity of the two aspects seems at least as much, if not more, to depend on which experience functions as preparation for what follows and what may follow from such preparation, than on which experience is the exclusive condition for what comes next. The kinds of human experience do not seem to be preconditioned by either faith in God or knowledge of God. Should this assumption be defensible, the aspect of condition is relative, not fundamental, notwithstanding the fact that it can be given under certain circumstances. And the aspect of exclusive condition is even more contestable.

More basic seems to be the fact that general knowledge of God may be the preparation for the experience of faith, just as well as the experience of faith will be the presupposition for the knowledge of God. This fact points to a two-way movement in experience, a two-way kind of encounter between religion and specific faiths, and to a common platform for all human beings, rather than to two divided platforms from which religion and faith cannot meet. The distinction between Christ and God is in some respects analogous to the distinction between Yahweh and God in the Jewish Bible, in other respects not. Of course, Christ and God are understood as two different persons, whereas Yahweh and God are one and the same person in the sense that 'God' functions as the term for the deity of Yahweh. Yahweh is God. While 'Yahweh' functions as the term for the personal identity of God. God is Yahweh.

With respect to the distinction between the two aspects in the concepts of deity in the two Bibles, it is noteworthy that the access to the knowledge of God in the Jewish Bible is also to a very large extent presupposed,

and predicated, by Israel's knowledge of Yahweh, that is, by the fact that Yahweh is identified as the God of Israel whose elected people they are and to whom they are existentially committed. However, its experience and knowledge of Yahweh, both conceptually and existentially, was for ancient Israel by no means the only access to its knowledge of God, as is well known. At any rate, Israel's knowledge of Yahweh is, in contrast to the New Testament, certainly not preconditioned by the eschatological criterion on which Bultmann's understanding of the knowledge of God through faith in Christ rests.

Again, the big question, now regarding both Bibles, is, whether the evidence unambiguously shows that access to the knowledge of God rests exclusively on the faith in Christ, or, respectively, on Israel's knowledge of Yahweh, or whether and, if so, where, the knowledge of Christ, or, respectively, of Yahweh also rests and depends on the knowledge of deity. These questions lie at the heart of any discussion of the issue of revelation, at least as far as our Bibles are concerned.

As for the notion of faith itself, we have to be aware of the divided faiths in the three monotheistic religions. In this case, the knowledge of one God is not generated by but presupposed in each faith, whereas the 'faiths' have split the knowledge of God.

A reporter for *Newsweek* was on a flight to Somalia seated next to a passenger who said to him: 'To believe in God, you have to believe in his messenger, Muhammad. Everyone who accepts Islam will be successful in front of Allah. If you don't, you will be sent to hell.'⁵ Does this sound analogous to Bultmann? In the *Los Angeles Times* of 7 November 1999, the Pope is said to have instructed his bishops in India to promote their religion with a firm insistence that Christ is 'the sole redeemer of the world'. However, as I am preparing this paper for publication, on 9 December 2000, I read in the Religion Section of the *Los Angeles Times*, of the same day, that 'The Pope Takes Inclusive View of Salvation', saying that all who live a just life will be saved even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church. The gospel teaches us that those who live in accordance with the Beatitudes, the poor in spirit, the poor in heart, those who bear lovingly the sufferings of life, will enter God's kingdom.

Years ago, I said in a lecture to Jewish teachers of their religion about the ongoing Jewish custom of not eating from the sinew of the hip in remembrance that Jacob had been struck on the hip and was limping: 'What

5. *Newsweek* (1 November 1999), p. 50.

Israel observes in this custom is that to have been crippled by God is forever its destiny'. One of the rabbis present acknowledged this interpretation, but then asked: 'For whom is this true?' My answer: 'For everyone whose destiny it has become to be crippled by God', to which he objected saying: 'This is only Israel's experience'. To avoid confrontation I did not answer but thought to myself: 'If your type of experience excludes all because they are not Jewish, for whom is your religion relevant except for Jewish people? As for me, I can say that my faith tells me that I am crucified with Christ. Thus, what is more decisive: that we belong to separate faiths or that we have the same destiny in the same kind of experience?' At that point, our dialogue came to its standstill. Here, then, is a problem, for our respective monotheistic faiths, for Bultmann, and already in the New Testament and also in parts of the Jewish Bible.

Finally, there is an aspect to the hermeneutical problem that is neither covered by the presupposed faith of the believer nor by a generally assumed knowledge of God. All one has to do is talk with a natural scientist who calls her/himself an agnostic and for whom the question of faith in Christ, or Yahweh, or Mohammed, or any knowledge of God is irrelevant and actually in the way of what really matters, to realize that the range of our own discussion is just as much under question as the range of that person's view of reality.

I wonder if we would in our modern languages even use the word 'God', had this word not for millennia belonged to the legacy of our languages. Would we even find the word in our lexica. Would we invent this term, the same word? Or would we coin some other term? What would that be? Do we even understand what the people originally meant when saying 'God', even mythologically? What would that meaning be today?

It may well happen that we would say: the earth in the cosmos is not created by us but given for life and all of us, even in the midst of cosmic chaos; as are love, justice, peace including all, and all this whether it is perceived as a general insight leading us to commitment to it, or whether it is generated as a particular commitment leading to the general idea. What if faith could be understood as the confession and practice of the values that are best for all, and of their truth because they prove to be rightful for all, despite, and in the face of the fact of the power of evil? And what about the idea of eschatological ultimacy? What if it would not function as an escapism from our lives within the structures of the imperfect, forever non-ultimate world into a world of unrealistic utopia, but as the ever-present yardstick compared to which we cannot justify ourselves with

reference to the non-ultimate and imperfect condition of the world and our lives? And what about the objectifiability of such ultimacy? What if its function would be that we will never own and control ultimacy because it will always own and control us? What would unite us all, and what would be the legitimate function of our diverse faiths within what unites us?

REPENTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF LUKAN SOTERIOLOGY

Robert C. Tannehill

The following essay is a token of my great respect for Dr Simon J. De Vries, friend and former colleague on the faculty of Methodist Theological School in Ohio. It is, I hope, in keeping with his life-long commitment to the development of biblical theology through careful study of the texts. After introductory observations about word usage, this essay will seek to explain the place of repentance within the larger context of Lukan soteriology and explore several noteworthy and unusual aspects of repentance, as this theme is presented in Luke–Acts. It will also discuss the occasional references to specific sins from which some must repent and ask whether all stand in need of repentance, according to Luke–Acts. Finally, the discussion will return to Lukan soteriology, especially the connection of repentance and forgiveness with the historical ministry of Jesus, on the one hand, and with the rule of the exalted Messiah, on the other, instead of with the death of Jesus as a distinct saving event.

The importance of the theme of repentance in Luke–Acts is obvious from a quick review of some key data.¹ Two word groups related to repen-

1. In addition to items cited later in this essay, I note the following bibliography: Peter Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer: Schlüssel zur Theologie und Ethik des Lukas* (SNTSMS, 99; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 96-123; Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke* (trans. Geoffrey Buswell; London: Faber & Faber, 1960), pp. 99-101, 227-30; Jacques Dupont, 'Repentir et conversion d'après les Actes des Apôtres', in his *Études sur les Actes des Apôtres* (Lectio divina, 45; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967), pp. 421-57; *idem*, 'Conversion in the Acts of the Apostles', in *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. John Keating; New York: Paulist Press, 1979), pp. 61-84; Augustin George, 'La conversion', in *Études sur l'oeuvre de Luc* (Sources bibliques; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1978), pp. 351-68; Pierre Haudebert, 'La métanoia, des Septante de Saint Luc', in Institut Catholique de Paris, *La vie de la Parole: de l'Ancien au Nouveau Testament—Études...offertes à Pierre Grelot* (Paris: Desclée, 1987), pp. 355-66; David Lertis Matson, *Household Conversion Narratives in Acts: Pattern and Interpretation* (JSNTSup, 123; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); R. Michiels, 'La conception lucanienne de la

tance (μετανοέω—μετάνοια and ἐπιστρέφω—ἐπιστροφή) are favored by the author of Luke–Acts. Half of the New Testament uses of the noun μετάνοια ('repentance') are in Luke–Acts (Lk. 3.3, 8; 5.32; 15.7; 24.47; Acts 5.31; 11.18; 13.24; 19.4; 20.21; 26.20). The related verb μετανοέω ('repent') occurs seven times in Matthew and Mark, together, but nine times in Luke and five times in Acts (Lk. 10.13; 11.32; 13.3, 5; 15.7, 10; 16.30; 17.3, 4; Acts 2.38; 3.19; 8.22; 17.30; 26.20). Beyond the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, μετανοέω is found in the New Testament only in 2 Cor. 12.21 and in Revelation. The verb ἐπιστρέφω can be used in the sense of physical turning. It is so used in Matthew and Mark, except in a quotation of Isa. 6.9-10 (in Mt. 13.15 and Mk 4.12). It is also used in this way in Luke–Acts, but sometimes in Luke and frequently in Acts it expresses a turning that is equivalent to repentance: a change in attitude and orientation that results in a new relation to God and fellow humans (Lk. 1.16, 17; 22.32;² Acts 3.19; 9.35; 11.21; 14.15; 15.19; 26.18, 20; 28.27).³ To this list we can add Acts 15.3, the only occurrence of the noun ἐπιστροφή in the New Testament. This second word group, when used to express repentance, is also characteristic of Luke–Acts in the New Testament.⁴

We find more substantial evidence for the importance of repentance in Luke–Acts when we note that this theme is found throughout the two-volume work and is highlighted in key statements about the message and mission of the leading figures in the narrative. The call to repentance is an important part of the mission of John the Baptist (Lk. 1.16-17; 3.3, 8; Acts 13.24; 19.4), Jesus (Lk. 5.32; 10.13; 11.32; 13.3, 5; 15.7, 10), the apostles, and Paul. It is significant, in connection with the apostles and Paul, that the commission given by the risen Christ to his apostles is to preach repentance and forgiveness 'in his name' (Lk. 24.47), that repentance and turning

conversion', *ETL* 41 (1965), pp. 42-78; David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel* (JSNTSup, 119; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 139-69; Jens-W. Taeger, *Der Mensch und sein Heil: Studien zum Bild des Menschen und zur Sicht der Bekehrung bei Lukas* (SNT, 14; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus/Gerd Mohn, 1982), pp. 105-228; Charles H. Talbert, 'Conversion in the Acts of the Apostles: Ancient Auditors' Perceptions', in Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips (eds.), *Literary Studies in Luke–Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), pp. 141-53.

2. Lk. 17.4 is a doubtful case.

3. In this meaning ἐπιστρέφω is often completed by the phrase 'to the Lord' or 'to God' (ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον or ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν).

4. The verb ἐπιστρέφω is also used in the sense of repentance in 2 Cor. 3.16; 1 Thess. 1.9; Jas 5.19-20; 1 Pet. 2.25.

to the Lord are repeated themes in the Acts mission speeches (2.38; 3.19; 5.31; 14.15; 17.30) and in summaries of the successful course of the mission (9.35; 11.18, 21; 15.3), and that these themes are repeated in Paul's summaries of his commission from the Lord (26.17-18) and of the actual content of his preaching (20.21; 26.20).

Repentance is often connected with forgiveness of sins in the passages cited above, but the saving benefits may also be expressed by references to the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2.38), being 'saved from this crooked generation' (2.40), gaining 'life' (11.18) and 'light' (26.18). Repentance has an important place in Lukan soteriology—in the understanding of the way of salvation for Jews and Gentiles and, as we will see below, in the understanding of the saving work of God through Jesus Christ.

In Luke–Acts ἐπιστρέφω and μετανοέω are twice used together (Acts 3.19; 26.20; see also Lk. 17.4), which may be for purposes of emphasis, since they are largely interchangeable terms. There may, however, be a difference in nuance, μετανοέω and μετάνοια emphasizing a change in thinking and attitude, compared to one's previous life, and ἐπιστρέφω suggesting the positive side of this change: the re-establishment of a harmonious relation to God. This aspect of the word appears in the frequent use of ἐπιστρέφω in references to turning 'to the Lord' or 'to God' (Lk. 1.16; Acts 9.35; 11.21; 14.15; 15.19; 26.18, 20).⁵

In its use of ἐπιστρέφω, Luke–Acts reflects the language of the LXX and suggests that John the Baptist, Jesus, and Jesus' witnesses revive the message of the Hebrew prophets, who called their people to 'turn' back to God, using the Hebrew verb נָשׁוּב. This verb is translated in the LXX by ἐπιστρέφω or ἀποστρέφω rather than by μετανοέω.⁶ However, μετανοέω, as well as ἐπιστρέφω, appears in references to human repentance in

5. Guy D. Nave, Jr, has written the most recent extensive study of repentance in Luke–Acts. See *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke–Acts* (Academia Biblica, 4; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002). Although this is a valuable monograph, both for its thorough study of the use of μετανοέω and μετάνοια in ancient Greek literature and for its interpretation of Luke–Acts, it is limited by its neglect of ἐπιστρέφω. Nave states that the author of Luke–Acts 'did not necessarily consider' the two terms to be 'synonymous' (p. 203 n. 262). However, even if we grant that there is a nuance of difference, we should recognize that they function in the same way to refer to the change required in humans in order to share in God's salvation. We can reach a full understanding of the Lukan view of repentance only by studying both.

6. 'For נָשׁוּב, the verbal expression...for religious and moral conversion, the LXX never uses μετανοέω but always ἐπιστρέφω (-ομαι) or ἀποστρέφω (-ομαι)', J. Behm, in *TDNT*, IV, p. 989.

Jeremiah (see, e.g., Jer. 8.6; 24.7; 38[31].19) and Sirach (see, e.g., Sir. 17.24, 25; 48.15; see also Isa. 46.8). Also, the noun μετάνοια, rare in the LXX, does occur in Wis. 11.23; 12.10, 19 (otherwise, only in Prov. 14.15 and Sir. 44.16).⁷ A growing tendency to use μετανοέω and μετάνοια for repentance appears not only in Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach but also in later Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures and in Philo.⁸ The mixed language of Luke–Acts reflects both the wording favored in the LXX and this later tendency.⁹

The Lukan emphasis on repentance, although it continues an important theme in the Hebrew Scriptures, may strike many modern people as odd or repugnant. It may seem too negative in its view of humanity and too closely tied to threats of judgment. In particular, modern Americans have little awareness of a need to repent, either individually or as a society. In an article that appeared shortly before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Lewis Lapham compares America's present domination in the world—the American Empire—to the Roman Empire.¹⁰ He goes on to state that, since we Americans think of ourselves as virtuous, we cannot understand the negative reaction of other parts of the world to American dominance. Since Americans assume that our national character and policies are virtuous (or that the economic decisions of American businesses are exempt from moral judgment), we are unable to face the damaging consequences of our actions and the contradiction between them and our democratic ideals. If this is true, we still need prophetic voices to call us to repentance, and repentance is not an obsolete concern of the Bible.

Considered theologically, an emphasis on repentance may seem to make human action the key factor in salvation. Repentance, to be sure, is closely

7. In Wisdom of Solomon note also μετανοέω in 5.3.

8. See H. Merklein, in Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (eds.), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), II, p. 416. For Philo's use of these terms see *TDNT*, IV, pp. 993-94.

9. Nave provides an extensive discussion of the use of μετανοέω and μετάνοια in Classical and Hellenistic Greek literature, Hellenistic Jewish literature, and the New Testament and other early Christian literature; see Nave, *Role and Function of Repentance*, pp. 39-144. Nave denies that 'the concept of repentance found in the Bible in general, and in the New Testament in particular, was a uniquely Jewish concept that was alien to classical and Hellenistic Greek culture' (p. 71), for the Classical and Hellenistic usage is not confined to an intellectual change of mind.

10. Lewis H. Lapham, 'The American Rome: On the Theory of Virtuous Empire', *Harper's Magazine* 303.1815 (August 2001), pp. 31-38.

related to the gracious offer of forgiveness of sins in Luke–Acts, but repentance seems to be the crucial condition that humans must fulfill and the key factor in determining the final outcome for each individual. As a result, it can become the primary focus of the religious life, calling forth the penitent's anxious efforts at improvement in order to achieve salvation. This view may seem to find support in the correct observation that repentance has a moral aspect in Luke–Acts.¹¹ It is expressed in concrete changes in behavior. In Lk. 3.8, the Baptist demands that the crowds produce 'fruits worthy of repentance', which are spelled out in some detail in 3.10-14, and this demand is echoed in Paul's summary of his mission and message in Acts 26.20 ('deeds worthy of repentance').¹²

This theological objection will diminish, I believe, if we understand repentance within the larger context of Lukan soteriology. Repentance and forgiveness together refer to the transformation in human lives that results from God's saving action in fulfilling the promises of salvation through Israel's Messiah, Jesus. The reference to 'fruits' and 'deeds' make clear that this is an ethically transforming event, one that results in changed behavior. But the primary and basic message is not 'You must repent' but this good news: 'the time of fulfillment of the promises, the time of salvation, has come. God is powerfully at work in the world changing things, and this provides a special opportunity in which you, too, can change.' In this context repentance is not isolated human action. It is human action which, theologically discerned, is also divine action in individuals and societies.

Luke's Gospel begins with the infancy narrative, which contains angelic messages and inspired hymns proclaiming the fulfillment of the promises of salvation to Israel through its Messiah, a salvation that the Gentiles will also share (Lk. 2.30-32).¹³ Then Jesus begins his work by announcing his mission to 'preach good news' and 'proclaim the acceptable year of the

11. See Ulrich Wilckens, *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* (WMANT, 5; Neukirchen–Vluyt: Neukirchener Verlag, 3rd edn, 1974), p. 181.

12. The nature of these 'fruits worthy of repentance' is spelled out in the ethical teaching in Luke–Acts, especially in the teaching of Jesus. But the association of moral transformation with repentance 'was not a Lukan invention. Moral and ethical transformation was considered an integral part of repentance in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era' (Nave, *Role and Function of Repentance*, p. 110 n. 347).

13. For the significance of the infancy narrative, see Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (Foundations and Facets; 2 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986, 1990), I, pp. 13-44, and *idem*, *Luke* (Abingdon New Testament Commentaries; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), pp. 35-77.

Lord', which is the time of 'release' (ἄφεσις)—including the release or forgiveness of sins (Lk. 4.18-19).¹⁴ He then proclaims that this special time is 'today' (4.21). In following scenes we find narrative development of both the theme of release of sins and of the theme of repentance.

Luke 5.17-32 (the healing of the paralytic and the call of Levi, followed by the meal in Levi's house) take on special importance in Luke's narrative, even though they are found in Matthew and Mark. In this section the Lukan narrative begins to develop Jesus' mission of release as a mission that brings release of sins to those labeled as 'sinners'. Jesus makes two fundamental assertions about his mission and authority: he has 'authority on earth to release sins' (5.24) and he 'has not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance' (5.32). Then, in a process of recall and comparison, later scenes in Luke emphasize and enrich the reader's understanding of these fundamental aspects of Jesus' mission. Through repetition of key words from 5.17-32 in later scenes (see 7.34, 48-49; 15.1-2, 7, 10; 19.7, 10), these scenes are linked together as a progressive development of Jesus' role as the one who brings the release of sins.¹⁵

The important theme of repentance is also progressively developed in the Gospel narrative. It first appears as part of the mission of John the Baptist, who 'will turn (ἐπιστρέψει) many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God', resulting in a people prepared for the coming salvation (Lk. 1.16-17). The depiction of John proclaiming a 'baptism of repentance (βάπτισμα μετάνοίας) for release of sins' and calling for 'fruits worthy of repentance' in 3.3-14 shows John fulfilling this prophecy. The proclamation of repentance does not end with John. It continues in the mission of Jesus, and he, in turn, will charge his apostles to preach repentance and forgiveness (Lk. 24.47). Repentance is not a concern that passes with the passing of John but is an integral part of the transforming process that continues into the time of the risen and exalted Messiah.

In spite of the fact that Luke refers to repentance more frequently than Matthew or Mark, and mentions it in key statements about Jesus' and the disciples' mission, Luke omits two prominent references in Mark.¹⁶ These references occur in Mark's initial summary of Jesus' message (Mk 1.15)

14. The word ἄφεσις appears elsewhere in Luke-Acts only in the phrase that is usually translated 'forgiveness of sins'. On the significance of ἄφεσις in Lk. 4.18, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, I, pp. 65-66.

15. For details, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, I, pp. 103-109.

16. See Nave, *Role and Function of Repentance*, pp. 159-64, 191-94.

and the summary of the message of the twelve, when sent by Jesus (6.12). At these points Luke substitutes statements about 'preaching good news' (Lk. 4.18; 9.6). Especially the initial description of Jesus' message in the Nazareth synagogue (4.18-21) suggests that repentance is not the fundamental or dominant note in the gospel message. Rather, repentance follows from recognition of God's saving work in fulfillment of prophetic promises, disclosed by the 'good news'.

Repentance is first mentioned in the ministry of Jesus in 5.32, where Luke's Gospel adds 'to repentance' (εἰς μετάνοιαν) to the statement in Mk 2.17 ('I did not come to call the righteous but sinners').¹⁷ This mission of repentance and forgiveness for sinners, resulting in the reinstatement of 'sinners' in God's covenant people, is depicted in vivid scenes in 7.36-50, 15.1-32, 18.9-14, 19.1-10,¹⁸ and 23.39-43. As Jesus begins his journey to Jerusalem, however, it becomes clear that the people in general (not just the 'sinners') must repent and that failure to repent in response to the mission of Jesus will bring condemnation at the judgment. Woes are pronounced over towns of Galilee because of their failure to repent (10.13-15). The people of Nineveh will condemn 'this generation' at the judgment, for the Ninevites repented but this generation has not (11.32). Recent disasters in the news have not befallen remarkable sinners but are symbolic of what will happen to all, if they do not repent (13.1-5). (To this warning is appended the parable of the barren fig tree, which shows a devoted gardener interceding and laboring to give the barren tree one more chance.) The scriptural prophets' call to Israel to repent resounds in these threatening words.¹⁹

A closer look at Luke-Acts reveals two noteworthy emphases that differ from common assumptions about repentance. First, the narrative suggests that human repentance should be understood as both divine and human action. The assumption that repentance is the human contribution to salvation and forgiveness is the divine contribution is not only theologically

17. The significance of this addition requires further discussion below.

18. Some interpreters deny that Zacchaeus is an example of repentance. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB, 28; 2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981, 1985), II, pp. 1220-21, 1225. My reasons for rejecting this view may be found in Tannehill, *Luke*, p. 277.

19. Lk. 10.13-15 and 11.32, however, presuppose a universal and final time of judgment, which differs from the historical judgment anticipated in most of Israel's prophetic Scriptures.

shallow but ignores indications in Luke–Acts that God's saving purpose and action are manifest in the act of repentance itself. The same act of repentance can be viewed as God's saving action in a person's life and as a human decision. Luke–Acts is a narrative, not a systematic theology, and does not try to explain this puzzle, but there is evidence that both perspectives are important in the two-volume work.

Luke 15 contains three parables. They concern a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son, and they also have in common a communal celebration that expresses joy at recovery of what was lost. There is a significant difference between the first two parables and the third, however. In the first two parables the focus of attention is not on anything that the sheep or coin do (they remain passive figures) but on the determined seekers, the shepherd and the woman. Yet it is these two parables that explicitly speak of repentance (15.7, 10). The parables, then, suggest that the experience of repentance may be more like being found by someone who searches with great determination than like achieving something through our own determination. The parable of the lost son then reflects on the matter from the other side, as a human decision to return.²⁰

In Acts repentance is twice described as God's gift. The last of Peter's mission testimonies in Jerusalem contains an important soteriological statement: God has 'exalted' Jesus 'at his right hand to give repentance to Israel and release of sins' (Acts 5.31). Here repentance and forgiveness are bracketed together as the gift of the exalted Messiah to Israel, in fulfillment of God's saving purpose. This is not a passing remark of little importance. In 11.18 the important encounter between Peter and Cornelius comes as the moment of insight and resolution for the church when the Jerusalem church is finally convinced by Peter that 'to the Gentiles, also, God has given repentance unto life'. In this scene there is deliberate reference back to Pentecost and the first preaching to Jews. Peter concludes his argument by emphasizing the similarity between the experience of Cornelius and his household, who received the Spirit, and the experience of the Jerusalem believers at Pentecost, calling the Spirit God's 'gift' (11.15-17). The Jerusalem believers respond by confessing that Gentiles share in another gift, the repentance that God gave to Israel, according to Peter's preaching in 5.31. In 11.18 there is deliberate repetition and development

20. In 15.17-19 the son rehearses a speech of penitence, but how penitent is he, really? His main motivation seems to be to keep from starving. The parable seems remarkably unconcerned with the 'purity' of the son's motivation. The return home is all that matters.

of 5.31, helping to express a crucial point in the scene: God is giving the same gifts to Jews and Gentiles, which makes them partners in salvation.

Even if we recognize the importance of these statements about God giving repentance, their significance is debatable. The interpreter can remove some of the oddness and sharpness of these statements by understanding them to mean that God gives the opportunity to repent.²¹ However, oddities of religious expression may sometimes capture more of the experience of God than the interpreter's effort to rationalize. While it is no doubt true, from the perspective of Luke–Acts, that God is giving people the opportunity to repent, this statement does not sufficiently convey the dynamic view of God in the Lukan writings.

There is considerable evidence in Acts that God is understood to be active in the human conversions that are depicted there. The progress of the mission is described as a process of persons being 'added' to the believers (using προστίθημι). In Acts 2.41 this is expressed by using a passive verb ('about three thousand persons were added'), but in 2.47 the underlying theological perspective is expressed clearly ('The Lord was adding day by day those who were being saved'). In Antioch 'a great number believed and turned (ἐπέστρεψεν) to the Lord'. Once again, this is attributed to divine power: 'The hand of the Lord was with' the evangelists (11.21). When Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, they report 'what God had done with them and that he [God] had opened for the Gentiles a door of faith' (14.27). This successful mission is later referred to as 'the conversion (ἐπιστροφή) of the Gentiles' (15.3). Similar language is applied to the response of an individual person, Lydia: 'The Lord opened her heart' (16.14). Divine intervention is dramatically portrayed in the story of Saul on the Damascus road (9.3–19), and divine guidance leads preachers of the gospel to specific individuals and groups that will respond to the message (8.26, 29; 16.6–10; 18.9–10). The result is sometimes described as a 'turning' or 'conversion' (using ἐπιστρέφω or ἐπιστροφή), one of the concepts on which this study focuses (11.21; 15.3). Thus, in specific cases the narrative depicts God as actively involved in creating a 'turning' in people's lives, that is, in creating repentance. This evidence should be considered when we seek to understand what it means for God 'to give repentance' to Israel and the Gentiles. God's gift of repentance

21. See Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald Juel; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 42. In support of this interpretation he cites Josephus, *Bell.* 3.127, and Philo, *Leg. All.* 3.106. To these could be added Wis. 12.10 (ἐδίδους τόπον μετανοίας).

refers to a new opportunity to repent, but it also refers to God's dynamic action in people's lives to bring them to repent.²²

The second noteworthy emphasis in Luke–Acts is the surprising link between repentance and joy rather than mourning, the traditional expression of repentance. It is true that the call to repentance is sometimes motivated by a threat of judgment, a traditional biblical theme. This is true in Luke (3.8-9; 10.13-15; 11.31-32; 13.1-9) and, in less dramatic language, in Acts (10.42-43; 17.30-31; cf. 2.40). However, there are other passages that relate repentance to the joy of a restored relationship, a joy that excludes the demonstrations of sorrow normally associated with repentance. Here the motivation is positive—to share in something that brings joy. Thus each of the three parables of Luke 15 emphasizes joy at finding what was lost, expressed in a public celebration, and the parable of the lost son defends the appropriateness of the celebration against the elder brother, who complains that returning sinners do not deserve such treatment. Perhaps the younger son might be accepted back after appropriate acts of remorse, which would demonstrate his repentance, but the father, in his eager joy, skips all that.

The Lukan redaction in Lk. 5.27-35 makes a similar point. This redaction not only involves adding 'to repentance' to the Markan statement that Jesus has not come 'to call the righteous but sinners' in 5.32. It also involves linking the following question about fasting to the question about feasting with sinners through removal of Mark's indication that a new group approaches Jesus and the scene has changed (Mk 2.18). The complainers of Lk. 5.30 press their point by noting that the disciples of Jesus 'eat and drink' while followers of John and the Pharisees exhibit more

22. Acts 3.26 may express God's active role, but the construction of the sentence, with an articular infinitive (ἐν τῷ ἀποστρέφειν ἕκαστον ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν ὑμῶν), leaves an ambiguity. Grammatically, ἕκαστον ('each') could be either the subject or the object of the turning (ἀποστρέφειν). In the latter case, God is blessing the people through God's servant Jesus 'by turning each of you from your wicked ways' (the NRSV translation). In the former case, we could translate, 'when each of you turns from your wicked ways', which could express a condition; the blessing will take effect only when people repent. The recent commentary by C.K. Barrett chooses the translation that expresses divine action: 'In Greek usage generally... the intransitive sense seems to be most often expressed by the passive or middle, and the notion of blessing [in Acts 3.26] is more consistent with that of divine than human action' (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* [ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994], I, p. 214).

appropriate behavior; they are fasting (5.33). This objection is a response to Jesus' festive meals with sinners, which, according to Jesus' statement, result from his call of sinners to repentance. The objectors do not see any sign of repentance. There were customary signs of repentance: weeping and mourning, fasting, donning sackcloth and ashes. Fasting, in particular, is a sign of repentance and accompanies ardent prayer for forgiveness (see Joel 2.12-17; Jon. 3.5-9; *Jos. Azen.* 10.14-17). If Jesus is calling sinners to repentance, why are his followers not fasting? Jesus defends his followers by comparing his ministry to a joyful wedding feast, when fasting would be inappropriate. In Lk. 5.29-35 and 15.1-32 repentance is equivalent to the joyful discovery that one is included in God's salvation, making possible a transformed life. Other references to the joy experienced by those who have just encountered Jesus or the gospel (using *χαίρω* or *χαρά*) take on deeper meaning in light of these parables and dialogues that present repentance as a joyful discovery (see Lk. 19.6; Acts 8.8, 39; 13.48, 52).

Sometimes the narrative indicates specific sins from which people should repent, sometimes not. The question, 'What should we do?', following John the Baptist's demand for 'fruits worthy of repentance', leads to specific instructions to tax collectors and soldiers to avoid oppressive tendencies in their work (Lk. 3.12-14). On the other hand, the 'sinners' are welcomed by Jesus, and there is no attention in the story to the nature of their sins. These people are socially marginalized but are affirmed by Jesus and the narrative. Their affirmation in the narrative, and the lack of attention to their past behavior, is a protest against this marginalization (see, e.g., Lk. 7.36-50).

This lack of attention contrasts with the Acts mission speeches to Jerusalem Jews, where there is a sharp focus on a specific reason why the audience must repent, namely, their rejection of Jesus and complicity in his crucifixion.²³ The Pentecost speech in Acts 2 is the first public proclamation of Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, events that reveal him to be Lord and Messiah. These events should change the audience's understanding of its own actions. They share responsibility for Jesus' death, Peter says. They have blindly rejected the one through whom God was bringing salvation to Israel. These accusations of the audience (see 2.23, 36) lead to the call to repentance (2.37-38), which means accepting Jesus as their Messiah and receiving forgiveness from him. Thus the Pentecost

23. On these speeches see further Robert C. Tannehill, 'The Functions of Peter's Mission Speeches in the Narrative of Acts', *NTS* 37 (1991), pp. 400-14.

speech, in its narrative context, is a repentance sermon. The temple speech, which follows in Acts 3.12-26, reinforces the accusation and the call to repentance (see 3.13-15, 17-19). Blindly (see 3.17), they have rejected their own Messiah, with tragic results. If they repent, however, the messianic promises can still be fulfilled. The short speeches by Peter in Acts 4.8-12 and 5.29-32 address the same accusation to the Sanhedrin. Remarkably, responsibility for the death of Jesus is laid at the feet of the people of Jerusalem and their leaders also in later speeches (10.39; 13.27-28), where these accusations are not being applied to the audience. The accusation is limited to the people of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' death.

The repeated emphasis on responsibility for Jesus' death, followed by the call for repentance and offer of forgiveness, shows that rejection of Jesus in Jerusalem is a continuing problem for the implied author of Luke-Acts. The problem grows as the good news about Jesus is rejected by many Jews as the mission unfolds. Believing the scriptural promises of salvation for the Jewish people and affirming that Jesus Messiah has come to fulfill those promises, the author sees the story of Israel taking a tragic turn and encourages us to weep over this, as Jesus wept for Jerusalem (Lk. 19.41-44).²⁴ Recovery from this tragic situation requires repentance, but Paul's anguished words at the end of Acts (28.25-28) indicate that the majority of Israel has not responded to the message of repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus Messiah. The theological problem of Jewish rejection remains unresolved at the end of Acts.²⁵

Gentiles, also, are expected to 'turn' in repentance to God (Acts 11.18; 15.3, 19). In their case, they must turn to the 'living God', the creator of all, from the worship of 'worthless things' (14.15). Paul's Areopagus speech contains a series of implied criticisms of common pagan worship, rejecting the assumption that God dwells in a building of human construction, needs things that humans supply, and can be represented by a manufactured image (17.24-25, 29). The Areopagus speech leads up to a call to repentance: 'Overlooking the times of ignorance, God now commands people that all everywhere repent' (17.30). Although there is a reference to philosophers in 17.18, the speech is not directed against the teachings of Greek philosophy. It is an address to the Areopagus council

24. See Robert C. Tannehill, 'Israel in Luke-Acts: A Tragic Story', *JBL* 104 (1985), pp. 69-85.

25. On Paul's encounter with the Roman Jews, the final scene of Acts, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, II, pp. 344-57.

concerning the popular religious rites and shrines over which they have responsibility.²⁶

On their face, Paul's words in 17.30 appear to be an emphatic statement of a universal need for repentance ('everywhere' strengthens 'all'). It is the clearest such statement. Evidence elsewhere in Luke-Acts, however, does not always support it. In Luke, some individuals are described as 'righteous' (δικαίος, Zechariah and Elizabeth, 1.6; Simeon, 2.25; Joseph of Arimathea, 23.50-51), and in the parable of the lost sheep there is a contrast between the repentant sinner and 'ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance' (15.7; cf. 5.32). To be sure, the assumption that there are many righteous persons who do not need repentance is later undermined by reference to those who falsely 'justify yourselves before people' (οἱ δικαιοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 16.15) and who 'trust in themselves that they are righteous' (18.9). Nevertheless, the possibility remains that there are some who are truly righteous.

In Acts there is the special case of Cornelius, who is 'righteous and God-fearing' (10.22; cf. 10.2). The speech of Peter to Cornelius and his household contains no call to repentance (and seems to affirm Cornelius as God-fearing and righteous in 10.35), yet Peter ends by stating that everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins (10.43). The reference to everyone who believes returns to the thought at the beginning of Peter's speech: God's acceptance of Gentiles. It seems, then, that Peter's final statement assumes that, in general, the Gentile audience stands in need of forgiveness of sins. The reference to forgiveness is supplemented by a reference to God's gift of repentance to Gentiles in 11.18, which serves as a theological summary of the whole Cornelius episode. Thus, even in the Cornelius episode there is a general assumption that Gentiles need repentance and forgiveness, although there is no clarity about whether this applies to Cornelius himself.

Paul's speech to Diaspora Jews and God-fearers in Antioch of Pisidia also lacks a call to repentance, yet it closes with an offer of forgiveness of sins and the promise that through Jesus 'everyone who believes is being justified (δικαιοῦται) from all the things which you were unable to be justified in the law of Moses' (13.38-39). Furthermore, Paul's summaries of his mission preaching in Acts indicate that repentance was a regular part of his message to Jews and Greeks (20.21; 26.20). In Luke-Acts, then, we find a presumption that there is a general need for repentance and

26. See Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, II, pp. 216-17.

forgiveness and that these are important aspects of the salvation that God offers through Jesus Messiah, but there is a lack of clarity as to whether this applies to certain righteous persons.²⁷ We can also conclude that, even though the mission speeches in Jerusalem are specific about the crime from which the hearers must repent, there are other occasions on which the preacher does not attempt to specify the sins of the audience but relies on their own awareness of their need for repentance and forgiveness of sins.

Finally, I would like to explain further how, in my understanding, repentance and forgiveness fit into the larger Lukan picture of God's saving work in Jesus. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Acts mission speeches is that Jesus' death is not presented as a saving event through which forgiveness of sins is offered to humanity. Salvation through Jesus is not proclaimed by saying that 'Christ died for our sins' (1 Cor. 15.3).²⁸ In order to understand why this view of Jesus' death is unnecessary (and, in fact, would fit awkwardly into the Lukan perspective), we first need to recognize that the proclamations of the fulfillment of the promises to Israel with which Luke begins are themselves soteriological statements. There is an unusual concentration of the terms for savior and salvation (σωτήρ, σωτηρία, σωτήριοι) in the first chapters of Luke (1.47, 69, 71, 77; 2.11, 30; 3.6), where the coming fulfillment of the promises is celebrated. Because they appear early in Luke and reappear in Acts, three promise traditions are especially important for understanding the Lukan perspective on God's saving purpose. They concern the promise to Abraham, the promise to David, and certain passages in Isaiah that speak of light and salvation.

It is striking that each of these promise traditions of the infancy narrative not only recurs in Acts but is also presented as a promise that includes Gentiles as well as Jews. Thus in the Magnificat Mary celebrates God's

27. We should not assume that the gospel has nothing to offer the righteous, for the Lukan understanding of salvation includes more than repentance and forgiveness. It includes, for instance, the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.38), healing (3.16; 4.9-10), the establishment of a unified community devoted to the worship of God in which the destitute are supported through the sharing of possessions (2.44-47; 4.32-35), the restoration of Israel through its Messiah (Lk. 1.68-75; Acts 3.20-21), and sharing with Jesus in the resurrection life of God's eternal kingdom (Acts 26.6-8, 23).

28. Only two passages attribute saving significance to the death of Jesus as a distinct event. They are the words of Jesus at the Last Supper (Lk. 22.19-20)—about which there are textual uncertainties—and Acts 20.28. Neither of these references is part of mission speeches, which summarize in careful and compact form the way the gospel was being presented, according to Luke-Acts.

saving intervention for Israel in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Lk. 1.54-55), and Zechariah in the Benedictus elaborates on this theme (1.72-75). Peter, at the end of his temple speech in Acts 3.25, affirms that the Jewish people has a special role as 'sons of the prophets and of the covenant' but goes on to cite the Abraham promise in a universal form: 'And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed' (cf. Gen. 22.18; 26.4). This blessing refers to the salvation being offered to the world through Jesus. Similarly, Gabriel's announcement to Mary in Lk. 1.32-33 reflects God's promise to David of a successor to his throne, who would be God's son (cf. 2 Sam. 7.12-16), and the expectation of the Davidic Messiah is further developed in Lk. 1.69-71 and 2.11. Then Peter at Pentecost proclaims that the promise of the Messiah who would inherit David's throne has been fulfilled through Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2.30-31; see also Paul's synagogue speech in 13.22-23, 32-35). The enthronement of the Davidic Messiah is a saving event for Gentiles as well as Jews, as is made clear by Acts 15.16-17 (quoting a version of Amos 9.11-12). The third promise tradition recalls Isaiah's prophecies of 'God's salvation ($\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\nu$)' revealed to 'all flesh' (Isa. 40.5 LXX, quoted at Lk. 3.6; cf. also 2.30) and of one who will be a 'light of the nations' to bring 'salvation to the end of the earth' (Isa. 49.6; cf. Lk. 2.32). These prophecies are not only reflected in the early chapters of Luke but continue to reverberate in Acts (cf. 1.8; 13.47; 26.23; 28.28²⁹). The universal scope of this saving revelation is apparent already in Lk. 2.32 and 3.6.³⁰

These three promise traditions help shape the Lukan vision of salvation, which is multi-faceted, embracing the bodily, economic, and social dimensions of human life. Even the theme of forgiveness of sins has a social dimension, for, in context, the reference to forgiveness of sins in Lk. 1.77 is best understood to refer to the communal sins of the people,³¹ and Jesus' ministry to 'sinners' has the implication that these marginalized people should now be accepted in Jewish society. Jesus' saving work of forgiving sinners is not postponed until his death, as if it could not happen apart

29. Use of the rare word $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\nu$, which occurs in the New Testament only in Lk. 2.30; 3.6; Acts 28.28; Eph. 6.17, indicates that Isa. 40.5 is still an influence when Paul makes his final statement in Acts.

30. For a more detailed discussion of these three promise traditions, see Robert C. Tannehill, 'The Story of Israel within the Lukan Narrative', in David P. Moessner (ed.), *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel: Luke's Narrative Claim upon Israel's Legacy* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), pp. 327-30.

31. See Tannehill, *Luke*, p. 62.

from his death for sins. In the Nazareth synagogue Jesus reveals that he has been sent to proclaim 'release', which includes the release of sins, and this is a central aspect of his mission (the word ἄφεσις occurs twice in Lk. 4.18). Then, in 5.24, Jesus claims the authority to carry out this mission of releasing sins as he encounters specific persons in his historical ministry.

In Jesus' final words to his followers in Luke, he commands that his mission continue through the proclamation of 'repentance for³² forgiveness of sins in his name' (24.47). This is a commission to the apostles, which Paul will later share (Acts 26.16-20). However, we cannot simply say that the apostles and Paul continue Jesus' mission of proclaiming repentance and forgiveness. The apostles are to proclaim repentance and forgiveness in Jesus' name, and Jesus has received new authority that makes his name a powerful source of benefits which are offered through a mission that extends far beyond the previous ministry of Jesus. Thus the saving work of Jesus, including the proclamation of repentance and forgiveness, is raised to a new level. This is the significance of the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus, according to the mission speeches in the early part of Acts. The killing of Jesus is a human act of rejection and denial. By itself it would have no saving significance. But God rejects this human rejection, raising Jesus from the dead, which leads to the public testimony that Jesus is God's Messiah, who will from now on assume the throne of David and reign at God's right hand (cf. Acts 2.23-36).³³

As ruling Messiah, Jesus has the power to confer benefits.³⁴ This power is expressed by a repeated pattern of thought in the Jerusalem mission speeches: the exalted Lord Messiah 'pours out' or 'gives' gifts to those who call upon him. The Pentecost speech focuses on the gift of the Spirit (2.33: 'Being exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this that you see and hear'), but other gifts are mentioned in the following speeches. In 4.12 Peter proclaims that Jesus' 'name...has been given among humans' as a means of salvation (see 2.21). Jesus' name represents his royal power and authority, accessible now as a source of saving benefits. The statement that Jesus' 'name...has been given' is an extension of the idea that the Messiah

32. The text is uncertain. Many manuscripts read 'repentance and forgiveness'.

33. For a more complete discussion of Peter's Pentecost speech, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity*, II, pp. 29-42.

34. On the application of the cultural role of 'benefactor' to Jesus in Luke-Acts, see Frederick W. Danker, *Luke* (Proclamation Commentaries; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2nd edn, 1987), pp. 28-46.

gives benefits through his name. These benefits include healing (3.6, 16; 4.7, 10, 30), but through baptism in Jesus' name people will also receive release of sins and 'the gift of the Holy Spirit' (2.38). Indeed, the apostles were instructed to proclaim 'repentance for release of sins in his [the Messiah's] name' in the commission statement at the end of Luke (24.47; see Acts 10.43). This is the context in which we should understand the prominent statements about 'giving' repentance or repentance and forgiveness in Acts 5.31 and 11.18. In 5.31, the fullest statement, the gift is connected directly to Jesus' new status at the right hand of God: 'God exalted him as leader and savior at his right hand to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins'. Jesus' exaltation has a saving purpose. Enthroned at God's right hand, his ruling power is saving power,³⁵ for he can confer the benefits of the messianic kingdom on his loyal people. Among these benefits are repentance and forgiveness. Furthermore, Jesus' death, resurrection, and exaltation demonstrate Jesus' faithfulness to God, God's affirmation of Jesus, and God's power to use even human resistance to accomplish God's purpose of bringing the nations to repentance and forgiveness.

Luke and Acts are narratives about the past, not messages spoken directly to us. They can be suggestive for our life today, but a leap of insight and inspiration is required to apply the Lukan message to our world. Nevertheless, the strong call for repentance in Luke–Acts, the breadth and depth of reflection on this theme, and the chorus of other biblical voices calling for repentance may set us thinking about our own need for repentance, as individuals and as nations. If we are willing to respond in this way, an understanding of repentance as part of Luke's broader soteriology may help faithful people to embrace repentance as a saving benefit. After all, a transformed life, free of those things that damage ourselves and others, is a great gift.

35. Two of the three passages that designate Jesus as 'savior' (σωτήρ) clearly present Jesus as the royal Messiah (Lk. 2.11; Acts 13.23). Also in the third passage (Acts 5.31) Jesus' exaltation is probably understood as enthronement (see 2.30-35).

ON PUNISHMENT IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

Rolf P. Knierim

The Problem

The subject of punishment in the Hebrew Bible in research since the 1950s is defined by the relationship of the aspect of punishment to the aspect of the so-called fate-generating sphere of an action (*schicksalwirkended Tatsphäre*). To that end it has to do with punishment as judgment by a forensic process, as distinguished from or opposed to the aspect of justice (*Gerechtigkeit*) either as law (*Recht*) or as a sphere of an action. It has also to do with the specific difference between punishment and retribution (*Vergeltung*). It concerns the questions whether the various circumstances indicated by these aspects are exclusive of one another or whether they complement one another, and whether they are based on two competitive ontologies or merely on different sides of one and the same ontology. It rests upon the clarification of these questions whether, how, and in which connections one can or cannot speak of punishment, and also retribution.

The terminology for punishment, to punish, vengeance, exempt from punishment, *et alii*, is generally found in German biblical translations of the entire Hebrew Bible and in scholarly commentaries, monographs, dictionaries and Hebrew lexica about it. There is a similar situation in translations in other ancient and modern languages. The terms punishment, fine, penalty, reprisal, retaliation, retribution, revenge, vengeance, sanction are used in English continuously. Yet, the Hebrew Bible has no root term which would exclusively denote this worldfield, and to which all other terms would be connoted. It uses, however, nouns (*kele'*, *p^eullâ*, *mišpāt*, *šepet*, *šepôt*, etc.) and verbs (like *kipper*, *nāqâ*, *šāpaʿ*, etc.) which, specified grammatically and syntactically, on the basis of their contexts point to punishment/to punish and are therefore translated as such. The situation is similar for the term retribution in the lexica and translations.¹

1. See HALAT, HAWAT, ThWAT, THAT, and also Eckart Otto, 'Wortregister', in Klaus Koch (ed.), *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung in Religion und Recht des Alten*

K. Koch's thesis of the fate-generating sphere of an action, that is, *schicksalwirkended Tatsphäre*,² descending from and modifying Pedersen and Fahlgren³ has been generally recognized. However, Koch's rejection of the forensic aspect in the parts of the Hebrew Bible which he discussed was generally not followed.⁴ The assumption that the principle of the sphere of an action basically excludes an understanding in the sense of a difficulties. On the other hand, the relationship of law and justice, even uniformly comprehensive understanding of reality, meets with insurmountable of punishment and retribution, without regard to that which ought to be meant by the sphere of an action, appears not to have been developed sufficiently.

The sphere of an action is by no means a primitive, prehistoric form of the understanding of reality. Also, it in no way has its ground of being (*Seinsgrund*) in the humanly moral domain. On the contrary, it is an ontic reality which is also effective in the moral domain. It is attested to in all levels of the Hebrew Bible, and not by accident. It does not represent merely an early stage which was later replaced by legal thinking (*Rechtsdenken*). The aspect of the sphere of an action appears in those texts that reflect a typical kind of experience. According to this experience, a thought, word, behavior or deed by a person or community catches that person or community in an inevitable end, which corresponds to the nature of its origin and is the result of an autonomously, consistently and irresistibly forward-moving dynamic process toward that end. Characteristic for this

Testaments (Wege der Forschung, 125; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), pp. 457-58.

2. Klaus Koch, 'Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?', in *idem* (ed.), *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung*, pp. 130ff.

3. K.Hj. Fahlgren, 'Die Gegensätze von *š'daqa* im Alten Testament', in Koch (ed.), *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung*, pp. 8ff.; 87ff.

4. See the following articles in Koch (ed.), *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung*: Friedrich Horst, 'Recht und Religion im Bereich des Alten Testaments' (pp. 181ff.); Wolfgang Preisler, 'Vergeltung und Sühne im altisraelitischen Strafrecht' (pp. 236ff.), affirming the law of punishment, but rejecting the thoughts of retribution; Josef Scharbert, 'Das Verbum PQD in der Theologie des Alten Testaments' (pp. 280ff.); Henning Graf Reventlow, 'Sein Blut komme über sein Haupt' (pp. 412ff.); see also, for example, the respective articles on '*šālem*' etc. in *HALAT, ThWAT, THAT*; Hermann Schulz, 'Das Todesrecht im Alten Testament', *BZAW* 114 (1969); Klaus Seybold, 'Gericht Gottes', *TRE* 12 (1984), pp. 460-66; Rolf P. Knierim, *Die Hauptbegriffe für Sünde im Alten Testament* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus/Gerd Mohn, 1965), pp. 73ff., 91ff.; *idem*, 'Sünde—AT', *TRE* (forthcoming), and so on.

type of dynamic-holistic-homogeneous experience (in contrast to 'synthetic!'), is that the movement of the happening and its end are predetermined from its origin in the persons who are involved. The persons who as subjects bring about the movement of the happening (*Geschehensverlauf*) by their action become objects of the process to which they remain subjected up to its end. This process happens essentially without the actively intervening reaction of other persons who are directly affected by an act, or without the intervention by a third, higher authorized authority. In the sphere of an action, it is the autonomy of the sphere itself which emanates from the action of a person and subjects that person to her/his appropriate end in this sphere. In this form, the dynamic relationship of the act and its consequent effect (*Folge*) is exclusive of any intervention from outside. It fulfills itself in a person or a community solely on the ground of its inherent stringent regularity (*Gesetzmässigkeit*), automatically, inevitably, as a law of nature and free of an externally active influence. The person involved falls prey to the natural order of things. In this sense a crime carries its 'punishment', or a good deed its 'reward', within itself.

Nevertheless, in many respects the texts show that the root of the ethos, according to which the effect of an act is anticipated as actualization of the inherently natural (*naturgesetzlich*) process, is not the only type of experience of the act-consequence effect coherence. The question of other types centers on those aspects in which other persons and occurrences by way of their own initiative actively intervene in the condition of a person bound by an act-consequent effect, and consequently, how such interventions may be understood. A comprehensive investigation of the problem is not available. In the following, essential aspects will be highlighted.

'The wicked flee when no one pursues' (Prov. 28.1a). They will even more flee when someone pursues them. 'He who walks in integrity will be delivered', by others (Prov. 28.18a). In both cases the aspect of the consequence points to the possibility or situation according to which this consequence of a behavior does not fulfill itself on the wrongdoer automatically but is by other persons executed against her/him, whereby such a realization may only take place. The determination of the essence of the act-consequent effect must be differentiated by the, above all sociological, description of its forms of appearance.

There are at all times cases in which one falls victim to oneself. More frequently one incurs the consequences of one's behavior through the indirect reaction, or the direct, extra-judicial or judicial, intervention of others. Examples for both cases are innumerable, also in the Hebrew Bible.

The view that a behavior has its corresponding consequences is common to both types of cases. Its focus falls thereby actually not upon the dynamically developing movement of a process, the movement as such which progresses between an act and its fulfillment. On the contrary, and above all, it falls upon the beginning of the movement of the happening which lies in the active act of the wrongdoer, and especially upon its end in the passive constriction of the wrongdoer, an intermediate consequence begun in that beginning, and regardless of how the development of beginning and end may proceed. Lastly, the end meets the wrongdoer in the form of a happening which is in any case other than its original action and also can be of different kind, even as it has been started by that action and on account of it.

In view of the substantial coherence of the active act of a wrongdoer and its consequence passively experienced by her/him, the difference between the modalities of the process of the act to its final consequence appears to be relative. The process befalling the wrongdoer alone can take place without or through the intervention of others. To both kinds the identical coherence of an act and its consequence are fundamental. If other persons actively intervene, they do not replace the principle of an act and its consequent effect for the wrongdoer through a foreign principle; rather they uphold that connectedness by making themselves available on their own account to the development of the happening between its two ends, within, not outside, that development. They do so in the interest of the community and the system of order operative in it and by actively executing it. They represent the coherence of an act and its consequent effect and its process personally, particularly because the coherence must be upheld through their own activities when its effectiveness is not guaranteed by the automatism of the dynamic of the natural process. Because the movement of the happening in each case is considered to be inevitable, the essentially natural power of its automatic mechanism is replaced, where necessary, by the power of the persons who are upholding the movement of the happening. The term sphere of action (*Tatsphäre*) first depends upon this understanding. If the term rules out the active involvement of others in the act-consequence connectedness of a person, the term is too narrow because it only refers to the essentially natural manner of the event-coherence confined only to the wrongdoer. However, if the term includes that activity, it corresponds to the understanding whereby the identical coherence of an act and its consequence germane to its essence takes place either essentially naturally or is accomplished by persons who themselves represent

the effectiveness of the 'sphere' for the wrongdoer through their actions. This type of activity may be an intervention of persons into the fate of an evil doer, in this sense 'from outside'. Nevertheless, it is not based on a 'foreign' principle, but on the contrary, represents the principle of the connection of act and consequence and its coherent dynamic.

There are passages in which the fate of a wrongdoer under the aspect of the essentially natural sphere of an action is expressly in parallel to that of the activity of others: 'Or can one walk upon hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife. None who touches her will go unpunished'; which happens, by whatsoever 'punishment', through the reaction of others, especially the husband. Whoever commits adultery, wants to 'destroy himself'. 'Wounds and dishonor will he get...' because the wrath of the husband knows 'no compensation at the day of reckoning' (Prov. 6.28-35). Whoever walks blamelessly, 'walks securely'. Whoever goes crooked ways 'will be found out' by others (10.9). Sorrow 'weighs' a person down, but 'a good word makes him glad' (12.25). Whoever disregards instruction, 'falls' into poverty and whoever heeds reproof, 'is honored' (13.18). 'Folly' is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to 'men' (24.9). The wicked one wound up in his fate will be 'done away with by kingly ruling', whereby the throne itself 'will be established' by righteousness, as the dross is taken away from the silver through the work of the smith who is thereby 'successful' with a vessel (25.4-5). The intellectual associations in such sayings show that the aspects of the essentially natural character of the wellbeing of the wrongdoer and of that type of wellbeing, which others impose upon him independently on account of his action, are not self-contradictory. They are complementary in that the one aspect expresses the essentially natural mode of the act-consequence coherence, while the other expresses its mode by saying how the effect of a person's action which is inherently consistent with the nature of her/his action is carried out by the activity of other persons on the ground of the corporate life of all. The practice of coherence by people in their interhuman domain is related to that mode in which the coherence is conducted by the people themselves, indeed, as a fulfillment of their moral responsibility for the justice of the coherence of an act and its consequence. The intervention of the individuals or of the community into the act-consequence of a wrongdoer is of fundamental importance. Its study in all relevant texts is indispensable as long as one cannot maintain that such interventions have nothing to do with such effects.

Act-Consequent Effect as Law, Law as Punishment

The affliction of a wrongdoer by others or by her/his community with the consequent effects of her/his actions takes place in various areas and ways, even in the area and in the ways of law.⁵ Forensic categories and procedures are widely attested to in the Hebrew Bible, not only in its legal corpora, in stories, prophetic texts and the Psalms, but also in those wisdom texts in which the forensic treatment of a wrongdoer is directly expressed or indirectly presupposed. The reality of judicially administered punishment of the crime of a wrongdoer which is expressed throughout contextually, next to the experience of the autonomous act-consequence, cannot thereby be understood in the diachronic sense by two heterogeneous ontologies; the first of which, the older, would have been replaced by the second, the younger. Both ways of experience have their common ground in the understanding of justice for the consequences arising for a person out of her/his action. In as far as these consequences for a wrongdoer her/himself require the judicial treatment by the community, this treatment is chiefly, if not exclusively, grounded in the necessity to pursue an injury done by the wrongdoer to other persons. In this way crimes make the pursuit necessary, in contrast to the reasons for the reward of persons for their merits. The legal order concerned with crimes is many-sided. One of its aspects is the system of punishment. The relationship between law and the sphere of an action becomes particularly acute in this system.

Since Hebrew terms are ambiguous, it is advisable to define the understanding of punishment on the grounds of substantive differences, even in the terms themselves. The issue of punishment appears in the context of biblical aspects which are indicated by the issues of law, judgment, blood, revenge, atonement, restitution, compensation, sanction, correction, curse, and so on, and even retribution. Certain elements of meaning are common to more or all of these issues. Nevertheless, each of them has its specific meaning, by which it is differentiated from the others. It is therefore important to grasp not only the subject matter on the basis of the scope of the word, but also in the wider range of aspects in which even the scope of the word has its function. This applies also to the understanding of punishment and retribution.

Punishment, and retribution as well, are related to that aspect under which an injury caused by one party to another can be settled neither by

5. Robert Louis Hubbard, Jr, 'Dynamistic and Legal Language in Complaint Psalms' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Claremont, CA, 1980).

arbitration nor by restitution, but only through an activity of another party reactingly injuring this party. Both are radical forms of judgment. However, whomever retributes does not punish, and whoever punishes does not retribute. The retaliating party receives repayment because that party itself is injured. The punishing party can act as a third party in representing a party who was inflicted with irreparable damage. And while retribution can also react to good, punishment reacts exclusively to injury. The difference between retribution and punishment rests on two different types of law. Retribution is grounded in the right of the one retributing; punishment, by contrast, in the right to punishment. The one who retributes receives what the law owes to him, whereas the one who punishes is subject to what is owed to the law.

The system of criminal prosecution is a specific area of law in the Hebrew Bible. It refers to the affliction of an evildoer with personal injury for an injustice which was committed by her/him and which cannot be restituted again. The system is based on authoritative traditions and laws of the community in which punishment equivalent to a crime is understood as just. And this system demands for its administration authorized institutions and their personnel. The evidence in the Hebrew Bible, directly and indirectly, is widespread and manifold, and requires ongoing specific clarification.

Types and Forms of Punishment

Introduction

Punishment presupposes the proof of a guilt which calls for punishment. The texts distinguish between the judgment of guilt or verdict, the judgment for punishment or the sentence, and the execution of the sentence. In so far as punishment is necessary, the final consequence for the crime, the execution of a sentence, results from both the state of established guilt and the sentence for that guilt, whereby the guilty verdict, occurring first, refers to the principle of the responsibility of the evildoer for her/his crime, and the sentence following it determines the measure of punishment specifically to be enacted.

Cases of executed conviction and punishment are reported in retrospect. On the other hand, the legal texts above all look to future cases of convictions and sentences to be required. The sentences are prescribed typically for the same kind of cases and as the same basis for the actual pronouncements of individually different sentences by judicial authorities.

These prescriptions for punishment, understood typologically, are especially expressed in the declaratory formulas. In contrast to other declaratory definitions, for example, factual findings, circumstantial findings, findings of guilt, the type of punishment itself is through them declared formulaically. The declarations for punishment belong to the traditions of Israel which propose, formulate and lastly command the law in the texts. They belong to the rhetoric which sets the law by which judging parties and their judgments are authorized beforehand for the administration of the act-consequence coherence. They presuppose the role of such parties in the administration of conviction and punishment. Whether, in what proportion, and when those traditions were put into use and were considered as judicially binding, depends, of course, upon their relationship to the judicial system in toto and its historical transformations. The fact that the texts formulated in the form of laws do not always reflect institutionally effective and particularly jurisdictionally applied laws does not invalidate the recognition that they are legislative formulations which under given circumstances could be, and in part were, recognized and claimed as laws.

Prescriptions

In the system of prescriptions for punishment the following aspects, unaffected by their changing grammatical and syntactical forms, are distinguishable: formal or fundamental, and substantive or specific prescriptions. To the first aspect belong the types of connection of established guilt with typical punishments. To the second aspect belong the forms of penalty.

Types of prescriptions for punishment. There is an aspect according to which a guilt established for a crime is as such imposed upon the guilty party (*rās 'ā*) as a permanently punishing condition. An example of this is the frequent expression 'he bears his guilt' (*nās 'ā 'awōnō*), and similar ones (Lev. 5.1; 7.18; 16.16; 19.8; 20.17, 19; Num. 5.31; 14.34; 18.23; Ezek. 14.10; 44.10, 12).⁶ By this expression an authoritative party sentences, or is expected to sentence, the party pronounced as guilty to carry its state of guilt, and this irrespective of a determination about the special manner of or further consequences from such carrying (Ezek. 14.8-10; 18). The expression declares, indeed officially enacts, the intrinsic connection of the guilty one with his guilt. This connection becomes punishment by

6. See Knierim, *Hauptbegriffe*, pp. 186-237, 258-60.

way of the fact that it is explicitly imposed upon the guilty one through the judgment of an authority. To the aspect of guilt as imposed punishment belongs also the concept of the curse as an unmistakable curse saying.⁷ This expression provides by itself a type of punishment, not only for a guilty act which remains unknown, as, for example, according to Deut. 27.15-26, but also as a special kind of punishment, should the crime become known. By this divine pronouncement Cain is punished with the curse as such. This punishment corresponds to the guilt which he must bear without someone being allowed to kill him, and which he cannot bear (Gen. 4.11-16; cf. 3.14-15).

The typical prescriptions for punishment which are designed to prepare the determination of specific forms of their execution are those of capital punishment, the punishment aspect in banishment, of exclusion from the community, of bodily punishment, of punishment as imprisonment, and of punishment, imposed as material work.

As a judgment, attested to as either required or pronounced in reports stating or presupposing executions, capital punishment is especially documented in the legal texts of the Pentateuch (Gen. 26.11; Exod. 19.12; 21.12-18, 19; 28.35, 43; 31.14, 15; 35.2; Lev. 20.2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16; 24.15, 16, 17, 21; Num. 35.16-18.21; Deut. 17.12; 21.21; 22.21-25; 24.7; Josh. 1.18; Judg. 6.31; 21.5; 1 Sam. 14.39, 44; 2 Sam. 12.14; 1 Kgs 2.42; and so forth).⁸ The general demand is usually expressed by the verb *môt*. In the hophal form *môt yāmût* means 'he shall be killed' and the like. The demand expects the execution by people. The qal forms *met/yāmôt* ('he dies') and the like, generally refer to a divine act according to the manner of the result of the sphere of an action (Lev. 20.20, 21). The expression *lō' yihyeh* ('he must/shall not live'), and the like, means execution in Gen. 31.32; Exod. 19.13; 22.17; Zech. 13.3. However in Ezek. 18.13, 17, 19-21, 28, 33.15 it is an indefinite death declaration⁹ which

7. Willy Schottroff, *Der altisraelitische Fluchspruch* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament, 30; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), esp. pp. 33-35; by contrast Schulz, 'Das Todesrecht im Alten Testament', p. 79.

8. See Schulz, 'Das Todesrecht im Alten Testament'; Rodney Ray Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae: Forms of Authoritative Pronouncement in Ancient Israel' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Claremont, CA, 1983), pp. 116-49, 247-305; Raymond Westbrook, 'Punishments and Crimes', *ABD* (1992), V, pp. 546-56; M. Greenberg, 'Crimes and Punishments', in Leander Keck *et al.* (eds.), *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), I, pp. 733-44.

9. Schulz, 'Das Todesrecht im Alten Testament', p. 171.

implies either human¹⁰ or divine execution.¹¹ *Hārag* ('to kill'), refers in Deut. 13.10 and 2 Sam. 4.12 to execution. Also, the declaration 'his blood come upon him' or 'his blood is or shall be upon himself', and the like, particularly when connected with the demand for execution (Lev. 20.9, 11, 12, 13, 16; cf. Ezek. 18.13), complements the prescriptions for the death penalty in the sense that, through this pronouncement, the punishing community officially burdens and restricts the sphere of the powerful influence of the blood shed by it upon the punished person(s) alone (singular and plural) thereby unburdening itself from that sphere.¹²

The ban, *herem*, means the killing of people and life and the destruction of goods, occasionally perhaps also merely the confiscation of possessions. While not everywhere, it functions as punishment in as much as it is commanded as a punishing reaction against previously committed serious violations of conventions or laws, even against a case of disobedience to a demanded ban itself. To the aspect of ban as punishment belong not only Exod. 22.19; Lev. 27.29; Deut. 13.2-6, 7-12, 13-19; 17.2-7; Ezra 10.8; but, for example, also 1 Sam. 15.2-3, 7-9, 10-33; Isa. 34.2-5; 43.28; Jer. 51.3. See also Deut. 7.26-27; 13.15; 20.17-18; Josh. 7.13.¹³

The event of 'cutting', denoted by the term *kāret*, often refers to cutting out, or eliminating people or groups through human or divine actions which are subject to the guilty verdict concerning 'violations of a religious, moral and sacral-legal manner'.¹⁴ To that extent the *kāret* action or event represents a type of punishment. Eliminating evildoers, either prescribed or announced, is thereby understood either as execution (Exod. 31.14; Lev. 20.2-3; Num. 15.32-36) or as banishment in the sense of the kinds of exclusion from the clan or national community, even of land, city or parental home. It is also understood as excommunication from the worshipping community, either by appropriate judicial agencies themselves¹⁵

10. Walther Zimmerli, *Ezechiel* (BKAT, 13.2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), p. 410.

11. Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', p. 126.

12. Reventlow, 'Sein Blut komme über sein Haupt', p. 412; Klaus Koch, "'Sein Blut bleibe auf seinem Haupt" und die israelitische Auffassung vom vergossenen Blut', in *idem* (ed.), *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung*, pp. 432-56 (432).

13. C. Brekelmans, '*heraem*, Bann', in *THAT*, I, pp. 635-39; see also, especially, N. Lohfink, '*haram*', in *ThWAT*, III, pp. 192-213, with important remarks concerning the theory of the ban.

14. G. Hasel, '*kārat*', in *ThWAT*, IV, pp. 355-67 (362).

15. Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', pp. 138-42.

or as a divine punishing judgment,¹⁶ particularly when the punishment by human agencies does not happen (Lev. 17.10; 20.4-6; Ezek. 14.8-14), or which, as in the punishing judgment over the nations, is in no other way possible than by affliction taking effect historically or existentially.¹⁷

Besides the punishment which brings about death, there is the category of bodily punishments. The principle for both is expressed in the maxim of the legal theory of *ius talionis* (Exod. 21.23-25; Lev. 24.18-21; Deut. 19.21; cf. Josh. 7.25; 1 Sam. 15.23-24; 1 Kgs 20.42; and more). This maxim says that the bodily injury which is to be inflicted on the wrongdoer should correspond to the bodily injury inflicted by her/him upon another person. As is evident, however, it implies that the literal bodily punishment may be substituted by an equivalent kind of material compensation due to the injured person. If such compensation is impossible, the talion determines the standard for the action by the blood avenger or the punishing authority. Bodily punishment is also one of the many types of punishment in the area of the so-called corrective action (Deut. 21.18; 22.18; Jer. 31.18; Prov. 31.18; also 13.24; 19.18). However, bodily punishment can also be bodily mutilating, inasmuch as its purpose is punishment for the sake of punishment itself.

Finally, and mostly in narrative texts, reference in variable terminology is made to justified or unjustified detention meant as punishment, whereby one must from case to case differentiate between the aspects of temporary imprisonment on remand, unlimited captivity, and imprisonment in the sense of punishment (Gen. 37.18, 22, 26; 39.20-41.14; Judg. 15.10, 12, 13, 14; 16.21; 1 Kgs 22.26; 2 Kgs 17.4; 23.30; 25.27; Isa. 24.22; Jer. 32.2; 37.21; 38.4, 6, 7, 9; 52.11, 31; Zech. 9.11; 2 Chron 33.11; 36.6).

For cases of encumbered material, for example, theft and extraction of property, the imposition of a punishment in the same (Exod. 22.3, 6, 8) or multiple value (Exod. 21.37; 2 Sam. 12.6; Prov. 6.31) was prescribed, in addition to the obligation of restitution or equivalent compensation. Finally minor punishments of 20% of the value of an item are demanded in money, in addition to the payment for guilt-obligations which have grown out of various misappropriations against Yahweh,¹⁸ see Lev. 5.16; 19.21; 22.14; 27.13, 15, 19, 27; Num. 5.6-8.

16. Thus 32 times: Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', p. 138.

17. Klaus Seybold, 'Gericht Gottes', *TRE* 12 (1984), pp. 459-66 (463-64); Hasel, 'kārat', p. 360.

18. Rolf P. Knierim, 'āšām, *Schuldverpflichtung*', in *THAT*, pp. 251-57; Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', pp. 189-200; Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers: The Traditional*

Particular forms of punishment. Documented for execution are: stoning, *sāqal* (Exod. 19.12-13; 21.29; Deut. 13.10-11; 17.5-6; 22.21, 24; 1 Kgs 21.10-15) or *rāgam* (Lev. 20.2, 27; 24.16; Num. 15.35-36; Deut. 21.21); shooting, *yārā* (Exod. 19.13); killing by the sword, *hārab* (1 Sam. 2.33; also Jer. 11.22; 16.4; 21.9; 34.4; 38.2; 42.17; 44.12; Ezek. 5.12; 7.15; 33.27; Amos 7.11; 9.10); burning, *sārap* (Gen. 38.24; Lev. 20.14; 21.9, etc.); and hanging, *tālā/tālā'* (Est. 2.33; 5.14) for Persia, but also used in Gen. 40.19, 22 and 41.13 for Egypt. For *post mortem* punishment by desecration see Josh. 10.22-27 and 2 Sam. 21.12-13. See also Deut. 21.22, Josh. 8.23-29, Lam. 5.12; so also for decapitation in 2 Sam. 16.19; 20.22; 2 Kgs 6.32, or *yāk'a* (hiphil, Num. 25.4; 2 Sam. 21.6, 9).

Documented for bodily punishment are the punishing beatings with the stick, *šebet*, called *yāsar* (Deut. 22.18; Prov. 13.24; 22.15; 23.13-14) or *nāqā* (Exod. 2.11; 5.14, 16; 21.20; Deut. 25.1-3; Neh. 13.25 by hand?), but not with the whip reserved for the horse, *šōt* (Prov. 26.3). See also 1 Kgs 22.11; Jer. 20.2; 37.15; 2 Chron. 25.16. Inasmuch as it is regarded as lawful, bodily beating is established in the right of the punishing to property and rule. Depending on the existing order it occurs either in public proceedings of a judicial or extra-judicial type or, certainly much more often, in the area of the family, removed from the eyes of the public. In the latter case the punishing beating, the flogging, is not coincidentally only indirectly indicated in expressions for correction which imply more than only corrective instruction; which has, however, nothing to do with a shyness by the texts to avoid an explicit expression for bodily punishment in favor of a more general expression for education. Infrequently documented are the cutting off of the tongue (Prov. 10.31), the toe (Judg. 1.6-7), the hand (Deut. 25.12), the penis (Deut. 23.2), the nose and ear (Ezek. 23.25) and blinding, *'ūr* (piel, 2 Kgs 25.7; Jer. 39.7; 52.11), or stabbing out the eyes, *nāqar* (Num. 16.14; Judg. 16.21; 1 Sam. 11.2). Common to these forms is the permanent mutilation of the body.

Means for bodily containment were bronze shackles (Judg. 16.21; 2 Sam. 3.34; 2 Kgs 25.7; Jer. 39.7; 52.11; 2 Chron. 33.11; 36.6), iron shackles for the feet or the neck (Pss. 105.18; 149.8), chains (Isa. 45.14; Jer. 40.1, 4; Nah. 3.10; Ps. 149.8; Job 36.8), and ropes (Judg. 15.13-14).

The forms of punishment for execution, beating, bodily mutilation and for unlimited imprisonment are distinguished in important points. Beating, or bodily correction, causes pain and may even leave remaining wheals in

a bad case (Gen. 4.23; Exod. 21.25; Prov. 20.30; Isa. 1.6). Nevertheless, it intends neither permanent mutilation nor restriction of future freedom to live. By the limitation in beating the aspect of punishment for a crime that dates back to the past is connected with the aspect of its effect for the avoidance of crime-like behavior in the future. Inherent in the occurrence of this limiting kind of punishment is therefore its educationally corrective function. Inasmuch as the person beating beats in order to educate, he executes what educates. By contrast, execution, mutilation and even unlimited detention are of permanent nature, even if in different ways. Detention means the deprivation of freedom through isolation from community and environment. As punishment it is distinguished from the less difficult form of bondage. Mutilation results in a permanent life in the community in the form of being bodily stigmatized, visible by all. These forms of punishment allow for continued living in limited ways. On the other hand, execution intends the final obliteration of life as such, the end of one's future. In detention and mutilation the living sinners are separated from and ostracized, opposite the righteous. In execution the sinners are cut out from the community of the living.

Punishment and judicial administration in the narrative texts. In addition to the already mentioned texts, those to be mentioned in which the aspect of punishment likewise plays a roll are the following: Gen. 31.36; 38.24-26; 44.4-17; Lev. 24.10-23; Num. 5.11-28; 15.32-36; Josh. 7.16-26; Judg. 19-20; 1 Sam. 14.38-45; 15; 2 Sam. 12.1-6; 1 Kgs 20.35-43; 21; the book of Esther.¹⁹ The order of punishments is subject to manifold and, above all in the narratives, not fully reconstructible structures of the system of Israelite law and especially its judiciary and its historical transformations, structures anchored in the customs of family, kinship, tribe, kingship and its military, and before and especially after the exile in the civil and hierocratic administration.²⁰

God's Punishing

God's punishing belongs to the workings of the just execution of the divine dominion in the world, in humanity, in Israel and in the life of people, and this also through the area of law and the administration of justice. Since

19. Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', pp. 264-305.

20. Pietro Bovati, *Re-Establishing Justice: Legal Terms, Concepts and Procedures in the Hebrew Bible* (trans. Michael J. Smith; JSOTSup, 105; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), esp. pp. 344-93.

the Hebrew Bible's view of reality is not dualistic, these workings are among other places also found as happening in and through the human institutions, especially through the institutions of Israel as the people of Yahweh. The texts emphasize that the administration of law in Israel is instituted and governed by Yahweh and represents Yahweh's law, also through judgment and punishment. Therefore, everything that can be said about punishment in Israel's jurisdiction belongs to the punishments of God to be administered by Israel. The violation of this representational assignment stands itself under punishment. Punishments, not executed by Israel, are instead carried out by Yahweh himself, as is the punishment of those who fail to execute just and demanded punishments. These latter also are carried out by extra-judicial processes.

The language of Lev. 20.2-21 is exemplary. Whoever commits one of the crimes worthy of death 'shall be put to death' (vv. 2, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16), especially 'the people of the land shall stone him with stones' (v. 2), 'They shall burn him and them (two women)'. To this corresponds: 'they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people' (vv. 17-18), and also 'his/her blood may be upon him/her' (vv. 9, 11, 12, 13, 16). On the other hand, in v. 2 and v. 3 it is said: 'I myself will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people...' See 1 Sam. 15.2-3; and a few others. What Israel should do is Yahweh's own doing. However, this doing of Yahweh happens even when Israel does not fulfill the command for punishment (vv. 4-6), in which case Yahweh alone brings the punishment about through, so it is presumed, judicial processes of the sphere of action outside the judiciary, as in vv. 17-18, 'they shall be childless'.

The aspect of God's punishing cannot be separated from that of his punishing by Israel. In both cases the actual messenger and executor of judgments of punishment is Yahweh himself. On the other hand, not all of his punishments are executed through the judiciary. Where its institutionalized execution does not happen or is not possible, Yahweh punishes through natural or historical catastrophes. These grow out of criminal offenses either causally or they rest, as, for example, in the cases of his reaction against disloyalty to the covenant (Lev. 26.14-39; Deut. 28.15-68), on a view of *metacausal* connections, connections eluding causal plausibility, a view rooted precisely in the awareness of the reality of the divine activity in the world. In this type of punishment God-Yahweh himself is understood as the punishing person through whom even the effectiveness of the sphere of an action is constituted, activated and maintained. The

personified 'I' of Yahweh is the acting subject of the sphere of an action. See, for example, Hos. 5.12; 7.8-16.

The texts speak of God's indicting activity, of the activity which defends himself and others, of pronouncing judgment and also punishment, of God's punishing activity, and often of his law-suit, *rib*. That Yahweh unites thereby the functions of indictment, judgment and even execution in one and the same person stands in contrast to the juridical systems required for Israel. The structure of these systems was obviously not necessary for the understanding of the judicial nature of God's judgments. The origin for this contrast appears to lie, on the one hand, much more in the vision of the representation of the integrity of all judicial elements through one and the same God, in contrast to the experience of the judicial distortion in the human institutions, than in texts generated by imaginative poetic freedom. On the other hand, the origin appears to lie partially in God's punishing through those forms of the sphere of an action which are not possible through the infliction of punishment by a judiciary. The idea of God's own judging and punishing refers to the judicial procedure as well as to the sphere of action which carries its effect within itself. By being independent of either of these two processes, yet using each as an instrument, it points to Yahweh, as the acting subject in all, who at the same time is distinguished from all. The biblical ideas of law as such, also as judgment, must, therefore, for good reasons be distinguished from those of the procedural structures of law and judgment.

Many indications point to the fact that the judiciaries' standards of punishment for corporal punishments, imprisonment, mutilation and capital punishment also play a part in Israel's understanding of its own catastrophic experiences as well as those of the nations as divine punishment. This is certainly the case for corporal punishment (see Isa. 1.5-9; Amos 4.6-11, etc.), and might be true also for all texts of imprisonment in the exilic captivity and in the vassalage of the people remaining in the land.²¹ The punishment of mutilation is expressed in the reduction of the promised land and of the body of people and in the concept of the rest. This is different with capital punishment, except for the aspect of the ban as punishment for particular groups, including Sodom and Gomorra. At the beginning, at the Flood, and at the end of the history of humanity, the one who sins, but never humanity in its entirety, falls into capital punishment. The chosen people of Israel are punished during their history again and again by their God on account of their disobedience, but never by death. The

21. J. Hausmann, 'kālā', in *ThWAT*, IV, pp. 153-56 (155).

God who strikes an unteachable people on account of justice (Hos. 11.4-7) is unable to annihilate them because he is God and not a human being (11.8-9). Because the right of his people to life is greater than the law of death, the prerogative of pardon replaces the justice of capital punishment and even of the justified ebullition of divine anger. The idea that the right to life is fundamental when compared to the law of death, because the deity is the God of life, not of death, and hence that the justice of pardon, at least of patience, must prevail over the justice of capital punishment, is in the Hebrew Bible not only applied to Yahweh's people Israel. In the Primeval History, for example, after the Flood it is applied also to the total history of humanity. The questions are therefore important whether, concerning the prevailing idea of divine justice, the aspect of the deity's pardon for the ongoingly sinful history of humanity is derived from and depends on or is based on God's pardon for his people, or vice versa; and therefore whether the particular idea of God's punishments for Israel and the nations is based on the principle of the same justice for both entities or on one principle for Israel but a different one for the nations. Finally, it is a matter of whether, according to the texts, justice and law are set, authored, by God-Yahweh himself, or whether in humanity and Israel already and always existing justice is represented by him; whether Yahweh repays on account of his divinity or whether he punishes on account of justice because his divinity is representative of the same justice universally; that is, whether we have to speak of the God of justice or the justice of God, or which of the two aspects is the criterion for the other.

Punishable Crimes

The evidence which points to or presupposes punishable crimes is scattered over wide parts of the Hebrew Bible. The crimes are not codified anywhere and certainly do not contain the sum of all crimes which were conceivable in the history of Israelite society. The references to them are essentially met in the instructions which forbid crimes and which require punishment, and only to a small extent in narratives about their actual punishment. Their typology extends to the areas of persons and property, family, tribe, place or city, state, and to the religion of Yahweh which increasingly pervades all these areas and especially its worship. Their sum, extant in the final form of the Hebrew Bible, is based on a history of centuries of manifold legal traditions which proved themselves in the theocratic design to be abidingly valid for Israel's existence and were synoptically adopted as normative for the future. Nevertheless, their position in

the Hebrew Bible does not mean that they were in the subsequent Jewish tradition, always or solely, actually obeyed, but it does mean that their claim could and can be actualized under given circumstances on account of their biblical authority.

The following list corresponds to the synoptic function of punishable crimes in the Hebrew Bible. In comparison to punishable crimes for personal injury and property, which are not cited here any further, the crimes worthy of capital punishment take up a good deal of space. Their list with the most important evidence is: (1) manslaughter and murder of a (free) man: Exod. 21.12; Lev. 24.17, 21; Num. 35.16, 17, 18, 21; Deut. 19.12; (2) beating of father or mother: Exod. 21.15; (3) theft (and sale) of a (free) man: Exod. 21.16; Deut. 24.7; (4) adultery (death for both parties): Lev. 20.10; Deut. 22.22; 24.25; (5) clan desecration (*Sippenschande*): Lev. 20.11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21; (6) violation of a wife or concubine: Judg. 19–20; (7) homosexuality among men: Lev. 20.13; (8) incest with an animal: Exod. 22.18; Lev. 20.15; (9) intercourse with a woman during bleeding: Lev. 20.18; (10) lewdness of an engaged woman: Deut. 22.20–21; (11) rape of an engaged woman who is not screaming (death for both parties): Deut. 22.24; (12) taking the name in vain of father, mother, God, Yahweh, the anointed one or the king: Exod. 21.17; Lev. 20.9; 24.10–23; 2 Sam. 16.7, 9, 10; 19.22; 1 Kgs 21.1–16; cf. Eccl. 10.20; (13) filial incorrigibility: Deut. 21.18–21; (14) rebellion against the head of Israel: Num. 16; Josh. 1.18; 1 Kgs 2.24; (15) disobedience against the priest of God or judge: Deut. 17.12–13; (16) defilement of the Sabbath: Exod. 31.14–15; 35.2; Num. 15.32–36; (17) sacrifice to Molech: Lev. 20.2; (18) consulting a medium and magician: Lev. 20.27; (19) idolatry: Deut. 13.2–19; 17.1–5; (20) false prophecy: Deut. 18.19–22; cf. 1 Kgs 22; Jer. 29.24–32; (21) breach of an oath: Judg. 21.5; 1 Sam. 14.39, 43–44; 1 Kgs 2.42; (22) profaning the sanctuary: Exod. 28.35, 43; 30.20–21; Lev. 8.35; 10.6–7, 9; 16.2; 22.9; Num. 18.32; (23) unauthorized service as a priest: Num. 3.10, 38; 17.28; 18.3, 7; (24) touching of objects for worship: Num. 4.15; cf. Exod. 19.12; (25) sparing of a vicious ox: Exod. 21.29.²² In addition there is, particularly, high treason against or by the house of the king (e.g. 2 Sam. 20.1–22; 1 Kgs 13; 14.1–18; 16.1–17; 18.17, 40; 20.35–43; 21.17–29; 22.1–40; 2 Kgs 9.1–10.33; 11; Amos 7.10–17; Jer. 29.16–23, etc.), or against the temple (Jer. 26).²³

22. Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae', pp. 116–49.

23. Knierim, 'Sünde—AT'.

BIBLICAL METAPHORS AS PSYCHOLOGICAL AGENTS
THAT LEGITIMATE VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY

J. Harold Ellens

Introduction

Religion is pervasive throughout human culture. It is apparently a universal, natural, and primal element of our humanness. It expresses itself mainly in worship ritual and sacred scriptures. It can be a remarkable source of consolation and hope, as well as the motivator for horrendous violence in society, ravaging persons, communities, and cultures. Religion is the externalized form of an irrepressible internal human quest for spiritual meaning and psychological tranquility. Humans move toward and express themselves in religious forms because of the unconscious or conscious assumption that doing so leads to a resolution of interior dissonance and turbulence in the psyche or soul, and to peace with God.

Sacred scriptures serve a significant psycho-spiritual purpose as the source of insight and authority regarding what may be assumed to bring that integrated wholeness, universally sought. Such scriptures, therefore, become dear to the hearts and minds of religious devotees, and are turned to for the stories that depict the divine nature and purpose, a transcendental worldview, a wholesome mode of life, and the consolations and hopes that satisfy the human spirit, holding it to the loadstar of meaning and purpose. This is as it should be, perhaps, since it offers sanctions and warrants for a transcendental idealism which often empowers humans to rise above the vicissitudes of life, to hope against all hope in desperate suffering, to rebuild life after moral failure or mortal tragedy, and even to inspire gratitude and joy in the face of both the magnificence and malignance of the universe.

Unfortunately, religions have a comparable power to destroy. Most violence in the history of the world has been perpetrated under either than name or motivation of religious metaphors and the stories to which they give weight and warrant.

Exposition

Stanley Hauerwas has taught us that we cannot get to any substantial truth and meaning in human life except in story. What we really know is what we have experienced and remember as the stories that form our lives. Humans tend not only to remember the events that shaped them but also to integrate the many stories about those personal experiences into a master story for that person's life. When your master story intersects my master story and we share a moment of meaning, your story is forever a part of mine at that intersection, and mine of yours, each expanding and illuminating the other. When the stories or the master story of the sacred scriptures, that each of us holds dear, is riding in each of our stories, those sacred memories illumine and expand both of our stories even more, as they intersect in our meaningful encounters.

Sacred stories, like all stories, have their meaning in the metaphors which form and express the pictures of experience, memory, and truth that are celebrated in any given culture or community, and hence in the individuals who constitute those communities. It is these metaphors which carry and convey the power of religious truth. Sacred scriptures are laden with such empowering metaphors, examples of which may be found nearly everywhere in the refined poetry of scriptural literature. In Isaiah 53 it is from 'a root out of dry ground' that there comes forth a new kind of vitality. Hope springs up in every heart at the words of Ezekiel 17 about the dry tree which is made to flourish. One can go on through terrible adversity on the strength of the metaphor of the dry bones which can live and flourish in Ezekiel 37. Psalm 1 makes clear, in the picture of the tree that flourishes in leaf and fruit because it is planted by 'streams of living water', that the 'spiritual location' of the righteous man makes life a lot more fun than 'the way of the wicked which is a form and experience of perishing'. It takes little more argument than that of the metaphors of Psalm 1 to motivate us to seek the happiness of 'the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, does not identify himself with wicked men, and does not hang out with cynical scoffers'.

Undoubtedly, the metaphor of the Exodus in Judaic and Christian tradition has empowered human hope, resilience, and endurance in both of our traditions, when in history or our personal odysseys our worst-case scenarios became realities and all other sources of optimism could no longer be sustained. The Christian metaphor of a God who visits us in our iniquity and affliction and embraces us in spite of ourselves, because of the

superiority of his character and grace, rather than hinging his goodwill upon our flawed characters and gracelessness, has certainly been the most redemptive notion ever conjured up in tortured human hearts and conveyed by the cadences of any sacred scriptures (Rom. 8). Jesus' insistence upon the fact the kingdom of God belongs to the children and the childlike in spirit, forms a metaphor, the meaning of which has a life-shaping simplicity which no one can miss, while at the same time it contains the mystery which no human mind or spirit can exhaust or fully explicate.

Tragically, sacred scriptures can also be devastatingly destructive, spiritually, psychologically, and culturally. Most of the frequent genocides in history have been religious wars, or the re-enactment of the metaphoric meaning of stories from sacred scriptures. Surely the Christian crusades of the Middle Ages were thought legitimate on the grounds that 'delivering the holy places from the infidel Turk' seemed very much the contemporary enactment of the presumed 'divine mandate' to the Israelite nation, in the Hebrew Bible, to exterminate the Canaanites who possessed the Holy Land, presumably promised to Abraham 3000 years earlier.

The recent destruction of the magnificent and massive ancient images of Buddha in Afghanistan by the Taliban is a direct result of numerous metaphors and stories in the Qur'an glorifying the destruction of heretical things, images and idols, and even humans: infidels who do not hold to the faith of Islam. This doctrine of Islam, moreover, is a derivative of the Qur'an image of Jihad as the act of ultimate devotion to God. In the Qur'an, Jihad is a call to struggle against evil in any and all forms. It meant from the beginning the struggle within a person against the forces of temptation and degradation of one's personality and character, as a devotee of God. It came to mean vicious war against anyone who might be identified as an enemy of Islam, of any Islamic leader whether authentic or self-appointed, or of the Umma (the family of nations of Islam and their geographical domain). Today the enemy might be another Muslim, such as Anwar Sadat, or another nation, such as the USA, or another faith group, such as Hinduism in Kashmir. While Mohammed himself probably meant Jihad to refer mainly to the struggle against inner spiritual evil, he betrayed his own cause by calling, in the early days of his leadership, for a Jihad of war against his enemies in Mecca and Medina, whom he determined needed to be overthrown in order for his movement to survive and succeed in dominating the Arab world. That gave a materialistic operational character to what might well have been originally a call to spiritual pilgrimage, persistence, perseverance, and discipline.

So, the destruction of the Canaanites, as though it was a command of God to ancient Israel, and the Qur'an's command to Holy War by the Islamic community are really the same pathogenic metaphor in the scriptures of Judaism and Islam. Both claim that God commands violence and genocide as the mode of advancing the divine kingdom in this world. Of course, contemporary Judaism, Islam, and Christianity all derive from the sacred traditions and scriptures of the ancient Israelite religion and its Hebrew Bible. Christianity arose in the first and second centuries of the Common Era and consolidated itself in the fourth and fifth centuries. Rabbinic Judaism developed in the second and third centuries CE and consolidated itself during the Talmudic era of 300–600 CE. Islam arose and consolidated as a religion and culture during the seventh century CE. All are rooted in the stories of the Hebrew Bible.

It is expected, therefore, that Christianity, like the other two, would have toxic texts that certify violence as a legitimate mode of pressing the claims of God and his kingdom in this world. Indeed, throughout its history Christianity has tended to resort readily to vicious violence to resolve ultimate issues of personal, national, and international relationships. The Medieval Crusades have already been mentioned. One hardly needs to remind anyone of the remarkable bloodshed and extermination of faith groups and cultural populations in the first three centuries of the Christian movement, when the struggle toward Orthodoxy produced conflicts that were normally carried out by war, pillage, fire, and rapine: Christian against Christian—and against nearly everyone else who seemed to be associated with a different party in that same faith community.

It is clearly evident that such religious violence and bellicosity could not have been justified in the Christian tradition if it had not been for metaphors rooted deeply in Christian scriptures—in the memory and story 'of the people of God'—that seemed to make such viciousness in the name of God both legitimate and necessary—mandated. The same observation must be made regarding Judaism and Islam. What can be the common source of such operational terrors? I think the answer is simple. There are in the Hebrew Bible, and hence in the traditions of all three of these great Western religions which derive from it, two central metaphors that insinuate an unmitigated toxic poison into the religious traditions that make all three of them potentially pathogenic.

The Metaphor of Cosmic Conflict

The first metaphor is that of a cosmic conflict at the ground of being and at the base of history. The Hebrew Bible depends, throughout its numerous narratives and the formation of its master story, upon the assumption that at the root of reality and hence at the core of human history and experience lies this model of cosmic conflict. This is depicted as the essential ontological reality. The stories and master story depend, for their cogency, rationale, and dramatic validity, upon the presence and purported divine sanction of this metaphor. It is a great tragedy that this notion of cosmic conflict has shaped the entire mindset of the Western world. It results in the fact that all of life is viewed through the lens of this metaphor and implies that good stands perpetually in jeopardy from cosmic evil, God from the devil, and human from every other kind of human.

Moreover, it leads to the perceived implication that advancing the cause of God requires conflict with all that stands against God; and since transcendental values are at stake, ultimate measures must be taken, for God's sake! As the *anti* is raised on the side of evil, in our perception, we must raise the *anti* on countering evil. It is a short step from evil in principle to evil in people, as humans perceive it. Thus, the Western world, since the rise of Christianity and its two siblings, has found it legitimate and necessary to resort to violence immediately, whenever a perception arises that any private or communal cause, rationalized as God's cause, is in jeopardy. Of course, no one believes that a cause about which he or she or his or her community feels very strongly could possibly be anything but God's cause.

This is a great tragedy for many reasons. The most obscene of these reasons is the fact that the notion of good and evil in this metaphor has no connection with reality. There is no basis in a proper reading of the Bible, nor in the evidence of life and history, for any kind of claim that there is such a thing as cosmic evil, a devil, or a counter force to God, the creator and sustainer of the universe. The only evil in this world for which one can identify any evidence, is the evil humans do to themselves, each other, and to the created world. What is often called natural evil is also often referred to, particularly by insurance companies and in common parlance, as an act of God. It is obvious that the metaphor has no substantive content. Natural disasters are simply the accidents of a free and evolving world, where growth and development is the primary dynamic at play. In the same manner, the ignorance, anxiety, paranoia, and personal perfidy which prompts

humans to wreak havoc upon each other is a product of the freedom and incomplete evolution which characterizes the human organism. We have a divine task to function wisely in this enormously complicated world; and we have only human, indeed, often pathological, resources or personal qualities with which to meet these responsibilities. In consequence, we make horrendous errors of judgment, behavior, and relationship. Nonetheless, this is far different from cosmic evil forces reigning in our world or hearts.

The problematic nature of the reality at the core of human existence would hold enough potential to wreck our world in every generation. The amazing thing is not that we are dealing with some cosmic conflict spilled over into our world from an alien transcendental place. The amazing thing is that we do so well so much of the time, and that the processes of nature unfold so benignly, indeed, so blessedly so much of the time.

In any case, the tragedy we have created for ourselves through the religious traditions preserved in all sacred scriptures is the development and preservation, generation after generation, of the pathogenic metaphors that form unconscious. These, in turn, distort our sense of reality and give toxic content to the psychological archetypes that drive our motivations toward destructive solutions for life's perpetual problems.

The Metaphor of the Scapegoat

The second metaphor that injects a destructive influence into the Western human psyche is that of the scapegoat. It was certainly a great achievement in ancient Israelite religion to have developed the notion of the scapegoat. It moved the liturgy for pacification of divine wrath against dysfunctional humans away from human sacrifice to a substitutionary atonement. It is clear from the progression of narratives in the Hebrew Bible that there was a concerted effort by the writers and redactors to demonstrate that Israelites rejected child sacrifice as a way of warding off divine displeasure. Surely the story of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac has one major implication, namely, that Yahweh and his people had moved away from Canaanite practices of child sacrifice. The practice apparently resurged in the reign of Solomon who built altars to Molech, but that was clearly the exception rather than the rule in ancient Israel; whereas it continued in Phoenician religious practice until the Romans terminated it by juridical action in the third century CE.

However, the metaphor of the scapegoat continued to grow and develop in Israelite tradition, relating as it did to the sacrificial system in which the fruits of the flocks, herds, gardens, and orchards were presented to Yahweh as expressions of gratitude for his covenantal grace and, particularly after the Babylonian exile, as propitiation for sin. This metaphor of sacrificial atonement persisted in the Christian movement and continues to operate as conscious or unconscious archetypal content in the Western psyche until this day. The virtue of the scapegoat idea was in the notion that God did not require lethal punishment of the sinner, but provided a redemptive alternative. The viciously destructive notion implied in the scapegoat idea, at the psycho-spiritual level, however, lies in the suggestion that divine displeasure about human dysfunction is so radical and intense that it cannot be resolved except by killing somebody or something.

While the Canaanites placated their gods with child sacrifice, the Israelites were implying the same notion about God: obviously he gets into such a state of internal dissonance and disequilibrium over human dysfunction that it is necessary for him to express it by causing the death of a victim; unless he kills somebody or something he just cannot get his head screwed on right again. That may have been a relatively benign metaphor, in the rituals of the scapegoat, or even in the sacrifice of animals for the propitiation of the sins of the persons or community offering the sacrifices. However, when it was picked up by the Pauline literature in the New Testament and crafted into an interpretation of the cross as God's sacrifice of his own son as a propitiation for human dysfunction, we have a sudden reversion not only to the theology of the scapegoat but to the pagan theology of child sacrifice. Abraham perceived 2500 years earlier that sacrificing his only begotten son, Isaac, just was not the requirement of the transcendent order of things. God does not seem to have received the message, even so late as the time of Jesus, if we are to take that substitutionary atonement interpretation of Paul seriously, as Anselm and others did.

The full import of the psycho-spiritual impact of such a metaphor may not be realized readily by people and cultures entrenched for 2000 years in the uncritical assumption that this interpretation of the cross is some kind of magical transcendental story of redemptive divine action. The psycho-spiritual fact of this matter, however, is that this metaphor inserts into the core of the master story of Christians and of Western culture the conscious and unconscious assumption that ultimate problems are resolved only by a

resort to ultimate violence. A sacrificial victim must be found and slaughtered in order that the world may continue on the way to redemption, and the resolution of the impasses of history.

The central metaphor of our Western world's master story and the key concept in our Christian worldview is the divinely ordained crucifixion of Jesus, interpreted as substitutionary atonement for our iniquities. Though theologians and biblical scholars have worked with vigor and imagination to modify this metaphor and mollify its psycho-spiritual effects, they have not been able to root it out of our foundational ideology nor out of the formation and content of our unconscious psychological archetypes. We should not be surprised, therefore, that God is perceived pervasively in our world as a divine regent who solves his main problems by immediate and exclusive resort to sacralized violence. Why should we wonder that it is the unconscious proclivity of Western men and nations to resolve all of our difficult problems by strategies of violence and viciously destructive behavior, a model legitimized by the central divine action and style?

It is impossible to find a community or nation, shaped or significantly influenced by Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, whose history is not beset, indeed written in detail, by a long story of virtually exclusively violent resolution of all of its major problems, particularly those which produce relational impasses. The USA was born in violence, however justified or ultimately healing the American Revolution may have been. It has continued ever since to solve its problems violently, in popular uprisings, gang conflicts, personal murders, civil and international war. Moreover, in this regard this nation has mirrored the long and horrendous history of Europe and the Middle East, from ancient time to the present. How could it have been any other way, since the main charter of our unconscious formation and life, as persons and as a culture, is the biblical narrative with its metaphors of divine rage and executions, from the extermination of the Canaanites in the Hebrew Bible to the crucifixion of Jesus in the New Testament. Apparently, the only way God himself, within himself, can achieve equilibrium, peace with his people, and a world order fashioned according to his template, is by murder and genocide.

The gospel of love is a great idea, and the ancient covenant of unconditional grace is blessed almost beyond human imagination. At the conscious intellectual and emotional level both have served as enormous sources of consolation and relief for those of us who see them as our only chance for meaningful life. But the factors that shape us on the level that counts, namely, that provide the content for our unconscious psychological

archetypes, those forces which shape our primal reactions to life and our perceived destiny, are the models of violence. These lend themselves well and directly to our primal human animal urges and reinforce the worst proclivities in us. They become our automatic charters and certifiers of that defensive aggressive behavior which is the wild animals' stock in trade and which humans are capable of transcending, except for the elements of sacred scripture and the interpretations that history has lent them, which undermine that civilized hope and possibility.

Until we have rooted out these metaphoric concepts of cosmic conflict as the foundational reality and divine murder as the operational method of problem solving, we cannot hope to gain ground against violence in personal, communal, or international affairs. It is simply not true that this world is the battleground of cosmic conflict. Our problem is not that we are shaped by some cosmic force of ontological evil. It is rather that we are still rather inadequately evolved, must operate with inadequate information, and are limited by our neuroses and psychoses from adequate imagination. Thus we are inadequate to the task of managing ourselves and our world in other ways than anxious lunges toward compulsive solutions to discomfort and danger, like the lion on the jungle path. We are addicted to immediate gratification of our hunger for inner tranquility and outer control. This compels us to strategies of manipulation and abuse of each other.

This may be seen in surprising ways, in the biblical narratives and in our own lives. Just one illustration may suffice. Everyone knows the story of Jesus' healing the man born blind, and the event's occurrence on the Sabbath. The story is so familiar and so loved it need not be completely recounted here. This much, however, must be said: the story is about four sets of action and reaction: Jesus', the blind man's, the Jewish religious leaders' and the blind man's parents'. Christian readers have a very warm and sympathetic sense of the poignancy and beauty of this story, as read at the conscious level. Who could possibly have any reservations about a blind man being healed? A whole lifetime he had wasted away as an object in the filthy street. Now he is restored to personhood by the Great Physician, prepared for a second life of dignity and the grace of infinite gratitude.

However, the real story here is quite different. It is not the romantic and sentimental story of a poor fellow healed. It is a story of violence, abuse, manipulation, ulterior motives, and tragedy at the end. On the Sabbath Jesus came upon this suffering man, who had been relegated by the years

to the approximate equivalent of an invisible fire hydrant on a busy street. Jesus viewed him as an object, just as did everyone else passing by. However, Jesus saw one more thing in the blind man, namely, that he was an object which could be manipulated to gain a political objective. Surely Jesus was well aware of the fact that this manipulation would result in significant depersonalization and abuse of the blind man. Nonetheless, he used this poor fellow as a chess-piece on his checkerboard.

Jesus' political objective, quite obviously, was to confront the Pharisees on their legalism, particularly regarding the absurd Sabbath laws. Jesus had already pitched that battle once before when challenged about his disciples harvesting grain on the Sabbath. Then he had confidently replied that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath, which in turn was made for humans and not humans for the Sabbath. Now Jesus picked the blind man as the object to use to stick the Sabbath issue aggressively into the face of the Pharisees one more time. He healed the blind man on the Sabbath, making sure in advance that an adequate crowd witnessed it so as to insure that it would come to the attention of the Jewish religious leaders. Indeed, I suppose that Jesus overtly instigated the crowd to bring the miraculously sighted, former blind man to the Pharisees.

Now, if Jesus had any passion or compassion for the blind man he would have come back on Tuesday to heal him, or would have come the week before on Wednesday. In that case, the man would have been genuinely and unambiguously advantaged by the healing. The community would have rejoiced for him, his parents would have been relieved and delighted, and even the Jewish religious leaders would have esteemed Jesus beyond description. Of course, that was not Jesus' political objective. His objective was to so annoy and assault the Pharisees and the Sabbath law as to make the incident unforgettable. He was willing to do this at the expense of objectifying and depersonalizing the blind man, jeopardizing his place in his family, in his faith community, and in the company of 'the people of God'.

The man was brought to the attention of the religious authorities, interrogated four or five different times, maligned for his simple statement of the facts of the case, psychologically distanced by his parents, reviled for 'proposing to teach the religious leaders the truth', denigrated and condemned as a sinner whose sin had caused his blindness, abused as a liar and ignorant fool, thrown out of the synagogue, and excluded from the people of God. All the while, Jesus had disappeared, in effect, having hung the poor guy out to dry, as we say.

This is just a story, but it sows the seeds of unconscious images in our individual and communal psyches. These in turn justify our unconscious and unintended insensitivity to others, prompting manipulation, depersonalization, and abuse. The gamesmanship and remarkable humor of the healed man in the story does not obviate the fact that Jesus abused him, exploited him for Jesus' own purposes, abandoned him to significant persecution, and only thereafter, when all the damage was done, embraced him in a redemptive way. What kind of people care is that? You could get fired today as a hospital chaplain or a professor of pastoral care if you exercised such method or style. You would be discretely dismissed from a mental health clinic. Of course, you might be able to get a job as a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Supervisor, come to think of it.

If Jesus had been interested primarily in the misfortune of this man, in his blindness, and in healing him, he would have done it quietly and pastorally on some other day than the Sabbath. The healing would have been more effective for the man's wellbeing. Of course, this text operates on a number of different levels in the Johannine Gospel and its source community. It is probably an allusion to the Christians being thrown out of the synagogue, a large theme throughout the fourth gospel.

Conclusion

Nobody likes to spoil this nice story about a blind man healed. No one can take away the redemptive poignancy of the blind man's simple reality, 'Once I was blind and now I can see'. That is not just his story, it is the story of us all, or it must become our story if life is to make any sense and become worthwhile, regardless of our worldview or faith tradition. The danger lurking here is not in the obvious story but in the under-story, the subtext of the narrative. That subtext legitimates people using people for their own narcissistic ends. It trivializes the exploitation and abuse of others, authorizing, at the unconscious level of our motivations, our treating people from ulterior motives rather than authentically and with integrity. It certifies the practice of handling people in ways that are clandestine, at their expense.

In these ways this text offers a model of abuse, giving license to exactly those kinds of misuse of others that are most natural in human society. It seems to justify husbands who take their wives for granted in order to achieve some objective that 'is good for the family'. It approves wives using their husbands to satisfy their womb hunger with children, to satisfy

their sexual urges with intimacy, to provide a steady paycheck by hard work, to make life seem secure through consistent companionship, but never feeling any need to love, respect, or cherish their men. It justifies relationships with others designed to gratify some need in us and then dispose of the other so he or she does not clutter up our lives or get in our way.

Such narratives in our authoritative sacred scriptures, with the word pictures and metaphors upon which they turn, afford subtle psychological authority for nations to use and abuse other nations in order to acquire political, economic, or cultural advantage. These stories and metaphors cause this unconscious effect by infecting our collective unconscious with Jesus' pathogenic model of objectifying other human persons and hence other communities. The abuse in the story of Jesus and the blind man is of one cloth with that in the model of a God who kills his son, to resolve his displeasure, so he does not have to exterminate us. It is also of the same character as the narrative of the ancient Israelites perceiving that Yahweh willed and commanded the genocide of the Canaanites. The implied model in each case is that of the resolution of our important problems by means of significant violence and the violation of other human beings.

Unless we can eliminate these destructive metaphoric religious artifacts from our inner world, how can we expect to create any sustained decency in our outer world? Everyone surely can see the absurdity implied! Unless we can change our core story, how can we change our unconscious psycho-spiritual images and archetypes. How can we improve the sad, sick story of human inhumanity to humans? Religious metaphors can kill. The kind of biblical metaphors addressed in this study, and many others that might have been mentioned, function chronologically as psychological agents for the instigation and legitimization of violence in society. We need to be very concerned about this as a culture and community. We need to decide how to repair this flaw at the core of our master story.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN LIGHT OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION*

Rolf P. Knierim

Introduction

The study of capital punishment, or the death penalty, in light of biblical interpretation, like the study of any subject in that light, requires that one accounts for what is involved in biblical interpretation for the purpose of such studies. Before turning to the issue of capital punishment itself, I will, therefore, remark on what I perceive to be two major aspects of this kind of biblical interpretation.

One of these aspects appears where the Bible is interpreted for the purpose of providing orientation in the particular, actual problems of our communities in and for our times. The purpose of this kind of study is specific, and different from other kinds of study in which this purpose plays little or no role, regardless of their objectives. The settings in which this interest is pursued are the Jewish and Christian communities, the Synagogue and the Church. For them, the legacy of their origins contained in their respective Bibles is indispensable and vital. These communities are the primary settings in which this legacy is kept alive, in which the biblical insights are applied for today, and in which nothing less than biblical truth for our time is at stake. The interpretation of biblical truth for today, is, in these communities, genuinely instituted; it happens through them, and is meant to serve all humanity rather than only the Church's or Synagogue's self-preservation let alone their exclusive self-interest.¹

* The second part of this paper was given as the first of two lectures at North Park Theological Seminary on 3 October 2000. The lectures represented the Hebrew Bible section of the 2000 Nils W. Lund Memorial Lectures at that Seminary.

1. I hope my reference to the Jewish Community and the Synagogue, for the grounds of my argument, up to this point, is tolerable. However, in order to avoid stepping over the boundaries to which I am confined, I shall from here on speak only about the Church, to which I am entitled.

The other major aspect has to do with method of biblical interpretation in general. It concerns the interpretation which is done for all scriptures, coherent throughout, and intelligible and valid for all rather than preconditioned as esoteric property which illuminates only after becoming situated inside the walls of a definitely believing community.

The general intelligibility of biblical interpretation communicated by the Church beyond its walls is inevitable for the discussion of issues by the societies at large which, as in the case of capital punishment, do not (and if so very questionably), depend on biblical interpretation.

As far as I see, the method of biblical interpretation needs to be aware of three steps each of which is distinct but must complement the others rather than be applied alone. This method belongs to the work of biblical scholarship. It should be the same also in the biblical interpretation in and by the Church itself, the setting specifically recognized in this paper. In what follows immediately, I shall say more about the role of biblical exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic in and by the Church. Subsequently, I shall discuss the case of capital punishment in biblical interpretation.

*On Biblical Exegesis, Theology, and Hermeneutic
In and By the Church*

Preliminaries

It is well known that the Bible for generations has been, can be, and is today read for all sorts of reasons. It is read as a source for historical knowledge, for cultural anthropology, as literature including the sociology of the forms, genres, settings and functions or intentions of that literature and the relationship between written and oral literature, as rhetoric, as a matrix for the, so-called Third World Theology, for social justice, for feminist (or by now femalist), for ecological and for postmodern reading, and more. I should emphasize that advocates of most of these readings, if not all, would want to point out that their approaches also have very much to do not only with exegesis and hermeneutic but also with the theology of the Bible, that is, its particular nature as a religious book. What, then, is the difference between the exegetical, theological and hermeneutic reading of the Bible in the setting of the Church on the one hand, and on the other hand in those other settings? A full answer to this question deserves more time for thought than I can afford in this article.

It seems to me that the basic difference lies in the distinction between what the texts say and what can and should be affirmed as their truth, especially as truth for all, including not only truth for the generations among

which they were written but also truth for us, today. This distinction has to do with two kinds of attitudes in which we all are constantly involved. First, it has to do with the attitude of the observer who registers, lists, and perhaps orders or catalogs facts as accurately as possible, and as neutrally and fairly as possible; but that is as far as one goes. One describes, reports, but stays personally distanced from the text's statements, remains neutral *vis-à-vis* them. Second, it has to do with the attitude which becomes involved in evaluating these statements, also personally, and arriving at value judgments, at judgments about truth or untruth in the Scriptures, or higher or lower degrees of truth.

The difference between a news reporter at a criminal trial and a member of a jury in such a trial might exemplify the distinction. Both the reporter and the jury member register the arguments in the proceedings. But while the reporter must not do more than state what happens, and may feel fortunate about having not more than that role, the jury member must on the same basis arrive at a judgment about what is right or wrong, true or untrue, by and large in nerve-wrecking discussion with other jury members under the same obligation. He/she is thereby not confronted with a contrast between an objectifying descriptive stance and a personal confessional stance, but with a judgment that is, however inevitably subjective, the considered and objectified consequence from the presented evidence.

As far as the interpretation of the Bible is concerned, one has sometimes spoken of two kinds of interpretation, each with its own function. Descriptive interpretation belongs to the scholarly or scientific setting, and confessional interpretation belongs to the Church setting. Church besides, or versus, scholarship; description besides, or versus, confession. I have never been convinced of this interpretative paradigm. Nor have I been convinced that my confessional stance is the condition for my reading of Scripture. On the contrary, I think that my reading of the scriptural facts have subsequently always formed, enhanced, changed, broadened and deepened what I confess and what I think I should confess or stand for.

Therefore, the *raison d'être* for the reading of Scripture in the Church is not so much the fact that it is a religious book, which is accepted generally, but that Scripture understands itself as the source through which truth is revealed, that is, the truth of God's relationship to the world and the world's relationship to God. It may be, and indeed is the case, that in other settings, the matter of truth in and through the Bible is left on the sideline, not discussed, at least openly. The Church cannot afford this sort of distanced neutrality. The problem is therefore not whether it describes or confesses, but how it evaluates what is to be described, arriving from the

evidence at value judgments, judgments about truth in and for this world. In theology, we have called this focus on the interpretation of the Bible 'the interpretation of the Word of God'.

I do not want to belabor the issue of postmodernism. It is no news for anybody who has ever studied history that we too live in a world characterized by pluralism, diversity, and divisiveness. At stake is the question of whether these and similar indisputable characteristics amount to neutralization or abrogation of the quest for value and truth, or whether, on the contrary, they amount to intensified attention to that quest. It is for the sake of that quest that the Church engages its own search for the truth in and through Scripture for our time. When talking about exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic of the Bible, we are talking about these approaches, all three of them, for the sake of serving the Bible's own claim to truth and our search for the truth in it as well. We are not alone. From whatever corners, enough voices call for the need to discern priorities, if for no other reason than for the survival of the human race.

Distinctions

For some, the distinction between exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic may sound overly technical. In fact, it reflects not more than what every reader of the Bible does. Before elaborating on each of the three approaches in interpretation, I want to say briefly how, in the scholarly field, the distinctions can be understood.

1. By exegesis we understand the attempt to read the individual biblical texts on their own terms, that is, in the sense of what they say to us, their readers, rather than what we say to, or about, them, or how we react to them. Even as their writers are not present, we ourselves have the task to represent their voices as loyally as possible, which includes their theological voices. One could call this task historical exegesis because the texts are documents from a historically long-gone past with its own conditions, and not from our time and its conditions.

2. By biblical theology, we mean something different which is more than the exegesis of the individual biblical texts. We refer to a task that the Bible, in which these texts are assembled, has thrust upon us but not solved for us. Namely, we must explain the relationships of the different theologies of the texts which are juxtaposed in one and the same Bible. This task presupposes the exegesis of the texts, of all texts, but it has to go beyond such exegesis. Even so, it still belongs in my opinion to the field of historical research in which the past is studied, a task typically done by

historians. Included in that study of history is the comparison, by the historians, of diverse ideas and forces within a certain period, and at least the attempt to assess which was true, more or less true, or untrue in its own time. This assessment must be gained from evidence from the texts of that time rather than from the historian's benefit of hindsight or, sometimes legitimately called and sometimes propagandistically denounced, 'super-sessionist' ideas pulled over the texts from outside.

When studying an era of the past, even recent past, the historians have to analyze all the different facts and dynamics and then still to do what the events themselves have not fully revealed: interpret why things turned out the way they happened. Even then, the conclusions by different historians may be different, as, for example, those concerning the reasons for the outbreak of World War I, for the rise of Nazism, World War II, and the Nazi concentration and death camps, or for the developments leading to Pearl Harbor, and many, many more cases.²

3. Biblical hermeneutic, then, attempts to explain the encounter between the worldview, or the worldviews, of the Bible in its times and our current worldview, or worldviews, and the meaning of this encounter for us today. It involves in the first place not what is often assumed or done or attempted, namely the application of a specific biblical passage to a specific situation today. Rather, it involves the critical comparison of the total worldviews themselves, the ancient ones and ours, in which all individual biblical texts are imbedded, the comparison out of which we formulate our specific positions. Of course, this critical hermeneutic comparison takes account of the perspectives gained from biblical theology. And again, it is a kind of task that we have to undertake ourselves, because the Bible has not done it for us. We know from the field of the History of the Traditions within the Bible, that the successive biblical generations have always carried on their own discussion between their past and their own time. They have not done, and could not do, the same for us and our time.

Distinct as each of the three modes of biblical interpretation is, exegesis of the texts, biblical theology, and biblical hermeneutic, they can be executed in complete separation from each other only at the decisive loss of all relevant aspects. Exegesis, by and large, can function on its own terms, as is done in commentaries. However, theology presupposes exegesis,

2. An excellent example of this kind of work applied to ancient materials by the historian, which also covers the pertinent biblical materials, is the book by Alan B. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell: Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

and hermeneutic even more presupposes exegesis and theology. The main reason, however, why they cannot be separated, is that our recognition of the claim of the biblical texts to reveal the truth of God's word, cannot be gained on the basis of one of these modes of interpretation alone. It can be envisioned only in our application of all three.

The question of where one enters the approach to a particular interpretation is thereby relative. The answer to this question depends from time to time on particular conditions with which the interpreter is confronted, that is, on our particular needs. The ministers who use the Bible from week to week for their preaching know this best. We sometimes *need* to preach about a text, which means that we start studying the text in order to find out what this text is talking about, and then stay with its message. If we are sufficiently informed, and careful enough, we may consider the text's meaning in the horizon of the whole Bible, and finally go from there to consider the question of its validity and truth in the encounter with our time.

Sometimes, and this seems to me to happen more frequently, we have particular concerns for our time, which means that we enter the process of interpretation by defining these concerns and by conceptualizing a topic, and proceed from that start backward. To what? To a biblical passage, or to a topic which occurs across many biblical passages and for which we might find a typical, representative passage, so that we may come back to find the message out of the comparison between the biblical picture and our concern for today.

Bible as 'the Word of God'

Thus far I have tried to say why the interplay of the three modes of biblical interpretation, exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic, are indispensable for the Church and the field of theology and also for theological education. They are indispensable because the Church recognizes the claim of the Bible to be the first source through which our knowledge of God is revealed. That is, it recognizes the Bible as the Word of God. This interpretation of the Bible in the hands of the Church distinguishes the task of the Church from most if not all other settings in which the Bible is also interpreted. Whatever the Church does by way of education in all other respects, and it should do as much as possible, the Church will cease to be the Church if it does not remain committed to the interpretation of the Bible as the Word of God.

Now then, when we come to the Bible as the Word of God, we Christians always have had a special problem, namely, the problem of our

so-called Old Testament; so-called because the Jewish people have their own Bible, their Tanakh, followed by their Talmud and Midrash. They have neither an Old nor a New Testament. And their Bible has become our Old Testament.

The tendency has become widespread today to avoid the expression 'Old Testament', at least to relativize it in order to step back from the discriminating meaning and function which it has had in the history of Christianity against Judaism. Thus, one speaks instead of the 'Hebrew Bible', which nobody reads, quite apart from the fact that there is also the LXX written in Greek. Or, one speaks of the 'First Testament' and the 'Second Testament', or the 'former' or 'earlier' and the 'latter' or 'later' Testament. The fact is that the Jewish people have no 'Testament' at all, and none of two. They have the Bible of the Jewish people. And the problem is, not only for us, but lastly also for the Jewish people, what the relationship is between their Bible and the New Testament of the Christians.

The fact that the Bible of the Jewish people is the first part of the total Bible of the Christians has always involved the problem of the relationship of Christians and Jews, the meaning of the Jewish Bible for the beginnings of the Christian movement before the existence of a New Testament, and lastly the question of the relationship between the Bible of the Jewish people and the New Testament of the Christians, rather than simply the question of the relationship of the Old and the New Testament in the Bible of the Christians. As far as I am concerned, the subordination of the Old Testament to the New in the Bible of the Christians has created the problem as to what the Jewish Bible and the Christian New Testament might mean for each other; what each might mean for the other in their mutually open encounter which is no longer prejudiced by the understanding of the 'Old Testament' from a New Testament or Christian vantage-point. This problem, to this day, has not been approached and tested, let alone answered to the detriment of both Bibles. To approach and deal with that problem is a task for coming generations and in my opinion points to something truly postmodern.

A few aspects may be highlighted concerning the relationship between the Old and the New Testament as interpreted from the Christian vantage-point since the time of the New Testament. It is known that in the original Christian writings the Bible, the only Bible, the Bible of the Jews, functioned to validate in various respects the event of the ultimate revelation of God in Jesus Christ and of the Christian community. In all these cases, the Bible of the Jewish people, from the perspective of the Christian faith, was

considered to point beyond itself and hence to testify to its penultimate, its preparatory, indeed, at least its lower value.

Compared to the fulfillment in Christ, it is only prophecy (Matthew). Compared to the grace and truth through Jesus Christ (Jn 1.17), Moses gave the law. The law and the prophets lasted until John the Baptist; since then the gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached (Lk. 16.16). The gospel and life in the Spirit reveal that every life, the life of every religion including the life revealed by God to Israel, is under the law because it is not reconciled through God's ultimate work in Jesus Christ (so Paul). And according to the Letter to the Hebrews, Israel's believing community only foreshadows the final human community of those who are atoned for by the event of the sacrifice of Christ once and for all times.

The decisive ground for these definitions of the Bible of the Jews is the Christian belief in the ultimacy of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. In view of this ultimacy, everything said in the Old Testament is at best penultimate. Prophecy is surpassed by fulfillment; Moses' law by grace and truth; the time of the law and the prophets by the time of the gospel; existence as sinner by liberation from death, sin, and law; the old by the new believing community; and the old, not only the fallen but the original creation by the new creation. And to whatever extent this Old Testament has been understood as Word of God, it was understood in light of the eternal presence of the ultimate revelation of God, not as passed away, but as the word of the past, as preparatory, as penultimate. In this sense, it has been understood as Word of God, against Marcion. Bultmann, clearly avoiding Marcion, did not say that the Old Testament is not the Word of God. He said that the Old Testament is God's own revelation for the Christian faith in the sense that it shows us how we must not believe. Thus, God is explained so as to tell us that we should not believe in whatever he has revealed in the Old Testament. One of the few problems that we have with this stance is that it represents once again a radical judgment from the preconceived Christian standpoint, regardless of what the Bible of the Jewish people would say in its own right. The Bible is simply prejudged. And we are amazed when the Jewish people have never prostrated and submitted themselves?

In the following, I shall argue what many Old Testament scholars have claimed, but what scarcely ever has been undertaken consistently: that the Bible of the Jewish People must by us Christians be given the right to its own contribution alongside our New Testament, rather than in subordination to it, and regardless whether we enter the comparison of both through the New Testament or through the Jewish Bible/Old Testament.

On Capital Punishment in Light of Biblical Interpretation

With these aspects of exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic in mind, I want to probe an issue by approaching it not from the Bible but from one of our current public problems and debates: the issue of the death penalty or capital punishment. The issue is complex, complicated, controversial. Its fully fleshed-out discussion would demand extensive space and time. I must focus on what seem to me to be the essential aspects. As far as the inclusion of the Bible is concerned, the argument involves the aspects of exegesis, theology, and hermeneutic.

Legalization of the Death Penalty

To begin with, it is sufficiently known that in the United States, the death penalty is currently legalized by 38 states (including those where there is currently a moratorium on execution, as in Illinois and New Hampshire, where the governor vetoed a repeal of it by that state's legislature). It is also legalized by the federal government for federal capital crimes and in the military.³

The legalization of the death penalty is thereby supported and approved by public votes of legally relevant majorities of the society. This voting and approval record is significant because it represents the free will of the people in a democracy, which is based on governance and rule by the people themselves, not on the imposition of a law upon the people by a governing authority instituted to rule the people, for instance by divine right. It must be recognized that the legalization of capital punishment in our society is subject to clearly stipulated restrictive standards, such as, for example, the right of an accused person to be represented by defense counsel, unanimous jury verdicts 'beyond reasonable doubt' in criminal trials for what falls under the category of first degree murder, and access to the process of appeal and review.

This legalization is orderly and controlled. It has nothing to do with forms of execution in societal conditions before the establishment of, or

3. My information comes from the Death Penalty Information Center of Amnesty International of 21 August 2000. The information lists the US-States with the death penalty; the death penalty abolitionist countries as of January 2000 (72); the death penalty abolitionist countries for ordinary crimes only as of December 1999 (13, including Israel); the de facto abolitionist countries as of January 2000 (21); and, as of January 2000, 89 retentionist countries, including the United States. The comparison of the countries alongside which the United States is listed, or of the countries from which the United States is separated regarding this matter, gives much to think about.

outside, law established democratically. And its principles remain unaffected by cases of miscarriage of justice which are currently widely discussed, such as the insufficient legal representation of defendants, insufficient proof for conviction, questionable jury decisions, and the debatability of the standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'. The fact that the judicial system would have to, and in certain dimensions apparently will have to be modified, does not invalidate the principle of the society's legalization of the death penalty as such. Also, its legality has nothing to do with revenge. It rests on the principle of equitable retribution for acts, especially of murder, for which no compensation is possible. What is referred to in addition is the attention to the right of the victims of a capital crime, indeed, a right that deserves even more to be protected than the rights of accused or convicted murderers.

That is, at any rate, the current opinion of the majority of the people in the democracy of the American Republic. This majority consists of people from many ideological, political, religious, and also professed agnostic orientations, including explicitly confessing or, if you will, born-again Christian people. With due respect to what aspiring politicians across the political spectrum profess to be their stance on this issue, one can scarcely avoid saying that they can call themselves fortunate if they are in favor of capital punishment. Otherwise, they might not be elected.

Abolition of the Death Penalty

Now then, there has been and currently is the vocal portion of those in our society who not only demand that a deficient judicial system be fixed, a demand with which the majority has no problems, but also advocate the abolition of the death penalty as such. Cardinal Roger Mahoney, Archbishop of Los Angeles, belonged to this portion of the society when saying before the National Press Club on 25 May 2000:

The Catholic Bishops of the United States join with Pope Paul II in a recommitment to end the death penalty. Our faith calls us to be *unconditionally pro-life*. We will work not only to proclaim our anti-death penalty position but to persuade others that increasing reliance on capital punishment diminishes society as a whole.⁴

Very clearly this also is a stance by a Christian, and by Christians, and also a Christian stance. Such Christians are fortunate to be free to say their

4. Quoted from *The Washington Spectator* 26.13 (1 July 2000), p. 1 (italics mine).

opinion publicly because they don't have to run for public office. We are facing two opposite camps representing opposite principles: the advocacy and defense of the legality of capital punishment by one part of the society, and the denial and contestation of at least the morality of that legality by the other part of the society.

Divisions

In order to consider this situation in a wider perspective, two observations may be in order. One has to do with the fact that the United States belongs among those nations that practice capital punishment (such as, among others, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, China, North Korea), whereas many other nations globally have abolished it, including each of the nations of the European Union. The Union itself appears to be on the path to establishing the abolition of capital punishment as one of its constitutional laws for all its present and future members. Also the State of Israel has abolished capital punishment, except for crimes related to the holocaust. Our domestic division is, then, the counterpart of a worldwide division on the issue of the capital punishment. Its defenders among us, the current majority, represent a national policy from which an increasing number of countries in the international community are retreating, concerning their own domestic policies.

The second observation has to do with the historical perspective in view of which the division has emerged. As far as I see, in thousands of years not a single society has existed without the law and practice of capital punishment. In that perspective, it must be said that the movement for the abolition of capital punishment is a historical novelty which in its global proportions actually began to appear on the world stage only after World War II. This means that the dynamic in the current division on the issue, in the United States and worldwide, does not reflect a continuation of a timeless, age-old debate in favor of or against capital punishment. On the contrary, it represents a historically completely new event: the rebellion, the revolution, against the age old, universally established and sanctioned legality and practice of capital punishment. The religious movements have been part of the millennia-old continuity of that all-inclusive tradition. This includes the monotheistic religions in the Islamic states to this day, in the nations under the influence of Christianity since the fourth century in unbroken continuity until after World War II, and now dividing the Christian movement itself.

Anybody in the Christian movement, not only the Pope and the American Roman Catholic Bishops, who advocates the abolition of the death penalty, must realize and admit that he or she stands against a practice of public law, of which in the past her or his own Church (with the exception of, for example, the Mennonites and the Quakers) has been a part, at least by condoning it, if not by supporting it or even by claiming it to be sacrosanct.

We must pay attention to this new development, literally a new element in human history, of the widespread outbreak in our generation of rebellion and protest against the total tradition of the unquestioned ideology of justice, especially the divinely ordained justice of the law and practice of capital punishment. And of course, we are confronted with the question of the reasons for this new stance in the history of human civilization. It should thereby be clear that superficial arguments in controversial rhetoric won't do. Neither should those in favor of capital punishment be demonized as killers, nor should those in favor of its abolition be ridiculed as soft on crime. To be against the death penalty means neither that one ignores the evidence of capital crime, nor that one is against the justice of appropriate punishment. I find it disturbing that the mutual demonizations in our public debates appear to belong to the same genre of rhetoric which in the middle ages functioned as effective arguments for putting people on the stake. The problems lie deeper, and deserve to be discovered, confronted, and publicized, which is a particular task in the ethics of the Church and of the Christians.

The Hermeneutic Event

The outbreak of the rebellion against capital punishment is a first rate hermeneutic event, which involves more than only the Churches and the Christians and the other religions, but which nonetheless affects the Christians specifically because of the way the issue of capital punishment is represented, to begin with, in the Bible.

The Bible of the Jewish People

As far as the Bible of the Jewish people is concerned, it can be said at once that in it the death penalty is never contested. The list of prescriptions assembled from it which require capital punishment encompasses twenty-five types of violations, with most mentioned more than once: (1) manslaughter and murder of a (free) man: Exod. 21.12; (2) beatings of father

or mother: Exod. 21.15; (3) theft (and sale) of a (free) man, as, for example, Joseph by his brothers: Exod. 21.16; (4) adultery (death for both): Lev. 20.10; (5) desecration of the clan (*Sippenschande*): Lev. 20.11, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21; (6) violation of the wife or concubine of another: Judg. 19–20; (7) homosexuality among men: Lev. 20.13; (8) incest with animals: Exod. 22.18; (9) intercourse with a woman during her period: Lev. 20.18; (10) lewdness of an engaged woman: Deut. 22.20–21; (11) rape of an engaged woman who is not screaming (death for both): Deut. 22.24; (12) taking the name in vain of father, mother, God, the name Yahweh, the anointed one or the king: Exod. 21.17; (13) an incorrigible son: Deut. 21.18–21; (14) rebellion against the head of Israel: Num. 16; Josh. 1.18; 1 Kgs 2.24; (15) disobedience against the priest of God or judge: Deut. 17.12–13; (16) defilement of the Sabbath: Exod. 21.14–15; (17) sacrifice to Molech: Lev. 20.2; (18) contact with medium and magician: Lev. 20.27; (19) idolatry: Deut. 13.2–19; (20) false prophecy: Deut. 18.19–22 (note Elijah and the Baal prophets); (21) breach of an oath: Judg. 21.5; (22) profaning of the sanctuary: Exod. 28.35, 43; (23) service as priest by an unauthorized person: Num. 3.10; (24) touching of objects for worship: Num. 4.15; and (25) sparing the life of a vicious ox: Exod. 21.29. Of course, death penalty cases for high treason against the house of the king or by it are frequently mentioned, and more.⁵

We do not have sufficient information that actual executions took place for each case prescribed, 'legislated', in this summary. Also, we know that not all the cases requiring capital punishment listed here originated in the same period in ancient Israel's history. Their existence in our text is the result of a century-long accumulative process in which older and newer cases were progressively synchronized up to the level of our extant, late postexilic text. What is thereby important is not so much the question as to which specific periods in Israel's history each of these prescriptions belong, prior to the period in which they were synchronically summarized in the extant text. It is the ideology underlying the, so-to-say, canonized sum total of all prescriptions, mostly explicitly, divinely authorized, which lends itself to future obedient actualization whenever suitable circumstances arise and societal forces make it possible. The claim to the authority of these prescriptions does not rest on whether or not they were ever implemented in actual executions. It rests on their nature as divinely ordered prescriptions for actualization by future obedient generations.

5. See Rodney Ray Hutton, 'Declaratory Formulae: Forms of Authoritative Pronouncement in Ancient Israel' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Claremont, CA, 1983).

Somebody may, in defense of the Bible, argue that the reality of capital punishment in ancient Israel was not as bad as the texts make it appear.⁶ What kind of defense of the Bible would that be? Would it mean to say 'Thank God that the recipients of those divine commands did not obey the Lord and instead pursued a more merciful and humane policy'?

The sum total of the prescriptions for capital punishment rests on common denominators: (1) all prescriptions presuppose ethical and legal standards, the violation of which represent capital crimes, and which are therefore absolutely prohibited; (2) all prescriptions presuppose only cases of violations by individual persons (not cases of crimes by corporate entities); and (3) all prescriptions are meant to be administered by the institutionalized judiciaries of the society. They are not meant to belong to the realm of discretionary private opinion, or to a public debate as to whether they are to be implemented or not. They are meant to be law for the society, to be implemented by the society's judicial institutions. The prescriptions show that the cases falling under capital punishment were considered legal, necessary, and obligatory. This basic picture is nowhere contested in the texts of the Bible of the Jewish people.

The countless passages about war, and killing in war, including those about the divine warrior and Yahweh's wars, appear to have remained conceptually unrelated to the cases of violations by individuals which are subject to societal prosecutions. To whatever extent killing in war had anything to do with the notion of capital punishment, such killing was either considered evil and belonging to whatever consequences, except those of capital punishment for the individual person, or it was considered to be an act of Yahweh's own just wars to begin with. Certainly it lacked any critique of Yahweh for his own killings in his wars, or it was considered as the act of Yahweh's just judgments through his punishments of the nations and of Israel for their sins. At any rate, to whatever extent the notion of punishment, especially capital punishment, plays a role in the texts, it is, as in modern times, confined to capital crimes by individuals, and its legality is not only never contested, but is in principle reinforced.

It is sometimes claimed that the prohibition 'you shall not kill' in the Decalogue (Exod. 20.13; Deut. 5.17) not only includes all possible objects of killing (such as, e.g., animals) but also killing by executing criminals. This claim comes from the wishful mind of the beholder who reads her/his

6. Such an argument was presented to me in an analogous case concerning the divine commands to the invading Israelites to expropriate and expel or at least subjugate the Canaanites.

own interpretation into the text. Exegetically, it stretches the text beyond what it says and means on its own terms. The Hebrew term used, *ršh*, means 'to commit murder', not just 'to kill' (*qll*, *piel*). It denotes what falls under the conditions of a capital crime against persons, as in its immediate context. In the Covenant Book, especially Exod. 21.12, 15, one can read what the consequences were for such murder. It stretches our exegetical rules too far if we assume that Exod. 20.13 is to be understood in contrast to its contexts.

The basic sentence never invalidated stands in Gen. 9.5-6, the rule for the Noahitic humanity after the flood. Allowing the killing of 'every moving thing that lives...for food for you', and excepting the eating of its blood (vv. 3-4), the divine announcement says: 'For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of (every) human. Of every human's brother I will require the life of humans. Whoever sheds the blood of humans, by humans shall his blood be shed.' Whether it suits anyone or not, in this text nothing other and nothing less than death penalty is divinely ordained precisely in order to erect the last defense line in the vast arena of the killing of life: the protection of human life, all human life, the basic nature of which is seen in and defined as human blood. The focus on this defense line does not mean that the blood of the one who spills it is also protected by this defense. On the contrary, it shall be spilled precisely because he transgressed the ultimate barrier. It is difficult to imagine a stronger legitimization for the death penalty than the one given here. It reinforces the radicality of the prohibition of murder. Clearly, anyone advocating the abolition of the death penalty also argues for the abolition of this basic biblical injunction.

The death penalty is also included in the types of cases covered by the legal maxim of the *lex talionis*, the 'law of retaliation', which requires retribution in like kind from a wrongdoer for injury done by him to another: 'Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe'.⁷ As, for example, the Code of Hammurabi shows, the 'law of retaliation' is not uniquely Israelite. It belongs to the common ancient Near Eastern legal tradition of the principle of responsibility for equitable compensation or retribution for damage done by persons to others. And, of course, it has nothing to do with revenge/vengeance, a widespread and ineradicable popular characterization up to our day, even by respectable public organs who either are,

7. Exod. 21.24-25; Lev. 24.19-21; Deut. 19.21.

on such an important matter, irresponsibly illiterate or seem to be guided by semi-hidden malicious, ostensibly anti-Semitic, intent.

The New Testament of the Christians

Is the situation different in the New Testament? I don't believe so. The following is important for the assessment of the question. Our own public debate today centers on whether or not we practice capital punishment as a societal institution, and on how we as the society of a democracy autonomously decide on which policy we will have, rather than having a law imposed upon us by virtue of a theology or ideology based on theocratic or hierocratic authority. We are neither a theocracy nor a hierocracy. The debate regarding capital punishment or its abolition is about its institutionalization by the autonomous decision of the whole society. It is not a matter of our private convictions or our freedom of speech, matters that nobody contests. And it is not a matter of the policies of certain groups in the society, for example, of a Church's jurisdiction over its own internal affairs which certainly exclude the Church's right to decide over life or death.

By analogy, then, the angle from which to look at the New Testament is not what Jesus or any of the writers of the New Testament books did think or say, or may have thought, more or less personally, about the issue of capital punishment. Nor is the issue the extent to which some of their words or actions could by implication be taken as a sort of subversive strategy for gaining control of the societal system, in our case, the system of capital punishment in the Roman empire.

At issue is the question whether evidence exists that anyone stepped forward, explicitly challenged the existing legal and judicial system of the empire in this respect, in the name of the Kingdom of God or the Lordship of Christ or the gospel or the eschaton, demanded its abolition by the empire, and propagated this demand as a decisive element in a strategy for the transformation of the institutions of the society. When we come to this kind of question, which points to the analogy of our own debate, I think that the answer is clearly negative. Not only is there no evidence in the New Testament, or in any of the reconstructions of the historical Jesus behind the New Testament texts, in favor of the abolition of the system of capital punishment in and by the Roman empire; there is on the contrary both indirect and direct evidence for the parenthesis to the Christians to submit to the laws of the empire and to the one 'who is in authority...who does not bear the sword in vain...but is the servant of God to execute

his wrath on the wrongdoer...’ Compare the paradigmatic passage Rom. 13.1-7, which also demands the payments of taxes and revenues to whom they are due. The New Testament acknowledges the state’s right to capital punishment just as much as its right to collect taxes, just as much as it affirms the system of slavery rather than demanding its abolition; and just as much as it affirms, indeed intensifies, the instruction for the subordination of wives to their husbands rather than advocating the abolition of that kind of societal order.

The text in Lk. 4.17-19, according to which Jesus calls the prophecy in Isaiah 61 fulfilled in the present moment of his appearance, ‘today’, does not invalidate what I just said about the New Testament’s stance on capital punishment. Whatever that text means positively, it speaks about the implementation, ‘now’, of the program of the year of Jubilee, which is expected once every fifty years. It does not speak about the permanent abolition of all miserable conditions listed. When proclaiming ‘release to the captives’, the text refers to those held in captive conditions because of indebtedness. It does not speak about the release of criminals, the abolition of the criminal justice system, and the abolition of punishment for evildoers. It might imply the practice of those policies by the followers of Jesus, individually or communally, in whatever worldly system they exist, but it does not aim at the momentary, let alone the permanent, replacement of the secular structures by the prophetic-messianic structures in ongoing human history.

Plain Reading of the Text

It should be very clear that as far as their positions are explicitly stated in their texts, both the Bible of the Jewish people and the New Testament, as well, acknowledge the legality of the death penalty as important parts of the normal functioning of the societal systems in which the disciples also live. They make no attempts to rebel against these systems and to work towards their abolition or overthrow. This must be said for exegetical reasons, and regardless of the possible jubilation by good Christians about the confirmation of their support for capital punishment on the ground of their plain reading of the Bible, and regardless of the embarrassment, also by good Christians, about the fact that the plain reading of the Bible does not support their convictions against the death penalty system. Of course, one wonders why the loyalty to the plain text of the Bible, which is for many the decisive rationale for the support of capital punishment, does not likewise function for them in other respects: for example, with respect to

the issue of slavery—slavery as such, past and present and not only of African Americans in the past—an issue that they might want to defend and perhaps to reintroduce, in obedience to what they understand to be the Word of God, and analogous to practices of slavery today in countries of Asia and Africa.

Now then, if the Bible is so clearly in support of capital punishment by the legislative and judicial institutions of societies, on what grounds do we evaluate the revolt by large groups of people, internationally and domestically, against it, and the movements to have this tradition, sacrosanct throughout millennia, overthrown and abolished? That many nations, such as those united in the European Union, have abolished capital punishment, could be taken, by some who so want, as a sign of the rise of the Anti-Christ before the Second Coming, since these nations have certainly not abolished the death penalty for specifically Christian reasons. That the state of Israel has also abolished it, in contrast to the Bible of the Jewish people, should give us special cause to think.

But how is it possible that Christian people, and not only the Pope and the Catholic Bishops of America, but many Christians in the United States and internationally, are advocating and propagating the abolition of capital punishment? Do they not know the biblical record? Do they make assessments of passages that cannot be confirmed exegetically? Or do they simply ignore the overwhelming evidence, resorting instead to something different, also in the Bible? What might that be? And how do they argue about it. This is by and large not explicated, not even in the statement of the Roman Catholic Bishops?

The Bishops say that they are against the death penalty because they are 'pro-life', which has been their long-standing expression for their opposition to abortion. It is obvious, however, that being for the life of an unborn, innocent fetus is something very different from being for the life of a convicted adult murderer. To defend the murderer on the same principle by which one defends innocent unborn life would amount to an attempt to stand for two opposite, mutually exclusive principles: the saving of the guilty just as much as the saving of the innocent.

The Bishops' stance against the death penalty therefore cannot be considered as a logical extension of their opposition to abortion on the common denominator of 'pro-life'. Pro-life means in their stance two different things. It rests on different principles, or rationales, and their long-established rationale for their rejection of abortion is not sufficient for opposing the death penalty. If one is against the death penalty because one

is pro-life, the concept of pro-life itself must be very different and decisively more radical, and more 'unconditional' than the concept of pro-life on which the opposition to abortion rests. The concept of pro-life, which is based on the rejection of the death penalty, is more fundamental than the concept of pro-life which is concerned with rejection of abortion only. The concept for the rejection of abortion falls short of accounting for the rejection of the death penalty. Where are the origins, and what are the roots of the more radical concept of pro-life?

It seems to me that the rise of the increasing opposition against the death penalty has to do with the growing experience especially during the past century of the appalling triumph of death by the taking of human lives, and with the emergence of the attention to the fundamental value of life as such, especially human life, an attention increasingly sharpened by our knowledge of the threat to all human life for the first time in human history by our own self-destruction from our generation onward. Human life is no more presupposed to be forever guaranteed by God. It is from now on forever at the brink of the abyss. It therefore appears as the fundamental value compared to which all else is relative, if not irrelevant.

Everybody knows about Albert Schweitzer's principle of *Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben* ('reverence for life'). Perhaps less known is how new and almost revolutionary this determined focus on life, and the call to reverence for life, was felt to be when it became known worldwide after World War II. And while everybody talked about it at that time, it played no role in my own specific theological education in the early 1950s. The focus by increasing segments of the human community on the fact of human life as such, on its nature, value, and sanctity, may be one of the profound reorientations which we experience in our outlook on reality in our generation.

The fact of human life and its significance, the realization of the value of human life, every kind of human life, in contrast to death and its destruction by us humans ourselves, have moved into center stage in the human conscience, whether such realization originates in Christian or biblical roots or not. This new look at human life has something to do with the legacy of capital punishment in our 'civilizations'. It is perhaps the foil, against which this legacy appears in a new light. For we cannot miss the fact that the death penalty is abolished not by individuals but by societies which step back from bearing the corporate responsibility for executing human beings while at the same time pursuing alternative kinds of punishment commensurate with crimes. And since the killings of masses of people in wars or conflicts remains, to a depressing extent, beyond

control, it is the focus on the life of the individual person that makes new legislation and its implementation by societies possible.

Societies step back from executions, which represent an unquestionable form of justice, in favor of what they perceive as forms of a better justice: a justice that is more humane, more for the validity of life, the life of each individual human being, and less for the validity of death; more for the acknowledgment that even a murderer remains a human being, than for the judgment that he/she has by her/his act and execution definitely lost her/his humanness; more for a degree of justice in which the remedial possibility and the redeeming qualities remain open, than for a kind of justice in which there is neither remedy nor redemption because the law of identical retribution is to be kept ultimate and finite; more for an ethos in adjudication that enhances the image of a society, than for a morale that 'diminishes the society as a whole'. Influenced by what ever ideological roots specifically, such societies no longer want to function corporately as agents for the premature termination of the life of even the most condemnable criminals.

And they are joined by Churches and Christians, for reasons not readily available in their conventional theological parlance or in their plain reading of the biblical texts, but which are potent in deep layers of their perception of the presence of God and Jesus Christ in human life, nothing but the sinful life of all, and of the greater justice of redemption over the justice of judgment; reasons that are also deeply rooted in the Bible's understanding of the meaning of God and Jesus Christ for us humans.⁸ I believe that the issue of capital punishment has nothing to do with an alternative between justice and injustice, that it would at best have something to do with the alternative between justice and mercy. I believe that this issue crystallizes and is forced into the open in the opportunity to choose the better justice in the challenge to human societies. The choice is whether to act as agents for the premature termination of the life of capital offenders or to implement alternative, remedial strategies for retribution while stopping before the authority for that final act. Of course, the biblical traditions themselves provide lucid paradigms which demonstrate that the focus on the better of two kinds of justice, and the pursuit of that way,

8. On the issue of redemptive justice, see the most recent essay by Robert L. Hubbard, Jr, 'The Divine Redeemer: Toward a Biblical Theology of Redemption', in Wonil Kim, Deborah Ellens, Michael Floyd and Marvin A. Sweeney (eds.), *Reading the Hebrew Bible for a New Millennium: Form, Concept, and Theological Perspective* (Trinity Press International, Harrisburg, PA, 2000), pp. 188-204.

is nothing new at all. It is merely not known, or not liked, or better left aside.

I believe that this kind of alternative between the better of two kinds of justice calls for an interpretation of the relationship of values, and for a strategy in principle for defining priorities for ethical decisions, for processes that are also in the Christian communities not yet clearly perceived and followed. In view of these tasks, we are certainly becoming aware that what we call our methods for biblical interpretation, exegesis, biblical theology, and hermeneutic, involve much more than the technical performance of rules for the sake of satisfying our professionalism. But I also find very dissatisfying, even troublesome, the positions of those who by thumping the Bible present themselves as knowing all clearly and surely, and who are certain because the Bible says what it says. I have a different kind of experience with the Bible, namely, to be lead by it and through it onward to fathom the face of God and Jesus Christ. In our case, to fathom the vision of God's own better justice, and God's own better laws for the sake of his better justice, so as to know where I myself should go.

*Postscript*⁹

Being a member of, and an ordained elder, in The United Methodist Church, I encountered on p. 4 of the 22 December 2000 edition of *Circuit West*, the bi-weekly United Methodist Review serving this Church in Guam, Hawaii, and Southern California, an article by Bishop Ann B. Sherer, the episcopal leader of the Church's Missouri area, on the issue of death penalty, also based on her experience in death row and the death chamber. In this article, the Bishop reminds or at least informs her readers that 'Since 1956 we United Methodists, in our *Book of Discipline* [i.e. the document containing all basic foundational affirmations, and policies and decisions by the quadrennially meeting General Conference of the worldwide Church] have said no to capital punishment and urged its elimination from all criminal codes'.

I am indebted to the Reverend Dr Robert Davis, the senior pastor of my local Claremont United Methodist Church, for putting copies of all editions of the *Book of Discipline* since 1956 on my desk, which have in regular intervals every four years appeared. 1956 was the year in which the, then still, Methodist Church went for the first time on record distancing itself from the practice of capital punishment, especially in the

9. This postscript was added to the text of the lecture on 29 December 2000.

United States, but also worldwide. A look at the development of the expressions for this distancing is instructive. The first expression is included in the 1956 edition of the *Methodist Social Creed* dating back to 1908. It says in Section III, Subsection D, *Treatment of Crime* (p. 706), in the first of its two paragraphs: 'We stand for the application of the redemptive principle to the treatment of offenders against the law, to reform of penal and correctional methods, and to criminal court procedure. For this reason we deplore the use of capital punishment'. (It is worth noticing that at that time, the *Methodist Social Creed* was in the composition of the whole *Book of Discipline* placed at its end, in section IV, paragraph 2020 of the *Appendix*.) The 1960 *Book of Discipline*, also in Section III, Subsection D. of the *Social Creed* (p. 698), which is also positioned in section IV, paragraph 2020, of the *Appendix*, repeats the 1956 statement verbatim: 'For this reason we deplore the use of capital punishment'. The 1964 *Book of Discipline*, now in Section III, Subsection C.2. of the *Social Creed* (p. 661), still positioned in section IV, now paragraph 1820, of the *Appendix*, says: 'For this reason we deplore capital punishment'. The formulation 'For this reason we deplore capital punishment' is, finally, also used in the 1968 edition, also in Section III, Subsection C.2. of the *Social Creed* (p. 57). Now, however, the *Social Creed* itself has shifted to a decisively more important position, namely, as *Part III: Social Principles*, paragraphs 96-97, of more than 1900 paragraphs of the *Book of Discipline*, directly after *Part I: The Constitution*, and *Part II: Doctrinal Statements and the General Rules*.

From 1972 onward, the picture changes. In *Part III*, paragraphs 71-77, the *Social Principles* were by the General Conference adopted as a new statement, of which section V, the *Political Community*, paragraph 75, in Subsection C, on *Crime and Rehabilitation* (p. 95), demands in a longer discussion the protection of all citizens from crime, but then also rejects the misuse of the protective mechanisms concluding by saying: 'For the same reason, we oppose capital punishment and urge its elimination from all criminal codes'. Compared to the previous statements, it is here that a twofold significant change occurs: instead of having said 'we deplore' it is now said 'we oppose', and instead of having said nothing more than 'we deplore', two statements are made—the first going from deploring over to opposition, and the second going on to urging the political system to eliminate capital punishment, and that 'from all criminal codes'. The 1976 edition repeats in Section V, paragraph 74, Subsection F, on *Crime and Rehabilitation*, verbatim what had been said in 1972. The same is true for the editions of 1980, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, and apparently also 2000.

In addition to the statements included in the *Book of Discipline*, the January 2001 edition of the *Interpreter*, published by the United Methodist Communications, Nashville, TN, refers to a string of resolutions against capital punishment, also by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, which are published in the *Book of Resolutions*. According to the *Interpreter*, such resolutions criticized the death penalty from 1980 and 1984 onward as an ineffective deterrent, which ‘falls unfairly and unequally upon an outcast minority’, and ‘violates the sacredness of human life’ and ‘eliminates the possibilities of reconciliation and restoration’. Finally, the 2000 General Conference, so reports the *Interpreter*, further strengthened the Church’s anti-death-penalty stance with three new statements in its *Book of Resolutions*, adding biblical and theological reflection, statistics, and so on, calling for an immediate national moratorium on US executions, and urging the United States Bishops to speak out and become active abolitionists against the death penalty.¹⁰

10. All editions of the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* are published by the Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, TN.

RENAISSANCE ARTISTS AND BIBLICAL EXEGETES*

Samuel Terrien†

1. Introduction

Sometimes painters and sculptors are ahead of scholars when they suggest new interpretations of Scripture.¹ For example, when Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II to decorate the vaulted ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he was asked by the pontiff to read the biblical commentaries of a Dominican scholar. Michelangelo read them, but he went his own way. Thus, in the fresco of the creation of man, he represented God transmitting, finger-to-finger, to the newly sculpted body of Adam, the spark of life.

Under the left arm, God harbored a beautiful young woman, whom art historians, to this day, identify as the yet-uncreated Eve. Such a traditional interpretation is not convincing. In this fresco, the image of the young woman differs markedly from the picture of Eve which appears elsewhere on the vaulted ceiling of the chapel. In the representation of Adam receiving the spark of life, the young woman is Lady Wisdom, a personification of the Creator's intelligence,² which is found in the sapiential literature of the Old Testament.³

* I am happy to participate in this set of commemorative volumes honoring Simon John De Vries, a scholar who discerned, especially in his commentary on Chronicles, the place of aesthetics in biblical exegesis.

1. Samuel Terrien, *The Iconography of Job through the Centuries: Artists as Biblical Interpreters* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), pp. xxxi-xxxv.

2. H.J. Hermisson, 'Observations on the Creation Theology', in J.G. Gammie *et al.* (eds.), *Wisdom, Israelite Wisdom* (Festschrift Samuel Terrien; New York: Doubleday, 1978), pp. 43-56; See also R.E. Murphy, 'Wisdom and Creation', *JBL* 104 (1985), pp. 3-11 (9-10), and L.G. Purdue, 'Wisdom in the Book of Job', in Leo G. Purdue, Bernard Brandon Scott and William Johnstone (eds.), *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 73-93.

3. See Prov. 8.1-36; Job 28.12-28; Sir. 4.11-29; Wis. 7.22-30.

Renaissance artists dared to perpetrate a half-concealed challenge to Church authorities by inserting into their work some tiny detail that could be obscured by the main subjects of their painting. The half-concealed detail, often ignored or misunderstood by art critics, constitutes unexpectedly a new message of the artist. Three illustrations of artistic 'exegesis' have been selected for this essay: (1) the parable of the man without a wedding garment, (2) the posing of the Virgin for Saint Luke, and (3) an announcement of the crucifixion.

2. Scheggi's *Marriage Dance* (c. 1450)

As one visits the Galleria del'Accademia in Florence to admire the original statue of David by Michelangelo, and then enters to the right the Florentine Hall, an exquisite painting of unusual dimensions, three feet high and nine feet broad, calls for immediate attention. Apparently made for the side of a bridal chest, or *cassone*, many of which were carved and built in Florentine shops between 1440 and 1500, this picture is now attributed to a stepbrother of Masaccio, Giovanni di ser Giovanni, *alias* Scheggi or Scheggia, who lived between 1407 and about 1490.⁴

Every iconographer agrees that the artist represented a wedding dance, taking place during the festivities that follow a marriage ceremony. But who is the little man seated at the extreme left corner, near the servants' entrance? He is clad in a drab costume, devoid of any fancy lace, ribbons, or embroidery. As far as it can be ascertained from published articles and monographs, art historians have ignored him completely, as if this jarring figure did not belong to the scene at all.

One may easily guess that the plainly dressed character provides the key to the mystery. Scheggi probably intended to represent his own view of a parable of Jesus, *The Man Without a Festive Garment*.⁵ The parable was appended to that of *The King's Guests* who had failed to come to the wedding feast and had been replaced by common people from the streets. When the king saw a man without a wedding garment, he said, 'Fellow, how did you come here without a festive costume?' According to Matthew's Gospel, the poor fellow was speechless and condemned to outer darkness.

4. Ph. de Montebello, *Art Bulletin* 38.3 (Winter 1980-81).

5. Mt. 22.11-12, see R.C.H. Lenski, *Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961), pp. 519-21.

Giovanni Scheggi boldly differed from hierarchic legalism. The man in ordinary clothes may be an outsider, but he has not been sent to outer darkness. A heretic, in the etymological sense of the word, is merely 'a man who chooses', we might even say, 'who is pro-choice'. He becomes, so to speak, the prototype of the pre-Reformation *humanists*. Scheggi inaugurates the intellectual freedom and the spiritual self-respect that came to mark the High Renaissance.

In the mid-fifteenth century, wars between principalities throughout the Italian peninsula, especially against the Papal States, undermined obedience to the Roman See. The expulsion of the Medici from the government of Florence and the frenetic preaching of Savonarola were still to come, but the first currents of Christian Humanism seemed everywhere to be on the rise. Respect for individual dignity was discovered. Greek and Roman classics as well as the Bible were read and discussed. In the light of this political, cultural, and religious upheaval, Scheggi proved to be far more than a playful jester. He shrewdly concealed the signs of his non-conformism.

It is difficult to believe that Jesus told a story in which he condemned a man to the place where 'there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Mt. 22.13). The conflation of the two parables in ch. 22 may have been done at a relatively late date during the first century CE, when the logia of the Synoptic Gospels were finally written down from an oral tradition of at least two generations of Christian reflection. Without following the extreme position of the Jesus Seminar, even cautious exegetes might recognize that the fragment of this parable may have been told by Jesus himself, and that the little man without a festive garment was none other than the crucified Messiah.⁶

The prediction that after three days Jesus would rise from the dead could hardly have been formulated by himself. Yet, did he avoid sharing any thought about his passion and death? He knew he would die under the condemnation of the high priest and priestly entourage, confirmed by the Roman authority. He was aware of the theological significance of this death, even a death by crucifixion. In the Gethsemane evening, Jesus might easily have walked over the Mount of Olives toward the desert of Judah and disappeared from the Jerusalem scene. Some exegetes have suggested that he might have joined the Qumran sect. But Jesus had a sense of

6. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, I (New York: Doubleday, 1994), pp. 315-27, 565-722, II. *Jesus' Prediction of the Passion and Death*, pp. 1468-91.

theological mission. He was not only a symbol of poverty beside the glamour of the Jewish and Roman authorities; he might also have pictured himself as the antithesis of the wealth and glamour of the parabolic wedding dance at a royal court. Moreover, his sayings of the temporality of the temple, his notion of women's theological equality to men, and the openness of the covenant people to foreigners in the whole world constituted in the mind of the authorities an act of blasphemy for which he deserved capital punishment. Was the man without a festive garment a parabolic image of his own destiny? If this interpretation is correct, Scheggi, the artist, was an exegete of the New Testament of some considerable wisdom and skill.

3. *The van der Weyden St Luke and Maria Lactans (c. 1458?)*

The second illustration is to be observed at the very center of another large painting, *St Luke Sketching the Maria Lactans* (Mary nursing the Holy Infant), by the Flemish artist Rogier van der Weyden (c. 1399–1464). This masterpiece hangs now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Van der Weyden was born in Flanders. Later in life he resided in Brussels, under the occupation of the Spaniards, their army and their church. In his early years he had traveled over the whole of Italy and sojourned in Rome (1450). Iconographers have lavishly described the unusual features of Mariological allegory in the picture, but they missed the central point. Nothing is ever said about the rushing river, incongruously set at the symmetrical core of the scene.

The painter had recently been exposed to the political, religious, and cultural storms of Italy. Back in Brussels, he manifested his opposition to the ruthless exploitation of the Low Countries by Spanish soldiers and Spanish priests. The works of the Dominican Spaniard, Thomas Aquinas, who later become known as The Angelic Doctor (*Doctor Angelicus*), were soon to be accepted as containing the official theology of the Church until the Second Vatican Council (1962). The veneration of this man was such that, even today, not just one skull, but two skulls attributed to him, are preserved, one in Madrid, the other in Toulouse.

In many respects, the work of this theologian's extremely fertile mind must be acknowledged as a monumental achievement. Incidentally, some of his views are carefully kept under cover. Aquinas permitted abortion during the first trimester of pregnancy, for he maintained that the soul had not yet come into the embryo. Furthermore, as a Dominican friar, he did

not espouse the Franciscan belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary. However, his basic error lay in his misunderstanding the scriptural view of time and history. Thomist theology was largely influenced by the philosophy of Aristotle, who, in turn, depended heavily on the principles of Zeno of Elea (c. 490–430 BCE). The pre-Socratic thinkers of Greece were deeply divided on the question of mobility and immobility. Eleatic principles considered perfection as immobility, even immutability. Motion or movement was viewed as the transformation of the primary reality of stillness. This, in turn, led to a view of unchanging time.

For Heraclitus, on the contrary (c. 540–470 BCE), motion was primary, while immobility was the arrest of movement. In the Heraclitean lineage, history unfolds as constant change.⁷ The dominant theme of Hebrew-Christian Scripture, indeed the coherent sweep of the ascent from Abraham to the prophets, with its climax in Jesus, St Paul, and the Apocalypse of St John the Divine, is a 'teleology', the expectation of the end as a new creation. The Heraclitean position argues against immobilism in all its varied manifestations.⁸ This philosophical attitude has nourished a whole sequence of existential discourse, in many diverse styles and conclusions, among thinkers as different from one another as Pascal, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Bergson, Husserl, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Levinas, Henri-Bernard Levy, and Luc Ferry in his recent work, *Homo Aestheticus*.

The image of a flowing stream in the van der Weyden picture should warn postmodern Christendom against theological fossilism, among Protestant Fundamentalists as well as among Roman Catholic integrists. I once heard in 1968 a biblical scholar say to Pope Paul VI, '*Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*' ('A reformed church is always reforming'). The exegesis of Matthew's Gospel demands that a careful equilibrium be respected between original meaning and the transitory trends of modern culture. Some artists of the Renaissance seem to have understood this exegetical dilemma. When Michelangelo created dynamic sculpture, even in its representations through his paintings, he went beyond the harmonious coherence of classical Greek art, and he indicated that there is activity in the being of God.

7. See Thorlief Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek* (ed. J.L. Moreau; London: SCM Press, 1960); Kostas Axelos, *Heraclite et la philosophie* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1962); G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

8. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, pp. 39-40, 51-52.

Eventually a deep relation may exist between Galileo's cosmology and Aristotle's physics, but there may be also a subtle manifestation of a Heraclitean sense of priority over immobility as the symbol of perfection. Heraclitus, unconsciously, absorbs Eleatic philosophy. In this sense, he helps to describe the dynamic faith of the Hebrew prophets, the visions of the Apostle Paul, and the prevailing openness of the early Christians. The Yahwist story of creation (Gen. 2.5-25), and even its priestly rehearsal (1.1-2.4), are to be viewed not as the beginning of a history of humankind, with a commencement of chronological time, but the qualitative description of the divine intervention in the life of humanity. The picture suggests a dynamic ongoingness of life, favored, not by Eleatic, but by Heraclitean philosophy.⁹

During his travels in Italy, Rogier van der Weyden had witnessed the rumbling of a distant storm that would soon explode against Savonarola's frenetic preaching, largely inspired by the theology of Thomas Aquinas. By placing not a stagnant pond with water lilies but a flowing river, rushing with many waves, at the geometrical equidistance in this picture of *St Luke Sketching the Maria Lactans*, a Mary revealing her full breast while suckling the Holy Infant, the Flemish painter unveiled his assent to the motto of Heraclitus, 'everything flows'. The river image advocates perennial growth and permutation, with increasing change, but change in measure and in respect for continuity. In Fragment 218, Heraclitus declares, 'Upon those that step into the same river, different waters flow'. He goes further, 'You cannot step twice into the same river'. He adds, 'All things are in process and nothing stays still'. He concludes, 'Everything is in perpetual flux, like a river'.

The Hebrew and early Christian concept of time dilutes *kronos* into *kairos*. Biblical time transforms history, with its commemoration of the past in festivals, and the apprehension of a future made today. Divine presence, sometimes hidden or at least silent, at once reveals, condemns, or forgives the arrogance of humanity. Some exegetes mislead biblical theologians when they fail to analyze the inner relation that binds cosmogony and cosmology. Eschatological celebration makes the 'then' of yesterday the 'now' of divine salvation. The Hebrew notion of 'being' flows like water in the living river of the divine reality of 'becoming'.

The name of God, YHWH, is not to be explained by the sentence, 'I am who I am' (Exod. 3.14), for the very word YHWH is the third person

9. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, pp. 129-30.

singular hiphil (causative mode) of the verb *hawah*, an early form of the verb *hayah* ('to cause to be, to create'). In all probability the name YHWH means 'He who causes to be (and to become)'. Applied to the deity, the verb *hayah* includes the activity of being within the reality of change and growth. 'Thus says Yahweh, "I have made this water wholesome; henceforth neither death nor miscarriage shall come from it"' (2 Kgs 2.21).¹⁰

With the preposition, 'al, the verb *hayah* means 'to come' (Lev. 15.17, 24). With the preposition-prefix 'b', the same verb signifies 'to abide' (Gen. 4.8), 'to live' (Gen. 6.4). 'The word of Yahweh came to Abraham' (Gen. 15.1), and several others, such as Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, and Isaiah. Since the Hebrew notion of time is based on movement rather than immobility, it seems that van der Weyden discerned this peculiarity with his river, perhaps also the flowing milk from Mary to the Holy Infant.¹¹

4. *The Grand Landscape by the Sea, Brueghel the Elder (c. 1558)*

The third illustration addresses itself to another aspect of cultural turmoil, either during the Renaissance or in our contemporary situation. This includes the painting by Pieter Brueghel the Elder (1525–67), less than a century after Scheggi and van der Weyden. Born in Brabant, Brueghel lived chiefly in Antwerp and Brussels, but, like most Flemish artists of his time, he first visited Italy, all the way down to Calabria and Sicily. There, he was fascinated by the Straits of Messina. The art and science of navigation, as well as the intricacies of naval battles captured his imagination. Returning to Flanders in about 1555, he drew many seascapes with large river estuaries and depicted ships of all kinds with a minute expertise.

In addition to his sequence of *Twelve Grand Landscapes* with fortified cities and majestic harbors, he painted in 1558 a fortified harbor in the estuary of a stately stream, and a three-masted vessel with fully winded sails. He then showed on the coast a shepherd keeping his flock, a fisherman casting his line, and close to the foreground a vigorous peasant driving his

10. J.F. Callahan, *Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948); J. Marsh, *The Fulness of Time* (London: SPCK, 1952), pp. 51-60; R. Martin-Achard, 'La Signification du Temps dans l' Ancien Testament', *Revue de Theologie et Philosophie* 4 (1954), pp. 137-41; E. Perry et al., 'Time in the History of Religions and the Bible', *Journal of Bible and Religion* 27 (1959), pp. 109-32.

11. See Simon John De Vries, 'The Time Word *mahar* as a Key to Traditional Development', *ZAW* 87 (1975), pp. 65-75.

farm horse to cut with a plow neat furrows in the soil. Scarcely noticeable at the lower right corner one can see, in the water, the legs of a young man seemingly fallen from nowhere, and about to be drowned, soon to be the prey of a sea-monster.

Until 1912, when the canvas was acquired by the Royal Museum of Belgium, this detail was overlooked. Brueghel's masterpiece had been entitled *The Grand Landscape by the Sea*. Since then, however, it has become known as *The Fall of Icarus*.¹² One must admit that, at first encounter, the picture seems to show only human society at work. It goes beyond this vista. Perhaps better than anyone else, W.H. Auden, in his poem, *Musee des Beaux-Arts*, has understood the intention of the artist:

About suffering, they were never wrong
The Old Masters...

In Brueghel's Icarus, for instance, how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it is not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to go and sailed calmly on.

The proverb applies cogently:

Whoever rises higher than he should
Soon shall descend lower than he would.
(Quiconque s'élève plus haut qu'il ne doit
Descend bien tot plus bas que vouloit.)

The theme occurs frequently in the book of Proverbs. Brueghel went further. Not only did he paint one black sheep in the midst of the shepherd's flock, he also placed on the path of the blade of the peasant's plough a dagger, piercing a sack of seeds, thereby alluding to the horror of famine and its social as well as its natural causes. Was he, in the end, raising the problem of evil, which Christians failed to solve with the notion of theodicy? The key to the painting appears in the head of a corpse of a dying youth, with eyes already fixed and empty in death. This immobile head, half hidden under a bush, illustrates still another proverb: 'No plough

12. A.E. Bye, 'Pieter Bruegel's "Fall of Icarus", in the Brussels Museum', *Art Studies* 1 (1923), pp. 22-27; Ch. de Tolnay, 'La chute d'Icare', *P. Bruegel l'Ancien* (Brussels: Nouvelle Société d'Éditions), pp. 74-75.

ever stops for a dying man' (*'Aucune charrue ne s'arrete pour un homme qui meurt'*).

It seems that Brueghel asks the question of an unjustified death. Could it be the death of Jesus? If so, the third illustration summons a theme similar to that of the first illustration, by Scheggi. The Gospels hardly consider the passion and the crucifixion as an offering of the Messiah for the redemption of humankind. Such a theology belongs to the Levitical system, in which religion becomes a mercantile exchange between a gift to God and the expectation of a commensurate response from the Almighty. Even the Synoptic tradition of the Last Supper, by including the motif of 'the new covenant in my blood', comes to the theology of St Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Copies of photographs of Brueghel's painting in modern times delete the shocking picture of the dead or dying youth. Yet, the genuine masterpiece in the Royal Museum in Brussels inserts it close to the very center of the scene. Was the artist's intention, not only not to use as a title 'The Fall of Icarus', but to represent human indifference to acts of heroism, even of the human exploitation of nature? His Christology would then have been misplaced. Even when the Epistle to the Hebrews attempted to depict the death of Jesus in terms of the ultimate sacrifice (Heb. 10.5), the Synoptic tradition merely states, 'We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be condemned to death' (Mk 10.33-34).

By placing the dead or dying youth at the edge of the soil broken by the ploughman's work, the artist links together the indifference of most of humanity to scientific daring or agricultural necessities. Perhaps such an indifference, with a touch of dividing conflict, was already found in the meeting of St Paul with the Epicureans and Stoic philosophers in Athens (Acts 17.18), where an early indifference turned into violent hostility. Brueghel warned the pioneer who may neglect the human needs on earth, but he is also stunned by society's indifference to scientific experiments and discoveries. The ambiguity remains entire; yet, he seems to have grieved for the world of the future.

Each of the three painters included a feature at first sight irrelevant. Giovanni Scheggi presents man as an outsider, always waiting, 'a traveler and a foreigner over the face of the earth'. Rogier van der Weyden calls attention to the existential urge that pushes a human being to go beyond the self—in the words of Bergson, '*dans le dépassement de soi*'. Pieter Brueghel warns against the passion to conquer nature thoughtlessly, but he also condemns a society which ignores the pitfalls of no man's land in science, and the double edge of its technological achievements: progress in

humaneness and regress into inhumanity. This is a display of society's lack of interest in heroic innovation, especially when its technological application is obscure and premature.

The Renaissance was in many ways a new birth. Yes, the Bible was made available to the laity in modern languages, but there was more: Columbus and Copernicus thrust upon the human mind a new geography and a new cosmology. Printing and travel, as well as new methods in mechanics, created new industries. Did Brueghel intend to point out a conflict between two antithetical aspects of human endeavor: Conventional labor vs. daring and folly? Like other artists of his time, for instance Jobst Alciat and Virgil Solist, he presumably wanted to satirize the idiotic credulity of the populace for astrologers and other mountebanks. Not only did he paint one black sheep among the shepherd's flock, he also placed the dagger and the spilled seed close to the blade of the peasant's plough.

When the youthful Samuel Beckett, many years before his *Waiting for Godot*, composed an essay on Marcel Proust, he wrote:

The perils of transition (in which we somehow exist), represent zones in the life of the individual, dangerous, precarious, painful, and fertile, then for a moment, the boredom of (mere existence) is replaced by the suffering of the living.

Thus, we are thrown back upon the miracle of being as becoming. Institutions, including the Christian Church—at once a mystical entity and a historical reality, therefore both holy and corrupt—must move with the times as well as against them.¹³

Christendom needs to re-examine many issues of theology and ethics for the next generations: centrality of Scripture and the constructive aspect of biblical criticism; divine omnipotence and divine pain or vulnerability; reappraisal of ancient Hebraism and modern Judaism, our first cousin; rapport with Eastern religions, especially Buddhism and Islam; democratic approach rather than autocratic hypocrisy on sexuality; work and income security; wealth and unemployment; cyberspace and honest communications; micro-genetic biology and medicine; the meaning of 'pro-life' when it is often in fact pro-criminal or pro-abusive existence; religion vs. religiosity; spirituality against superstition; the search for being in all these areas, and in many others, as a quest for becoming.

Ontology, the philosophy of being, is the concern, not only of philosophers, but also of any thinking mind. Titles of modern and postmodern

13. Marsh, *The Fulness of Time*, pp. 37-50.

books are revealing: Heidegger, *Being and Time*; Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*; Cocteau, *The Difficulty of Being*; Camus, through Bonnier, *The Power of Being*; Tillich, *The Courage to Be*; Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*; Beckett, through Steiner, *The Authentic Weakness of Being*. If the ontological quest is pursued long enough, 'being' with a small 'b' becomes 'Being' with a capital 'B', toward God, beyond the god of catechism.¹⁴

The careless ambition and temerity of a young man raises another question: Should the Galileo of all centuries be muzzled for the sake of a belief in frozen biblicism?

5. Conclusion

The half-concealed jests that Italian and Flemish masters dare to perpetrate at the expense of Church authorities may be used as pungent admonitions to postmodern Christendom, in today's religious turmoil or the religious indifference that has crept through its ranks. The interpretations presented here are not confirmed by documents of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but imagination has a legitimate role to play in articulating fresh discoveries. Even scientists are prone to admit that a sober synthesis needs to follow a rigorous analysis. *A fortiori*, in the realm of art criticism and exegetical interpretation?

The wily warnings of some Renaissance painters are not simply artistic jests. They bid Christendom to face renewal while balancing the urge to change with reverence for its dynamic root, which is the Biblical Vision, reordered on the Greco-Roman equilibrium of Classical Antiquity, but constantly brought up to date as its spur and its brake. Some Renaissance painters ask Christendom to confront change, from a new exegesis, with reverence, restraint, discipline, openness, and compassion.

14. P. Tillich, *The Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Doubleday, 3rd edn, 2001), pp. 4-14.

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