

“Let the Wise Listen and Add to Their Learning” (Prov 1:5)

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Editors' Foreword

In 2005, on the occasion of Günter Stemberger's 65th birthday, his colleague and friend Mauro Perani edited a *Festschrift* that bore the title *The Words of a Wise Man's Mouth are Gracious* with 30 articles by renowned scholars from Europe, America and Israel. Ten years later, we – Constanza Cordoni and Gerhard Langer –, together with the same publishing house, have the privilege of editing a new collection, which we now present him in honor of his 75th birthday on December 7, 2015.

The willingness of so many scholars to contribute to this *Festschrift* is a clear sign of the enormous appreciation we all share for Günter Stemberger. In the replies we received, colleagues referred to both the greatness of his accomplishments and the many personal encounters with him that they have enjoyed through the years. Our own personal experience with Günter Stemberger can be seen as representative of those of our colleagues. A brilliant scholar, with an all-encompassing knowledge of the scholarly landscape of Jewish Studies and related fields, year after year he has been accompanying and guiding not just our work, but that of many colleagues and doctoral students from all over Europe. He has been untiring in answering queries, writing reviews of research proposals, and cultivating friendships through the extensive exchange of ideas. He is therefore richly deserving of our gratitude.

The works of Günter Stemberger in the fields of Late Antiquity, Jewish history, culture and religion have had an impact on generations of academics and have thus contributed to the formation of Jewish Studies. The many different articles in this book reflect this. The *Festschrift* Mauro Perani edited ten years ago provided an excellent overview of Stemberger's oeuvre.

Günter Stemberger's retirement in 2009 by no means diminished his scholarly productivity. He is still very active, either working in his office on an almost daily basis, or travelling the world as a sought-after guest speaker, consultant or adviser. This dedication has resulted in around 50 articles and six books (excluding revised translations), including the ninth revised edition of his *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch*, published in 2011 (English *Introduction to Talmud and Midrash*), a two-volume collection of articles with the title *Judaica Minora* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), and *Mose in der rabbinischen Tradition* (Freiburg: Herder, 2016).

In the last couple of years, Günter Stemberger received honorary doctorates from the Faculty of Theology at the University of Göttingen and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Potsdam in recognition of his services, amongst other accolades. In 2010, he was awarded the Grand Decoration of Honour in Silver for

Services to the Republic of Austria, and in 2011 he received the Wilhelm-Hartel-Award from the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

The articles, which are preceded by an introduction with a laudation by Karl Erich Grözinger, have been arranged in six sections, which follow a chronological and topical order: 1. Hebrew Bible, its Text and Meaning; Targum; 2. History of Late Antiquity; 3. Rabbinic Literature; 4. New Testament, Early Christianity; 5. Medieval Judaism; 6. (Early-)Modern Judaism; Jewish Studies. Readers seeking a quick overview will find an abstract for each of the contributions at the end of the volume, which is characterized by a multilingualism that reflects Stemberger's internationality.

Biblical and other ancient texts in English contributions were abbreviated according to the *SBL Handbook of Style*, except for rabbinic texts that follow the index of the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (EBR). In articles written in German, Spanish and Italian, abbreviations, especially those of biblical texts, follow the standard conventions of their respective languages. No directives were issued by the editors concerning the transliteration of the Hebrew language.

We thank the editors of *Studia Judaica*, Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Alexander Samely, for accepting the *Festschrift* in the series, Sophie Wagenhofer of De Gruyter for her meticulous and professional supervision of the project, and Joshua Davis for his revision of some of the texts written in English. We would like to express our special thanks to all the authors for their commitment. Each of the articles collected here is a token of appreciation, a sign of gratitude as well as a salute to Günter Stemberger: *ad meah we-essrim!*

Karl E. Grözinger

Wahrheiten auf dem Weg zur Wahrheit: Günter Stemberger zum 75. Geburtstag

Lieber Herr Stemberger,

es ist mir eine ganz besondere Freude, Ihnen an Ihrem entscheidenden Wirkungsort, dem Wiener Institut für Judaistik, bei der offiziellen Geburtstagsfeier am 15. Dezember 2015 zu ihrem 75. Geburtstag zu gratulieren. Ich tue dies aus Ehrerbietung, aber auch aus dem Anreiz, bei dieser Gelegenheit ein wenig über Ihre Lebens-Arbeit als Wissenschaftler nachzudenken. Ich will versuchen zu verstehen, *wer* oder noch genauer, *was* dieser Mann, dieser weltweit hochgeschätzte Judaist, ist, was ihn antreibt, ein so umfangreiches und nachhaltiges Werk hervorzubringen? Nein, ich werde jetzt nicht die zahlreichen Bücher und Aufsätze von Günter Stemberger aufzählen – die kennt man am Wiener Institut ja ohnehin sehr genau und die veröffentlichten Bibliographien weisen dies bis ins Detail nach: Es sind fünfundzwanzig Bücher – einige davon in mehrere Sprachen übersetzt – außerdem vier Sammelbände und 200 Aufsätze. Mit dieser beeindruckenden Publikationsarbeit hat Günter Stemberger das Bild vor allem des rabbinischen Judentums nachhaltig geprägt. Hervorheben will ich noch besonders, weil dies für das Folgende symptomatisch ist, die nicht weniger als 103 Buchbesprechungen, die unter dem Namen Stemberger erschienen sind.

Fangen wir unsere Betrachtungen zunächst bei der schieren Anzahl der Publikationen zu sehr verschiedenen Themen an. Was alleine sagt uns diese große Zahl an Publikationen? Ist es das Motto des Theaterdirektors aus dem *Faust*, das unseren Jubilar bewegte, so viele Schriften zu publizieren. Goethes Theaterdirektor, der ja auf ein zahlreiches Publikum angewiesen ist, weiß um den Nutzen allein der Zahl der Angebote. Seine Arbeitsphilosophie lautet:

Die Masse könnt ihr nur durch Masse zwingen,
Ein jeder sucht sich endlich selbst was aus.
Wer vieles bringt, wird manchem etwas bringen;
Und jeder geht zufrieden aus dem Haus.

Fast scheint es so auch im Wissenschaftstheater zuzugehen. Gerade erst wurde Günter Stemberger an meiner Universität in Potsdam die Ehrendoktorwürde verliehen und da hat die Laudatorin mit großem Nachdruck die neue, die neunte Auflage der nunmehr zu Recht nur noch nach Stemberger benannten *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* besonders gelobt und empfohlen. Warum? Weil in diesem Band auch die moderne Gender-Forschung berücksichtigt wird, ein wichtiges

Arbeitsgebiet der Laudatorin. Und wer sieht sich nicht gerne in dieses Standardwerk der modernen Judaistik aufgenommen? Goethes Theatermann hat doch irgendwie Recht.

Aber nein, es ist nicht die Menge, die Fülle an sich, die uns aufhorchen lassen muss. Es ist ja auffällig, dass in Günter Stembergers *Œuvre* neben der *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* so viele andere grundlegende Einführungs- und Übersichtswerke vorkommen: Die *Einführung in die Judaistik*, *Das klassische Judentum*, die *Einführung in die Geschichte der jüdischen Literatur* –, die anthologischen Einführungen in den Talmud (*Der Talmud: Einführung, Texte, Erläuterungen*) und Midrasch (*Midrasch: Vom Umgang der Rabbinen mit der Bibel*), das historische Lesebuch (*Die Juden: Ein historisches Lesebuch*), die *Jüdische Religion*. Diesen auffälligen Befund muss man deuten – was ich im Folgenden versuchen will.

Es wäre allerdings eine Verkürzung, wollte man Günter Stemberger auf den Einleitungs- und Einführungs-Wissenschaftler reduzieren. Seine vielen Aufsätze zu sehr unterschiedlichen Themen des rabbinischen Judentums und auch des Christentums sind allesamt Kleinodien gründlicher Wissenschaft am Text – aber nicht nur am Text, auch am Bild und an den archäologischen Funden. Schaut man sich diese Aufsätze allerdings einmal aus der Nähe an, so taucht da wieder der Stemberger der Einleitungen auf, der möglichst alle verfügbaren Daten zu dem gerade verhandelten Thema zusammentragen will, und nicht nur die Daten. Stemberger zitiert und sichtet die vielen Meinungen der Deuter und Erklärer, die vor ihm dasselbe Thema bearbeitet haben. Tut er dies mit demselben Ziel wie der Geistliche im *Proceß*-Roman von Kafka? Auch er spricht über die vielen Meinungen und Deuter der Schrift. Nachdem der Kafkasche Geistliche Josef K. all die verschiedenen Meinungen zu der Geschichte von dem Manne vor den Toren des Gesetzes vorgetragen hat sagt Josef K.:

„Du kennst die Geschichte genauer als ich und längere Zeit“, ... Sie schwiegen ein Weilchen. Dann sagte K.: „Du glaubst also der Mann wurde nicht getäuscht?“ „Mißverstehe mich nicht“, sagte der Geistliche, „ich zeige Dir nur die *Meinungen*, die darüber bestehen. Du mußt nicht zuviel auf Meinungen achten. Die Schrift ist unveränderlich und die Meinungen sind oft nur Ausdruck der Verzweiflung darüber.“

Und am Ende der Debatte:

„man muß nicht alles für wahr halten, man muß es nur für notwendig halten“. „Trübselige Meinung“, sagte K. „Die Lüge wird zur Weltordnung gemacht.“

Ist dies das Ziel, weshalb Günter Stemberger all die vielen und widersprüchlichen Meinungen seiner Kollegen anführt? Sollen sie als falsch erwiesen werden, als

Verzweiflungstaten angesichts der unnahbaren Schriften? Sollen sie eben nur als *Meinungen* bloßgestellt werden?

Nein, der Grund, weshalb unser Jubilar nicht nur möglichst alle Fakten sondern stets auch viele Meinungen zusammenträgt, hat einen ganz anderen Grund. Er trägt die vielen Meinungen der Gelehrten zusammen, weil sie nach seiner Auffassung allesamt richtige Hinweise zur Sache geben und darum beachtenswert sind. Aber trotz dieser Berücksichtigung der anderen Meinungen enden viele von Günter Stembergers Aufsätzen eher skeptisch hinsichtlich dessen, was aus den Quellen wirklich zu erkennen ist. Darum liest man am Ende von seinen Aufsätzen häufig Sätze wie die folgenden: „Das erfordert Vorsicht in der Bewertung der einzelnen Elemente dieser Aussagen, die man nicht vorschnell wörtlich interpretieren darf.“¹ Oder: „Diese Feststellung [von E. R. Goodenough] stammt wohl aus der ersten Begeisterung über die Schätze, die in der Via Latina entdeckt wurden, und ist eine grobe Verallgemeinerung; immerhin sind die Fresken der Katakomben der Via Latina wertvollstes Beweismaterial für die Zusammenhänge zwischen jüdischer und christlicher Kunst ...“² oder: „Immerhin bleiben so große Unsicherheiten bestehen, daß eine Beurteilung der Vorlage von Apg 7 als Homilie, als Synagogenpredigt, nicht mehr als eine gewisse Wahrscheinlichkeit für sich beanspruchen kann.“³ Und schließlich: „Aus all dem ist der Schluß zu ziehen: wir haben keine Quellen, um etwas über den Ablauf des Pesachmahles vor dem Jahre 70 oder dabei verwendete Texte auszusagen.“⁴ Also, so kann man fragen, warum so viele Meinungen zu den Quellen, die doch nicht so viel hergeben?

Welche Bedeutung hat angesichts solch skeptischen Resultaten die enzyklopädische Fülle der Fakten und Meinungen, die Günter Stemberger zusammenträgt? Mir scheint, es ist gerade das Erreichen des enzyklopädischen Wissens, welches eine wichtige Funktion im Wissenschaftsverständnis von Günter Stemberger hat. Dafür zeugen nicht nur die oben genannten Einführungen, die allesamt Enzyklopädien für die jeweils genannten Themenbereiche sind. Dafür zeugen auch die Aufsätze oder ein Büchlein wie *Juden und Christen im spätantiken Palästina*. Alle diese Schriften tragen jeweils alle verfügbaren Fakten für das verhandelte Thema zusammen, und zu diesen Fakten gehören auch die Meinungen der Sekundärliteratur – darum mein obiger Hinweis auf die zahlreichen Buchbesprechungen von Stemberger. Günter Stemberger ist ein enzyklopädischer Denker. Was dies bedeutet, will ich im Folgenden noch erläutern.

1 Günter Stemberger, *Studien zum rabbinischen Judentum* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990), 88.

2 Ibid., 176.

3 Ibid., 250.

4 Ibid., 373.

Zunächst muss hier ein Wort zum Begriff des Enzyklopädischen gesagt werden. Ursprünglich war eine Enzyklopädie nicht, wie wir das heute gewohnt sind, ein alphabetisches Register zahlloser Informationsfragmente. Die Enzyklopädie hatte in ihren Ursprungsphasen noch ganz andere literarische Formen. Und solche Formen wurden gerade auch im Judentum der Renaissance entwickelt. Ich denke zum Beispiel an Josef Schlomo Delmedigos (1591–1655) *Sefer Elim* und sein *Ta'alumot Hokhma*, an Tuvja Ha-Kohens (1652–1729) *Ma'aseh Tuvja*, an Jizchak Lamprontis (1679–1756) *Pachad Jizchak*, aber auch an Beer Perlhefters (1650–1713) jiddisches *Be'er Scheva'* – für den christlichen Bereich muss man natürlich Diderots und d'Alemberts *Encyclopédie* nennen.

Hinter solchen Werken stand nicht nur das pragmatische Ziel, nötiges Wissen bequem bereitzustellen. Hinter der Erarbeitung von Enzyklopädien stand vielmehr eine eigenständige Erkenntnislehre. Ich stütze mich bei dem Folgenden vor allem auf Josef Schlomo Delmedigo. Delmedigo entwickelte eine Lehre von den drei Wahrheiten.⁵ Es sind dies, die *Wahrheit der empirischen Erkenntnis*, die *Wahrheit der argumentativen Überzeugung* und schließlich die *Wahrheit des überlieferten Glaubens*. Nach Delmedigos Auffassung schlossen diese drei Wahrheiten sich nicht einander aus, sondern sie stehen – fast – gleichberechtigt nebeneinander. Denn nur wenn die empirischen Befunde ganz klare Fakten bieten, müssen die *Meinungen* und der *Glaube* weichen.

Die Anerkennung dieser drei so unterschiedlichen Wahrheiten ist demnach nötig, solange sie nicht durch die Empirie widerlegt sind. Vorher braucht man, will man der Wahrheit näher kommen, auch die Wahrheit der Meinungen und auch die des Glaubens. Weil dies so ist, stehen in dem Buch von Tuvja, dem Arzt, neben der Medizin, der Physik, der Pharmakologie auch Themen der Kosmologie und der Metaphysik. Durch diese Verbindung der unterschiedlichen Wahrheiten entsteht ein neues Weltbild, das die jüdischen Leser zuvor so nicht hatten. Tuvja will das Nebeneinander von sich durchaus widersprechenden Positionen fördern. Denn das *Wissen* ist das Ziel, nicht die systematische Ablehnung von anderen Erkenntnissen. Aus alledem darf man schließen. Das Ziel der wahren Enzyklopädie ist nicht die einfache Anhäufung von Wissen, sondern die Auffassung, dass die Wahrheit gerade darin besteht, dass man die Fülle der sich widerstreitenden Fakten und Meinungen kennt. Die Wahrheit, die man als Mensch erlangen kann ist die Wahrheit der vielen Daten und der unterschiedlichen Deutungen. Eine solche

⁵ Zum Folgenden siehe Karl E. Grözinger, *Jüdisches Denken: Theologie, Philosophie, Mystik*, Bd. III, *Von der Religionskritik der Renaissance zu Orthodoxie und Reform im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2009), 59–92 insbesondere 68–76.

komplementäre Pluralität der Wahrheiten ist das höchste erreichbare Ziel menschlicher Erkenntnis.

Mit anderen Worten: Das bei den Renaissance-Denkern sichtbar gewordene enzyklopädische Bestreben sieht in der Konkordanz der unterschiedlichen Wissensmöglichkeiten die einzige vom Menschen erreichbare Wahrheit. Es sind nicht die einzelnen Wissensgebiete, die einzelnen Fakten oder einzelnen Meinungen, die je für sich die Wahrheit verbürgen, es ist alleine die Enzyklopädie, die Zusammenschau sämtlicher vorhandener Daten und deren Deutungen, welche die Wahrheit verbürgt oder ihr uns nahe bringt.

Ich glaube, jetzt wird deutlich, was ich meine, wenn ich Günter Stemberger einen enzyklopädischen Denker nenne. Er ist nicht der Mann der sich auf einseitige steile Thesen kapriziert. Es ist nicht das eigene Fündlein, nicht die eigene Hypothese, die ihn fasziniert. Nicht die extreme Einzelmeinung verbürgt ihm die Wahrheit. Der Wahrheit kommt man am nächsten, wenn man alle Daten und alle Meinungen zu einem Gegenstand kennt. Was Günter Stemberger fasziniert, ist der Überblick über alle erreichbaren Daten und alle erreichbaren Meinungen zu einer Sache. Dies ist nicht nur eine Marotte, *dies ist ein erkenntnistheoretisches Programm, ein wissenschaftliches Programm*. Nur wer in der Konkordanz des erreichbaren Wissens zu einem Thema einen *eigenen* und *wesentlichen* Erkenntnisgewinn sieht, kann so viele enzyklopädisch angelegte Bücher schreiben wie Günter Stemberger dies getan hat und noch tut.

Dieser holistische Erkenntnisweg zeigt sich, wie ich schon sagte, auch in den Einzelforschungen von Günter Stemberger. In seinen Aufsätzen zu Einzelthemen werden möglichst viele oder gar alle Daten zum Thema zusammengetragen. Ebenso referiert er auch Meinungen anderer, selbst wenn sie ihn nicht überzeugen. In dieser Bewahrung auch abgelehnter Auffassungen folgt Günter Stemberger zugleich einem alten rabbinischen Prinzip. Auch die Rabbinen der Mischna haben zum Zweck der Wahrheitsfindung selbst die Meinungen der in früheren Abstimmungen unterlegenen Minderheiten weiter tradiert. Warum? Damit man sich bei späteren erneuten Aufnahmen des Themas entweder positiv oder negativ auf solche Einzelstimmen berufen kann.⁶ Auch nach rabbinischem Verständnis gehört zum Prozess der Wahrheitsfindung die *Gesamtheit* der Meinungen, nicht nur die Meinungen der Mehrheit.

Es scheint nach alledem, dass man von Günter Stemberger keine einfachen Antworten bekommen kann. Wo die Wahrheit so vielschichtig ist, müssen auch die Antworten komplexer ausfallen. Das ist es, was ich bisher hervorgehoben habe. Aber Günter Stemberger kann dennoch auch einfachere Antworten geben. Seine

⁶ mEd 1.4–6.

Einführungen in die Judaistik und in die jüdische Religion, in Talmud und Midrasch kommen auch Lesern entgegen, die erst am Anfang ihres Wissens zum Judentum stehen – ein Beleg dafür sind die wiederholten Neuauflagen dieser Bücher. Hier zeigt sich die vorbildliche Bescheidenheit des großen Gelehrten, der von seiner hohen Stufe auch herabsteigen kann, um die Fragen der Kleineren und der Anfänger zu beantworten – dies ist wahrhaft der ideale Hochschullehrer, der allen gerecht werden kann.

Zum Abschluss meiner Lobrede auf Günter Stemberger muss ich noch einige ganz persönliche Erfahrungen mit „dem Stemberger“ aus den frühen siebziger Jahren berichten. Wir sind ja alle mit dem alten Strack und seiner Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch in die Judaistik hineingewachsen. Hermann Strack war der erfahrene Altmeister, der uns die erste und die uns stets begleitende Handreichung und Wegleitung zu diesem Thema gab. Eine solche Hilfe konnte wirklich nur aus der Hand eines gereiften Meisters des Faches geleistet werden, denn solche Einführungsbücher in eine Wissenschaft, kann nicht von Anfängern geschrieben werden, sondern sie brauchen das Wissen und den Überblick des erfahrenen Wissenschaftlers.

Die *Einleitung* des erfahrenen Gelehrten Strack war es, die uns jungen Nachkriegsjudaisten eine Brücke über den Abgrund der Schoah und des deutschen Mordens angeboten hatte, ein wissenschaftliches Fundament aus der Zeit, da die jüdische Wissenschaft in Deutschland durch Juden wie Nichtjuden noch von den Männern mit den großen Namen betrieben wurde.

Und nun gab es plötzlich wieder eine Neuausgabe dieses vertrauten Strack – und damit meine ich vor allem die vollkommen neu gearbeitete siebente Auflage dieses judaistischen Standardwerkes. Wir im „fernen Deutschland“ haben uns gefragt, wer dieser Stemberger wohl sei, der so meisterhaft in die großen Fußstapfen des alten Strack zu treten vermochte. Gewiss musste er aus der Generation unserer Lehrer kommen, ein altgestandener Judaist. Doch woher war der so plötzlich gekommen? – man hatte damals ja noch keine Google Suchmaschine, wo man schnell nachschauen konnte, wer sich hinter diesem Namen verbirgt.

Und wie groß war dann unsere Überraschung, als wir erkannten, dass sich hier nicht unsere Lehrergeneration ans Werk gemacht hatte, sondern ein junger Wiener Forscher aus unserer eigenen Generation. Die Überraschung war perfekt. Ein judaistisches Wunderkind war geboren!

Und jetzt, wo wir Günter Stemberger alle gut kennen. Als was sollen wir ihn betrachten? Nach all dem oben Gesagten wäre die beste Charakterisierung: Günter Stemberger ist eine wandelnde Enzyklopädie. Aber lassen Sie es mich auch noch mit jüdischen Worten sagen: Günter Stemberger ist eine wandelnde Tora, denn was steht über die Tora geschrieben?

הפוך בה והפך בה דכולא בה: Drehe sie und wende sie – denn alles ist in ihr!

Ja so ist er – Günter Stemberger.

In diesem Sinne nochmals herzlichen Glückwunsch zu einem reichen Forscherleben an Ihrem 75. Geburtstag und ein aufrichtiger Dank für Ihre so wertvolle Arbeit!

Weiter so: עד מאה ועשרים!

Hebrew Bible, its Text and Meaning; Targum

Marianne Grohmann

Interpreting the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Beginning of Exile

1 Introduction: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Phenomena of Exile

“From the beginning to end, the Hebrew Bible may be considered as a series of narratives, tales, and depictions of deportation and displacement. ... the Bible is the great metanarrative of diaspora.”¹ The texts of the Hebrew Bible describing exile and diaspora form a “metanarrative” in the sense of a background narrative since, instead of a continuous historiographical account of exile, they contain several individual perspectives of this topic. The origin of many biblical texts is situated in a context of exile and migration, and they reflect the experience of displacement and wandering. The Babylonian Exile, especially, is a central myth and founding period in the Hebrew Bible.²

Whereas up to the 1980's scholars were interested primarily in historical, military, and political events during the exile and their influence on the religious institutions of Israel, present-day scholars apply an interdisciplinary approach in order to take into account sociological, anthropological, and psychological questions as well. The historical and literary research of central biblical texts such as 2 Kings 25, Jer 39 and 2 Chr 36:17–21 has been widened by the interpretation of prophetic and poetic texts like the books of Ezekiel and Lamentations which contain more indirect information regarding the beginning of exile. The social living conditions both in Judah and the exile have gained more attention in recent years. Trauma theory adds psychological perspectives.³

Aspects of diaspora studies may be applied to the interpretation of biblical texts. According to current scholarship, three general sociological criteria describe

1 Gregory Lee Cuéllar, *Voices of Marginality: Exile and Return in Second Isaiah 40–55 and the Mexican Immigrant Experience* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2008), 1.

2 Some aspects of this article have been presented in: Marianne Grohmann, “Exil – ein Narrativ der Hebräischen Bibel in Europäischen Diskursen,” in *Europa mit oder ohne Religion? II: Der Beitrag der Religion zum gegenwärtigen und künftigen Europa*, ed. Kurt Appel and Isabella Guanzini (Göttingen: V&R unipress, Vienna University Press, 2015), 95–107.

3 Cf. Brad E. Kelle, “An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Exile,” in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle, Frank R. Ames, and Jacob L. Wright (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 5–38.

diaspora: dispersion in space, homeland orientation and boundary maintenance.⁴ The sociologist Rogers Brubaker hints at the ambivalence of boundary maintenance: “Although boundary-maintenance and the preservation of identity are ordinarily emphasized, a strong counter-current emphasizes hybridity, fluidity, creolization and syncretism.”⁵ The term “diaspora” has its origin in the specific context of the scattering of the Jewish people in the Hellenistic period as the “spreading of people of Jewish origin over different countries outside Israel/Palestine.”⁶ It implies their being related to a centre, either positively in the form of a desire to return or by delimitation. Compared to “exile” this is a somewhat more neutral term for Jewish life outside Israel,⁷ and by now it has evolved beyond an exclusively Jewish context and is used for a wide variety of similar situations.

This article investigates historical and literary research of ancient texts and other sources from and about the period of the Babylonian Exile and links it with contemporary sociological and psychological debates about diaspora, displacement and migration. As a biblical example, I examine Lamentations 1: How does this text reflect the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of exile and diaspora? What can contemporary theories contribute to its interpretation? Some examples from Lamentations Rabbah add rabbinic perspectives.

2 The Babylonian Exile as a Key Period in the History of Biblical Israel

The Babylonian Exile is regarded as a key event in the history of Israel; it has influenced Jewish identity up to this day and is among the historical facts that are taken for granted by scholars of the Hebrew Bible.⁸ Rainer Albertz, for example, has ad-

4 Cf. Rogers Brubaker, “The ‘Diaspora’ Diaspora,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (2005): 5–7; for a similar, but more detailed definition see Jürgen Van Oorschot, “Das babylonische Exil: Eine Konzeption im Alten Testament, in der Historiographie und in der Kulturbegrenzung des 6. Jh. v. Chr.,” in *Kommunikation über Grenzen: Kongressband des XIII. Europäischen Kongresses für Theologie*, 21.–25. September 2008 in Wien, ed. Friedrich Schweitzer (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verl.-Haus, 2009), 245.

5 Rogers Brubaker, “The ‘Diaspora’,” 6.

6 Jörn Kiefer, *Exil und Diaspora: Begrifflichkeit und Deutungen im antiken Judentum und in der Hebräischen Bibel* (Leipzig: Evang.-Verl.-Anst., 2005), 43.

7 Cf. Joseph Dan, “Exil, II. Judentum,” in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz, Don S. Browning, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jüngel, 4th ed., vol. 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 1810.

8 Cf. van Oorschot, “Das babylonische Exil,” 233.

equately highlighted its relevance: “Of all the eras in Israel’s history, the exilic period represents the most profound caesura and the most radical change. Its significance for subsequent history can hardly be overstated.”⁹ In contrast to its historic relevance the period of time of the Babylonian Exile is relatively short: just 60 years in the sixth century B.C.E.: from the deportation of Judeans by the Neo-Babylonians in several waves (598/7, 587/6, and 582) up to the end of Babylonian rule and the beginning of Persian era under Cyrus II in 539 B.C.E.¹⁰

Since the 1960’s it has gradually become generally accepted knowledge that the exile was the decisive formative phase of the literature of Biblical Israel and that approximately half of the books of the Hebrew Bible underwent their decisive formation processes during that period.¹¹ The entire literature of the Hebrew Bible – at least in European Bible scholarship – is divided into the categories pre-exilic, exilic and post-exilic: at the same time this terminology is used to designate the periods of the history of Israel during the formation of the Hebrew Bible.

In any case, the Babylonian Exile has played a decisive part in shaping the identity of Israel: on the one hand, the loss of the country through exile constitutes a severe crisis of identity for biblical Israel, and on the other hand, a new conception of its own identity manifested in continuity with previous concepts of identity.¹² The experience of exile leads to a thorough renewal of religion and a major increase in the production of literature.¹³ Central criteria of identity and symbols creating a sense of identity, such as monotheism, the Torah, the Sabbath, promises of blessings, circumcision, and teachings on purity reached their zenith of definition during the period of exile.¹⁴

The exile marked the beginning of the scattering of the people of Israel among the nations, an experience primarily marked by suffering, even up to

9 Rainer Albertz, *Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), 1.

10 Cf. Rainer Albertz, *Die Exilszeit: 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001), 11; Jürgen van Oorschot, “Das babylonische Exil,” 234.

11 Cf. Rainer Albertz, *Die Exilszeit*, 7; Brad E. Kelle, “An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Exil,” 5.

12 Cf. Marianne Grohmann, “Diskontinuität und Kontinuität in alttestamentlichen Identitätskonzepten,” in *Religionsgemeinschaft und Identität: Prozesse jüdischer und christlicher Identitätsbildung im Rahmen der Antike*, ed. Markus Öhler (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2013), 17–42, 30–31.

13 Cf. Rainer Albertz, *Die Exilszeit*, 11.

14 Cf. Thomas Podella, “Reinheit II: Altes Testament,” in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Müller et al., vol. 28 (Berlin et al.: De Gruyter, 1997), 481–482.

this day. At the same time, the ensuing opening towards the nations paved the way for the subsequent emergence of Christianity.¹⁵

3 Availability of Historical Sources

Further investigation into this era shows that the available texts, socio-historical and archaeological source materials do not allow us to draw a clear picture. Our knowledge of the specific living conditions in Judah and Babylon in the sixth century B.C.E. is quite limited.¹⁶ Furthermore, the dating of sources defies accurate delimitation. The Hebrew Bible preserves both descriptions of events in Jerusalem and a rich literary production from the time of the Babylonian Exile. The texts reflect an interaction of perspectives of the people in Jerusalem and those in exile. They were subject to comprehensive revision during the subsequent period of restoration under Persian rule, an aspect which has considerable influence on the narrative.¹⁷

3.1 Archaeological Sources

Extra-biblical sources are rather scarce with respect to the sixth century B.C.E.¹⁸ Archaeological research on Judah in the middle of the sixth century conveys the picture of a self-sufficient rural society with little new building activity. The settlement area covered the central parts of Judah, particularly north of Jerusalem, e. g. around Tell en-Naşbeh (Biblical Mizpah in Benjamin, approximately 12 km northwest of Jerusalem). There is no evidence of a clear break in the material culture but there is evidence of obvious decay and slow renewal amid altered

15 Cf. Rudolf Mosis, “Das Babylonische Exil Israels in der Sicht christlicher Exegese,” in *Exil – Diaspora – Rückkehr: Zum theologischen Gespräch zwischen Juden und Christen*, ed. R. Mosis (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1978), 59–60.

16 Cf. Eric Meyers, “Exile and Restoration in Light of Recent Archaeology and Demographic Studies,” in *Exile and Restoration Revisited: Essays on the Babylonian and Persian Periods in Memory of Peter R. Ackroyd*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers, Lester L. Grabbe, and Deidre N. Fulton (London, New York: Clark, 2009), 166–167.

17 Cf. Peter Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1968); Peter Ackroyd, *Israel under Babylon and Persia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970); Brad E. Kelle, “An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Exile,” 7.

18 Cf. Rainer Kessler, *Sozialgeschichte des Alten Israel: Eine Einführung*. 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008), 131; Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 190.

circumstances.¹⁹ According to current archaeological research, the inhabited area of Jerusalem and surroundings covered 1,000 dunams of land at the end of the Iron Age, however at the beginning of the Persian era it was only 110 dunams. During the period of the exile the population dropped from 25,000 to 2,750 people, a decline of 89 per cent.²⁰ At the same time, the population drain in Benjamin was significantly lower with 56.5 per cent.²¹ The archaeological findings show traces of destruction in major cities in Judah, e.g. Lachish, Ramat Rahel, Beth Shemesh during the last years of the Kingdom (597–581 B.C.E.), thus matching biblical accounts. Most of the texts in cuneiform script from this period were written in other places outside Judah.²²

The portrayal of the major turning point and disaster scenario as we find it in the examples from Lam 1 and in other biblical descriptions of the exile (2 Kings 24–25; see also Jer 39; 51; 2 Chr 36:17–21) is only partially reflected by archaeological research. Archaeologists regard the sixth century B.C.E. as a period of transition from the Iron Age to the period of Persian rule.²³

3.2 Texts of the Hebrew Bible

There is no continuous historiographical account of the exile in the Hebrew Bible, but individual texts describe aspects of the experience of exile from different perspectives: The intention of the books of Ezekiel, Lamentations and Daniel is not to shed light on the historical background of the period of exile, but they indirectly contribute information in poetic and literary language. 2 Kings 25 (see also Jer 39; 51) describes the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E. and the deserted land where only the poorest people remain.

2 Chr 36:21 describes the land lying desolate for a period of 70 years:²⁴ “for as long as she [the land] lay desolate she kept Sabbath (*šbt*) to fulfil threescore and ten [70] years.” Even though texts like this one describing the Sabbaths of the land convey the image of a desolate and depopulated land, this conception

19 Cf. Kirsi Valkama, “What Do Archaeological Remains Reveal of the Settlements in Judah during the Mid-Sixth Century B.C.E.?,” in *The Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel and its Historical Contexts*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, and Christoph Levin (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 58–59.

20 Cf. Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 262, 270; Eric Meyers, “Exile and Restoration in Light of Recent Archaeology and Demographic Studies,” 167.

21 Cf. Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 270, Table 4.3.

22 Cf. Brad E. Kelle, “An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Exile,” 9–10.

23 Cf. *ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*, 8–9.

was regarded as a myth or fiction²⁵ as early as the 1950's as there is no archaeological evidence to support it. Thus, there is a general consensus nowadays that the image of the "desolate country" does not align with the reality of the sixth century B.C.E.; even during the period of exile, part of the Judean population remained in the land.²⁶

The texts of the Hebrew Bible represent a wide variety of literary genres – tales, reports, prophetic interpretations of history, prayers, lamentations – which are not in chronological order. We have knowledge of certain events at the beginning and at the end of the exile, but we know very little about what happened in between. "Thus the period of the exile constitutes a wide open gap like a dark hole in the history of YHWH with his people with just a few spotlights shedding a little light on this period."²⁷

The texts of the Hebrew Bible contain different conceptions of exile: exile as a lost opportunity of salvation (Jer 39–43), as a (temporary) end of history (2 Kings 24–25) and as a Sabbath of the land (2 Chr 36:21).²⁸ The Hebrew Bible uses a varied terminology to designate the phenomena of migration, flight, displacement, deportation, and exile.²⁹ There are texts in which exile is cast in a negative light, whereas other texts regard exile as a "chance for survival, point zero and new start."³⁰ Narrative texts like the book of Daniel and later works including some deuterocanonical books (3 Esdras, Tobit, Judith) fill gaps of information on the exile with their own tales.³¹ The book of Esther is an example of Jewish life in the diaspora with a willingness to accept assimilation.³²

At this point, I would like to examine a specific text more closely as an example, namely Lam 1.

25 Cf. Antje Labahn, "Trauern als Bewältigung der Vergangenheit zur Gestaltung der Zukunft: Bemerkungen zur anthropologischen Theologie der Klagelieder," *Vetus Testamentum* 52 (2002): 515.

26 Cf. Eric Meyers, "Exile and Restoration in Light of Recent Archaeology and Demographic Studies," 169.

27 Rainer Albertz, *Die Exilszeit*, 13.

28 Cf. Ibid., 13–22.

29 Cf. Jörn Kiefer, *Exil und Diaspora*, 226–227; Jürgen van Oorschot, "Das babylonische Exil," 236.

30 Cf. Jörn Kiefer, *Exil und Diaspora*, 692.

31 Cf. Rainer Albertz, *Die Exilszeit*, 23–40.

32 Cf. Shemaryahu Talmon, "'Exil' und 'Rückkehr' in der Ideenwelt des Alten Testaments," in *Exil – Diaspora – Rückkehr: Zum theologischen Gespräch zwischen Juden und Christen*, ed. Rudolf Mosis (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verl., 1978): 31–54, 47–48.

4 Interpreting Lamentations 1: Exegetical, Sociological and Psychological Perspectives

4.1 Introduction

Lam 1 refers directly to the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of part of its inhabitants into exile in 587 B.C.E. The song is an anonymous text, a literary artefact, an acrostic in 22 strophes. The situation in the city is described from the perspective of people who have remained in Jerusalem, but time and again turn their eyes to those who have been deported. Many commentators argue that this text was written immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, because it describes the happenings in a shocking way.³³ On the other hand, this can be the effect of conscious literary and stylistic decisions from a later era. As there is no indication of a return to Jerusalem, the period of composition of Lam 1 might be limited to the years 580–550 B.C.E.³⁴ The laments might have been used in public mourning, either in Jerusalem at the site of the destroyed temple (cf. Jer 41:5) or in the rural areas around Jerusalem.³⁵ The language of trauma and shock, revealing profound emotional connection to Jerusalem, and the lack of any hope or return argue for the exilic origin of the text. That the text is a highly sophisticated acrostic might argue for the same, that it was not created immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem but rather in exile. Lam 1 is written from the perspective of people who stayed in the destroyed city, but switches to the angle of the exiles from time to time.

First I will investigate the formal shaping and the genre of Lam 1:

In the first part of the song, v. 1–11, an external voice describes the situation in Jerusalem. The city is personified in different social roles, as lonely widow, former princess, now a slave, a mother bereaved of her children, a lamenting, mourning woman, a woman whose lovers and friends have abandoned her.³⁶ Adele Berlin tries to “translate” these metaphors: “The woman betrayed by her lovers is the country betrayed by its allies; the mother mourning the loss of

³³ Cf. Ulrich Berges, *Klagelieder*, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2002), 72.

³⁴ Cf. Klaus Koenen, *Klagelieder (Threni)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2014), 30.

³⁵ Cf. Christl M. Maier, “Lost space and revived memory. From Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. to New Orleans in 2009,” in *Interpreting Exile* (wie Anm. 3), 191.

³⁶ See Adele Berlin, *Lamentations: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 47: “Here a kaleidoscope of images turns quickly from a lonely widow, to a degraded princess, to a whore, to a rape victim, to a betrayed lover, to an abandoned wife.”

her children is the city lamenting the exile of her citizens; the sexual violation of the woman-city is the religious violation of the temple precincts; the sexual sin of immorality is the religious sin of idolatry.”³⁷ The first part of Lam 1 features the external voice of a narrator; we find in v. 9c and 11c the voice of Jerusalem herself inserted twice along with an appeal to God.

In the second part, v. 12–22, we discern the voice of Jerusalem herself, a lamentation of the city. In this speech about her in third person singular in v. 1–18a, we find two insertions the other way round: Jerusalem herself speaks in first person singular and addresses in v. 12 כָּל-עֹבְרֵי דָרֶךְ (“all, who pass by on the way”) and in v. 18 כָּל-עַמִּים (“all nations”). In v. 20–22 the song of Jerusalem finds its climax in a prayer, an appeal to God, introduced by: רֵאֵה יְהוָה (“See, YHWH”).

Lam 1 uses at least three different literary patterns and combines them into a unique creation:

(1) a city lament: the mourning about the downfall of a city – a literary genre that is well-known in the ancient Near East from the nineteenth century B.C.E., e.g. mourning about the downfall of Ur, (2) a dirge/keening: a lament for the dead (Lam 1:11c–16.18–22)³⁸ and (3) elements of the Psalms in the lament of a single person or of the whole people.

The personification of the city renders the destruction of Jerusalem more dramatic and personal. The titles רְבָה and שְׂרָה for Jerusalem are titles that are ascribed to goddesses in the ancient Near East.³⁹ City goddesses mourning about the loss of their cities, the temple and the people, are well known in Mesopotamia.⁴⁰ Aside from these personifications of the whole city, many groups of inhabitants of Jerusalem are mentioned in Lam 1: כֹּהֲנִים (“priests”) in v. 4.19, בָּתוּלוֹת (“young women”) in v. 4.18, עוֹלָלִים (“babies”) in v. 5, שְׂרִים (“princes”) in v. 6, בָּחוּרִים (“young men”) in v. 15.18, בָּנִים (“children/sons”) in v. 16 and זִקְנִים (“the elderly”) in v. 19.

The female personification of Jerusalem embodies a human collective and a space at the same time, that is, the inhabitants as well as the gates, buildings, and streets of the city. The name Zion traditionally stands for God’s elected place, the mountain on which the main sanctuary is located. The title *Daughter Zion* creates a relationship between the space, its population, and God.⁴¹

The following interpretation of Lam 1 applies some of the sociological and psychological approaches to the biblical text and its rabbinic interpretation.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Cf. Hedwig Jahnow, *Das hebräische Leichenlied im Rahmen der Völkerdichtung* (Gießen: Töpelmann, 1923), 174.

³⁹ Cf. Ulrich Berges, *Klagelieder*, 54–55.

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 63.

⁴¹ Maier, “Lost Space and revived memory,” 192.

4.2 Dispersion in Space

גָּלְתָהּ יְהוּדָה מֵעֲנִי וּמִרֵּב עֲבָדָה
הִיא יֹשֶׁבֶת בְּגוֹיִם לֹא מִצָּאָה מְנוּחַ
כָּל־רֹדְפֶיהָ הִשִּׁיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים

Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude;
she lives now among the nations, and finds no resting place;
her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress. (Lam 1:3) (NRS)

“Judah has gone into exile” – this is described in a verbal form of the root גלה (*glh*) from which *gôlāh* is derived. Going into exile is described as an active process although it never describes a voluntary departure. Judah, personified as a woman, is seen both as a state and as a population. “She lives now among the nations, and finds no resting place” is another description of the circumstances of exile. The root גלה (*glh*) has a broad spectrum of meanings – to denude, to open, to go away, to emigrate, to be deported, to go into exile⁴² –, and the noun *gôlāh* designates the *group* of deported, exiled, or banished persons, the community in exile collectively, and the *process* of deportation, banishing, removal, or leading into exile⁴³ as well as subsequently also the *place* or *condition* of exile.⁴⁴ The situation of those in exile is described as suffering (עני) and distress (מצרים), indicating the difficult social living conditions.

4.3 Social Living Conditions after the Destruction of Jerusalem

One of the social effects of exile is the diminishment of resources and security.⁴⁵ The situation of those who remained in Jerusalem after the destruction of the city in 587 B.C.E. is described as follows:

כָּל־עֲמָה נֶאֱנָחִים מִבְּקָשִׁים לֶחֶם
נִתְּנוּ מִחֲמוּדֵיהֶם
בְּאֶכָל לְהָשִׁיב נַפְשׁ

⁴² Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, vol. 1, 18th ed. (Berlin et al.: Springer, 2007), 215–216.

⁴³ Ibid., 206.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 95.

⁴⁵ Cf. Richard Ames, “The Cascading Effects of Exile: From Diminished Resources to New Identities,” in *Interpreting Exile* (wie Anm 3), 175–176.

All her people groan as they search for bread;
 they trade their treasures
 for food to revive their strength. (Lam 1:11) (NRS)

These descriptions of dire need, hunger and problems with food supply are in contradiction with texts such as Jer 39–40, which are intended to convey hope for a new beginning. One explanation may be that immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, supplies in the city was obviously scarcer than in rural areas and during subsequent periods.⁴⁶

In Lam 1:16–20, the children and very young people are described as being affected in particular by captivity, violence, and death – also a general experience in situations of exile. However, a list of all population groups mentioned in the book of Lamentations shows that it was not only the weakest that suffered. It reveals a diverse picture of the urban population including some or even all strata and groups of society.⁴⁷ This image differs from 2 Kings 24–25 and Jer 39, where we are told that only the socially weak groups stayed in the country: They could reflect the perspective of the exiled in Babylon who understood themselves as elite looking down on the people that stayed in the land. The text describes the state of emergency after the destruction of Jerusalem and the sending of its inhabitants to exile: exile (v. 3), misery and wandering (v. 7), hunger (v. 11), murder, especially of the youngest (v. 20), slavery, captivity (v. 5.18). Corresponding to the original profane character of the lament for the dead, the suffering in the city is described as a very secular experience, caused to a large extent by humans to other humans.

Other social effects of exile are destructive behavioural patterns in crisis: The state disintegrates, violence becomes the order of the day, and the weak are further subjugated. Conflicts begun at home are continued. A widespread phenomenon is the ambiguous view of foreign rulers:⁴⁸ The “pursuers” and “affliction” are not mentioned by name but described using a varied linguistic repertory of oppression, limitation and persecution.⁴⁹ Lam 1 uses various terms for the enemies: אִיבִים (v. 2.5.9.16.21), רֹדְפִים (v. 3.6), צֹרִים (v. 5.7.10.17). What is particularly terrifying is that former friends have become enemies (Lam 1:8). The fact that the

⁴⁶ Cf. Kessler, *Sozialgeschichte des Alten Israel*, 131; Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 190.

⁴⁷ Cf. Berlin, *Lamentations*, 13–15.

⁴⁸ Cf. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, “Reading War and Trauma: Suggestions toward a Social-Psychological Exegesis of Exile and War in Biblical Texts,” in *Interpreting Exile* (wie Anm. 3), 266–267.

⁴⁹ Cf. Koenen, *Klagelieder*, 41–45.

Babylonians are not mentioned by name makes the text open to different readings at various times.

Although Lam 1 uses poetic language to mourn the destruction of Jerusalem in the style of lamentations of the destruction of cities,⁵⁰ as it is common in the ancient Near East, the text contains clues that indicate specific circumstances: Judah has gone into exile (v. 3), the city, her streets and gates are desolate and deserted, no solemn assemblies are held (v. 4), enemies are in power (v. 5.7), the own princes are weak (v. 6), the people go hungry (v. 11.19):

בְּנַפְל עָמָה בְּיָד־צָר וְאִין עֹזֵר לָהּ
רְאוּהָ צָרִים שְׂחָקוּ עַל מִשְׁבֹּתֶיהָ:

When her people fell into the hand of the foe, and there was no one to help her,
the foe looked on mocking over her downfall. (Lam 1:7b) (NRS)

Passages like this one with the “downfall”, “end” or “sabbath” (שַׁבָּת), as well as the aforementioned 2 Chr 36:21 have given rise to the image of total destruction of Jerusalem and a deserted land. “Exile is Jerusalem as a wasteland; it is the emptiness of the soul; it is to be without God.”⁵¹

At the same time, Lam 1 describes the city in great detail from the perspective of a person inside it. Thus, there is a connection between groups of the population in exile and people who remain in the city – a perspective of homeland orientation. “Afflictions” (v. 7) and “great servitude” or “hard labour” (v. 3) describe the circumstances of life. עָי is a general expression designating affliction of whatever kind: sorrow, suffering, humiliation, and oppression. It is frequently used in the Psalms (e.g. Ps 9:14), in wisdom literature (e.g. Job 10:15) but also appears in narrative texts (Gen 16:11), and is sometimes used in describing the relationship with God: God sees the affliction of the Israelites in Egypt; God cares for Israel and delivers it from misery (Exod 3:7.17).

4.4 The Trauma: From “Speechless Terror” to Collective Memory

According to trauma studies terror renders those who experience it speechless in the beginning:

⁵⁰ Albertz, *Die Exilszeit*, 127.

⁵¹ Thomas L. Thompson, *The Mythic Past: Biblical Archaeology and the Myth of Israel* (London: Basic Books, 1999), 222.

The trauma is the confrontation with an event that, in its unexpectedness or horror, cannot be placed within the schemes of prior knowledge. ... Not having been fully interpreted as it occurred, the event cannot become ... a narrative recovery that is integrated into a completed story of the past.⁵²

If this is correct, the literary style and poetic language of Lam 1 could indicate that it had not been written down immediately after the catastrophe, but later on during the process of coping with the catastrophe.

Christl Maier uses Jan Assmann's concept of "collective memory" to describe what is going on in Lam 1: "the collective memory of a group or society is the sum of ideas and knowledge gathered to establish its identity."⁵³ The destruction of Jerusalem 587 B.C.E. greatly influenced the collective memory of the city's population.

By personifying Jerusalem as female, the book generates a close relationship between the city and its population.⁵⁴ The personification of the city in the female figure of daughter Zion in Lam 1 shaped Israel's collective memory in two ways: (1) Personified Zion attests to a broken relationship between the city, its population, and God. (2) It sustains the readers' emotional connection to the space. The female figure generates hope for the survivors of the catastrophe in Judah and in exile and expectations of rebuilding the city.⁵⁵

"Verbalizing pain and telling one's story of suffering often has a cathartic and healing effect"⁵⁶ – they are an attempt at self-consolation. We find this process of collective memory, the starting point of remembering and mourning, in Lam 1:7a:

זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַם יָמֶי עֲנִיָּה וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ
כֹּל מִחֲמֻדֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִיָּמֶי קֶדֶם

Jerusalem remembers, in the days of her affliction and wandering,
all the precious things that were hers in days of old. (NRS)

According to refugee studies, living in a memorialized past is a specific quality of the post-traumatic experience. Establishing identity in the present ("who I am")

⁵² Cathy Caruth, "Introduction: Recapturing the Past," in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. Caruth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 153.

⁵³ Maier, "Lost Space and revived memory," 189.

⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 190.

⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 192.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 196.

is based on identities from the past (“who I was”).⁵⁷ We notice examples of this memorialized past in Lam 1:

In v. 1 we find this juxtaposition between the past and the present identity: from a nation full of people (רַבְּתֵי עַם/בְּגִיּוֹם) to a lonely one (אֶלְמִנָּה/בִּדָּד), from a princess among the provinces (שָׂרָהּ בַּמְּדִינֹת) to a tributary (מַס). V. 6 contrasts the former glory (הֵדָר) with the present situation of weakness (בְּלֹא כֹחַ).

5 Religious Dimensions of Exile/*gôlāh*

A major subject of debate among scholars engaging in exile and diaspora studies is whether exile should be regarded as a religious⁵⁸ or secular phenomenon. The fact that exile is generally man-made (as opposed to a result of, for example, natural disaster) and that it is a political and “secular” phenomenon⁵⁹ also holds true for the Babylonian Exile. Nevertheless, drawing a boundary between religion and the secular in this case is an anachronism: In antiquity, religion is never separate from the other spheres of life. In the Hebrew Bible, the transcendental dimension is always present. As regards antiquity, it may be more appropriate to speak about aspects of the secular and religious that, while differentiated, cannot be separated from each other:

any and all theological reflection on the exilic experience ... must first contend with the enormity of the physical, social, and psychological trauma of this experience in the life of Ancient Israel, and only then proceed to an assessment of theological themes that are part of the recovery process of a frankly heroic survival of domination in the ancient Near East.⁶⁰

57 Cf. David M. Carr, “Reading into the Gap: Refractions of Trauma in Israelite Prophecy,” in *Interpreting Exile* (wie Anm. 3), 297–299.

58 van Oorschot, “Das babylonische Exil,” 250, argues that “exile” is never a merely historical and descriptive concept but always a “political, social and religious concept creating a sense of identity.”

59 See Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed. Russell Ferguson et al. (New York: MIT Press, 1990), 358: “It is not true that the views of exile in literature and, moreover, in religion obscure what is truly horrendous: that exile is irremediably secular and unbearably historical; that it is produced by human beings for other human beings; and that, like death but without death’s ultimate mercy, it has torn millions of people from the nourishment of tradition, family and geography.”

60 Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, “Reassessing the Historical and Sociological Impact of the Babylonian Exile (597/587–539 B.C.E.),” in *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions*, ed. James M. Scott (Leiden et al.: Brill, 1997), 36.

The book of Lamentations is an example of the intertwining of “secular” and religious-theological elements: It describes the events around the *gôlāh* in very secular, almost “historical” terms. Following the example of the ritualized lamentation for the dead, the book of Lamentations in a figurative sense mourns the death of the city of Jerusalem. At the same time the city, personified as a woman, mourns the death of her children. As early as 1923, the Jewish Old Testament expert Hedwig Jahnow observed that lamentation for the dead is a secular genre in the ancient Near East since as a matter of principle death is a sphere distant from God.⁶¹ In accordance with the secular character of the lamentation for the dead, the social distress in the city is largely described in exclusively secular and sober terms as being caused by humans: deportation, misery, serfdom, hunger, the threat of enemies, and murder. The situation reflects the state of emergency immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem.

The catastrophe takes on an even more harrowing dimension when God is described as its cause (v. 5.12–13). Holding deities responsible for the destruction of cities is not uncommon in the context of the ancient Near East: Sometimes the tutelary goddess of a city cannot protect it, because other, higher gods decided to destroy it.

The religious dimension comes to the fore when God is described as initiator of the disaster scenario (v. 5) and the experience of exile is shown in the context of a process of wrestling with God. The personification of the city of God has its predecessor in the Mesopotamian lamentations of the destruction of cities in which the tutelary deity of a city mourns the loss of his/her city, temple and population.⁶² Thus, e.g. in the second lamentation of the destruction of the city of Ur⁶³ shared responsibility is attributed to several deities. The city deities are not capable of protecting their city because higher-ranking deities have decided that it should be destroyed. In the Hebrew Bible, YHWH assumes both the protective and destructive functions. Following the example of ancient Near Eastern lamentations of the destruction of cities, God is held responsible for the destruction of the city. Unlike the ancient oriental parallels, Lam 1 regards the transgressions, offences and crimes of men as the reason why God has taken the side of the enemy: “because the Lord has made her suffer for the multitude of her transgressions” (Lam 1:5).

⁶¹ Cf. Jahnow, *Das hebräische Leichenlied*, 168 ff.

⁶² Cf. Berges, *Klagelieder*, 63.

⁶³ Cf. Otto Kaiser and Bernd Janowski, eds., *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments*, vol. 2, *Orakel, Rituale, Bau- und Votivinschriften, Lieder und Gebete* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verl.-Haus Mohn, 1986), 707.

Human misconduct and violations of the relationships within the community are contrasted with the conviction that God is righteous:

צדיק הוא יהוה כי פיהו מריתי

The Lord is in the right,
for I have rebelled against his word (Lam 1:18) (NRS)

The insight that God is righteous gives rise to the hope of being accepted again by him. It is true that, in the same way as in the Psalms of lamentation, God is held responsible for the situation of distress but at the same time the lamentation is directed to him with a prayer for help.⁶⁴ The texts express a wrestling between human responsibility vis a vis divine intervention.

ראה יהוה כי צר לי
מעיי חמרמו
נהפך לבי בקרבי
כי מרו מריתי

See, O Lord, how distressed I am;
my stomach churns,
my heart is wrung within me,
because I have been very rebellious. (Lam 1:20) (NRS)

The text oscillates between two poles: recognizing God as the originator of one's own distress, itself a logical consequence of his righteousness in the face of the people's sinfulness, and continuing to trust in God as the only one who can deliver them from distress. This tension is a defining characteristic of the Psalms. However, Lam 1 basically lacks any prospect of comfort. In the end "many sighs" are all that is left for the city that was once inhabited by people from many nations:

כִּירִבּוֹת אֲנַחְתִּי וְלִבִּי דָוִי:

For my groans are many
and my heart is faint. (Lam 1:22) (NRS)

Even though the text offers little comfort, speaking about distress may be a first step: "Jerusalem remembers" (v. 7) – the key word *זכר* is used frequently in this

⁶⁴ Cf. Klaus Koenen, Art. "Klagelieder Jeremias," in *Das wissenschaftliche Bibellexikon im Internet (WiBiLex)*, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/23640/>.

context. It describes at least the beginning of a process of remembering and lamenting in order to cope with the disaster.

In one point there is a difference in Lam 1 to these ancient Near Eastern parallels: The text holds the sins of the people responsible for God's activity. Human responsibility is one reason for the present desolation. חטא (v. 8), פשע (v. 14.22) and רעה (v. 21.22) hint at every human behaviour that separates man from God, misbehaviour towards other people, sin. Different voices reflect on the reasons for the disaster.

As in Psalms of lament, God is held responsible for the suffering, but is at the same time beseeched for help. We find the same kind of interaction: God as cause of suffering – insight into God's justice – human responsibility – adherence to God who alone can rescue one from suffering – characteristic of the Psalms, but in Lam 1 the comforting perspective is almost completely absent. Although the text does not give any comfort, at least speaking aloud can be a first step to overcome the catastrophe: "With this peculiar form of poetry, the authors obviously tried to overcome the wordless grief ..." ⁶⁵

6 *Ekha Rabbah* (LamR): Rabbinic Perspectives on Lamentations 1

Lamentations/Ekha Rabbah (or *Echa Rabbati*) is an exegetical Midrash on the book of Lamentations, dating probably from the first half of the fifth century C.E.⁶⁶ A group of *petichot* is followed by a commentary interpreting all 5 chapters of the book איכה. It is unknown whether they were written as sermons in the synagogue or constructed as literary texts from the beginning.⁶⁷ The Midrash combines the destruction of the First and Second Temple with other dramatic events like the Bar Kochba revolt.⁶⁸

The interpretation of Lam 1:3 in LamR 1:20 distinguishes between exile/*gôlāh* of Israel and the exile of the nations:

⁶⁵ Maier, "Lost Space and revived memory," 191.

⁶⁶ Cf. Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1996), 285.

⁶⁷ Cf. Marianne Grohmann, "Jüdische Psalmenexegese als Paradigma kanonischer Intertextualität," in *Der Bibelkanon in der Bibelauslegung: Beispielexegesen und Methodenreflexionen*, ed. Egbert Ballhorn and Georg Steins (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2007), 62–73.

⁶⁸ Cf. Günter Stemberger, "Reaktionen auf die Tempelzerstörung in der rabbinischen Literatur," in *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels: Geschehen – Wahrnehmung – Bewältigung*, ed. Johannes Hahn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 217.

1. A. 'Judah has gone into exile:'
- B. Do not the nations of the world go into exile?
- C. Even though they go into exile, their exile is not really an exile at all [אומות העולם אינן גולים].
- D. But for Israel, their exile really is an exile [אבל ישראל גלותם גלות].
- E. The nations of the world, who eat the bread and drink the wine of others, do not really experience exile.
- F. But the Israelites, who do not eat the bread and drink the wine of others, really do experience exile.
- G. The nations of the world, who ... travel in litters, do not really experience exile.
- H. But the Israelites, who [in poverty] go barefoot – their exile really is an exile.
- I. That is why it is said, 'Judah has gone into exile.'⁶⁹

The verb גלה is used as an active verb as in the biblical text, both for Israel and the nations. Only Israel's exile is defined as "real" exile, repeated three times with the tautological sentence: גלותם גלות. The intention of this interpretation is boundary maintenance in exile/*gōlāh*. The text does not mention a special historic period, but refers to any situation of *gōlāh*.

LamR to Lam 1:11 links this verse with Jer 52:6, describing heavy famine:

1. A. 'All her people groan as they search for bread:'
- B. 'In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was heavy on the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land' (Jer 52:6).
- C. For the people of the land there was no bread, but the disciples of sages had bread (לעם הארץ לא היה לחם, היה לתלמידי חכמים).
- D. That was in the destruction of the first temple (הדא בחרבן ראשון).
- E. But as to the destruction of the second, 'All her people groan as they search for bread.'⁷⁰

This text tries to resolve the contradiction in the biblical text between Jer 52:6 and Lam 1:11: While Lam 1:11 talks about כל עמה ("all her people") suffering from hunger, Jer 52:6 describes the famine concerning only עם הארץ ("the people of the land"). According to the rabbinic principle that there may not be any contradiction in the biblical text,⁷¹ the rabbis distinguish here between different social groups and between the destruction of the First and Second Temple: The suf-

⁶⁹ Jacob Neusner, *Lamentations Rabbah: An Analytical Translation* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 136; EkhR 1:210, Salomon Buber, ed., *Midrasch Echa Rabbati* (Wilna: Romm, 1899; Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), 62.

⁷⁰ Jacob Neusner, *Lamentations Rabba*, 159; EkhR 1:336–337; ed. Buber, 74–75.

⁷¹ Cf. Günter Stemberger, "Hermeneutik der Jüdischen Bibel," in *Hermeneutik der Jüdischen Bibel und des Alten Testaments*, ed. Stemberger and Christoph Dohmen (Stuttgart et al.: Kohlhammer, 1996), 80.

fering of עם הארץ (Jer 52:6) – in opposition to לתלמידי חכמים, the rabbinic scholars⁷² – applies to the aftermath of the destruction of the First Temple, while the more comprehensive famine of all people (Lam 1:11) applies to the suffering after the destruction of the Second Temple.

In the rabbinic explanation in LamR to Lam 1:5, at the transition to Lam 1:6, we find an aspect that can be interpreted as comfort in the situation of exile:

1. A. ‘her children have gone away, captives before the foe:’
- B. Said R. Judah, “Come and notice how much the Holy One, blessed be He, loves children.
- C. “The ten tribes went into exile [גלו], but the Presence of God [שכינה] did not go into exile. D. “Judah and Benjamin went into exile, but the Presence of God did not go into exile.
- E. “The sanhedrin went into exile, but the Presence of God did not go into exile.
- F. “The priestly watches went into exile, but the Presence of God did not go into exile.
- G. “But when the children went into exile, then the Presence of God went into exile: ‘her children have gone away, captives before the foe.’⁷³

The idea that the שכינה, the presence of God, is with the children in exile, might include a tiny aspect of comfort.

These few rabbinic examples reflect their context in the Hellenistic and Roman Diaspora and link this context with that of the Babylonian Exile.

Today it is not possible to speak about *gôlāh* in a neutral way. The distinction between *gôlāh* and *diaspora* / תפוצה marks the different connotations of dispersion in space:

In Modern Hebrew the term *tefuza* (literally: “scattering”) has been coined to designate diaspora as opposed to *galût*, the latter being associated with suffering, persecution, and despair. Diaspora, in contrast, describes a place where Jews can lead a fruitful life in a pleasant and protected environment and need not attempt to leave the country and immigrate to the land of Israel.⁷⁴

The Babylonian Exile is only the beginning of many different developments of *gôlāh* and *diaspora*.⁷⁵ Altogether, applying interdisciplinary approaches to texts about the Babylonian Exile proves useful. As the contexts of these approaches are different from those of the ancient texts, this application opens a wide spectrum of new questions.

72 Cf. Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, “Talmid Hakham,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 15:746.

73 Jacob Neusner, *Lamentations Rabba*, 145; Salomon Buber, *Midrasch Echa Rabbati*, 69.

74 Joseph Dan, “Diaspora, II. Jüdische Diaspora,” in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz, Don S. Browning, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jüngel, 4th ed., vol. 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 829.

75 Cf. Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, “Galut,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 7:275–294.

Corrado Martone

From Chaos to Coherence and Back: Some Thoughts on the Phenomenon of Harmonization in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls

1 Introduction

Harmonization is a well-known phenomenon in the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, from the point of view of both higher and lower criticism. As an aside, I will add that, as far as I know, it is a phenomenon to be found only in the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, as it is unheard-of for other textual traditions, even though on this point I do hope to be corrected. Since the key to good textual work is, ultimately, common sense, as A. E. Housman put it,¹ I would like to offer no more than a few observations on this point.

Emanuel Tov defines the phenomenon of harmonization as follows: “Scribes adapted many elements in the text to other details in the same verse, in the immediate context or in a similar one, in the same book and in parallel sections elsewhere in the Bible.”² Elsewhere, Tov says that “[t]he different types of textual harmonization have in common the fact that they bring elements of the text into harmony with each other.”³ In my opinion, we can be certain in this conclusion only when we have a clearly traceable history for a given text, which is not always the case for the Hebrew Bible.

This paper addresses the question of whether it is possible to be sure that a difficult text is more ancient (or original) than a clear one; by difficult, I mean a contradictory text as opposed to one with consistent reasoning. In other words, my point is to ascertain whether a narrative that shows a logical chain of events, is to be viewed as less ancient (or original) than a contradictory one. What if the

1 See P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 19, quoting the well-known work by Alfred Edward Housman, “The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism,” *Proceedings of the Classical Association* 18 (1922): 67–84.

2 Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2001), 261.

3 Emanuel Tov, “The Nature and Background of Harmonizations in Biblical Manuscripts,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 10 (1985): 3.

accidents of textual history have made some texts more difficult and contradictory over the centuries?⁴

Examples will be given from the biblical and so-called parabiblical literature from Qumran as well as from other forms of Second Temple exegetical literature. Such examples will help determine the degree to which it is possible to discover the remains of more ancient text-forms in allegedly harmonistic passages.

2 A Few Examples

I would like to begin with an example in which no Qumran text is involved, thus we will have to rely solely on our judgment or on our common sense.

Prov 15:20

MT

בֶּן חָכָם יִשְׂמַח־אָב וּבֶן כְּסִיל אֶת־אִמּוֹ:

A wise son makes a glad father, a fool scorns his mother.

LXX

υἱὸς σοφὸς εὐφραίνει πατέρα, υἱὸς δὲ ἄφρων μυσκτηρίζει μητέρα αὐτοῦ.

A wise son gladdens his father, but a foolish son scorns his mother

Medieval Hebrew MSS

בן חכם ישמח-אב ובן כסיל בזה אימו

A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son scorns his mother

In the second hemistich the Hebrew reads “a foolish *man*.” The LXX and some medieval Hebrew manuscripts read “foolish *son*” which most commentaries on Proverbs consider a harmonization of the expression here to the more familiar form of Prov 10:1: “A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.”⁵

In my opinion such a judgment betrays a more or less unconscious tendency to consider the MT as more ancient and more reliable, not to say more original. So any difference from it has to be explained somehow. In fact, if we consider these three texts *per se*, we see that the Hebrew text handed down by the medieval manuscripts and reflected in the LXX is no doubt a better text than the one handed down in the MT as far as parallelism, style, grammar and so on are concerned. I have said a “better text,” but I could say a more harmonious text. Harmonious does not mean harmonistic.

⁴ See also Corrado Martone, “Authority and Text in the Temple Scroll,” *Henoch* 36 (2014): 21–34.

⁵ See Roland E. Murphy, *Proverbs* (Dallas: Word, 1998), *ad loc.*

Another interesting example is 2 Chr 22:2, where we read that “Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king.” This verse is innocuous in itself, but it has some problems if we consider that in the preceding verses we are told that Ahaziah was made king right after the death of his father, who died at 40. This means that, according to this narrative, the son is older than his own father, since the former becomes king at 42 and the latter dies at 40. In this case, the book of Kings comes to our assistance with some more reliable figures: the father dies at 40 and his son is made king at 22.⁶

I give this example because we see here that the rules of harmonization, if rigidly applied, may be misleading. In fact, if we had to rigidly apply these rules we would have to consider the data of Chronicles original and the data handed down in the book of Kings a harmonization.

* * *

Up to now, we have seen a couple of examples; in these Qumran evidence could not help us understand the development of the text. Now, I turn to a manuscript from Qumran, 11QPs^a. Psalm 145 is an acrostic, each verse beginning with a successive letter of the alphabet; the nun verse is missing in the MT, but there is a nun verse in 11QPs^a 17:2–4:⁷

Psalm 145, 13–14

13 מְלִכּוּתֶיךָ מְלִכּוּת כָּל־עֲלָמִים וְיִמְמֶשֶׁלְתֶּךָ בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדָר:
14 סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנִּפְלְאִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכַּפּוּפִּים:

11QPs^a 17:1–5:

(Ps 145:13) ... 1 מְלִכּוּתֶיךָ מְלִכּוּת כָּל עוֹלָמִים וּמִמְשַׁלְתֶּיךָ 2 בְּכֹל דּוֹר וְדוֹר בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד (Ps 145:13b) נֶאֱמַן 3 אֱלֹהִים בְּדַבְּרֵיוֹ וְחִסִּיד בְּכֹל מַעֲשָׂיו בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה וּבְרוּךְ 4 שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד (Ps 145:14) סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכֹל הַנִּפְלְאִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכֹל הַכַּפּוּפִּים 5 הַכַּפּוּפִּים בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד (Ps 145:13) Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion 2 endures throughout all generations. Blessed be the LORD and blessed be his name forever and ever. 3 (Ps 145:13b) God is faithful in his words, and gracious in all his deeds. Blessed be the LORD and blessed be his name forever and ever. 14 The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down. Blessed be the Lord and blessed be his name forever and ever.

6 Jacob M. Myers, *II Chronicles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 125.

7 Qumran texts' transcriptions are taken from Emanuel Tov and Donald W. Parry, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, parts 1–6 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004–2005); translations are taken from Michael O. Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Ed Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996).

As George Brooke has pointed out: “It may be that a Qumran scribe has created the verse to fill an obvious gap, but it is more likely that the reading represents what originally stood in the Psalm.”⁸ Again, without a clear picture of the history of a given text, both from the perspective of higher and lower criticism, the reliability of the principle of harmonization is cast into doubt.

* * *

One could argue that there is no scholarly consensus on labelling 11QPs^a as a biblical manuscript, thus I turn to a biblical manuscript from Qumran, that is 4QJoshua^a, a text dating back to about 100 B.C.E. This is unanimously considered to be a biblical Qumran manuscript. There, we find the end of chapter 8 of the MT put right before the beginning of chapter 5:⁹

Josh 4[8-]:34–35; 5:x, 4QJosh^a, col. I: fragments 1–2

1 [בספר] התורה לא היה דבר מכל צוה משה [את יהושוע אשר לא קרא יהושע נגד כל 2 [האנשים העברים] את הירד[ן] והנשים והטף והג[ר] ההולך בקרבם אחר אשר נתקו [...] 3 [...] את ספר התורה אחר כן [...] נושאי הארון [...] 4 [...] בעת [ההיא אמר יהוה אליהש[ע] ש[ה] לך חרבות צרים 5 [ושוב מל את בני ישראל ייעש] לני[י]השע ח[רבות צר]ים וימל את בני ישראל אל 6 [גבעת הערלות וזה הדבר אשר מל יהושע כ]ל [העם היצא ממצרים הזכרים כל 7 אנשי המלחמה מתו במדבר בדרך בצאתם ממצרים כ]י [...]]

34 [After this he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, just as it is written in the book of] the [l]aw. 35 There was not a word of all Moses commanded [Jo]shua which Joshua did not read before all [...] the Jorda[n,9 and] the women and children, and the stra[n]gers living among them. 5X After they had removed [their feet from the Jordan, ...] the book of the law. After that, the arkbearers [...] 5:2 At t[hat] [time] the Lord said to Josh[ua], “Ma[k]e yourself flint knives, and again circumcise the children of Israel.” 3 So Jo[shua] [made flint] kn[ives] for [himself, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. 4 And this is the reason why Joshua had them circumcised: a]ll [the people who had come out of Egypt, all the males of military age, had died in the desert along the way, after leaving] E[gypt].

In other words, in this manuscript, the building of the altar and the Torah reading come first, and circumcision and the conquest follow, in a more logical sequence than that given in the MT. And it is worth noting that Josephus too recounts that Joshua built the altar right after crossing the Jordan.¹⁰ Before the

⁸ George J. Brooke, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (London: Routledge, 2007), 71; see also McCarter, *Textual Criticism*, 42.

⁹ Texts and translations taken from Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Martin G. Abegg, Peter W. Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1999).

¹⁰ *Ant.* 5.16–20.

Qumran discoveries, it would have been easy to contend that Josephus' rewritten Bible was harmonizing the rather difficult original text handed down in the MT. This example illustrates well that it may not always be true that a later and secondary text is necessary more logical and clearer. Incidentally, this manuscript and this sequence of the text show that the Samaritan reading of Deut 27:4 concerning the building of the first altar on the Gerizim should be retained as more ancient, and that the ideological variant is the text handed down in the MT:

וְהָיָה בְּעֶבְרַכֶּם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּקְיֻמוּ אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוָּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּהַר עִיבָל וְשַׁדַּת אֹתָם בְּשִׂיד:

So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall cover them with plaster.

וְהָיָה בְּעֶבְרַכֶּם אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּקְיֻמוּ אֶת הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוָּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּהַר גְּרִיזִים וְשַׁדַּת אֹתָם בְּשִׂיד:

And it shall be when you cross the Yaar-daan, you shall set up on Aargaareezem these stones, which I am commanding you today. And you shall coat them with lime.¹¹

Thus, given that the Samaritan Pentateuch is the harmonized (or harmonizing) text *par excellence*,¹² cases like this should make us cautious about detecting harmonizations or about regarding them as supplements to inferior or later texts.

And this leads us to the biblical or parabiblical Qumran texts that seem somehow to anticipate the text that will become the Samaritan Pentateuch. The evidence from Qumran shows that a number of alleged harmonizations of the Samaritan Pentateuch were in common use in pre-Christian times, in the library of a priestly (or *soi-disant* priestly) community. In fact, the so-called Pre-Samaritan Qumran scrolls include all the editorial additions and rearrangements found in SP, in the exact same places.¹³

To give one single example I will refer to 4QpaleoExod^m, a manuscript in which one finds a number of agreements with the text that will become the Sa-

11 Benyamin Tsedaka and Sharon Sullivan, trans., *The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah: First English Translation Compared with the Masoretic Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), *ad loc.*

12 See Sidnie White Crawford, "The Pentateuch as Found in the Pre-Samaritan Texts and 4QRe-worked Pentateuch," in *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Hanne von Weissenberg, Juha Pakkala, and Marko Marttila (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 123–136; Robert T. Anderson and Terry Giles, eds., *The Samaritan Pentateuch: An Introduction to its Origin, History, and Significance for Biblical Studies* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).

13 See Emanuel Tov, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Proximity of the Pre-Samaritan Qumran Scrolls to the SP," in *Keter Shem Tov: Essays on the Dead Sea Scrolls in Memory of Alan Crown*, ed. Shani Tzoref and Ian Young (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013), 69–98.

maritan text. Despite these similarities, it offers a different version of Exod 7:18 than the MT. In the Qumran text, as in the Samaritan Pentateuch, Moses and Aaron report God's words to the Pharaoh, as explicitly ordered by God in the preceding verses:

Exod 7:16–19 4QpaleoExod^m, col. II

3 ... [Exod 7:18a] והדגה אשר [Exod 7:18a] בתוך הַיָּאֵר תָּמוּת [ובאשׁ היאר ונלאו מצרים לשחות] Exod 7:18a 5 מִיֶּם מִן הַיָּאֵר [Exod 7:18b] [] [וילך משה ואהרן אל רעה] Exod 7:18b 6 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרִים שְׁלַח אֶלֶיךָ לְאֹמֶר [Exod 7:18b] 7 שְׁלַח אֶת עַמִּי וַיַּעֲבֹד־נִי בַמִּדְבָּר וְהִנֵּה לֹא שָׁמַעַת עַד כֹּה Exod 7:18b 8 [. כה אֹמֶר יְהוָה בְּזֹאת תֵּדַע כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי] Exod 7:18b 9 מִן [בְּכֹה] בְּמַטֵּה אֲשֶׁר [בידי על המים אשר ביאר ונהפכו לדם] Exod 7:18b 10 [.] Exod 7:18b 11 מִן [צִיִּים לְשׁוֹן] תוֹת מִיִּם מִן הַיָּאֵר [Exod 7:18b] [] [] 7:19

[“And the fish that are] in the mi[dst] the Nile shall die, [and the Nile shall stink; and] the Egyptians shall weary of drinking water from the Nile.”] [And Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh] and [s]aid to him, “The Lo[r]d God of the Hebrews sent us to you, saying,] ‘Let my people go that [they] may serve [me in the wilderness.’ And behold, you have not listened until now.] Thus the Lord said: By [this you shall know that I am the Lord: behold I am] s[trikin]g [the water which is in the Nile] with the rod that [is in my hand and it shall be turned to blood] and [the f]ish that are in the mi[dst] of the Nile shall die and the river shall stink and the] E[gy]ptians [shall weary] of dri[n]king water from the Nile.

I have spoken in terms of a different version, handed down by 4QpaleoExod^m and not of a harmonization or of an embellishment because these latter terms somehow confer a leading position to the MT. Prior to the discovery of the Qumran texts, it was customary to label cases such as this as harmonizations inserted in a later text for any number of possible reasons. Now, the evidence from Qumran allows for different explanations and the repetition here may well witness to a more ancient or archaic form of the text. In sum, the discovery of a much more ancient text confirming a much later one turned the tables.

The same may be said of another passage in a non-biblical text, 4Q158 (4QRP^a) 7–8 1–3.¹⁴

4Q158 (4QRP^a) 7–8 1–3.

Deut 5:30 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵךְ אֹמֶר לְהֵמָּה שׁוּבוּ לְכֻמָּה לְאֶהֱלִיכֶמָּה 31 וְאֵת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תִּלְמְדֵם וַעֲשׂוּ בְּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁרְךָ אֲנוּכִי נֹתֵן לְהֵמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ 5 וַיֵּשׁוּבוּ הָעָם אִישׁ לְאֶהֱלֹיו וַיַּעֲמֹד מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי

Deut 5:30 And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Go say to them, ‘Return to [your tents.]’ 4. 31 and the ordinances that you shall teach them, so that they may do them in the land that[I am giving to them for an inheritance]. 5. So the people returned, each one to his tent, and Moses stood before...

¹⁴ See Tov, “Harmonizations,” 7.

After the command in Deut 5:30, “Go and say to them, Return to your tents” (4Q158 [4QRP^a], 7–8 1–3), and after 5:31 (not preserved in 4Q158) “But you, stand here by me...,” the Qumran document (1.5) reads: “And the people returned, everyone to his tents, and Moses stood before ...” Again, to consider line 5 a harmonization based on the command in 5:30 is tantamount to conferring a leading position to the MT. A leading position that, as we know now, did not belong to the MT in Second Temple times.¹⁵

Another non-biblical scroll from Qumran usually considered a harmonizing text is the Temple Scroll. In view of the above considerations, we might entertain a different perspective based on the presupposition that we cannot always verify that a difficult text is more ancient (or original) than a clear one.

I realize that this theory bears the burden of proof, and I will try to demonstrate it by approaching it the other way round, starting from the biblical text. If we compare Deut 17:5:¹⁶

וְהוֹצֵאתָ אֶת־הָאִישׁ הַהוּא אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַהִוא אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה אֶל־עֵינֶיךָ אֶת־הָאִישׁ אוֹ
אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה וּסְקִלְתֶם בָּאֲבָנִים וּמָתוּ

then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed, to your gates,
that is, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death.

with 11QT 55:20 – 21:

... והוצאתה 21 את האיש ההוא או את האשה ההיא וסקלתמה באבנים

then you shall bring forth 21. that man or woman, and you shall stone them with stones

and LXX Deut 17:5:

καὶ ἐξάξεις τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκεῖνον ἢ τὴν γυναῖκα ἐκείνην καὶ λιθοβολήσετε αὐτοὺς ἐν λίθοις
καὶ τελευτήσουσιν

then you shall bring out that man or that woman and stone them with stones, and they will die.

The clause אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה ... אֲשֶׁר is a later addition to the (proto)MT, while it is probable that the Temple Scroll and the LXX witness to a more ancient form of Deut 17:5.¹⁷ In other words, in this case the MT would seem to be a harmoniza-

¹⁵ See the classic work by Emanuel Tov, “A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53 (1982): 11–27.

¹⁶ See Martone, “Authority and Text,” 25–26.

¹⁷ See David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 48–49.

tion, or at least an explanation of the text of the Temple Scroll. And it might witness to a former situation of peer authority of the Temple Scroll and the text that will become the MT.¹⁸

3 Some Provisional Conclusions

In a recent study, Emanuel Tov has pointed out the strong tendency toward harmonization in the LXX of Deuteronomy.¹⁹ Tov goes as far as to contend that we must no longer consider the Samaritan Pentateuch the most harmonizing version of the biblical text, and that this label should now be assigned to the LXX, based also on a recent evaluation of textual harmonization in Genesis chapters 12–50.²⁰ In this regard, an important problem is whether these harmonizations originate in the translation or in the parent Hebrew text. Tov suggested in another study that the harmonization should be attributed to the Hebrew parent text unless the opposite can be proven. Tov's conclusion is that this seems to be the case also in the Greek text of Deuteronomy.²¹

As is well known, the *Letter of Aristeas* recounts that Demetrius asks the Jerusalem High Priest Eleazar to translate the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch into Greek.²² The High Priest had to:

dispatch men of the most exemplary lives and mature experience, skilled in matters pertaining to their Law, six in number from each tribe, in order that after the examination

18 See, *contra*, Molly Zahn, "New Voices, Ancient Words: The Temple Scroll's Reuse of the Bible," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day (New York: Clark, 2005), 435–458. Zahn sees a clear-cut hierarchical relationship between the Temple Scroll and the Torah: "if the Torah did not exist as a recognized authoritative text, TS would have no authority" (at 452), with reference to George J. Brooke, "The Temple Scroll: A Law Unto Itself?," in *Law and Religion: Essays on the Place of the Law in Israel and Early Christianity*, ed. Barnabas Lindars (Cambridge: J. Clarke, 1988), 34–43. Brooke maintains that the Temple Scroll is at the centre of the pre-canonical process in Early Judaism (at 42).

19 Emanuel Tov, "Textual Harmonizations in the Ancient Texts of Deuteronomy," in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment, in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, ed. Nili Sacher Fox, David A. Glatt-Gilad, and Michael J. Williams (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 15–28.

20 See Emanuel Tov, "Textual Harmonization in the Stories of the Patriarchs," in *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Devorah Dimant and Reinhard G. Kratz (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2013), 19–50.

21 Tov, "Textual Harmonizations."

22 On Eleazar see James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 157–167.

of the text agreed by the majority and the achievement of accuracy in the translation, we may produce an outstanding version in a manner worthy both of the contents and of your purpose. (*Letter of Aristeas* 32–33)²³

From this passage we may infer that a Temple library existed in which the Zadokite priesthood kept its sacred literature; Tov's study has shown there was a time when a harmonizing Hebrew text of the Pentateuch was part of this sacred literature and of its library. This text has survived not only in the Greek translation but also in the Qumran library, which in part constituted the library of the Zadokite priesthood. From this perspective, one might evaluate the well-known agreements between the Qumran biblical and parabiblical scrolls and the LXX²⁴ as a further connection between the Zadokite high priests and the Qumran community.

In this regard, it is interesting to note Molly Zahn's proposal to refer to the harmonization as "addition of material from elsewhere." According to Zahn, "to this category belong additions that derive their content and formulation from another scriptural text."²⁵ This is an interesting point, and though I fully agree with her formulation, I would broaden her statement to read "from another text" rather than "from another scriptural text."²⁶ Besides, I would not rule out the possibility that a number of such "additions" were created *ex novo* by the priests themselves in the Temple's library.²⁷ Much of this literature, which we call parabiblical today, is somehow the raw material on which the Zadokite priesthood worked in order to create and improve its sacred and legal literature

23 Translation by Robert J. H. Shutt in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, vol. 2, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 15. Greek text: ... ἀποστέλλαι τοὺς μάλιστα καλῶς βεβιωκότας καὶ πρεσβυτέρους ὄντας ἄνδρας, ἐμπείρους τῶν κατὰ τὸν νόμον τὸν ἑαυτῶν, ἀφ' ἑκάστης φυλῆς ἕξ, ὅπως τὸ σύμφωνον ἐκ τῶν πλειόνων ἐξετάσαντες καὶ λαβόντες τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν ἀκριβές ἀξίως καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ τῆς σῆς προαίρεσεως, θῶμεν εὐσήμεως. Quoted after André Pelletier, ed., *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate* (Paris: Cerf, 1962), *ad loc.*

24 See Emanuel Tov, "The Temple Scroll and Old Testament Textual Criticism," *Eretz Israel* 16 (1982): 100–111; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Septuagint and the Temple Scroll: Shared 'Halakhic' Variants," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: International Symposium on the Septuagint and its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings*, ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 277–297.

25 Molly Zahn, *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QRevised Pentateuch Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 17.

26 See Carr, *Formation*, 90, n. 93, where Molly Zahn's discussion of problems with the term "harmonization" is noted.

27 Émile Puech, "Qumrân et le texte de l'Ancien Testament," in *Congress Volume, Oslo 1998*, ed. André Lemaire and Magne Saebø (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 437–464.

in an ongoing process. The historical vicissitudes of the Zadokite priesthood have linked this literature to both Alexandrine Judaism and the Qumran community.²⁸

Besides, we have seen that repetitions are frequently interpreted as harmonizations and, therefore, as hints of later and reworked texts. In this regard it is worth noting that one of the greatest modern biblical scholars, Umberto Moshe David Cassuto, has written important pages on the epic character of certain passages of biblical literature, arguing that “epic poetry shows a predilection for verbal repetitions, and this phenomenon is bound up with the essential nature of the epic, which was primarily intended to be heard and not read.”²⁹ In other words, repetitions may be indicative of the ancient provenance of a text.

²⁸ See Corrado Martone, “Beyond *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis?* Some Observations on the Qumran Zadokite Priesthood,” *Henoch* 25 (2003): 267–275.

²⁹ Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1–11*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 212.

Beate Ego

Kanonizität, Dekanonisierung und Nicht-Kanonizität im jüdisch-christlichen Religionskontakt: Das Buch Tobit als Beispiel

1 Die Erforschung der jüdischen Kanongeschichte

Zu den zahlreichen Forschungsfeldern, mit denen sich der Jubilar Günter Stemberger in seinem beeindruckenden Oeuvre beschäftigt hat, gehört nicht zuletzt auch das Thema des Kanons. Sein Aufsatz „Jabne und der Kanon“, erschienen im *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie* 3 aus dem Jahre 1988, bildet dabei einen wichtigen Meilenstein der Forschung. Stemberger weist hier nachdrücklich darauf hin, dass der Begriff „Kanon“ als Bezeichnung einer fest umrissenen Größe von heiligen Büchern erst im vierten Jahrhundert n. Chr. in christlichen Überlieferungen zu finden sei; die jüdischen Überlieferungen dagegen kennen diese Begrifflichkeit nicht. So „gibt (es) keinen eindeutigen *Kanonbegriff* für das rabbinische Judentum“, vielmehr lasse sich die „Sache ‚Kanon‘ ... von Aussagen wie jenen, daß ein Buch ‚die Hände verunreinigt‘, ‚im heiligen Geist gesagt ist‘ oder ‚verborgen werden muß‘ nur sehr annähernd eingrenzen.“¹

In diesem Beitrag hat Stemberger zudem in Aufnahme älterer Arbeiten auch nachdrücklich unterstrichen, dass es eine Synode von Jabne im Anschluss an die Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels (so die These von Heinrich Graetz) niemals gegeben hat.² Die Sammlung, die wir als Kanon der Hebräischen Bibel bezeichnen, ist vielmehr in einem langsamen Prozess öffentlicher Anerkennung entstanden, wobei – ebenfalls gegen Graetz – eine antichristliche Tendenz dabei nicht festzustellen sei.³ Schließlich weist Stemberger hier auch darauf hin,

daß in der frühen rabbinischen Zeit der Einfluß der Rabbinen auf die gewöhnliche jüdische Bevölkerung wohl gering war; insbesondere auf Synagoge und Synagogenpredigt haben die Rabbinen in der Frühzeit kaum eingewirkt und erst ab dem 3. Jahrhundert sich zunehmend bemüht, hier ihren Einfluss geltend zu machen; jedoch noch lange ohne zu großen Erfolg. Was in der Synagoge gelesen wird, wird nicht von den Rabbinen bestimmt, sondern kann von

¹ Günter Stemberger, „Jabne und der Kanon“, in *Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie* 3 (1988): 173.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

ihnen nur zur Kenntnis genommen werden. Doch scheint es gerade in diesem Punkt keinen Konfliktstoff gegeben und es schon als selbstverständlich gegolten haben, welche Bücher gelesen werden durften, und welche nicht. Es gibt keinerlei Hinweise, dass ein Kanon biblischer Bücher in rabbinischer Zeit von oben her festgelegt worden ist; aber auch für frühere Zeiten ist nicht unbedingt an konkrete Einzelakte bestimmter Autoritäten zu denken. Selbstverständlich muss jemand einmal verfügt haben, welche Texte z. B. in die Tempelbibliothek als Heilige Texte aufgenommen werden; damit ist auch eine gewisse Vorgabe von oben gegeben. Gleichzeitig ist wohl mit einem Wachsen des Kanons von unten her zu rechnen, die Akzeptanz bestimmter Bücher durch das gläubige Volk als entscheidender Faktor zu betrachten. Nicht einmalige Entscheidungen, sondern ein langer Prozeß haben bewirkt, daß schließlich ein Corpus heiliger Schriften abgegrenzt war, ein Kanon vorlag.⁴

Die Thematik des Kanons hat der Autor dann in seinem Aufsatz „Entstehung und Auffassung des Kanons im rabbinischen Denken“ wieder aufgegriffen und weiter ausgeführt.⁵ Bei aller Problematik des Kanonbegriffes kann man demnach – so Stemberger – „gewiss bestimmte Kriterien angeben, um festzustellen, welche biblischen Bücher höchste religiöse Autorität genossen und allgemein im Judentum des ersten Jahrhunderts anerkannt waren“. ⁶ Besonders unterstreicht Stemberger in seinen Ausführungen hier die Tatsache, dass in der rabbinischen Welt der „inspirierte Text ... genau festgelegt (war); es ist der Text, aus dem der masoretische Text werden sollte, und kein anderer. Keine Übersetzung kann diese Würde erlangen, auch wenn man der griechischen Übersetzung einen gewissen Wert zuerkennt, insofern Griechisch die einzige Sprache ist, in die der Text der Bibel nahezu angemessen übersetzt werden kann.“⁷ Während er in seinem älteren Beitrag von 1988 dafür plädierte, dass die Diskussion um die Kanonizität mancher Bücher sich im rabbinischen Judentum noch lange Jahre fortsetzte,⁸ kommt er nun zu dem Schluss, dass zu „Beginn der rabbinischen Zeit ... schon alle Bücher, die wir als Teil des biblischen Kanons betrachten, als biblische Bücher angesehen (wurden).“⁹

4 Ibid., 173–174.

5 Günter Stemberger, „Entstehung und Auffassung des Kanons im rabbinischen Denken,“ in *Judaica Minora*, Bd. I, *Biblische Traditionen im rabbinischen Judentum* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 69–87. Zum Ganzen s. a. auch Stemberger, „Die Megillot als Festlesungen der jüdischen Liturgie,“ *Judaica Minora*, Bd. I, 234–247.

6 Stemberger, „Entstehung,“ 70.

7 Ibid., 83.

8 Stemberger, „Jabne,“ 173.

9 Stemberger, „Entstehung,“ 86.

2 Die Kanongeschichte des Tobitbuches: materiale Aspekte

Mit dem hier vorliegenden Beitrag¹⁰ möchte ich an diese Arbeiten Stembergers anknüpfen und sie in einen breiteren Kontext stellen, indem ich sie mit der Kanongeschichte des apokryphen Tobitbuches verbinde. Dieses spielt zwar in den rabbinischen Diskussionen um den „Kanon“ keine Rolle; dennoch vermag das Wissen um die Hintergründe der Entstehung des jüdischen Kanons, das wir u. a. den Forschungsarbeiten Stembergers verdanken, die konkrete Kanongeschichte des Tobitbuches zu beleuchten.

Wie allgemein bekannt, gehört das apokryphe (bzw. in katholischer Nomenklatur) deuterokanonische Tobitbuch, dessen ursprüngliche Form nach der Mehrheit der Exegeten um 200 v. Chr. in Hebräisch oder Aramäisch entstanden ist¹¹ und dessen älteste nahezu vollständige Version uns heute im sogenannten Langtext (G II) in der Handschrift des Sinaiticus vorliegt,¹² zwar zum Kanon der katholischen Kirche, es fehlt aber im jüdischen Kanon der Hebräischen Bibel und hat damit auch im protestantischen Kanon keinen Platz. Die Anfänge dieser

10 Der Beitrag stellt die überarbeitete Version eines englischen Vortrags dar, der beim International Meeting der Society of Biblical Literature in St. Andrews/Schottland im Jahre 2013 im Rahmen einer Sitzung zum „Canones – Scripture between Jews and Christians“ zum Thema „Canonization“ and „Decanonization“ gehalten wurde.

11 Zur Datierung des Werkes siehe u. a. Beate Ego, „Das Buch Tobit,“ in *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*, Bd. 6,1,2, *Einführung zu den jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit: Unterweisung in erzählender Form*, hg. Gerbern S. Oegema (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005), 130 f.; Joseph Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2003), 50–54.

12 Seit Konstantin von Tischendorffs Entdeckung des Codex Sinaiticus im Jahre 1844 sind zwei unterschiedliche griechische Versionen des Buches – ein Kurztext (G I) sowie ein Langtext (G II) – bekannt, deren Relation zueinander aber nicht eindeutig entschieden werden konnte. Diese Situation änderte sich erst durch die Entdeckung der aramäischen bzw. hebräischen Fragmente aus Qumran im Jahre 1952 (kritische Ausgabe im Jahre 1995 durch Joseph Fitzmyer; siehe Anm. unten). Da die Qumrantexte im Wesentlichen und von einigen Ausnahmen abgesehen mit der Langform (G II) übereinstimmen, liegt es nahe – so ein gewisser Forschungskonsens – dieser Textform eine zeitliche Priorität in der Überlieferung einzuräumen. Die Kurzversion (G I) lässt sich vor diesem Hintergrund als eine sekundäre Fassung beschreiben, die ihre Vorlage paraphrasiert und ggf. auch glättet. Weitere wichtige antike Überlieferungen des Textes liegen in lateinischer Sprache (*Vetus Latina* und *Vulgata*) sowie auf Syrisch vor. Zur Textgeschichte des Tobitbuches siehe ausführlich Michaela Hallermeyer, *Text und Überlieferung des Buches Tobit* (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2008); Robert Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte des Buches Tobit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1984); s. a. Christian J. Wagner, *Polyglotte Tobit-Synopse: Griechisch – Lateinisch – Syrisch – Hebräisch – Aramäisch; Mit einem Index zu den Tobit-Fragmenten vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2003), XIII–XVI.

Entwicklung liegen im Dunkeln. Die Tatsache, dass die Tobiterzählung in der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels – so der eindeutige Beleg in den Qumranhandschriften – sowohl auf Hebräisch als auch auf Aramäisch verbreitet war,¹³ zeigt zunächst ganz deutlich, dass dem Buch im ersten Jahrhundert v. Chr. der Status einer autoritativen Schrift zukam. Nicht definitiv geklärt ist das Verhältnis der hebräischen zur aramäischen Version. Mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit entstand das Buch auf Aramäisch und war in dieser Sprache auch weitaus mehr verbreitet als die hebräische Version, die dann eine Übersetzung darstellen würde.¹⁴ Ein ganz anderes Bild vermitteln dann die späteren Zeugnisse ab dem ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert, wenn das Buch definitiv nicht als kanonisch erscheint. Sie machen deutlich, dass die Tobiterzählung in den Jahrhunderten nach der Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels und der Neukonstituierung des rabbinischen Judentums wohl keine allzu große Verbreitung gefunden hat. Blicken wir auf die jüdischen Quellen, so findet sich in der Liste der biblischen Bücher bei Josephus in *Contra Apionem* I,40 kein Hinweis darauf, dass das Tobitbuch zu den heiligen Schriften gezählt wird; ebenso fehlt es in der rabbinischen Baraita bBB 14a. Ein ähnliches Bild zeigen die Zeugnisse der Kirchenväter. Bereits Origenes (185–254) weiß in seiner *Epistel an Africanus* zu berichten, dass das Buch zwar in den Kirchen gelesen wird, nicht aber von den Juden, die es auch nicht in hebräischer Sprache besitzen.¹⁵ Dies macht auf jeden Fall deutlich, dass die hebräische Version der Tobiterzählung, von deren Existenz im ersten Jahrhundert v. Chr. wir ja durch die Qumranfunde wissen, in den ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderten nicht mehr verbreitet war. Auch Hieronymus (347–420) deutet in seiner Vorrede zu seiner lateinischen Übersetzung des Werkes, die wohl im ersten Jahrzehnt des fünften Jahrhunderts entstanden ist, auf diesen Umstand hin, wenn er berichtet, dass eine Person, die gut chaldäisch konnte, ihm die Vorlage der Tobiterzählung vom Aramäischen mündlich ins Hebräische übersetzt habe, woraufhin er dann sofort einem Schreiber den Text ins Lateinische diktieren habe. So habe er sein Werk an

13 Zu den Qumrantexten siehe Joseph Fitzmyer, „Tobit,“ in *Qumran Cave 4: XIV; Parabiblical Texts 2*, hg. M. Broshi u. a. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1–76, Tafeln I–X; s. a. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 8–11. Eine ältere Rekonstruktion des Textes liegt vor bei Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Geniza, der Fastenrolle und dem alten talmudischen Zitaten*, Ergänzungsband (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1994), 134–147.

14 Zum Verhältnis der aramäischen und hebräischen Textform siehe Ego, „Das Buch Tobit,“ 125–127.

15 S. Origenes, *Epistel an Africanus* 13 (PG 11, 79 f.); zum Ganzen siehe Johannes Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung des Buches Tobias in der griechisch-lateinischen Kirche der Antike und der Christenheit des Westens bis um 1600* (München: Kösel, 1969), 31–34; Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte des Buches Tobit*, 11; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 55 f.

einem einzigen Tage zu Ende gebracht.¹⁶ So wird also auf jeden Fall deutlich, dass das Buch in den ersten Jahrhunderten n. Chr. kaum mehr verbreitet war.

Darüber hinaus macht Hieronymus auch explizit deutlich, dass das Tobitbuch nicht zum jüdischen Kanon gehört und dass dies – so legt es die aktive Formulierung nahe – wohl auf eine bewusste Entscheidung der Juden zurückgehe. Denn – so Hieronymus in seiner Einleitung in die Übersetzung des Buches in der *Vulgata* – die „Hebräer scheiden das Buch aus der Liste der heiligen Schriften aus und schlagen es jenen zu, die sie Hagiographen nennen.“¹⁷

Der Wunsch der Bischöfe, das Buch Tobit ins Lateinische zu übersetzen, bringt Hieronymus auf jeden Fall in einen gewissen Zwiespalt. Das entscheidende Kriterium für seinen Widerstand, das Buch Tobit ins Lateinische zu übertragen, war das Prinzip der *Veritas Hebraica*.¹⁸ So betont er ausdrücklich, dass er der Übersetzung eines Buches, das chaldäisch geschrieben sei und das die Hebräer aus der Liste der Heiligen Schriften ausscheiden, nicht aus eigenem Antrieb („non tamen meo studio“) nachkommt, sondern nur wegen des Befehls des Heliodorus, dem Bischof von Altinum, und des Chromatius, dem Bischof von Aquileja. Denn – so erfahren wir – die Juden sehen es kritisch, dass die Christen ihren Kanon ignorieren. „Da er aber es für besser halte, dem Urteil der Pharisäer zu mißfallen und den Befehlen der Bischöfen zu gehorchen, habe er sich bemüht, wie er konnte.“¹⁹

Diese Daten, die wir über die antike Kanongeschichte des Tobitbuches wissen, bestätigen, dass der Prozess der Kanonisierung bzw. der Nicht-Aufnahme in den Kanon ein mehrdimensionales Geschehen war. Die Tatsache, dass das Tobitbuch in den ersten Jahrhunderten kaum mehr verbreitet war (und wenn, dann nur in Aramäisch) sowie die Tatsache, dass jüdischerseits mit Nachdruck die Nicht-Kanonizität des Buches vertreten wird, zeigt, dass es tatsächlich ein Zusammen-

16 Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 74 f.

17 „... librum ... Tobiae, quem Hebraei de catalogo divinarum Scripturarum secantes his quae Agiografa memorant manciparunt“; zitiert nach *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, hg. Bonifatius Fischer et al., 3. Aufl. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983), 676.

18 Zur *Veritas Hebraica* s. a. Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 82. Allgemein zur *Veritas Hebraica* siehe Eva Schulz-Flügel, „Hieronymus – Gottes Wort: Septuaginta oder ‚hebraica Veritas‘“, in *Die Septuaginta: Text, Wirkung, Rezeption*; 4. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 19.–22. Juli 2012, hg. Wolfgang Kraus und Siegfried Kreuzer in Verbindung mit Martin Meiser und Marcus Sigismund (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 747–758; vgl. hierzu auch den älteren Beitrag von Christoph Marksches, „Hieronymus und die ‚Hebraica Veritas‘ – ein Beitrag zur Archäologie des protestantischen Schriftverständnisses?“ in *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, hg. Martin Hengel und Anna Maria Schwemer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 131–181.

19 „Sed melius esse iudicans Pharisaeorum displicere iudicio et episcoporum iussibonibus deservire“, zitiert nach *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, 676. Zum Ganzen siehe Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 75–82.

wirken mehrerer Kräfte war, die für die Kanonizität bzw. Nicht-Kanonizität bestimmter Schriften verantwortlich war.

Ganz anders gestaltet sich der Kanonisierungsprozess des Buches in der Diaspora und in der christlichen Tradition: Vor dem Hintergrund der im Tobitbuch entfalteten Frömmigkeit überrascht es nicht, dass diese kleine und erbauliche Erzählung ins Griechische übersetzt und schließlich integraler Bestandteil des christlichen Septuaginta-Kanons wurde. Wahrscheinlich war es nicht zuletzt die Diasporathematik sowie die Aussage, dass all diejenigen aus dem Gottesvolk, die sich durch ihre Treue zu den Traditionen der Väter und ihr Vertrauen in Gottes Hilfe bewähren, letztendlich der göttlichen Zuwendung sicher sein dürfen. So kann das Handeln der Protagonisten geradezu als eine Art Rollenmodell für ein vorbildliches Handeln in der Diaspora aufgefasst werden. An diese Elemente konnten die frühen Christen dann sicherlich nahtlos anknüpfen und das Buch in den Septuaginta-Kanon integrieren.²⁰

Wie Johannes Gamberoni in seinem einschlägigen Werk *Die Auslegung des Buches Tobias in der griechisch-lateinischen Kirche der Antike und der Christenheit im Westen bis um 1600* deutlich gemacht hat, entsteht für das Tobitbuch durch den Prolog des Hieronymus eine paradoxe Situation, auf die das Mittelalter insgesamt keine befriedigende Antwort findet. Eine Fülle von Belegen zeigt, dass das Buch Tobit einerseits ohne Bruch und Differenzierung in verschiedenen Kanonlisten in der Reihe jener Bücher, die man als kanonisch bezeichnen kann, erscheint. Es gilt, so Gamberoni, als verbindliche Norm des gesamten Glaubens und als verbindliches Wort Gottes, das in unterschiedlichen liturgischen Situationen sowie im volkstümlichen Bereich seinen Sitz im Leben hat. Andererseits wird das Buch in eben dieser Relevanz durch das Vorwort des Hieronymus aber auch in Frage gestellt. Wenn auch die meisten Stimmen die Autorität des Tobitbuches nicht problematisierten, so waren es doch immer wieder Einzelne, die das Buch Tobit in gewisser Weise diskriminierten und sein Recht bestritten, unter die Bücher der Heiligen Schriften gezählt zu werden.²¹ All diese Diskussionen hatten auf die Praxis freilich jahrhundertlang keinen Einfluss. Dies soll sich erst um die Wende vom 15. zum 16. Jahrhundert im Gefolge von Renaissance und Humanismus än-

²⁰ Ausführlich zur Bedeutung der Tobittradition im frühen Christentum siehe Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 19–99; Martin Hengel, „Die Septuaginta als „christliche Schriftensammlung“, ihre Vorgeschichte und das Problem ihres Kanons,“ in *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum*, hg. Martin Hengel und Anna Maria Schwemer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 274.

²¹ Hierzu Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 159–195. Zum Ganzen s. a. Hengel, „Die Septuaginta,“ 227: „Der Konflikt über den Umfang des Alten Testaments in der Reformationszeit geht von den schon in der Alten Kirche frühzeitig sichtbar werdenden Aporien aus und setzt die damals aufgebrochenen – und zuletzt ungelöst gebliebenen – Auseinandersetzungen in neuer Gestalt fort.“

dern. Kritik am Inhalt des Buches wurde zum ersten Mal bei dem Freiburger Dominikaner Ambrosius Pelargus (1493/94 – 1531) laut. Dieser Humanist hatte das Buch zunächst einer eigenen Vorlesung für Wert befunden, zeigte sich dann aber – wie aus einem Brief an Erasmus von Rotterdam (ca. 1466 – 1536) hervorgeht – bald tief enttäuscht. Das Buch lasse einen kalt, sei hausbacken („jeiunus“) und vieles daran sei sehr dunkel, vor allem in der griechischen Version der Septuaginta. Auch Erasmus von Rotterdam äußerte eine ausgesprochen kritische Haltung zu diesem Buch.²² Der entscheidende Schritt, der schließlich zur De-Kanonisierung des Buches führen sollte, kam freilich von Andreas Bodenstein, genannt Karlstadt (1486 – 1541). Für ihn war der jüdische Kanon das entscheidende Kriterium dafür, ob ein Buch als kanonisch oder nicht-kanonisch zu betrachten ist. Alles andere, so die kirchliche Praxis oder die Bekanntheit des Verfassers, sei dagegen als sekundär zu erachten. Da aber auch die Apokryphen wertvolle Wahrheiten enthalten, dürfe man diese nicht verachten. Aber die Autorität dieser Wahrheiten komme nicht aus den Apokryphen selbst, sondern vielmehr weil diese Wahrheiten auch in einer der kanonischen Schriften zu finden seien.²³

Was Karlstadt in der Theorie darlegte, wurde dann von dem Drucker Johannes Knobloch in Straßburg in die Tat umgesetzt. Am 21. November 1522 brachte er eine Vulgata des Alten Testaments in insgesamt 6 Bänden heraus, wobei nun – im Gegensatz zu älteren Ausgaben – die apokryphen Bücher getrennt in dem letzten Band zusammengefasst sind. Dieser trug den Titel: „Bücher, die von den Juden nicht als kanonisch angenommen sind.“²⁴ Diese Tendenz, sich auf einen engeren Kanon zu beschränken, wurde durch das Erscheinen von hebräischen Bibeldrucken, die in dieser Zeit aus Italien kamen,²⁵ verstärkt.

Luthers Entscheidung, die Apokryphen abzutrennen und diese als „gut und nützlich zu lesen“ zu klassifizieren, war somit zu seiner Zeit sowohl theoretisch als auch praktisch vorgezeichnet und die Notwendigkeit, das Ausscheiden der Apokryphen (und damit auch des Tobitbuches) explizit zu erklären, schien sich damit zu erübrigen. Vor diesem Hintergrund liest sich freilich Luthers Vorrede von 1530 fast wie eine Apologie des Buches. So stellt er den alten Tobit nicht nur als Vorbild von Glaubenstreue, Geduld und dem Tun guter Werke dar, sondern betont auch die Kontinuität zwischen der hebräischen Dichtung der Bibel und der griechischen

²² Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 201 – 204.

²³ Zu Karlstadt siehe Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 204 – 208; vgl. hierzu auch Hans-Peter Rüger, „Karlstadt als Hebraist an der Universität zu Wittenberg,“ in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 75 (1984): 297 – 308.

²⁴ Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung*, 209.

²⁵ So wurde die erste Rabbinerbibel im Jahre 1516/17 von Daniel Bomberg in Venedig gedruckt; die zweite erschien dann im Jahre 1524/25.

Dichtung. Wenn er das Tobitbuch als Werk „eines feinen hebräischen Poeten“ beschreiben kann, „der keine leichtfertige, sondern die rechten Sachen handelt und über die Maßen christlich treibt und beschreibt“,²⁶ so deutet Luther zumindest an, dass das Buch Tobit, wenn auch auf Griechisch verfasst, doch dem Ideal der *Veritas Hebraica* zu entsprechen vermag – von den hebräischen Fragmenten, die noch Jahrhunderte lang in der Judäischen Wüste auf ihre Entdeckung harren sollten, konnte Luther nichts ahnen.

Für die katholische Kirche wurde dann, wie allgemein bekannt, die Kanonizität des Tobitbuches als Reaktion auf die Reformation im Konzil von Trient 1546 definitiv festgelegt, und es zählt fortan zu den sogenannten Deuterokanonen.²⁷

3 Das Fehlen des Tobitbuches im hebräischen Kanon

Die Tatsache, dass das Tobitbuch nicht Teil des jüdischen Kanons ist, hat in der Forschung immer wieder Überraschung hervorgerufen, verkörpert es doch – so der unbefangene Eindruck bei der Lektüre dieser Überlieferung – viele Ideale der jüdischen Frömmigkeit. An erster Stelle sind hier die Protagonisten der Handlung zu nennen, für die das „Gesetz des Mose“ eine zentrale Größe darstellt, nach der sie ihr Handeln ausrichten. Dabei ist es insbesondere die Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem (1,6 – 8 G 2) sowie das Prinzip der endogamen Heirat (7,12 G 2), die hier explizit als Konkretionen eines toratreuen Verhaltens angeführt werden.²⁸ Aber auch die Werte, die der alte Tobit seinem Sohn in seiner weisheitlichen Abschiedsrede in Tob 4 vermittelt, lassen sich ohne Weiteres in das ethische System des rabbinischen

²⁶ Vgl. das volle Zitat: „Darum ist das Buch uns Christen auch nützlich und gut zu lesen, als eines feinen hebräischen Poeten, der keine leichtfertige, sondern die rechten Sachen handelt und über die Maßen christlich treibt und beschreibt;“ zitiert nach Martin Luther, *Luthers Vorreden zur Bibel*, hg. Heinrich Bornkamm (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1983), 156 f.

²⁷ Der Begriff „deuterokanonisch“ stammt von Sixtus von Siena (1520–1569); zum Ganzen siehe Fitzmyer, Tobit, 56; *ibid.* 55 f. ein kurzer Abriss zur christlichen Kanongeschichte des Buches.

²⁸ Zur Tora-Konzeption im Tobit-Buch siehe Johannes Gamberoni, „Das ‚Gesetz des Mose‘ muss in die andere Richtung schauen im Buch Tobias,“ in *Studien zum Pentateuch: Walter Kornfeld zum 60. Geburtstag*, hg. G. Braulik u. a. (Wien, Freiburg, Basel: Herder, 1977), 227–242; siehe hierzu auch Thomas Hieke, „Endogamy in the Book of Tobit, Genesis, and Ezra-Nehemiah,“ in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology; Papers of the First International Conference on the Deuterocanonical Books, Pépa, Hungary, 20–21 May, 2004*, hg. Geza Xeravits und Joseph Zsengellér (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 103–120; Tobias Nicklas, „Marriage in the Book of Tobit: A Synoptic Approach,“ in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology*, 139–145.

schen Judentums eintragen.²⁹ Zudem ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass Barmherzigkeit und Gerechtigkeit geradezu als Leitworte der Erzählung gelten können.³⁰ Unabhängig von der Frage, ob das Tobitbuch nun im Land Israel oder in der Diaspora entstanden ist,³¹ kann man feststellen, dass Jerusalem und der Tempel in diesem Werk eine ganz wichtige Rolle spielen. Dies zeigt sowohl die bereits erwähnte Fokussierung auf das Gebot der Wallfahrt als auch die Gesamtstruktur des Buches, die eindeutig auf Jerusalem hin ausgerichtet ist: Die Zeit des Exils ist nur als eine Zeit des Interims aufgefasst, denn vor seinem Tod formuliert der alte Tobit die Hoffnung auf die Wiedererbauung des Tempels und auf die Rückkehr der Exilierten (Tob 13,10–18 G 2; 13,9–18 G 1). So ist festzustellen, dass die Thematik „Jerusalem und der Tempel“ – eingespielt als Rückblick und eschatologischer Ausblick – geradezu einen Rahmen um die eigentliche Geschichte, die in der Diaspora spielt, fungiert.

Aber nicht nur Jerusalem, auch die Zeit des Exils ist positiv konnotiert. Fern der Heimat werden die Protagonisten der Handlung Tobit, Tobias und Sara sowie deren Familien Zeugen dafür, dass Gottes Gegenwart und Hilfe auch in der Diaspora erfahrbar ist. Der Figur des Engels Rafael kommt dabei als einer Art Werkzeug Gottes eine herausragende Rolle zu.³² Die Tora, Taten der Nächstenliebe, Gottes Hilfe und Schutz, die Hoffnung auf die Erbauung Jerusalems – all dies sind die Themen, die sich problemlos in das Wertgefüge des antiken und rabbinischen Judentums einfügen lassen, und man könnte sich gut vorstellen, dass die Tobiterzählung in der Hebräischen Bibel neben dem kleinen Buch Ruth oder dem Jonabuch einen guten Platz hätte finden können.

29 Zu Tob 4 siehe Beate Ego, „Tobits weisheitliches Vermächtnis (Tob 4): Narratologische und theologische Aspekte,“ in *Weisheit als Lebensgrundlage: Festschrift für Friedrich V. Reiterer zum 65. Geburtstag*, hg. R. Egger-Wenzel, K. Schöpflin und J. Diehl (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2013), 95–122.

30 Vgl. hierzu Helmut Engel, „Auf zuverlässigen Wegen und in Gerechtigkeit: Religiöses Ethos in der Diaspora nach dem Buch Tobit,“ in *Biblische Theologie und gesellschaftlicher Wandel: FS Norbert Lohfink SJ*, hg. Georg Braulik OSB, Walter Groß und Sean McEvenue (Wien, Freiburg, Basel: Herder, 1993), 83–100.

31 Siehe hierzu den Überblick bei Beate Ego, „Das Buch Tobit,“ 130 f.; Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 52–54; vgl. hierzu jetzt auch die Problematisierung der These vom Diaspora-Hintergrund der Tobit-Erzählung bei Debora Dimant, „The Book of Tobit and the Qumran Halakhah,“ in *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran*, hg. Debora Dimant und R.G. Kratz (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 121–143.

32 Vgl. dazu Beate Ego, „Heimat in der Fremde: Zur Konstituierung einer jüdischen Identität in der Diaspora,“ in *Die Jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit in ihrem antik-jüdischen und christlichen Kontext*, hg. Hermann Lichtenberger und Gerbern Oegema (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2002), 280–293.

Der zunächst erstaunliche Sachverhalt, dass das Tobitbuch nicht zum jüdischen Kanon gehört, findet in den verschiedenen Kommentaren unterschiedliche Antworten: Die ältere Literatur verweist auf die These der Synode von Jabne, wonach eine Synode von Rabbinen in den Jahren 90 und 100 stattfand, in der die definitive Entscheidung über den Umfang des Kanons der Hebräischen Bibel gefällt wurde.³³ Ein weiterer Vorschlag, der bis heute in der Forschungsliteratur rezipiert wird, findet sich in Harry L. Orlinskys Studie „The Canonization of the Bible and the Exclusion of the Apocrypha“ aus dem Jahre 1976. Orlinsky erklärt das Fehlen des Buches im Kanon mit halakhischen Gründen, wenn er darauf verweist, dass das Tobitbuch in halakhischer Hinsicht eine nicht-pharisäische Position vertritt. So widerspreche die Tatsache, dass der Brautvater Raguel den Heiratsvertrag (Ketubba) schreibt, der rabbinischen Bestimmung, wonach die Ketubba vom Bräutigam und nicht vom Vater der Braut geschrieben werden musste. Dementsprechend kann Orlinsky formulieren:

This law, according to Shabbat 14b, was changed by Simon b. Shetaḥ (early first century B.C.E.), so that henceforth the groom (not the bride's father) wrote the document of marriage (*ketubah*, rather than *sheṭar*) and thus gave the bride greater protection. The Pharisees could not canonize the book of Tobit when its *halakhah* on marriage contradicted its own.³⁴

Eine weitere Erklärung, die direkt auf die rabbinischen Kriterien zur Kanonizität zurückgreift, wurde von Martin Hengel gegeben, der das Fehlen des Tobitbuches (sowie auch anderer Apokryphen) damit verständlich machen möchte, dass der hebräische Kanon nur Schriften enthalte, die nach der biblischen Chronologie zwischen Mose und Esra entstanden seien und die als inspiriert galten.³⁵ Bei Tobit, das mit seinem nationalen, theokratischen Charakter und der „Verherrlichung der Tora und der in ihr manifesten göttlichen Weisheit sowie ... (der) schrof(e)n Verwerfung des törichten und sittenlosen heidnischen Götzendienstes“ und der „wunderbaren Errettung des Gottesvolkes aus Unterdrückung und Kriegsnot“ eigentlich für das pharisäisch-rabbinische Judentum „akzeptabel“ gewesen wäre,

33 Zum Ganzen ausführlich siehe Carey A. Moore, *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 49–51 (mit zahlreichen Referenzen auf die ältere Forschungsliteratur).

34 Vgl. hierzu Harry L. Orlinsky, „The Canonization of the Hebrew Bible and the Exclusion of the Apocrypha,“ in *Essays in Biblical Culture and Bible Translation*, hg. Harry L. Orlinsky (New York: Ktav, 1974), 284; hier zitiert nach der Referenz bei Fitzmeyer, *Tobit*, 55. Kritisch hierzu Moore, *Tobit*, 51.

35 Hengel, „Die Septuaginta,“ 232. Zur Vorstellung vom Ende der Wirksamkeit des Heiligen Geistes seit Beginn der griechischen Herrschaft s. a. Peter Schäfer, *Die Vorstellung vom Heiligen Geist in der rabbinischen Literatur* (München: Kösel, 1982), 98 f.

habe man die späte Entstehung noch im 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr. „durchschaut“, so dass das Buch für eine Aufnahme in den Kanon letztlich dann doch nicht in Frage kam. Das Fehlen des Tobitbuches im jüdischen Kanon erscheint also deshalb plausibel, da das Buch aufgrund seiner späten Entstehung nicht als inspiriert angesehen werden konnte.³⁶

4 Fazit: Die Kanongeschichte des Buches Tobit im Rahmen jüdischer Kanonisierungsprozesse

So lässt sich im Hinblick auf diese Beobachtungen feststellen, dass hier ganz unterschiedliche Kriterien für die Kanonizität eines Buches angewendet wurden. Neben inhaltlichen Kriterien – nämlich der Distanz zur rabbinischen Halakha – spielen auch formale Kriterien, wie das Alter des Werkes oder die Sprache seiner Überlieferung, die ja wiederum eng mit der Inspiriertheit zusammenhängen, eine bedeutende Rolle.

Vor dem Hintergrund der allgemeinen Überlegungen zur Kanonizität frühjüdischer Überlieferungen lässt sich subsummierend folgendes Fazit ziehen: Die Nicht-Kanonizität des Tobitbuches ist sicherlich nicht auf eine einmalige Entscheidung, wie die einer „Synode von Jabne“ zurückzuführen, sondern ist wohl eher das Ergebnis einer längeren Entwicklung. Wenn man sich vor Augen hält, dass entscheidende Prozesse der Kanonisierung autoritativer Schriften bereits vor der Zerstörung des Tempels im Jahre 70 stattfanden und die Rabbinen anfangs gar nicht einen so großen Einfluss hatten, so verliert das Argument, das die halakhischen Unterschiede zwischen dem Tobitbuch und der rabbinischen Halakha als Grund für den Ausschluss aus dem Kanon stark macht, ein Stück weit an Gewicht. Weitaus bedeutender als solche inhaltlichen Gründe scheint vielmehr die Tatsache zu sein, dass die Erzählung auf Aramäisch tradiert wurde und aus diesem Grund wie auch aufgrund ihres relativ jungen Alters wohl auch nicht als inspiriert gelten konnte. Es mag eine Zeit gegeben haben, in der sich die Erzählung in volkstümlichen Kreisen großer Beliebtheit erfreute – für die Verlesung in der Synagoge war es aus diesen Gründen sicherlich nicht geeignet, und so ist es auch nicht verwunderlich, dass das Buch – trotz seines frommen Inhalts, der in Grundzügen dem pharisäisch-rabbinischen Denken entspricht – nicht in die Sammlung der heiligen jüdischen Schriften aufgenommen wurde. Warum sich die hebräische Form des Tobitbuches nicht durchsetzen konnte, können wir heute

³⁶ Hierzu s. a. Hengel, „Die Septuaginta,“ 254.

nicht mehr rekonstruieren; wenn es eine Rückübersetzung aus dem Aramäischen darstellt, wie man vermutet hat, so hatte es vielleicht eine geringere Dignität als andere hebräische autoritative Schriften.

Man sollte freilich die inhaltlichen Elemente auch nicht ganz marginalisieren, denn sie bildeten sicherlich in den späteren Jahrhunderten auch einen Grund, warum man – so im Falle der Gesprächspartner des Hieronymus – mit Nachdruck auf der Nichtkanonizität des Tobitbuches bestand. Auf weitere Unterschiede zwischen der Halakha im Buch Tobit und der traditionellen rabbinischen Halakha hat Debora Dimant aufmerksam gemacht. Hier ist insbesondere auf die Nähe der Opfervorschriften in Tob 1,6–8 zu verweisen, die eine klare Nähe zur Halakha aufweisen, wie man sie in den Schriften vom Toten Meer gefunden hat, sich aber eindeutig von der rabbinischen Halakha unterscheiden.³⁷ Des Weiteren sind aber auch noch andere Motive anzuführen, die im Hinblick auf eine Reserviertheit gegenüber dem Tobitbuch in rabbinischen Kreisen eine Rolle gespielt haben könnten. Wenn auch das eschatologische Potential der Erzählung durchaus mit den rabbinischen Vorstellungen verbunden werden kann, so stehen andere Elemente der rabbinischen Denkwelt doch recht ferne. In diesem Zusammenhang ist vor allem die Wunderhaftigkeit des Geschehens und die herausragende Bedeutung des Engels zu nennen. Wie Peter Schäfer in seiner Studie von 1972 „Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen“ ja deutlich gezeigt hat, haben die Rabbinen eine durchaus kritische Haltung gegenüber der Welt der Engel, und es ist die Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen, die für diese bestimmend ist.³⁸ Das positive Image des Engels Rafael lässt sich auf jeden Fall nur schwerlich mit der rabbinischen Vorstellungswelt verbinden. Auch die Tatsache, dass das Tobitbuch zwar eine nationale Zukunftshoffnung kennt, aber zumindest nicht explizit auf eine individuelle Auferstehung verweist, könnte dazu geführt haben, dass die Erzählung bei den Rabbinen auf Ressentiments stieß und sie an einer Stärkung des Buches, und sei es auf christlicher Seite, kein Interesse hatten. In jedem Falle bestätigt sich aber, dass bei Versuchen einer Rekonstruktion der Kanongeschichte eines Buches formale und materiale Aspekte mitbedacht werden müssen

³⁷ Dimant, „The Book of Tobit,“ 121–143; siehe insbesondere den ebd. Überblick 139.

³⁸ Zum Ganzen Peter Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur rabbinischen Engelsonststellung* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975).

Armin Lange

Rabbi Meir and the Severus Scroll

Günter Stemberger is one of the few scholars who are able to study rabbinic texts in the wider context of the literatures of Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity. It is my privilege to work with Günter at Vienna University's Institute for Jewish Studies. Since I came to Vienna, I have benefited much from Günter's knowledge and scholarly savvy. It is therefore a pleasure to contribute a small study to his *Festschrift* in appreciation of our cooperation and friendship.

In his huge oeuvre Günter made a few remarks on a reading of Rabbi Meir in Isa 21:11 (see below, 2.5).¹ The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's variant readings have occupied my own research for quite some time. For my contribution to Günter's *Festschrift*, I decided therefore to address a special aspect of the study of the Severus Scroll, i.e. its relation to the Torah of Rabbi Meir.

1 The Severus Scroll, Rabbi Meir's Torah, and the History of Research

The Severus Scroll (Sev) was an ancient Torah scroll which was kept in the Severus Synagogue in Rome but which has been lost since the looting of Rome by the Vandals. 33 of its variant readings toward a now lost proto-Masoretic Torah scroll (Sev^{comp}) are recorded in an ancient variant list. Four different versions of this variant list are extant: *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* on Gen 45:8 (Sev^{MBR}), folios 146 and 403 of the *Farḥi Bible* (Sev^{D146} and Sev^{D403}), and folio 399 of manuscript Hébreu 31 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Sev^P).² Elsewhere I have argued

1 Günter Stemberger, *Die römische Herrschaft im Urteil der Juden* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1983), 114.

2 For more information on the Severus Scroll, see my article "The Severus Scroll Variant List in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in "The Severus Scroll Variant List in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature; Jointly Sponsored by the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity*, 22–24 February, 2011, ed. Menahem Kister, H. L. Newman, M. Segal, and R. A. Clements (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 179–207. The Severus Scroll was subject to several studies: Abraham Epstein, "Ein von Titus nach Rom gebrachter Pentateuch-Codex und seine Varianten," *Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 34 (1885): 337–351; Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik bei den Rabbinen,"

that Sev was a proto-Masoretic scroll from the end of the Second Temple period which attested to a very limited amount orthographic and textual disagreements with the consonantal text of MT as known today.³

Rabbi Meir⁴ belonged to the third generation of Tannaim (second century C.E.). He is recognized as one of the most important Rabbis of his time and is known both for his halakhic and haggadic achievements. Rabbi Meir was a scribe by profession⁵ and various rabbinic texts mention highly respected copies of the Torah, Isaiah, and Psalms in his possession. BerR 9.5; 20:20; 94.9, *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* on Gen 45:8, and yTa'an 1.1 (64a) attest to particular variant readings which are attributed to a Torah Scroll of Rabbi Meir or his copy of Isaiah.

These readings of Rabbi Meir have been subject to surprisingly little scholarly attention⁶ and among the few existing studies which address them at all

in *Recueil des travaux rédigés en mémoire du Jubilé scientifique de Daniel Chwolson*, ed. D. Günzburg (Berlin: Calvary, 1899), 42–56; Abraham A. Harkavy, חדישים גם ישנים (Jerusalem: Karmiel, 1969–1970), 102–103; Harkavy, “Things Old and New: Memories from my Trip to Jerusalem,” *Hapigah* 1 (1895): 58–59 (Hebr.); Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1897), 410–421; Abraham M. Habermann, “ספר אורייתא דאשתכח ברומא,” in *Ketav Lashon Wa-Sefer: Reflections on Books, Dead Sea Scrolls, Language and Folklore* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1973), 166–175 (Hebr.); Moses H. Segal, “The Promulgation of the Authoritative Text of the Hebrew Bible,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 72 (1953): 35–47 (45–47); Samuel Loewinger, “ספר תורה שהיה גנוז בבית כנסת סורוס,” *Beth Mikra* 15 (1970): 237–262; Loewinger, Prolegomenon to *Das Schriftwort in der rabbinischen Literatur*, by Viktor Aptowitzer (Vienna, 1906; New York: Ktav, 1970;), vii–xlv (xxv–xxxviii); Edward Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1 Q Isa^a)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), esp. 87–89; Jonathan P. Siegel, *The Severus Scroll and 1QIsa^a* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975); Nathan Jastram, “The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir’s Torah,” in *The Text of the Hebrew Bible: From the Rabbis to the Masoretes*, ed. Lorena Miralles Maciá and Elvira Martín Contreras (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 137–145; Jastram, “2.2.5.4 Severus Scroll,” in *Textual History of the Bible*, vol. 1, *The Hebrew Bible*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2016), http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/textual-history-of-the-bible/2254-severus-scroll-COM_000718

³ See note 2 and my “The Question of the So-Called Qumran Orthography, the Severus Scroll, and the Masoretic Text,” *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 3 (2014): 424–475.

⁴ For Rabbi Meir and his life, see Naomi Goldstein Cohen, “Rabbi Meir, a Descendant of Anatolian Proselytes,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 23 (1972): 51–59; Aharon Oppenheimer and Stephen G. Wald, “Meir,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (Detroit: Macmillan Reference, 2007), 13:776–777; Galit Hasan-Rokem, “Rabbi Meir: The Illuminated and the Illuminating,” in *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, ed. Carol Bakchos; (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 227–244.

⁵ Cf. bEr 13a; bGit 67a; QohR 13a.

⁶ Nehemias Brüll, “R. Meir,” *Jahrbücher für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* 1 (1874): 235–236; Epstein, “Titus,” 342–343; Epstein, “Biblische Textkritik,” 48–49; Segal, “Promulga-

only a limited number draws some overall conclusions. Nevertheless, scholarly opinion differs widely regarding the character of Rabbi Meir's variants and the biblical texts of Rabbi Meir.

Brüll viewed the variants as a result of textual alterations made by Rabbi Meir for interpretative reasons.⁷ Other scholars think that either all five variants⁸ or at least a part of them⁹ were marginal notes in proto-Masoretic master copies in the manner of Alexandrian scholia¹⁰ and/or of homiletical character¹¹ by which Rabbi Meir collected divergent readings from different scrolls.

Shortly after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lieberman introduced the idea that Rabbi Meir might have owned proto-Masoretic scrolls but that to satisfy the demand of his customers he "copied the vulgate, the text to which the public was accustomed."¹² Rabbi Meir's scrolls were "copies of the average vulgata of the Jerusalem type."¹³ Several scholars variegated Lieberman's theory. Based on a comparison with 1QIsa^a, Kutscher thinks that Rabbi Meir possessed copies of the Bible influenced by the popular orthography vernacular texts.¹⁴ Siegel argues that the Torah scroll of Rabbi Meir reflects "some ancient Palestinian manuscript tradition" not "entirely in conformity with other texts of his day."¹⁵ Similarly, van Seeters describes the Biblical scrolls of Rabbi Meir as texts that "correspond not entirely with the MT" but rejects Lieberman's theory of vulgar texts.¹⁶

tion," 45–46; Kutscher, *Language*, 87; Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the I Century B.C.E–IV Century C.E.*, 2nd ed., ed. (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of New York, 1962), 24–25; Loewinger, *Prolegomenon*, xxxii–xxxviii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 257–263; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 43–48; Timotheus Arndt, "Zur Tora des Rabbi Me'ir: Bemerkungen zu Uwe Gießmer," *Mitteilungen und Beiträge der Forschungsstelle Judentum* 12–13 (1997): 87–91; John van Seeters, *The Edited Bible: The Curious History of the "Editor" in Biblical Criticism*, 2nd printing with corrections (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 73–76; Jastram, "The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah," 144–145.

7 Brüll, "R. Meir," 235–236.

8 Epstein, "Titus," 343; Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik," 48–49; Loewinger, *Prolegomenon*, xxxiii–xxxviii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 259–263.

9 Liebermann, *Hellenism*, 24; Segal, "Promulgation," 45 (Gen 46:23 is a real variant); Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 43 (the readings of Gen 1:31 and Isa 21:11 are such marginal annotations).

10 Loewinger, *Prolegomenon*, xxxiii–xxxviii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 259–263.

11 Segal, "Promulgation," 45.

12 Liebermann, *Hellenism*, 24–26, the quotations is on p. 25.

13 Liebermann, *Hellenism*, 26.

14 Kutscher, *Language*, 87.

15 Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 43 and 48.

16 Van Seeters, *Edited Bible*, 73–76, the quotations can be found on p. 110.

A general problem with all the models described above is that their conclusions are based on very limited evidence. With only five preserved variant readings of Rabbi Meir, of which four are from Genesis and one from Isaiah, not much can be said about the textual character of his biblical manuscript. Even the Minor Prophets scroll from Wadi Murabaat (MurXII), which is regarded by common scholarly opinion as a classic example for an early proto-Masoretic text,¹⁷ includes 23 orthographic and 28 textual variants toward the text of MT^L in 3803 preserved (partial) words. Nevertheless no one would characterize MurXII as a vulgar copy or as orthographically different from MT. It needs to be emphasized that a lack of evidence precludes almost any conclusion about the textual and orthographic character of Rabbi Meir's biblical master copies.

A special focus of the discussion about Rabbi Meir's Torah scroll was its relation to the Severus Scroll. The first one to see a parallel between the two texts was Moshe Ha-Darshan (*Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* on Gen 45:8). David Kimchi pointed to such a connection in his commentary to the book of Genesis as well (on Gen 1:31).¹⁸ In modern times, several authors have emphasized the close relationship of the Severus Scroll with Rabbi Meir's Torah¹⁹ or have even claimed that the two are identical.²⁰ Most publications though argue for a somewhat more vague relationship between the two.²¹ Burns regards Rabbi Meir's connection with the Severus scroll even as a part of Masoretic legend.²²

17 For this scroll and its textual character, see Armin Lange, *Handbuch der Textfunde vom Toten Meer*, vol. 1, *Die Handschriften biblischer Bücher von Qumran und den anderen Fundorten* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 346.

18 The Commentary of R. David Qimhi to the Pentateuch, *Perushe Radak li-Bereshit*, ed. Abraham Ginzburg (Pressburg: Schmid, 1842), 9b (Hebr.).

19 E.g., Epstein, "Titus," 346; Lieberman, "Hellenism," 25; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 113; Arndt, "Zur Tora des Rabbi Me'ir," 87.

20 E.g., Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Three Scrolls of the Law Found in the Temple Court," in *Text and Canon of the Hebrew Bible: Collected Studies* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 329–346, 330; Emanuel Tov, "The Text of the Old Testament," in *The World of the Bible*, ed. Adam S. van der Woude (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 159; Paul D. Wegner, *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods and Results* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 124; Randall Price, *Searching for the Original Bible* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2007), 56; Jonathan D. H. Norton, *Contours in the Text: Textual Variation in the Writings of Paul, Josephus, and the Yahad* (London: Clark, 2011), 113; Andreas Lehnardt, *Ta'aniyot Fasten: Übersetzt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 94, n. 11.

21 E.g. Segal, "Promulgation," 45; Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxxi; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 257; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 43.

To judge the relationship of Rabbi Meir’s Torah and the Severus Scroll properly and to understand its variant readings better I will analyze each of Rabbi Meir’s readings in detail. Afterwards it needs to be asked if these variant readings go back to a single manuscript or not. At the end of this small contribution, by way of conclusions, I will come back to the relationship of the Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir’s Torah.

2 The Variant Readings Attributed to Rabbi Meir

Before discussing and comparing the readings of the Torah of Rabbi Meir with the Severus Scroll variant list, I have to describe the principal structure of this list. Each entry²³ of the Severus Scroll variant list consists of two parts. First, the list quotes for purposes of referencing a proto-Masoretic manuscript (Sev^{Comp}), afterwards the list provides the reading of the Severus Scroll. An example is Gen 1:31:

Quotation Formula	Severus Scroll Reading	Text of Sev ^{Comp}
היה כתוב	מות	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד

This basic structure has been ignored in most if not all studies of the Severus Scroll²⁴ and has led to much confusion as to which variants were actually read by the Severus Scrolls and which by Sev^{Comp}. Only by distinguishing carefully between Sev and Sev^{Comp} can the relationship between the Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir’s Torah be reconstructed. A further requirement in studying the variant is to understand the readings attributed to Rabbi Meir in the context of the rabbinic texts which quote them.

²² Joshua Ezra Burns, “The Synagogue of Severus: Commemorating the God of the Jews in Classical Rome,” *Henoch* 37 (2015): 101–118, esp. 102–107. For a critical discussion of Burns’ argument, see below, note 56. I am obliged to Günter Stemberger who alerted me to Burns’ publication.

²³ Below I will quote the Severus Scroll variant list according to an eclectic text which I have prepared. See Lange, “The Severus Scroll Variant List.” For reasons of scholarly accountability, I will also provide a transcription of each of the four versions of the list for each entry of the list discussed below.

²⁴ My position was already accepted by Jastram (“The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir’s Torah,” 138) to whom I made a preprint copy of my article “The Severus Scroll Variant List and the Dead Sea Scrolls” available.

2.1 Gen 1:31 (BerR 9.5)

In the copy of R. Meir's Torah [Pentateuch] was found written: AND, BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY (ME'OD) GOOD: and behold, death (*maweth*) was good (והנה טוב מאד והנה טוב מות). R. Samuel b. Nahman said: I was seated on my grandfather's shoulder going up from my own town to Kefar Hana via Beth-Shean, and I heard R. Simeon b. R. Eleazar as he sat and lectured say in R. Meir's name: AND, BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY GOOD: and behold, death was good (הנה טוב והנה טוב מאד).²⁵ (BerR 9.5)

It is important to note that two different readings are attributed to Rabbi Meir in this small anecdote. Rabbi Meir would have read both מאד and מות. That both readings are noted can best be explained, if Rabbi Meir owned a Torah scroll, into whose margin he made notes about alternate readings, as argued above.

It has long been observed that the second reading can also be found in the Severus Scroll variant list.²⁶ The evidence of the textual witnesses can be summarized as follows.²⁷

Rabbi Meir according to BerR 9.5:	והנה טוב מאד והנה טוב מות
Sev ^{List} :	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד מות היה כתוב
Sev ^{MBR} :	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד
Sev ^{D146} :	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד מות היה כתיב
Sev ^{D403} :	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד מות היה כתיב
Sev ^P :	וירא אלהים את כל אשר עשה והנה טוב מאד מות היה כתוב
Sev:	מות
Sev ^{Comp} :	והנה טוב מאד
MT:	וְהָנָה טוֹב מְאֹד
SP:	והנה טוב מאד
LXX:	καὶ ἰδοὺ καλὰ ἡ λεία.
TO:	והא תקין לחדא
TPsJ:	והא טב לחדא
Tg Neof:	והא שפר ותקן לחדא
TFrag:	והא שפר ותקין לחדא
V:	et erant valde bona
P:	והנה טוב מאד

²⁵ Translation according to Harry Freedman and Maurice Simon, trans., *The Midrash Rabbah*, vol. 1, *Genesis* (London: Socino Press, 1939), 66.

²⁶ See e.g. Epstein, "Titus," 342–343; Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik," 48; Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 411; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 247.

²⁷ The abbreviations MT^{Kenn} and MT^{DeRossi} refer to the edition of Benjamin Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum hebraicum, cum variis lectionibus*, vols. I–II (Oxford: Clarendon, 1776–1780) and the variant lists of Giovanni B. de Rossi, *Variae lectiones Veteris Testamenti*, 5 vols. (Parma: Regio, 1784–1788; Amsterdam: Philo, 1969).

Although Brüll,²⁸ Bacher,²⁹ and Siegel³⁰ want to see an interpretative variant reading at work, the difference between Rabbi Meir's Torah and the Severus Scroll on the one hand and MT on the other hand is orthographic in nature. The orthographic differences between מוֹת (Sev and Rabbi Meir) and מָאֵד (MT etc.) concern how a long *ō* is depicted by way of a *mater lectionis* and how voiceless alveolar plosives (as in the English words *debt* and *tap*) are represented. In the case of מָאֵד, the Hebrew character *dalet* normally represents the voiced alveolar plosive, but the Severus Scroll in Gen 1:31 used a *taw* instead (מוֹת טוֹב).³¹ Examples for similar confusions of characters can be observed both in the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls:

- In Septuagint manuscripts, *dalet* is sometimes transcribed by *θ*. An example is the transliteration of זִבְחָד as ζαβουθ or ζαββουθ in 1 Kgs 4:5 (LXX^A, B).³²
- A *dalet-taw* confusion is also reflected in the textual difference between MT (עֵד) and LXX (αἰών = עֵת; cf. V T S) in Ezek 22:4.
- 1QIsa^a reads Isa 14:20 for the תוֹחַד of MT the word תַּחַת³³
- 1QIsa^a reads in Isa 66:17 for the אַחַד of MT the word אַחַת³⁴

A similar case can be found in the Severus Scroll variant list itself in Gen 3:21 (see below, 2.2.). The interchangeability of *dalet* and *taw* makes it unlikely, to my mind, that the difference in consonants indicates a difference in pronunciation; i.e., pronunciation as fricatives (as in English *this/then*) rather than plosives.

²⁸ Brüll, "R. Meir," 235: Rabbi Meir inserted the reading to reject dualistic thought and to make death a part of God's realm.

²⁹ Wilhelm Bacher, *Aggadoth Ha-Tannaim*, trans. Alexander Z. Rabinowitz, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Dvir, 1928), 7 and 11 notes 13–14 (part 1).

³⁰ Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 44–45: That death is good suggests the idea of the resurrection of the dead.

³¹ Similar Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik," 51–52; Sperber, "Problems," 333; Sperber, *Historical Grammar*, 519; Kutscher, *Language*, 87; Loewinger, Prolegomenon, xxviii, xxxii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 247, 259; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 17; Tov, *Textual History*, 113. Cf. Segal, "Promulgation," 47, n. 42 ("caused by faulty hearing"); Jastram, "The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah," 139, n. 11 ("aural confusion").

³² See Alexander Sperber, "Hebrew Based upon Greek and Latin Transliterations," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 12–13 (1937–1938): 103–274, 128–129, 146–147; further examples can be found on 128–29; idem, "Problems of the Masorah," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 17 (1942–1943): 293–394, 333; Sperber, *A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: A Presentation of Problems with Suggestions for Their Solution* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 226, 519. Cf. also Loewinger, Prolegomenon, xxviii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 247.

³³ Cf. Kutscher, *Language*, 517.

³⁴ Cf. Sperber, *Historical Grammar*, 481.

For the use of *waw* (מֹוּת Sev and Rabbi Meir) rather than *'aleph* (מֹאֵד MT) to represent a long *ō* by way of a *mater lectionis*, many parallels can be found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Already Kutscher showed that the adverb מֹאֵד might have been pronounced *mōd*, and might thus occasionally be spelled מֹוֹד (see Isa 16:6 in 1QIsa^a 13:23) or מֹוֹד (4QPs^f [4Q88] 8:10 [*Apostrophe to Zion*]; 11QPs^a [11Q5] 22:1 [*Apostrophe to Zion*]; 4QTohorot A [4Q274] 3 ii 9).³⁵

In Rabbi Meir's reading and in the Severus Scroll at Gen 1:31, both orthographic peculiarities – i.e., the representation of the voiced alveolar plosive by *taw* instead of *dalet* and the use of *waw* instead of *'aleph* as a *mater lectionis* – coincided, and מֹאֵד became מֹוֹת. It seems likely that the *Vorlage* of the Severus Scroll (or an even earlier copy in its textual tradition) read מֹוֹד, a form that was then changed to מֹוֹת by the Severus Scroll or its *Vorlage*.³⁶ Rabbi Meir either encountered the same reading independent of the Severus Scroll or got knowledge about it through a shared textual ancestor of his own *Vorlage* and the Severus Scroll. Alternatively, the strange reading might have reached the Rabbi by way of oral tradition. For the latter argue the other traditions quoted by BerR 9.5. The debates of the Rabbis which are connected with Rabbi Meir's reading in BerR. 9.5 leave little doubt that they were not familiar any more with the unusual spelling of the word מֹאֵד as מֹוֹת. Instead they developed an exegetical interest in the variant because they understood מֹוֹת “very” as מָוֹת “death.”

2.2 Gen 3:21 (BerR 20.12)

AND THE LORD GOD MADE FOR ADAM AND HIS WIFE GARMENTS OF SKIN ..., AND CLOTHED THEM ... In R. Meir's Torah it was found written, ‘*Garments of light* (כְּתוֹנוֹת אֹוֹר) ...’: this refers to Adam's garments, which were like a torch [shedding radiance], broad at the bottom and narrow at the top. Isaac the Elder said: They were as smooth as a finger-nail and as beautiful as a jewel. R. Johanan said: They were like the fine linen garments which come from Bethshean, GARMENT OF SKIN meaning those that are nearest to the skin. R. Eleazar said: They were of goats' skin. R. Joshua said: Of hares' skin. R. Jose b. R. Hanina said: It was a garment made of skin with its wool. Resh Lakish said: It was of Circassian wool, and these were used [later] by first-born children. R. Samuel b. Nahman said: [They were made from] the wool of camels and the wool of hares, GARMENT OF SKIN meaning those which are produced from the skin.³⁷ (BerR 20.12).

³⁵ See Epstein, “Titus,” 342–343; Epstein, “Biblische Textkritik,” 51–52, writing even before the Dead Sea Scrolls were found; cf. esp. Kutscher, *Language*, 87; Loewinger, “Prolegomenon,” xxxii; Loewinger, “ספר תורה,” 259.

³⁶ Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 17, argued similarly, but without reference to 4QPs^f (4Q88) 8:10 (*Apostrophe to Zion*); 11QPs^a (1Q5) 22:1 (*Apostrophe to Zion*); 4QTohorot A (4Q274) 3 ii 9.

³⁷ Translation according to Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, vol. 1, 171.

That BerR 20.12 quotes for Gen 3:21 only one and not two readings – as BerR 9.5 did – is of little importance.³⁸ The midrash did not deem it necessary to repeat the MT reading because it can be found in the opening quotation of Gen 3:21 as the lemma which is to be interpreted. This opening quotation precedes the quotation of Rabbi Meir's Torah directly.

Rabbi Meir according to BerR 20.12: ³⁹ כתנות אור

Sev^{List}: כתנות עור וילבשם כתנוד היה כתוב

Sev^{MBR}: לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור

Sev^{D146}: כתנות עור כתנוד כתי

Sev^{D403}: כתנות עור כתנוד כתי

Sev^P: כתנות עור וילבשם כתנוד היה כתוב

Sev: כתנוד

Sev^{Comp}: כתנות עור וילבשם

MT^L: כתנות עור וילבשם

MT^{Kenn6}, 18, 104, 111, 150, 158, 168, 177, 189, 196, 223, 225, 227, 239, 251: כתנות

MT^{Kenn18}, 69, 80, 109, 111, 125, 152, 155, 158, 186, 189, 191, 260: וילבשם

SP: כתינת עור וילבישם

LXX: χιτώνας δερματίνους καὶ ἐνέδυσεν αὐτοὺς

TO: לבושין דיקר על משך בסרהון ואלבישינון

TPsf: לבושין דיקר מן משך חויה דאשלח מיניה על משך בישריהון חלף טופריהון דאישתלחו ואלבישינון

Tg Neof: לבושין דאוקר למשך בשרהון ואלבש יתהון

TFrag: לבושין דיקר מן משך בסריהון ואלבש יתהון

V: tunicas pellicias et induit eos

P: כְּתוֹנֹת עוֹר וְיִלְבָּשׁוּם

Gen 3:21 is perhaps one of the two readings, which confused the discussion about the relation of the Severus Scroll with Rabbi Meir's Torah most. Several scholars wanted to read or reconstruct as the variant reading of the Severus Scroll in Gen 3:21 as כתנות אור.⁴⁰ It needs to be emphasized though that all witnesses to the Severus Scroll variant list as well as Sev^{Comp} agree on reading עור. The word אור simply does not occur in any part of any witness of the Severus Scroll variant list. Only the Torah of Rabbi Meir included the reading אור accord-

³⁸ Contra Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 46.

³⁹ The reading from BerR is already quoted in Kennicott's edition (see note 25) under the siglum 651 which refers collectively to the Midrash Rabbah corpus.

⁴⁰ Epstein, "Titus," 343; Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik," 48–49; Neubauer, "Pentateuch," 508, n. 1; Harkavy, *חדישים*, 102; Sperber, "Problems," 333; Sperber, *Historical Grammar*, 519; Habermann, "Seder Aoritha dashetach broma," 169; Segal, "Promulgation," 47; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 18 (Siegel has on p. 90 the correct transcription); Gließer, "Mehrdeutigkeit," 82; Arndt, "Zur Tora des Rabbi Me'ir," 87; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 113.

ing to *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah* 20.12.⁴¹ There is hence no reason to reconstruct אור as the original reading of the Severus Scroll in Gen 3:21. This is all the more the case as the Torah of Rabbi Meir does not support the Severus Scroll in its reading כתנוד either. Rabbi Meir's Torah reads instead in agreement with MT כתנות. As I have explained elsewhere,⁴² the reading כתנוד of the Severus Scroll is not a textual but an orthographic variant. The voiceless alveolar plosive is represented by *dalet* instead of the *taw* which is normally employed for this purpose (כתנוד instead of כתנות). Parallels for this orthographic confusion in 1QIsa^a include the following:

- 1QIsa^a IV:24 (בת אחד instead of בת אחת in the MT; Isa 5:10)⁴³
- 1QIsa^a L:28 (בגד instead of בגת in the MT [cf. 1QIsa^b (1Q8) XXVII:12; MT and LXX]; Isa 63:2)⁴⁴

Therefore, the Torah of Rabbi Meir, the Severus Scroll and Sev^{Comp} do not share a variant reading common to all of them in Gen 3:21. The Severus Scroll variant list does not indicate any textual or orthographic difference between the Severus Scroll and Sev^{Comp} for the word עור either. On the other hand Rabbi Meir's reading disagrees twice orthographically with the Severus Scroll in reading כתנות with *taw* instead of כתנוד with *dalet* and in employing an additional *mater lectionis* in the word כתנות.

That Rabbi Meir's Torah reads against all other witnesses⁴⁵ to Gen 3:21 אור instead of עור was understood already by Ginzberg⁴⁶ as pointing to the idea of

⁴¹ Cf. Julius Theodor and Chanoch Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba: Critical Edition with Notes and Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1965), vol. 1, 196.

⁴² Lange, "Question," 434; "The Severus Scroll Variant List in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," and the literature quoted there. Cf. also recently Jastram, "The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah," 139, n. 11 ("aural confusion").

⁴³ Kutscher, *Language*, 517.

⁴⁴ Cf. Kutscher, *Language*, 517; Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxix; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 247–248.

⁴⁵ Epstein, "Textkritik," 52; Epstein, "Titus," 344; Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 412; Sebastian Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter: Internationales Kolloquium, Eichstätt 1981*, ed. Margot Schmidt and Carl F. Geyer (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1982), 14, argue that the Targumim would render Gen 3:21 in the sense of garments of light (cf. James L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998], 133). Against such claims it needs to be emphasized that all Targumim include the word משך "skin" in their various renderings of Gen 3:21. The parent text of the Targumim read therefore with MT

the garments of light given to Adam and Eve before the fall. Ginzberg influenced with his understanding subsequent readings of the evidence. In Ginzberg's line of thinking, Siegel⁴⁷ regards אור as a variant reading reflecting Gnostic influence and refers for this purpose to the *Gospel of Thomas* (82–83). Anderson points to Rabbinic passages which speak about Adam's likeness to God in bodily terms and regards the phrase “garments of light” as a description of Adam's luminosity.⁴⁸ Similarly, Gleßmer thinks of the light garments supposedly worn by the first humans which would reflect God's glory.⁴⁹ Only Brüll argues that Rabbi Meir inserted אור to avoid the impression that God would have tailored clothes for Adam and Eve.⁵⁰

BerR 20.12 itself leaves little doubt that at least some Rabbis wanted to understand Gen 3:21 in the sense of garments of light based on Rabbi Meir's text. But this interpretative tradition says little about the character of Rabbi Meir's variant reading. Against Rabbinic and even modern scholarly interpretations, Rabbi Meir's reading אור should be understood as an orthographic and not a textual variant. It goes back to scribal practices from first century C.E. or even earlier times. Due to a weakening of 'ayin, a confusion of the characters 'ayin and 'aleph is attested repeatedly in texts from this period. Examples include several variant readings of SP against MT (Gen 23:18: SP בעי ↔ MT באי; Exod 4:12: SP אם ↔ MT עם; Exod 22:29: SP עמו ↔ MT אמו), a Sebir reading in 1Kgs 1:18 (ואתה) against MT's (ועתה)⁵¹ as well as various cases in 1QIsa^a (e.g. אתה instead of MT's עתה in Isa 5:5; 28:22; 64:7; and אצית instead of MT's עצות in Isa 25:1).⁵² The repeated confusion of the prepositions אל and על in biblical texts is further evidence for this confusion 'ayin and 'aleph in the Second Temple period. That

כתונת עור. It is only in their exegetical extensions of Gen 3:21, that the Targumim point towards the idea of glorious garments.

46 Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1925), 103–104; Ginzberg, “Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern VI: Der Kommentar des Hieronymus zu Jesaja,” in *Jewish Studies in Memory of George A. Kohut*, ed. Salo W. Baron and Alexander Marx (New York: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1935), 279–314, 299. In “Haggada,” Ginzberg understood אור as a haggadic interpretation which is based on equation of graphically similar characters. In *Legends*, he speaks simply of “R. Meir's statement.”

47 Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 18–19, 46–47.

48 Gary A. Anderson, “The Garments of Skin in Apocryphal Narrative and Biblical Commentary,” in *Studies in Ancient Midrash*, ed. James L. Kugel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, 2001), 117–119 (esp. 119); cf. also Kugel, *Traditions*, 132–314.

49 Gleßmer, “Mehrdeutigkeit,” 82–84.

50 Brüll, “R. Meir,” 236.

51 Sperber, *Historical Grammar*, 477.

52 For these and other cases of the weakening of 'ayin in 1QIsa^a, see Kutscher, *Language*, 507.

the Torah of Rabbi Meir includes the reading אור instead of עור should therefore not be interpreted as a textual but as an orthographic variant.⁵³

2.3 Gen 45:8 (BerRbti 209.12)

Different from all the other variant readings out of Rabbi Meir's Torah scroll, his variant for Gen 45:8 is provided by Moshe Ha-Darshan's *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* (on Gen 45:8) and not by *Bereshit Rabbah*.

(10) וישימני לאב לפרעה: שאני כנושה עליו כד"א לא תשימון (11) עליו נשך (Exod 22:24) מה דרכו של נושה? עבד לזה לאיש מלוה (Prov 22:7) בספרו של ר' מאיר כתוב וישני לאב' שנאמר אשר ישה ברעהו (13) דין הוא מן מליא דכתיבן באורייתא דנפקת (14) מן ירושלם בשביתא וסלקת לרומי והות גניזא בכנישתא (15) דאסורוס

"And he has made me for a father to Pharaoh" (Gen 45:8): A different (reading): "like a creditor on him – according to another word – you shall not put interest on him" (Exod 22:24). What is the way of a creditor? "A slave is a borrower to a lender" (Prov 22:7). And in the scroll of Rabbi Meir it is written "and he lent me as a father" (Gen 45:8) for which it says "he lends to his fellows" (Deut 15:2). This is among the words, which are written in the Law that was taken from Jerusalem in captivity and removed to Rome. And it was hidden (stored away) in the Synagogue of Severus. (BerRbti 209.10 – 15)⁵⁴

For the same reason as BerR 20.12 (see above 2.2.), BerRbti quotes in its version of the Severus Scroll variant list only the variant reading of Rabbi Meir but not the proto-Masoretic text it was correlated with, i.e. the MT text of Gen 45:8 was quoted in the immediate context of the reference to Rabbi Meir's scroll as the lemma, which BerRbti interprets. A repetition of Gen 45:8 would thus have been superfluous.

R. Meir's Torah according to BerRbti וישני לאב' וישימני לאב' וישימני לאב' וישימני לאב'

Sev^{List}: וישימני לאב לפרעה פרעה היה כתוב

Sev^{MBR}: וישימני לאב לפרעה

Sev^{D146}: לאב לפרעה פרעה כתי

Sev^{D403}: לאב לפרעה פרעה כתי

Sev^P: וישימני לאב לפרעה פרעה היה כתוב

Sev: פרעה

Sev^{Comp}: וישימני לאב לפרעה

⁵³ See Sperber, "Problems," 333; *Historical Grammar*, 519 (cf. 477); Kutscher, *Language*, 87; Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxxii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 259; cf. Segal, "Promulgation," 47, n. 42 ("faulty hearing"); Jastram, "The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah," 144, n. 81 ("aural confusion").

⁵⁴ The translation is my own.

MT ^L :	וְיִשְׁמְנִי לְאֵב לַפְּרָעָה
MT ^{Kenn155} :	לֵאב פִּרְעָה
SP:	יִשְׁמְנִי לֵאב לַפְּרָעָה
LXX:	καὶ ἐποίησέν με ὡς πατέρα Φαραώ
TO:	וְשׁוּיִי אָבָא לַפְּרָעָה
TPsJ:	וְשׁוּיִי לָרֵב לַפְּרָעָה
Tg Neof:	וְשׁוּי יְתִי לֵאבָא לַפְּרָעָה
V:	qui fecit me quasi patrem Pharaonis
P:	סִבְבֹּנ סִבָּא לִפְרָעָה

After Gen 3:21 (see above, 2.2.), Gen 45:8 is the second variant reading, which caused much confusion in the discussion of the relation between the Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah because many scholars confused the reading of Sev with the reading of Sev^{Comp}. The only word which the variant list quotes from the Severus Scroll is פִּרְעָה. The Severus scroll reads instead of MT's לַפְּרָעָה only פִּרְעָה. The reading of Sev^{Comp} was וְיִשְׁמְנִי לֵאב לַפְּרָעָה. Only Sev^{MBR} corresponds in its text to some extent with Rabbi Meir's Torah.⁵⁵

Sev ^{MBR}	Rabbi Meir
וְשׁוּיִי לֵאב לַפְּרָעָה	וְשׁוּיִי לֵאב

As in several other cases, Sev^{MBR} simply did not include the variant reading of the Severus Scroll any more. In general, the various witnesses of the Severus Scroll variant list have a tendency to abbreviate its text, as can be seen when e.g. the readings of its four witnesses for Gen 45:8 are compared. Because Sev^{MBR} was the first copy of the Severus Scroll variant list to be published, scholars paid special attention to its reading וְשׁוּיִי claiming that the Severus Scroll shared a variant reading with Rabbi Meir's Torah scroll.⁵⁶ But *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* attributes

⁵⁵ Against Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 46, *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* quotes Rabbi Meir's reading only as וְשׁוּיִי לֵאב (Albeck, *Midraš Berešit Rabbati*, 209, line 13) and not as לַפְּרָעָה. How Rabbi Meir read the Gen 45:8 after לֵאב cannot be said anymore.

⁵⁶ Epstein, "Titus," 347; Epstein, "Biblische Textkritik," 53; Segal, "Promulgation," 46; Kutscher, *Language*, 88; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 29. Burns, "Synagogue of Severus," 102–103, understands the remark of BerRbti quoted above as a part of a Masoretic legend which would have claimed that Rabbi Meir took his variant reading of Gen 45:8 from the Severus Scroll. Burns' understanding is based on a mistaken interpretation of the demonstrative pronoun דֵּין and the preposition מִן in the sentence "this is among the words which are written in the law ..." Burns renders "This interpretation is from the wording recorded in the Torah ..." (102). He relates the word דֵּין thus to an interpretation. But instead of an interpretation, BerRbti clearly refers to a reading of Rabbi Meir's Torah Scroll: בְּסֵפֶר שֶׁל רַבִּי מֵאִיר כְּתוּב ("in the scroll of Rabbi Meir it is writ-

the reading וישני wrongly to the Severus Scroll. Sev^P preserves the complete text of that particular entry of the Sev^{List}. It leaves no doubt that at best Rabbi Meir's variant could agree with Sev^{Comp}'s text of Gen 45:8 as preserved by Sev^{MBR}. Because as a textual witness to the Severus Scroll variant list Sev^{MBR} is of the worst textual quality, the text of Sev^P needs to be preferred. Sev^{MBR} abbreviates the text of the list to the point of incomprehensibility and suffers from scribal errors. Often the text of Sev^{Comp} differs in Sev^{MBR} from the one attested by Sev^{D146}, Sev^{D403}, and Sev^P (variants no. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33), which points to a certain scribal indifference in the transmission of the Severus Scroll variant list which preceded Sev^{MBR}. The above observations make likely that וישני is a secondary reading in the textual history of the Severus Scroll variant list.

In the transmission of the Severus Scroll variant list, the scribal indifference described above might be accountable for the loss of the *mater lectionis* in וישמיני – a reading which can also be found in SP (וישמני).⁵⁷ The reading of Rabbi Meir might as well go back to a scribal tradition which read with SP the defective spelling וישמיני. In this case, וישני could have developed in both the textual transmission of the book Genesis which preceded Rabbi Meir and the textual transmission of the Severus Scroll variant list which preceded Moshe Ha-Darshan due to the accidental loss of a *mem*: וישני ← וישמיני.⁵⁸

2.4 Gen 46:23 (BerR 94.9)

For Gen 46:23, the reading of Rabbi Meir's Torah is quoted in an exegetical discussion about a contradiction in Gen 46:26–27. Gen 46:26–27 itself reports that 66 people came with Jacob to Egypt and adds to these the two sons of Joseph. Gen 46:27 summarizes that 70 persons of the house of Jacob came to Egypt.

ten"). The demonstrative pronoun refers thus to this variant reading and not an interpretation of Rabbi Meir. Because in the subsequent context BerRbt provides the Severus Scroll variant list, the preposition מן needs to be understood in a partitive sense here "out of/among" (cf. the translation of Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 50). BerRbt does not claim that Rabbi Meir had access to the Severus Scroll in Rome but simply notes a parallel variant reading.

⁵⁷ When Gen-LXX reads ἀὐτὸς ἐποίησέν με for וְיִשְׁמִינִי this does not contradict the text of MT, SP, and Sev^{Comp}. Gen-LXX translates various forms of the Hebrew verb שׁים in Gen 33:2; 45:9; 46:3; 48:20 with equivalent forms of the Greek verb ποιέω. That Gen-LXX translates לְאָב as ὡς πατέρα in Gen 45:8 should not be regarded as a textual variant either. While ὡς renders the preposition לְ rarely this translation is also attested in Gen 34:16.

⁵⁸ Cf. Segal, "Promulgation," 46; Kutscher, *Language*, 88; Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxxiii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 259. Contra Jastram, "2.2.5.4 Severus Scroll," forthcoming.

To solve this disagreements in numbers different Rabbis propose different solutions in BerR 94.9. For the proposal of some unnamed rabbinic authorities, the text of Gen 46:23 according to Rabbi Meir's Torah is quoted:

Others say that Hushim the son of Dan made up the number. In the Torah of R. Meir the reading was found, and the son of Dan: Hushim (ובן דן חשים).⁵⁹

As before (see above 2.2. and 2.3.), BerR 94.9 quotes the text of Gen 46:23 in the Torah of Rabbi Meir only once. That is, its quotation includes only the variant reading toward MT. But as in BerR 20.12 and BerRbt on Gen 45:8, a quotation of the MT text of Gen 46:23 precedes the quotation of Rabbi Meir's Torah immediately. The midrash avoided an awkward double quotation of the MT text of Gen 46:23 by quoting only Rabbi Meir's variant reading.

Rabbi Meir's Torah according to BerR 94.9: ובן דן חשים⁶⁰

Sev: not included in list

Sev^{Comp}: not included in list

MT^L: ובְּנֵי־דָן חָשִׁים

MT^{Sebir}: ובן

SP: ובני דן חשים

LXX: υἱοὶ δὲ Δαν Ἀσσημ

TO: ובני דן חשים

TPsJ: ובני דדן זריזין ואמפורין ולית סכום למניניהום

Tg Neof: ובני דדן חשים

V: filii Dan Usim

P: סבן דן חשים

Neither this variant reading of Rabbi Meir's Torah nor any text of Gen 46:23 are part of the Severus Scroll variant list. Therefore, Gen 46:23 needs to be discussed only briefly. The overwhelming majority of textual witnesses read with MT the plural form ובני (MT, SP, LXX, V, TO, TPsJ, Tg Neof). The singular form ובן of Rabbi Meir's Torah is only supported by P and a Masoretic Sebir annotation, i.e. a Masoretic annotation which recommends not to read ובן. The problem of Gen 46:23 is obvious. Gen 46:8–25 is a list of the sons and grandsons of Jacob. According to

⁵⁹ Translation according to Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabbah*, 2:876. Theodor and Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba*, 3:1182 as well as Freedman, in the translation quoted above, supplement the text of BerR 94.9 with the MT reading ובני דן חשים.

⁶⁰ The reading from BerR is already quoted in Kennicott's edition (see note 25 above) under the siglum 651 which refers collectively to the Midrash Rabbah corpus. Kennicott lists also the Sebir reading quoted below under the siglum 683. Cf. e.g. Epstein, "Biblicse Textkritik," 48; Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxxii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 259; Segal, "Promulgation," 45.

this list Dan had only one son whose name is given in Gen 46:23 as Hushim. Nevertheless Gen 46:23 speaks of sons of Dan in the plural: “And the sons of Dan: Hushim” (ובני דן חשים). The problem was already noted by the book of *Jubilees*. Jub 44:28–29 explains that Dan had two sons but that one of them died. Rabbi Meir’s Torah attests most likely to an editorial reading.⁶¹ Rabbi Meir’s reading and the Sebir reading of the Masoretes adjust the incorrect plural form to the singular required by Dan’s single son Hushim.⁶² Later on, the reading of Rabbi Meir’s Torah was employed for the exegetical purposes of the Rabbis.

2.5 Isa 21:11 (yTaan 1.1 [64a])

Talmud Yerushalmi includes in tractate *Taanit* (1.1 [64a]) an exegetical discussion about the meaning of Isa 21:11.

Said R. Haninah son of R. Abbahu, “In the book of R. Meir they found that it was written, ‘The oracle concerning Dumah, [that is,] the oracle concerning Rome (משא דומה רומי). One is calling to me from Seir [Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?].’” (Is. 21:11) ... Said R. Yohanan, “One is calling to me because of Seir.” ... Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “‘To me.’ From whence will there be a match for me? ‘From Seir.’” ... Said R. Joshua b. Levi, “If someone should say to you, ‘Where 148 is your God,’ say to him, ‘He is in a great city in Edom [V: in Rome],’ What is the scriptural basis for this view? ‘One is calling to me from Seir’” (Is. 21:11)⁶³

As was the case with Gen 1:31 in BerR 9.5, yTaan 1.1 (64a) attributes two different readings to Rabbi Meir’s scroll, i.e. the MT of Isa 21:11 and a variant reading. In this structure, yTaan 1.1 (64a) differs from BerR 20.12; 94.9; and BerRbti which quote only one reading. To quote both readings was necessary in yTaan 1.1 (64a) because the immediate context of the Rabbi Meir reference did not provide the MT text of Isa 21:11.

Rabbi Meir’s reading according to yTaan 1.1 (64a): משא רומי

1QIsa^a: משא דומה

4QIsa^b: משא דן/מה

MT^L: משא דומה

MT^{Kenn187}: משא גיא

⁶¹ For the category of editorial readings, see Armin Lange, “4QXII^g (4Q82) as an Editorial Text,” (forthcoming in *Textus*).

⁶² Cf. Brüll, “R. Meir,” 236; Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 47.

⁶³ Translation according to Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation*, vol. 18, *Besah and Taanit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 147–148.

MT^{DeRossi20, 380marg}: מִשָּׁא אֶדוֹם

MT^{DeRossi319}: רומה

LXX: Τὸ ὄρημα τῆς Ἰδουμαίας

Aquila: *Duma* (according to Jerome's Commentary on Isaiah ad loc.)

Tg Neb: מטל כס דלוט לאשקא ית דומה

V: *onus Duma*

P: *דומה דומה*

The readings of LXX and MT^{DeRossi20, 380marg} as well as MT^{Kenn187} show that the word דומה was difficult to understand even in antiquity. Since then, the meaning of the word דומה is therefore debated. Because of the mention of Seir in Isa 21:11, until to date, commentaries and dictionaries suggest that דומה is another designation for Edom,⁶⁴ or goes back to scribal corruption and should be emended to אֶדוֹם.⁶⁵ Others want to identify דומה as the Dūmat el-Ġandal in the oasis of el-Ġōf in North Arabia.⁶⁶ Whatever the original reading of Isa 21:11 might have been and to whichever place דומה might have referred, Aquila, Peshitta, Targum Jonathan, and Vulgate leave little doubt that the proto-Masoretic text of Isa 21:11 read דומה in late antiquity. The Qumran evidence (1QIsa^a) argues the same for the Second Temple period. The readings of LXX (τῆς Ἰδουμαίας) and MT^{DeRossi20, 380marg, 1004} (אדום) are linguistic actualizations which rightly or wrongly identify דומה as Idu-mea or Edom. A similar linguistic actualization can be found in MT^{Kenn187} (גיא).

Although the reading of Rabbi Meir's Isaiah scroll is repeatedly quoted in scholarly discussions about the Rabbinic identification of Edom as Rome,⁶⁷ Jerome's remarks about Jewish readings of Isa 21:11 are mostly discussed in early treatments of Rabbi Meir's Torah but enjoy less attention today.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ See e.g. Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, 18th ed. (Heidelberg: Springer, 2013), 245.

⁶⁵ See e.g. Otto Kaiser, *Der Prophet Jesaja: Kapitel 13–39* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 106.

⁶⁶ See e.g. Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja*, vol. 2, *Kapitel 13–27*, 3rd ed. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003), 787; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 153.

⁶⁷ See e.g. Friederich Avemarie, "Esau's Hände, Jakobs Stimme: Edom als Sinnbild Roms in der frühen rabbinischen Literatur," in *Die Heiden: Juden, Christen und das Problem des Fremden*, ed. Reinhard Feldmeier and Ulrich Heckel (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 182; Martha Himmel-farb, "The Mother of the Messiah in the Talmud Yerushalmi and Sefer Zerubbabel," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, vol. 3, ed. Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 381; Johann Maier, "Israel und 'Edom' in den Ausdeutungen zu Dt 2,1–8," in *Studien zur jüdischen Bibel und ihrer Geschichte* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 292.

⁶⁸ But see Giovanni B. De Rossi, *Scholia critica in V. T. libros seu supplementa ad varias sacri textus lectiones* (Parma: Ex regio typographeo, 1793), 50: "Ad hunc eundem Meirii codicem eaque vetus-

Hoc juxta historiam dictum sit: caeterum propter similitudinem litterae, et ex eo quod RES et DALETH, non multum inter se discrepent, quidam Hebraeorum pro Duma, Romam legunt, volentes prophetiam contra regnum Romanum dirigi, frivola persuasione, qua semper in Idu-maeae nomine Romanos existimant demonstrari: Duma autem interpretatur silentium.

Besides what is said according to history: because of the word-similarity and the fact that *resh* and *daleth* are not much different from one another, some among the Hebrews read Rome instead of Duma because they want the prophecy to be directed against the Roman rule, out of their wrongful conviction by which they always consider the name of Idumea to indicate the Romans. Duma, however, is to be translated as “silence.” (Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah*, on Isa 21:11–12)⁶⁹

Judaei frustra somniant contra urbem Romam, regnumque Romanum hanc fieri prophetiam; et illud quod in Isaia scriptum est, Onus Duma, paululum litterae apice commutato pro DELETH legi posse RES, et sonare Romam: VAU quippe littera et pro u, et pro o, eorum lingua accipitur.

The Jews vainly dream that this prophecy is against the city of Rome and the Roman sovereignty; and they hold that in ‘the burden of Dumah’ in Isaiah [21:11], by a tiny alteration in the crown of a letter, *Resh* can be read for *Dalet*, so that the word becomes “Roma”; for in their language the letter Waw is used for both u and o.⁷⁰ (Jerome, *Commentary on Obadiah*, on Ob 1:1)

In the *Commentary on Obadiah*, Jerome does not refer to actual manuscripts but reports about a Jewish textcritical emendation of his time which allowed to identify *Duma* in Isa 21:11 as *Roma*, i.e. Rome. But in his *Commentary on Isaiah*, Jerome argues slightly different. He accuses “some Hebrews” that out of their zeal against Rome they would read *Roma* instead of *Duma* confusing the similar letters *dalet* and *resh*. The word *legunt* seems to imply the reading of a written text.⁷¹ Jerome attests thus to a manuscript tradition which is very close to Rabbi Meir’s variant reading רומי.

tiorum rabbinorum verba alludere videtur Hieronymus, qui lib. V in Isaiam refert quosdam Hebraeorum pro Dumà legisse Roma, hancque prophetiam ad regnum Romanum applicasse”; Brüll, “R. Meir,” 236; Epstein, “Titus,” 343; Epstein, “Biblische Textkritik,” 48; Adolph Neubauer, “The Introduction of the Square Characters in Biblical MSS., and an Account of the Earliest MSS. of the Old Testament,” in *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica: Essays Chiefly in Biblical and Patristic Criticism*, ed. Samuel R. Driver, Thomas K. Cheyne, and William Sanday, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), 22; Ginzberg, “Haggada,” 299.

⁶⁹ For stylizing my rather literal translation into proper English, I am obliged to my good friend and colleague Zlatko Pleše.

⁷⁰ Translation according to William Horbury, “Old Testament Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers,” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin J. Mulder and Harry Sysling (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), 774.

⁷¹ Cf. Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 787.

Further evidence for the variant reading רומי/רומה might be found in a fifteenth century Bible codex (MT^{DeRossi319})⁷² which reads רומה instead of דומה. While it is not impossible that this reading goes back to a manuscript tradition whose ancestor is to be found in the manuscript tradition on which Rabbi Meir depends⁷³ and to which Jerome referred, a late codex such as manuscript De Rossi 319 could also be influenced by more recent factors in its variant readings. De Rossi⁷⁴ himself mentions that רומה is attested in a fifteenth century copy of David Kimchi's Isaiah commentary (manuscript De Rossi 1004)⁷⁵ and in a 1515 edition of the Latter Prophets which includes Kimchi's Isaiah commentary, too.⁷⁶ It is therefore also possible that the reading of manuscript De Rossi 319 reflects the impact of Kimchi's commentary.

Given the cumulative evidence of Jerome's testimony, yTaan 1.1 (64a), and MT^{DeRossi319}, it is likely that Rabbi Meir's reading רומי preserves an ancient variant⁷⁷ which was attested by a significant number of Isaiah scrolls in (late) antiquity. That Rabbi Meir has רומי instead of רומה is due to the influence of Koine-Greek as the dominant language in the eastern part of the Roman Empire while רומה reflects the city's Latin name *Roma*. The Greek word for Rome is Ῥώμη which becomes Rōmi when pronounced with an itacism.

Originally, Rabbi Meir's variant might have gone back to a scribal error, i.e. a *dalet-resch* confusion: רומה ← רומה.⁷⁸ In the case of Josh 15:52, the same character

⁷² For a brief description of the codex, see De Rossi, *Variae lectiones*, 1.cvii.

⁷³ Thus seems to be the implication of Robert Govett, *Isaiah Unfulfilled: Being an Exposition of the Prophet with New Version and Critical Notes* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1841), 211.

⁷⁴ De Rossi, *Scholia critica*, 50.

⁷⁵ See De Rossi, *Variae lectiones*, 4.xxxii. I have not been able to verify this reading in Finkelstein's edition of Kimchi's commentary (Eliezer U. Finkelstein, ed., *The Commentary of David Kimchi on Isaiah* [New York: Columbia University, 1926], 1:121). It is possible that the רומה-reading in Kimchi's commentary quoted by De Rossi goes back to a scribal error in the manuscript tradition of the commentary.

⁷⁶ The edition was published in Pesaro by a member of the Soncino family and publishing house. See De Rossi, *Variae lectiones*, 1.cxlvi; Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 886–889.

⁷⁷ Contra Kutscher, *Language*, 87, n. 3 (midrashic exegesis); Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 45–46; Gerson D. Cohen who regards it as a “piquant play on words” by Rabbi Meir (“Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Jewish Thought,” in *Studies in the Variety of Rabbinic Cultures* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991], 245); and Heinrich W. Guggenheimer who understands it as an interpretative variant (*The Jerusalem Talmud: Second Order Mo'ed; Tractates Ta'anit, Megillah, Hagigah and Mo'ed Qatan (Mašqin)* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015], 16, n. 84).

⁷⁸ Thus Loewinger, “Prolegomenon,” xxxii; Loewinger, “ספר תורה,” 259; Jastram, “The Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah,” 144, n. 84, who regard the reading of Rabbi Meir as a whole as the result of a scribal error. They ignore though the different orthographies of רומי (interpretative reading, Rabbi Meir) and רומה (scribal confusion, Jerome) which point to the different character

confusion is attested in many manuscripts and version: Many important Masoretic manuscripts speak of a town called רומה (e. g. MT^{A, L, C}, LXX, Pesh., V)⁷⁹ while other witnesses call the same town דומה (MT^{mss}, T).⁸⁰

By the time of Rabbi Meir, what began as scribal corruption gained an alternate meaning though. This is particularly evident in the reading attributed to Rabbi Meir. While the manuscripts to which Jerome referred read apparently רומה changing only *dalet* to *resh*, Rabbi Meir read instead of רומה or רומא the widespread rabbinic spelling רומי thus identifying the Dumah as Rome.

In Isa 21:11, Rabbi Meir's variant רומי for דומה is interpretative in nature and needs to be read in the context of the rabbinic reception history of Isa 21:11. It identifies the Dumah of Isa 21:11 with the Roman Empire based on the graphic similarity of *resh* and *dalet*. The historical identification of Dumah with Roman reminds of the hermeneutics of the Qumran pesharim.

2.6 Isa 34:7 (PesRK 7.11)

In a typological comparison of Egypt and Edom (identified with Rome) which is based on intertextuality, PesRK 7.11 quotes Rabbi Meir with an interpretation of Isa 34:7:

R. Levi said in the name of R. Hama bar R. Hanina: With the very means by which he punished the former He will punish the latter. As He punished Egypt with blood, so, too, He will punish Edom – [Rome], for it is written *I will show wonders of in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke [over Edom] (Joel 3:3) ... As with Egypt He took each of the chiefest among them and slew them, so, too, with Edom: A great slaughter in the land of Edom, among them to come down shall be the Remim (רמִיִּם; Isa. 34:6–7), that is, as R. Meir expounded it – among those to come down shall be the Romans (אמִי ר' מאיר וירדו רומיים עמם).*⁸¹

of the two secondary readings. Siegel, *Severus Scroll*, 47 proposes an emendation by Rabbi Meir inspired by the similarity of *dalet* and *resh*. But in this case Rabbi Meir should have read רומה instead of his רומי. Ginzberg, “Haggada,” 299, understands both Rabbi Meir's reading and the reading quoted by Jerome as haggadic interpretations based on the graphic similarity of *resh* and *dalet*. Segal, “Promulgation,” 45, regards either a scribal corruption from רומה→רומי or an interpretative reading inspired by משעיר as likely.

⁷⁹ The BHS transcribes MT^L here erroneously as דומה.

⁸⁰ See the discussion in Yoel Elitsur, “Duma-Ruma: The Original Version of a Biblical Toponym and its Effect on Historical and Geographical Problems,” in *Rabbi Mordechai Breuer Festschrift: Collected Papers in Jewish Studies*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher (Jerusalem: Academ Press, 1992), 2:615–620 (Hebr.); cf. Elitsur, “Rumah in Juda,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 44 (1994): 123–126.

⁸¹ Translation according to William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein, *Pēsikta dē-Raḥ Kahāna: R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days; Translated from Hebrew and*

Brüll, Loewinger and Jastram⁸² include this quotation of Rabbi Meir in PesRK 7.11 wrongly among the variant readings of the Rabbi quoted in Rabbinic literature. Both miss though a principal difference between all other quotations of Meir-variant-readings and PesRK 7.11. BerR 9.5 (Gen 1:31); 20.12 (Gen 3:21); and 94.9 (Gen 46:23) refer explicitly to a Torah scroll of Rabbi Meir (מֵאִיר מִצְאוֹ כְּתוּב) “in the Torah of Rabbi Meir they found written”) when quoting its variants. Similarly BerRbt 209:12 (Gen 45:8) and yTaan 1.1 (64a) (Isa 21:11) refer explicitly to scrolls connected with Rabbi Meir in which variants were found written.

BerRbt 209:12: “and in the scroll of Rabbi Meir it is written” בספרו של ר' מאיר כתוב
yTaan 1.1 (64a): “in the book of R. Meir they found that it was written” בספרו של רבי מאיר
מצאו כתוב

Such an explicit reference to a written source is missing in PesRK 7.11 which refers instead to an oral statement by Rabbi Meir. PesRK 7.11 preserves hence neither a variant reading of an Isaiah scroll of Rabbi Meir nor an interpretative gloss which he might have inserted into such a scroll. PesRK 7.11 attests instead to an oral interpretative tradition in which Rabbi Meir identifies in the style of pesher hermeneutics the רָאִמִּים (“bulls/wild oxen”) of Isa 34:7 as רומיים (“Romans”) based on the orthographic similarities of the two words.⁸³

2.7 Psalms (ySuk 3.12 [16a])

Rav and Samuel. One said *hallelu yah*, and the other one said *halleluja*. For him who said *hallelu yah* it is split but cannot be erased. For him who said *hallelujah* it may be erased but cannot be split. We do not know who said what. Since Rav said, I heard from my uncle, if somebody would give me a book of Psalms written by Rebbe Meir I could erase all *hallelujah* in it since he did not intend to sanctify them (אם יתן לי אדם ספר תילים שלרבי מאיר) (מוחק אני את כל הללויה שבו שלא נתכוון לקדשן). This implies that he said *hallelujah*.⁸⁴

Aramaic, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 202–203. The quotation of R. Meir is on p. 203. The Hebrew text of the quotation of R. Meir is according to Dov Mandelboim, ed., *על פי כתב יד אוקספורד ושנויי נוסחאות מכל כתבי היד ושרידי הגניזה*, (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962), 1:134.

⁸² Brüll, “R. Meir,” 236; Loewinger, “Prolegomenon,” xxxii; Loewinger, “ספר תורה,” 258; Jastram, “Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir’s Torah,” 144.

⁸³ Cf. Stemberger, *Die römische Herrschaft*, 114; Kutscher, *Language*, 87 note 3; Cohen, “Esau,” 245.

⁸⁴ Text and translation according to Heinrich W. Guggenheimer, *The Jerusalem Talmud: Second Order Mo'ed; Tractates Šeqalim, Sukkah, Roš Haššanah and Yom Ṭov (Beṣah)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 289.

This brief reference to a psalms scroll of Rabbi Meir was included by Loewinger into the list of his variant readings.⁸⁵ The debate above is concerned with question if the invocation to praise God, *halleluyah*, should be written as one (הללויה) or two words (הללו יה). In the latter case, יה would become a separate word, which as the name of God would be forbidden to erase from a scroll. The passage does not quote a variant reading of Rabbi Meir but is concerned with a scribal habit with significant halakhic implications. As such it is of no interest for my question.

3 Conclusions

3.1 The Character and Transmission of Rabbi Meir's Variant Readings

Of the seven cases which modern scholars discussed as references to variant readings of Rabbi Meir, two (Isa 34:7 = PesRK 7.11; Psalms = ySuk 3.12 [16a]) are not concerned with orthographic or textual variants but discuss an interpretation of Isa 34:7 or report about a scribal habit with important halakhic interpretations. Of the remaining five variant readings two are orthographic in nature (Gen 1:31; 3:21) and only three concern textual differences toward the consonantal text of MT. Gen 45:8 is a case of scribal corruption, Gen 46:23 attests to an editorial reading, and the reading of Isa 21:11 is interpretative in nature. Because the character of Rabbi Meir's orthographic and textual variants is very diverse, it seems possible that the Rabbi noted at least some of them if not all as glosses of divergent readings in the margins or above the lines of his own master copies. These divergent readings he would have encountered in his professional career as a scribe in other biblical scrolls.⁸⁶ But such a conclusion needs to remain speculative.

If the readings of Rabbi Meir derive from his personal master copies, they represent an important testimony to the work of an eminent scribe not long after the destruction of the Second Temple. It is unlikely though that the various Rabbis who refer to readings of Rabbi Meir in Rabbinic literature all had access to his personal scrolls. R. Samuel b. Nahman claims therefore when he was a child R. Simeon b. R. Eleazar would have taught him a reading of Rabbi Meir (BerR 9.5). While the possibility of such an oral transmission should never be ne-

⁸⁵ Loewinger, "Prolegomenon," xxxii; Loewinger, "ספר תורה," 258; cf. Brüll, "R. Meir," 236; Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 24.

⁸⁶ See the literature quoted above in notes 8–11.

glected in rabbinic times, the tiny and precise textual details argue in my opinion for a written transmission of the Rabbi Meir's variant readings. In this respect, the two cases for which two different readings for the same biblical reference are attributed to Rabbi Meir are important. The quotations of these readings remind of the structure of the Severus Scroll variant list as well as of other variant lists quoted in Rabbinic literature.⁸⁷ In a protasis, the reading of MT is quoted and in an apodosis the variant reading of Rabbi Meir.

	Apodosis with variant reading	Protasis with MT reading
BerR 9.5 regarding Gen 1:31	והנה טוב מות	והנה טוב מאד
yTa'an 1.1 (64a) regarding Isa 21:11	משא רומי	משא דומה

Rabbinic texts avoided the quotation of the MT readings from this variant list regularly in those cases where the quotations of Rabbi Meir readings were preceded by quotations of the proto-Masoretic text of a biblical reference (BerR 20.12 = Gen 3:21; BerRbt on Gen 45:8; BerR 94.9 = Gen 46:23).

It seems hence likely that various Rabbis and rabbinic texts perused a variant list which collected various variant readings of Rabbi Meir. This variant list included most likely more variant readings than quoted in rabbinic literature and was not restricted to the Torah because a variant reading in Isa 21:11 is attributed to Rabbi Meir as well. The Rabbis selected those readings out of the Rabbi Meir variant list for quotation which were of interpretative interest to them and ignored the rest.

Overall conclusions regarding the character of the text underlying the Rabbi Meir variant list are impossible because of the limited evidence preserved. Four readings out of a Torah scroll and one reading from an Isaiah scroll are simply insufficient to qualify Rabbi Meir's scrolls as vulgar, not conform with MT, orthographically different from MT, or as proto-Masoretic. Given the general textual history of Hebrew text of the Bible,⁸⁸ it is by no means impossible though that

⁸⁷ For further variant lists in Rabbinic literature, see Carmel McCarthy, *The Tiqqune Sopherim and Other Theological Corrections in the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981); Giuseppe Veltri, *Eine Tora für den König Talmi: Untersuchungen zum Übersetzungsverständnis in der jüdisch-hellenistischen und rabbinische Literatur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994).

⁸⁸ For my own understanding of the textual standardization of the proto-Masoretic text and its dominance in the second century C.E., see Armin Lange, "They Confirmed the Reading" (y. Ta'an. 4:68a): The Textual Standardization of Jewish Scriptures in the Second Temple Period," in *From Qumran to Aleppo: A Discussion with Emanuel Tov about the Textual History of Jewish Scriptures in Honor of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Armin Lange, Matthias Weigold, and József Zsengellér (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 29–80.

Rabbi Meir's master copies were proto-Masoretic in character with a rather limited amount of disagreements toward MT^L (see above, 1.).

3.2 Was Rabbi Meir's Torah Scroll a Copy of the Severus Scroll?

In light of the above analysis, the question of the relationship between the Severus Scroll and Rabbi Meir's Torah can be answered. The Babylonian Talmud reports about a stay of Rabbi Meir in Rome (bAZ18a–b). While the passage in question is clearly legendary, it cannot be excluded that the Rabbi visited Rome. Historically it would thus not have been entirely impossible that Rabbi Meir actually saw the Severus Scroll. But a comparison of the variant readings of Rabbi Meir attested in Rabbinic literature and the Severus Scroll variant list does not support such speculations. Rabbi Meir's variants include four readings from the Torah. Three out of these four readings also occur in the Severus Scroll variant list; i.e., Gen 1:31; 3:21; and 45:8. But only in the case of Gen 1:31 does the Severus Scroll agree with Rabbi Meir's Torah in a variant reading against MT. Both read מוֹת instead of MT's מֵאֵד. This is an agreement in orthographic convention, however, rather than in textual difference. In the other two cases (Gen 3:21 and 45:8), the readings of Rabbi Meir do not correspond to any text of the Severus Scroll.

Because Rabbi Meir's Torah shares only one agreement with the Severus Scroll, Rabbi Meir's Torah may neither be identified with the Severus Scroll nor be seen as closely related to it. This is all the more the case since even the single agreement between R. Meir's Torah and the Severus Scroll reflects a shared spelling convention. Rabbi Meir's Torah can hence be regarded neither as another version of the Severus Scroll, nor as a manuscript closely related to it.

Miguel Pérez Fernández

El Proceso Targúmico: La Sinagoga y la Academia

1 Sobre los Orígenes de las Versiones Arameas de la Biblia

Conforme a la legislación de la *Mišnah* el traductor arameo había de traducir la Torah verso a verso (mMeg 4.4; cf. yMeg 4.1 [74d])). Puede suponerse que los que traducían oralmente en la sinagoga habían de tener preparación y conocer bien ambas lenguas, pues el traductor no podía tener delante ningún texto escrito.¹

Ello no significa necesariamente que no pudiera haber versiones arameas escritas de la Biblia. Es más, hubo de haberlas. Los persas impusieron el arameo como lengua de su administración y con el tiempo el arameo alcanzó amplia difusión hasta el punto de poderse hablar de una *koiné aramea*, que en Palestina se acentuaría con el retorno de los exiliados. Los documentos de Qumrán testimonian la existencia de documentos arameos, entre los cuales hay fragmentos del Levítico (4Q156) y del libro de Job (4Q157; 11Q10) – que parecen versión muy literal –, y, por su amplitud, hay que resaltar el Apócrifo del Génesis (1Q20; 1QapGn), “composición escrita en arameo que desarrolla los temas contenidos en Gn 6–15.”²

Díez Macho es de la opinión que tras las primeras versiones literarias en arameo imperial, debieron surgir versiones vernáculas para uso sinagoga en arameo occidental.³ Todas las hipótesis son muy especulativas, pero hay que

1 bMeg 32a “¿Por qué se dice que el lector de la Torah no debe apuntar al traductor? Para que nadie diga que la traducción estaba escrita en la Torah.” Cf. bBer 45a: “Al meturgeman no le está permitido levantar la voz por encima del lector.”

2 F. García Martínez considera 1QapGn “una composición prequmránica, originada en los mismos círculos en los que fue redactado *Jubileos*, y de los que más tarde surgirá la comunidad qumránica” (*Literatura judía intertestamentaria*, ed. Gonzalo Aranda Pérez, Biblia: Los Florentino García Martínez, Miguel Pérez Fernández et al. [Estella: Verbo Divino, 2000], 128 y 131). J. Ribera, en “Introducción al Targum del Génesis,” en *Traducciones arameas de la Biblia: Los Targumim del Pentateuco; I. Génesis* (Estella: Verbo Divino, 2004), 3–4, recoge las diversas hipótesis, como una evolución desde las versiones iniciales de los siglos I–II en Qumrán, un segundo estadio en Galilea en los siglos II–III donde surgen proto-versiones de la Torah, etc.

3 “Que los primeros Targumim fueran compuestos en Palestina en arameo imperial, es lógico en el siglo IV o quizá III a.C., cuando tal arameo en Palestina era lenguaje del Pueblo. Que tras la dialectización, se escribiesen Targumim en arameo imperial, no se puede dudar ... Lo que parece no poderse sostener es que al lado de estos Targumim literarios no existiesen, una vez consti-

contar con lo evidente: en primer lugar, con la iniciativa o intervención de la clase sacerdotal en las primeras versiones arameas.⁴ Los Targumim bíblicos de Qumrán (fragmentos de Lv y Job), procedentes de un ambiente sacerdotal y culto – poco aptos para la comprensión popular – son probablemente el primer testimonio de versión aramea de la Biblia escrita para una élite.⁵

Para el público sinagoga – que en su mayoría ya no entendía el texto hebreo – fue necesaria una traducción popular en arameo. Se ha de contar, pues, con traducciones y traductores, donde empieza a detectarse la presencia acusada de la clase rabínica.

Toda traducción, y más para un público indocto, lleva consigo, con el riesgo del error o la inexactitud, una posibilidad real de enriquecimiento, pues una característica de las versiones targúmicas es la recreación de sentido, que lleva a su receptor a descubrir posibilidades que estuvieron escondidas incluso al traductor primero del texto original. No todo *traduttore* es un *traditore*.

Los Targumin que han llegado a nosotros no son sólo traducción literal sino muchísimas veces también *explicativa* o *interpretativa*, y en algún momento *exegética*. Apenas hay un versículo que no contenga alguna alteración de significado o incluso añadidos.⁶ Tales añadidos o complementos de la traducción pueden provenir de la versión inicial, o de improvisaciones del traductor, o de desarrollos exegéticos, no ya desde el momento inicial, sino a todo lo largo de su transmisión escrita. Le Déaut hace tiempo que llamó la atención sobre Neh 8,8: *Leían el Libro de la Ley traduciendo y dando el sentido* – מפרש ושום שכל – , donde

tuido y en marcha el dialecto arameo occidental, traducciones arameas de la Biblia en lengua vernácula” (Alejandro Díez Macho, *El Targum: Introducción a las traducciones aramaicas de la Biblia* [Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1982], 76–77).

4 G. Stemmerger: “... the targumic tradition was not primarily or even exclusively a rabbinic enterprise ... Other people, perhaps many priests, were responsible for the targumim or participated in their creation” (“From inner-biblical interpretation to rabbinic exegesis,” en *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. James Carleton Paget y Joachim Schaper, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to 600* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013], 211).

5 “Los dos targumim (de Qumrán) citados proceden del ambiente sacerdotal, culto, de Qumrán, lo que torna problemático y cuestionable que su arameo sea del pueblo y para el pueblo.” (Díez Macho, *El Targum: Introducción*, 50).

6 El principio de R. Yehudah en tMeg 3.21: “el que traduce un versículo tal cual [literalmente, según su forma] es un embustero, el que añade es un blasfemo”, apenas se cumple en Onq y nunca en los otros testigos. Más exacto, aunque también sea exagerado, es el principio rabínico de que “la Torah tiene setenta caras (בתורה פנים שבעים פנים)” (BemR 13.15), de donde los frecuentes desarrollos exegéticos e inserciones.