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WRITING, RITUAL, AND APOCALYPSE:
STUDIES IN THE THEME OF ASCENT TO HEAVEN IN ANCIENT
MESOPOTAMIA AND SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

by

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Abstract

Explanations of the rise of the genre apocalypse in Hellenistic Judaism have typically traced literary influences but left questions about the mechanisms by which the genre itself came about. To address these questions, this dissertation focuses new methodological and philological resources on a single element of the genre: the ascent to heaven. The first chapter investigates the history of comparison between Jewish apocalypses and Mesopotamian religious traditions and finds that history dominated by a developmentalist model of borrowing, with Mesopotamian material arranged to fit a Hellenistic Jewish pattern. The second chapter develops an alternative, inner-Mesopotamian model of journeys to heaven and revelatory mediators based on a detailed survey of texts. The next three chapters apply this model to processes by which Israelite textual and ritual traditions were invoked and changed. The third chapter shows "apocalyptic" processes at work in the relationship between the Torah and the Bible: contests over the definition of Israel and the physical location of its contact with God affected, on a micro level, the textual form of the book of Joshua, and, on a macro level, the formation of new genres such as the apocalypse. The fourth chapter investigates generic continuity, showing that the mystical liturgies found at Qumran, in the book of Revelation, and in the later Hekhalot literature share a vocabulary, a set of poetic techniques and a concern with the ritual construction of otherworldly space comparable to ancient Near Eastern Temple Hymns. The fifth chapter shows how Canaanite myths of ascent to the throne of the dominant god are moved across different genres, from epic to prophecy, to emerge in the Hellenistic period in the genre of prayer as part of

a discourse of revealed knowledge and identification with divine beings. This discourse has a practical correlate in the corporeal dualism of Qumran ritual. By tracing the history of an apocalyptic theme, the dissertation documents the transformation of religious genres and the ritual subject: how they became apocalyptic together.

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Note on Format and Abbreviations

All texts cited in ancient languages are also translated into English the first time they appear. Hebrew and Aramaic are generally not transliterated. Akkadian, Ugaritic and Sumerian, as well as Hebrew (when transliterated), all appear in the AkkadGeneva font, for example, mannam lušpur "whom shall I send?" Unless noted, translations from the Hebrew Bible are those of the NJPS version; translations from the New Testament are those of the NRSV; translations of Apocrypha are from Sparks, ed. *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (1984); all others are mine. Bibliographical references generally follow the social sciences system, except in two cases: where the publication data are themselves relevant to my argument, and in treatment of Assyriological material, where the abbreviations of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary and Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary (in that order) are followed.

Writing, Ritual, and Apocalypse
Studies in the Theme of Ascent to Heaven in
Ancient Mesopotamia and Second Temple Judaism

Introduction

1. Apocalyptic Origins and Practices

For those religions which attempt to mediate between humans and a God beyond their imagination's power to grasp, imagining a scene of direct encounter with that God is a goal simultaneously impossible and recurrent, pervasive, even essential. Like certain Biblical prophets and Medieval Jewish mystics, the visionaries of the apocalypses appeared in this scenario, inhabiting the role of intermediary between divine revelation and human knowledge. The role was one of enormous historical consequence, as the history of Hellenistic Mediterranean society shows. Yet a detailed understanding of how someone could inhabit this role seems to have exceeded the resources, both methodological and evidentiary, available to modern scholarship. From a literary point of view, the identity of the visionary seems to shift locations disconcertingly from that of a character to that of an author, even to that of a reader. Historically, the question of origins remains perplexing: given that the genre apocalypse did not spring into existence full-blown, by what mechanisms did older texts and ideas *become* apocalyptic? Practically, the reader confronting an apocalypse is faced with a written object claiming authority over his or her life and experience; could the appearance of such texts be correlated with other changes in religion and society such that it could be involved in somehow *producing* a new reader? Examining the visionary element in apocalyptic literature raises essential questions of how textual genres and social roles are formed and inhabited.

This dissertation tries to provide a rigorous and explicit way of investigating these questions through the topos of ascent to heaven. To do this, it reexamines

two old topics in the study of the apocalyptic heavenly journey: the ancient sources of the otherworldly journey and its practical, experiential character. A new exploration of the Mesopotamian otherworldly journey, its protagonists, and its relation to ritual suggests ways of reading the cuneiform texts in their own social and historical context which can then be applied to the study of the apocalyptic otherworldly journey in its Hellenistic Jewish context.

The material is philologically difficult and the approach involves some ideas new to Biblical studies. The rest of the introduction will present these ideas and relate them to the texts through concrete examples. It should be emphasized that the goal is not to produce neat, conclusive solutions: the dissertation does not attempt to offer *the* origins of the apocalyptic otherworldly journey or *the* nature of the visionary experience, but rather to provide useful perspectives and empirical ways of answering smaller, focused questions that bear on these larger ones.

2. The Concepts and Methods of the Dissertation

The Apocalypse as a Written Text

The apocalypse, a literary genre narrating a revelation, is first known to us in two Jewish Aramaic texts from the third or fourth centuries B.C.E.: the Book of the Watchers and the Book of the Luminaries, which later become part of the Books of Enoch. After this point the production of apocalyptic literature never really ceases.[1] The genre receives its name from the first Christian example, the Revelation (*apokalypsis*) of John in the New Testament. The apocalypse is most

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[1] The seventeenth-century Sabbatean movement reworked older Jewish apocalypses and produced new ones; an eighteenth-century letter attributed to the Baal Shem Tov (founder of Hasidism, the most important Jewish mystical movement of the modern era) contains most of the defining features of an apocalypse (Scholem 1954). For modern Christian and Jewish apocalyptic movements and literature see Boyer 1992 and Marcus 1996, respectively.

conveniently identified by its literary features:

"...a revelation mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, inasmuch as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world." (Collins 1979:9).[2]

The apocalypse thus has a *morphological* identity, that is, a cluster of features defining it in a formal way and giving it a transhistorical character. This definition makes no particular claim as to content or historical context: the possession of the requisite features would make any text an apocalypse, no matter where it was found or when, and instances of these texts might be meaningfully compared. The apocalypse also has a *historical* identity, that is, a history in which earlier texts influenced and even gave rise to later texts. For example, Ezekiel's vision of God's chariot-throne, the *Merkavah*, recurs in almost every apocalyptic vision of heaven and continues to be central to early Jewish mystical texts, which are therefore often simply called Merkavah literature (or Hekhalot literature; the terms are interchangeable). Both the historical and morphological identities flow outside the established generic boundaries of the "apocalypse:" the Merkavah literature includes heavenly visions, incantations, songs, and Rabbinic legends that do not all meet the definition of an apocalypse, and certain essential features of the apocalypse are

[2] While Collins' definition is the most coherent and successful to date, there is in fact a *prima facie* problem with any such purely textual definition of a genre, well described by the linguist Charles T. Scott in the conclusion to his 1965 *Persian and Arabic Riddles: A Language-Centered Approach to Genre Definition*. This is that "linguistic units alone are not sufficient to provide a complete definition of a literary genre. They are relevant to a description of the internal composition of a genre...However, a description of the nonverbal matrix within which the genre is distributed is a further necessary component of a definition, and linguistics alone cannot provide this description." (cited in Briggs and Bauman 1992:138). Briggs and Bauman cite specific examples of how texts with the same formal literary features fall into *different* native genres depending on the contexts they are used in: generic specification resides "in the interaction between the organization of the discourse and the organization of the event in which it is employed." (1992:142).

found before the historical starting point of the genre in the Hellenistic period, in Egyptian, Greek and Mesopotamian texts.[3]

The Apocalypse as an Authoritative Act

There is a significant tension between the apocalypse's morphological and its historical understanding. First, while the two oldest apocalypses, the Book of the Watchers and the Book of the Luminaries, are both based around an otherworldly journey, later apocalypses sometimes lack this element entirely, and frequently enough that it was seen as inessential: note well its *absence* from the definition given above. Yet some of the most important studies have taken these early Enochic books as paradigmatic of the apocalypse in general. The origins and definition of the apocalypse might be seen to be in direct conflict here.

Second, as John Collins notes,

"...it seems very unlikely that all apocalypses can be traced to a common origin. Even the types involving an otherworldly journey are not clearly derived from a single historical source. In the Greco-Roman world, otherworldly journeys can be traced back to Parmenides and even to Homer. It is far from evident that the Jewish journeys of Enoch depend on the Greek tradition, and the relation, if any, of the Persian book of Arada Wiraf to either Greek or Jewish traditions has not yet been shown..." (1979:16)

This emphasizes that the apocalypse is most fundamentally a phenomenon produced under certain historical or social conditions, not the result of a single historical transmission. Studies of Jewish apocalyptic tend to scrupulously avoid this issue and emphasize the tracing of literary influences. But if Collins is correct, the tracing of literary influences can never really explain the apocalypse, which arose in several cultures independently, each instance

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[3] Useful descriptions of these different types of apocalypse are collected in Hellholm, ed. 1983.

drawing on different literary sources.

What makes both of these problems essential, rather than part of the inevitable "empirical residue"[4] left over from generic classification, is the way they force us to consider how the apocalypse *became a genre*. Why, over the course of history, did various separate texts and traditions begin to acquire these features that we can retroactively recognize as a unity?

A very different sort of account of the apocalypse allows us to begin to answer this question by opening up the notion of apocalyptic genre to investigation based not on literary form or historical influence but on relationships to ritual, textual authority, and the reader. This is Hartmut Stegemann's analysis of apocalyptic literature as a response to a historically specific problem of authority (1983:505). He finds the essence of apocalyptic literature in an attempt to introduce new ritual practices and religious ideas that were neither present in the Torah nor exegetically derivable from it.[5] The problem of the exclusive authority of the Torah and Torah exegesis during the Hellenistic period is resolved by diffusing the Torah's exclusivity: it is claimed to be only one of the written texts (*written* form is crucial here) revealed by God. In this Stegemann takes the Book of the Luminaries as having not only historical but conceptual priority. In providing a way for new knowledge to claim authority, the earliest apocalypse is also a model for what an apocalypse *does*.

"Die Autorität Gottes selbst, 'himmlisches Wissen,' und dessen 'Offenbarung' in Form eines 'Buches' sind hier die Konstituenda von

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[4] "...all of us know intuitively that generic classifications never quite work: an empirical residue that does not fit any clearly defined category—or, even worse, that falls into too many—is always left over." Briggs and Bauman 1992:132.

[5] p. 506. This insight has significant consequences for the usual view of apocalyptic visions as based on "exegesis" of Biblical materials, if the concern motivating the generic form of the apocalypse is precisely the *inadmissibility* of the content of the apocalypse as "exegesis." For further critique see chapter five below.

'Apokalyptik', was auch immer Gegenstand und Inhalt der 'neuen Offenbarung' sein mag..."(507).

For Stegemann, apocalyptic is most fundamentally defined as a solution to a problem of textual authority arising in a specific historical situation. In order to induce the reader to understand the text in the proper fashion (as an authoritative, divinely revealed book) a framing device meant to trigger a specific mode of reading (that proper to the Torah) is employed. It is then these framing devices that are recognized as the formal features that define an apocalypse.[6]

It is Stegemann's insight which allows us to connect this generative problem of apocalyptic literature with the conditions of production of literary genres in general:

"Genres are essentially literary *institutions,* or social contracts between a writer and a specific public, whose function is to specify the proper use of a particular cultural artifact. The speech acts of daily life are themselves marked with indications and signals (intonation, gesturality, contextual deictics and pragmatics) which ensure their appropriate reception. In the mediated situations of a more complicated social life—and the emergence of writing has often been taken as paradigmatic of such situations—perceptual signals must be replaced by conventions if the text in question is not to be abandoned to a drifting multiplicity of uses...Still, as texts free themselves more and more from an immediate performance situation, it becomes ever more difficult to enforce a given generic rule on their readers. No small part of the art of writing, indeed, is absorbed by this (impossible) attempt to devise a foolproof mechanism for the

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[6] Stegemann's definition is formed exclusively on the basis of Hellenistic Jewish texts, but it is highly suggestive that the Iranian apocalypse of Kartir was probably a response to an analogous problem of textual authority, specifically the challenge to Zoroastrian religious power posed by the otherworldly revelations and concomitant book production of Mani and his followers. See Russell 1990.

automatic exclusion of undesirable responses to a given literary utterance."[7]

In Fredric Jameson's terms, Stegemann's argument amounts to a demonstration that the apocalypse belongs to that part of the art of writing that works to exclude undesirable responses to itself. Specifically, it seeks to protect its new ritual practices and religious concepts from dismissal as demonic invention, priestly corruption, hubris, or, perhaps worst of all, an exercise of merely human creativity, a literary fantasy. While there are other ways to understand the notion of genre,[8] the vital contribution that Stegemann makes here is to redefine the apocalypse to include an implicit relationship to historical contests over authority, situations of performance and reading, and thus to changing historical circumstances.

This redefinition raises a challenge. Collins' formal literary definition represented a solution to a troubling but essential feature of the apocalypses. Generically, apocalypses show an overwhelming tendency to be pseudepigraphic, that is, to falsify their own contexts of authorship and use.[9] Historically, the Hellenistic Jewish apocalypses often come to us only through extremely long and complex processes of transmission, in which each new editing or reuse tended to efface the previous ones. By opening up the definition of apocalypse to these contexts of use, one thereby introduces new difficulties as well as new possibilities. We are able to pose more sophisticated

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[7] Jameson 1981:106-7. While Jameson suggests the idea of an inverse proportion between literary-generic form and daily life, this appears to be slightly oversimplified. Mikhail Bakhtin (1986), famously, investigated the problem of *speech genres*, the fact that the discourse of daily life is itself largely organized by convention. Work in linguistic anthropology supports the idea that there is rather a back-and-forth between textual form and performance, wherein texts acquire markers of their own history as they are subjected to reuse. See Briggs and Bauman 1992.
[8] In fact modern theories of genre have been constructed according to at least four different analogies: genetic descent, family resemblance (in the Wittgensteinian sense), social institutions, and speech acts. (Fishelov 1993). We have already examined apocalypses according to the first two, and both Jameson's and Stegemann's statements deal with the last two analogies.
[9] At least from our point of view!

questions about the texts' relation to life—but can we answer them?

The Apocalypse as Text and Action

These difficulties and possibilities can be summed up in the question of *how the generic form of a text relates to its context of performance*: that is, how can we tell how a text, preserved for us in the literary form of an apocalypse, might have been applied to a real occasion? One possible answer would be that the question asks for information we do not have: it requires us to think like ethnographers, eliciting a daunting amount of contextual information from our materials.[10]

Instead, this dissertation will attempt to demonstrate that the most traditional sort of philological technique—the historically and linguistically informed close reading of ancient texts—does address these questions. Rather than producing abstract generalizations, methodological reflection can make our old philological analysis more rigorous and concrete by drawing our attention to aspects of the texts and our reconstruction of their contexts which may have been taken for granted or ignored in the past. The following discussion of the relationship between a text genre and a ritual role at Qumran is meant to exemplify the mode of analysis I will use in the dissertation. It introduces and applies the most important concepts of the dissertation, attempting to show how attention to them lets us answer these new questions.

In religion, language and ritual claim to deal with the forces governing the universe; it is therefore a *goal* of religious texts and acts to explicitly connect language to power. This feature may explain why religion has provided so

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[10] The terms in which this question is phrased were first formulated in a separate study of genre and ritual performance in Mesopotamian childbirth incantations, read to the 45th annual Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in Cambridge, MA in 1998.

many twentieth-century theorists with a model for the way language is used to

produce life roles and social authority." The work of the Oxford philosopher of

language J.L. Austin provides a useful starting point in such an investigation

because his analysis starts from a point most congenial to philology: a

grammatical definition. Austin began his influential *How to Do Things with*

Words (1962) by defining the category of what he called "performative

utterances", verbal formulae that do not just describe but affect reality.

Significantly, in accounting for their grammatical form and somehow related

social power he described these utterances as not merely conventional

language but "ritual or ceremonial." His definition is well characterized by

Hillers in his study of performative utterances in Biblical Hebrew:

> "Austin distinguished performative utterances from ordinary declarative
> sentences in this way. They are pronouncements where the uttering of the
> sentence is not a *description* of an action, but itself the *doing* of an action, or
> part of the doing of an action. One of his examples (now apparently classic) is of
> the christening of a ship. "I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth," actually
> accomplishes what it states, given, of course, the proper ritual circumstances. "I
> bet you it will rain tomorrow" is a further example, and illustrates the ordinary
> grammatical form of an explicit performative in English: the first-person singular
> of the present tense. Terms such as *now* or *hereby* may accompany
> performatives, as in "You are hereby authorized to pay," which incidentally
> exemplifies the transformation of a performative into a second-person passive."
> (1995:758-9)

To achieve the goal of the study (documenting instances of explicit

performatives in the text of the Hebrew Bible), Hillers restricts his use of Austin

to the grammatical definition of "performative" that would allow one to identify

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" The (only sometimes acknowledged) extent to which some of the most influential contemporary
theories of language and social action are dependent on religious models is a project more
appropriate to explore elsewhere. Interested readers might investigate this issue themselves by
reading Althusser 1994, Butler 1997, or Foucault 1979 and tracking the various concepts and
movements that words like "ritual" and "magic" are called upon to underwrite.

the form in a written text. But it is only after this definition that Austin turned to the problem of how this grammatical form could so strongly affect reality outside of texts, beyond some mysterious power inhering in "ritual". In fact, the way the performative connects to reality outside the utterance is inherent in its grammar. The careful reader will have noted that the most distinctive markers of the English performative ("you," "I," "here," "now," use of present tense) have the common function of pointing to the situation in which the utterance is used. Linguistically, we may classify all of the discursive markers of the performative as *deictic*, referring to their own context of utterance.[12] But exactly how do these features of its language bring social force *outside of language* to bear on the context of utterance?

These considerations eventually forced Austin to abandon the term "performative utterance" entirely.[13] In his subsequent discussion Austin argued that the essence of the performative may not lie in the grammatical form at all. Its conditions for success and failure reach outside of texts into history and depend on the specific context of the utterance that its deictics mark. First, the utterance must draw on the past—it must be a historically accepted formula. Further mandatory requirements involve the person's intentions (in "I promise," the promiser has to mean it), identity (in "I hereby sentence you" the sentencer has to be a judge), and performance (in "I bless," the blessing cannot be garbled)—in Austin's words, the "total speech situation." Austin then realized that he was no longer talking about a mere utterance but about an action enmeshed in history and social life, which he christened a "speech act," broadening the category to include other forms such as commands. In my

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[12] For discussion of the phenomenon in Akkadian see the bibliography in Hillers 1995 and my note below in chapter two, s.v. Maqlû.

[13] Hillers is also aware of this complexity: "Somewhat disconcertingly, [Austin] ended by questioning whether *performatives...*are actually a special class of utterance at all." (1995:758)

discussion the term *performative* will be retained to refer only to the grammatical form as found in texts, the term *speech act* to the application (attested or reconstructed) of a performative to a specific situation.

Exorcism as Speech Act and Genre

Let us choose as an example a text clearly designed to be performed. 4Q510 fragment 1, inscribed in a Herodian hand and datable to the late first century B.C.E., is part of a series of brief compositions from Qumran bearing the generically confusing labels "praises" and "songs to frighten." The texts express cosmic knowledge and wonder at God's power, which have led them to be classed as "sapiential" or "prayers," but their stated effect is to frighten off demons. The strange function of the text is condensed neatly in the following explicit performative (ll. 4-5):

ואני משכיל משמיע הוד תפארתו לפחד ולב[הל]ל] כול רוחי מלאכי חבל ורוחות ממזרים

"And I, the Sage, proclaim the majesty of His beauty to frighten and ter[rify] all the spirits of the destroying angels and the bastard spirits..."[14]

While the grammatical form of the verbal phrase here fits that of a performative ("I proclaim"), the text has two other striking features that go beyond mere grammatical form and demand we that examine them as historical

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[14] The translation follows the syntactic interpretation of Vermes 1997:420. It is justified by the only parallel phrase in the Songs of the Sage, 4Q511 frg. 35 6 ואני מדרא אל בקצי דורותי לרומם שם "And I, I spread fear of God in the periods of my own time to exalt the Name...", which shows so many syntactic parallels that the two must be read together as instances of the same formula. The syntax of this formula consists of: copula, first person singular pronoun, participle with direct object, infinitive clause of purpose with direct object. Interestingly, the other possible reading of the syntax here (exemplified by Baillet's translation in the *editio princeps*, DJD VII:216: "Et moi, je suis un sage, qui proclame la majesté de Sa splendeur...") also indicates a type of speech act (if not a formal performative): the claiming of a privileged ritual role. For the importance and extensive history of this claim in Near Eastern exorcistic ritual see chapter 2 below.

evidence about speech acts. The first feature concerns genre, and thus the text's status as ritual (with all the authority that might derive from its acceptance and conventionality); the second feature concerns the identity of the speaker, another constitutive requirement for the efficacy of a speech act.

Concerning genre: while "proclaiming the majesty of (God's) beauty" would invoke the category of "hymn" in earlier contexts, the text itself clearly states that the purpose of the hymn is exorcistic, to combat demons. In other words, the performatives and rubrics of the text suggest that we are dealing with either the repurposing of an old genre or the manifestation of a new one. There is evidence that such a new category was actually being formed in this period within the stream of tradition represented at Qumran. The Apocryphal Psalms scroll (11Q5 XXVII) designates a category of exorcistic song in its concluding discussion of the authorship of the Psalms. Here it claims that, among the types of "hymns" and "songs" that David composed, there existed "four songs to sing over the afflicted" (9-10). The opinion of the redactors of 11Q5 is especially relevant for the Qumran world view because they also credit David with 364 daily sacrificial songs (XXVII 5), indicating they shared a belief in the 364-day liturgical year with the Qumran sectarians.[15]

The incipient genre of exorcistic song which we first see at Qumran had become a well known tradition by the time of the Byzantine period. In the later Jewish amulets and magic bowls, "song of praise" is used as a rubric marking a section of discourse whose explicit purpose is driving away harmful spirits.[16] These amulets and bowls could already draw on the authority of centuries of

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[15] This ritual practice represented such a great point of division at the time that the first known apocalypse, the Book of the Luminaries, promulgates it as its major divine revelation.

[16] See Naveh and Shaked 1993 A 25:7 שׁיר תשׁבחה לאלהא_על כל פגע "a song of praise to God...against all harm;" B 25:4-5 שׁיר התשׁבחות (where the *vav* is probably metathesized with the *tav*); Isbell 1975 69:2 שׁיר תשׁבחה; Naveh and Shaked 1985 A 3:1 תשׁבחות_אל כל רוח ביש"ה שׁיר "a song of praise against every evil spirit."

tradition, over which this designation had been repeated enough to become ancient and conventional. It is therefore probably not a coincidence that at Qumran, where the phenomenon is first attested, we find an attempt to give the genre an ancient past by attributing composition of exorcistic songs to David. Here, the manuscripts attest to the process of historical formation of a genre on whose history a ritual speech act would draw.[17]

Disconcertingly, what we find about the conventionality of the form on which a speech act draws is that it *starts somewhere,* as a creative human invention. Furthermore, we seem to find ourselves looking at a place very near where it starts: as a repurposing of other, earlier genres. Finally, we must admit that however close we get to this supposed starting point, we will probably never reach it because each new genre seems itself to consist of modifications of older genres and to draw on their traditionality in turn. The history of exorcism thus grants us insight into that historical dimension of speech acts which seems to inhere in, and grant social power to, their generic form.

This historical and generic dimension also extends to the speaker of the texts. It appears that one had to be a Sage (משכיל) to properly recite the exorcistic songs. This is implied by the explicit performative cited above and the only completely preserved beginning rubric of a song (4Q511 frg 2 i 1 [   ]שיר למשכיל "For the Sage: [first?] song"[18]). The constitution of the Qumran community itself is also dependent on the Sage: initiation into the community

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[17] There is just enough evidence to suggest that an exorcistic song of praise to a deity was probably not native to the ancient West Semitic incantation tradition before the Hellenistic period. This conclusion, based on my own unpublished studies, is supported by the following Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Aramaic texts: CAT 1.12, 1.13, 1.23, 1.65, 1.82, 1.96, 1.100, 1.107, 1.114, 1.169, 9.435, Arslan Tash I and II (on the authenticity of which see van Dijk 1992 and Pardee 1998) and the Uruk incantation (which, though dating from the Seleucid period, represents older West Semitic traditions as shown by its parallels with CAT 1.169 and 9.435).

[18] The only other preserved text that is clearly the beginning of a song, 4Q511 frg 8 3, has a gap the size of the designation "For the Sage" at the beginning of its rubric, suggesting that such a designation appeared at the beginning of every song in the text.

and instruction in its teachings and practices are mainly his responsibility. This made especially clear by the most important constitutive document of the Qumran community, the Community Rule, which is framed as "Instruction for the Sage, with regard to the men of the Torah who have freely pledged themselves..."[19] The Community Rule tells the Sage how to make the men who have pledged themselves into a new kind of person. Like the exorcistic songs, the Rule is designated in its rubric for the Sage's use.

The historical dimension of the speaker's role extends back to the Bible, where earlier forms of the personal designation of Sage appear. In the Psalms rubrics we also find the word משכיל, but here it is used to designate not a type of person but a type of song.[20] A much closer fit occurs between the Qumran designations and the persons alluded to in the final apocalyptic visions of the book of Daniel. Here the משכילים appear as central actors in an eschatological drama, teaching ("The knowledgeable [משכילי] among the people will make the many [רבים] understand..." [Dan. 11:33]), suffering ("Some of the knowledgeable will fall, that they may be refined and purged and whitened until the time of the end..." [Dan. 11:35]) and, in the first and only Biblical reference to the concept, achieving a heavenly afterlife ("And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of the sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever." [Dan. 12:3]).

[19] The words occur in the only fully preserved beginning of a recension of the Community Rule (4QSd): 4Q258 i 1: ...מ_ ש למשכיל על אנשי התורה המתנדבים. The same words frame a very similar text in 4Q256 frg 4, which Alexander and Vermes DJD XXVI reconstruct as column IX of this alternative recension (4QSb). From this evidence, Vermes reconstructs a similar text in the broken beginning of 1QS (see simply Vermes 1997:98). Other initiation texts are also designated for the Sage's use. See 4Q298, the "Words of the Maskil to all the Sons of Dawn," ed. Pfann and Kister DJD XX.

[20] In the Psalms the heading takes the format: genre type, le- + author/performer, or: le- + author/performer, genre type; while its uses are not well understood, the formulaic nature of the designation is clear. The word משכיל appears in the Psalms rubrics in forms such as: ...משכיל למנצח "For the leader, a *Maskil*..." (Ps. 42:1) or משכיל לדוד "A *Maskil* of David" (Ps. 142:1).

What is especially striking about the fit between the Qumran and apocalyptic usages of the term משכיל is the way the Qumran texts provide roles that seem to be modeled on and act out an apocalyptic text. The Community Rule not only designates the figure of the Sage in the same role—(literally?) enlightened teacher—that we find in Daniel's vision, but the inner circle of the community is designated with the very same term used in Daniel for the students of the משכיל: the Many (רבים).[21] This suggests an important fact about the "real life" identity upon which the efficacy of the speech act in the exorcistic songs and the production of new community members in the Community Rule depends. The role of Sage itself refers to and is structured by the usage of the word משכיל in Daniel, a literary text of the genre apocalypse which has been used to designate the performed roles of the Sage and the Many at Qumran.[22]

The study of persons in speech acts has thus led us back to the study of genres, and the way texts of different genres (rule, song, apocalypse) may implicate each other. A final feature of the textual evidence allows us to situate the Sage historically in relation to his songs: this is that while the genre designation "exorcistic song" persists in the later amulets and magic bowls, the personal designation Sage does not. No later incantation refers to the role of a משכיל, a term which therefore seems to both begin and end its ritual life in the Qumran texts.

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[21] See for example 4Q258 II 5, the index to DJD XXVI *q.v.*, and 1QS *passim*.

[22] This pattern is especially significant in light of the anthropological concepts of "entextualization" and "contextualization," that two-way process by which living discourse is rendered repeatable by being transferred into a textual format, and the way that the texts reemerge in social life by being introduced back into discourse. "The idea that social identities may be durable projections from texts read in terms of their entextualization processes raises further questions about the idea...of culture as text inserted into a social context. For that latter view...presupposes a differentiated social world, existing prior to the entextualization processes. Our investigations into the natural histories of particular discourses, however, suggests that the distinction between the social and the cultural cannot be so easily made, and that social categories, if readable from entextualization processes, are just as much products of them." Silverstein and Urban 1996:6.

The exorcistic songs thus provide a particularly dense example of the temporality of both genres and ritual roles: we can observe at once the end of the Sage and the beginning of his song. And there is something perhaps more disconcerting. If we assume that the life role of משכיל was as central to the self-conception of those persons who assumed it as it was to their daily behavior, which is elaborately regulated in the texts, then we see evidence that even the self has a historical aspect vis a vis performance; at least some selves may be provided by ritual and inhabited via performance.

It would be possible to take an alternative view and see the speaker of these texts as a sort of literary conceit. One would then analyze the relationships found in the text as set of a "hollow" theatrical effects, supported only by what religious authority and practical discipline the Qumran leaders could muster within their own community. Such an analysis need only be taken a step further to examine the extent to which every authoritative role is a sort of literary conceit, provided with a larger contextual frame and therefore more social force. But this does not appear to make authority any less effective. Either way, the result is the same: the texts we have considered suggest a new way of writing the history of the Qumran community and apocalyptic literature, based on the evolution of religious roles in relation to the genres in whose performance they are invoked.[23]

The Construction of Apocalyptic Experience

The historical changes in and interactions between religious roles and

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[23] Using "invoke" in the magical sense of calling into being as well as in the sense of being called upon to enact the genres themselves. As Silverstein and Urban write, "...the genre, as a metadiscursive label for a class of recurrent entextualizations...is what appears to give substance and continuity to the social interactions in which the texts are produced, and, therefore, to the broader social order." 1996:8.

textual genres, so visible at Qumran, are of more general significance. The

claim of a prophet to speak with authority by directly reporting the speech of a

god is partly based on the same sort of discursive phenomena that frame a

speech act, such as deictic markers and pronoun shifts ("utterance of the Lord;"

"I the Lord am your God"). The prophet's claim to be producing something like

an autobiographical utterance, to be narrating events that really happened to

him, represents a claim not only to knowledge but to the kind of personal status

that is a precondition for certain authoritative speech acts. In these cases the

performance situation may involve the adoption of speaking roles (the Maśkîl,

the prophet, God) and interaction with participants (angels in a prayer, demons

in an exorcism, a god in a prophecy) whose presence and discursive role as

audience, addressee, or speaker might not be registered in other contexts.[24] In

this regard note that the two parallel performatives in the exorcistic songs ("...I,

the Sage, proclaim the majesty of His beauty to frighten and ter[rify]..." and ".. I

spread fear of God in the periods of my own time to exalt the Name...") both

refer to acts of making God perceptible, the first through "proclaiming His

beauty" and the second through "exalting the Name."

Attention to these features of religious language and ritual is not meant to

reduce human experience to discourse or to give up hope of a view of human

practice that incorporates more than just texts. Instead, it is intended to draw our

attention and critical faculties to the grounds of that experience and practice

preserved to us in historically documented instances of discourse. It points to

the fact that the discursive markers and speaking roles that help in the

production and reception of these texts are an inextricable part of the

construction of experience, not just in marked performance situations but in

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[24] For this general propensity of religious language see Keane 1997.

daily life.[25] To affect someone's current subjectivity (the position from which someone speaks and thinks), or even build a new subjectivity, the designations must be not only used but accepted. In the documented changes in usage and acceptation we can trace the political and historical dimension of the subject. Old subject positions can be called into question and new selves may be fashioned in the course of time. It is this aspect of discourse, partly constitutive of human experience, whose history can be tracked through our texts.

These theoretical considerations have led to the philological program pursued in the rest of the dissertation.

3. Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter one is a study of previous research on the background of the otherworldly journey and its earliest protagonist, Enoch. In addition to providing a summary and critique of the most important research, it illustrates a methodological point. This is that the very notion of a "background" is connected to a mode of comparison—the tracing of literary influences—and a way of organizing the data—selectively disarticulating it from its ancient contexts and rearticulating it into a model based on Biblical and Hellenistic Jewish patterns. While the comparisons made this way lead to useful insights, they also necessarily foreshorten the material chosen for "background."

Chapter two is the necessary complement of chapter one: an encyclopedic survey of the Mesopotamian materials relating to ascent to heaven and a study of human mediators of divine revelation that attempts to reverse the handmaiden status of Assyriology in Biblical studies and turn the "background" into a "foreground." The mode of investigation is deliberately mechanical: citing

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[25] An insight that was the great merit of Erving Goffman (1959, 1974) to develop in rigorous sociological analyses.

and analyzing, in historical and literary context, every instance in Sumerian or Akkadian of an ascent to heaven and every mention of the protagonists of such journeys. The survey is accompanied by an analysis of the role of the diviner and the exorcist, human mediators between this world and the other world. This is an attempt to produce a less biased view, or at the very least the view of a different swath of the material than has previously been presented. The encyclopedic survey allows us to track the historical specificity of ritual roles and textual genres relating to ascent to heaven. In particular, it allows us to produce a richly documented model of how Mesopotamian religious practitioners related to the protagonists of otherworldly journeys in the Hellenistic period.

The following three chapters then take the opposite tack. Rather than encyclopedic surveys, they represent focused studies of the way in which the themes introduced in chapter two are developed in early Jewish texts. In different ways, all three attempt to track the complex interplay between textual genres, ritual roles, and historical circumstances. They thus attempt to provide concrete and context-specific views of problems essential for understanding the otherworldly journey in the apocalypses. These comparative studies are based around textual criticism and sacred space, sacred space and ritual, and ritual and exegesis, respectively.

Chapter three is a study of the textual politics of revelation in the Bible; it attempts to analyze how heavenly revelation is mediated and relocated through the writing and editing of texts. Its specific interest is the way in which Mount Sinai, the site of Moses' receipt of the Torah and the elders of Israel's vision of God's throne, is transferred to the land of Israel itself, thus producing an *axis mundi* that obviates the need for access to heaven. It is found that the key function is that of *translation* in the sense of the transfer of the geographical and

metaphysical properties of one site to a new one. The Qumran fragments of Joshua allow us to examine how this issue is played out differently in variant literary editions of Joshua. Here we see the Bible's composers at work, because the Qumran evidence grants us empirical access to the process of redaction that produced the Hebrew Bible. These redactors handled problems of ritual and cosmic geography by producing variant literary editions of Joshua which document the multiplication and repression of sacred sites in the text of the Tanakh, a process continuous with the writing of apocalyptic literature itself.

Chapter four then deals with the multiplication and repression of sacred sites in ritual and history. Archaeological and historical evidence agree that there were Israelite cult sites outside of Jerusalem. Yet outside of some legendary and polemical material, we have little textual evidence from these sites. At the same time, Hellenistic Jewish literature shows a flowering of a genre completely unknown in the Hebrew Bible, the temple hymn. The Hellenistic Jewish temple hymn appears in revelatory contexts, applied to the heavenly sanctuary. Investigation of the ancient Mesopotamian and Aramean temple hymn indicates that the Hellenistic Jewish hymns are continuous with these ancient traditions. The poetic techniques that produced these hymns worked to generate sacred space through the liturgical performance of the hymns.

Chapter five connects the heavenly journey with the reapplication of ancient myth in ritual. It shows how an archaic Canaanite myth concerning ascent to heaven (or the heights of the *axis mundi*) by a usurper to the divine throne is subsequently invoked and reinterpreted in Isaiah, Ezekiel, the Psalms, and later in Hellenistic Jewish literature, the Qumran *Hodayot*, and the book of Revelation. The texts all invoke the persona of a being who attempts to claim

divine status and cognitive power through ascent and seating on the throne of the dominant god: in Ugaritic, the figure is Athtar; in Isaiah Helel ben Shachar, in Psalm 82 YHWH himself. By the Hellenistic period the figure, who became Lucifer in Christian tradition, has been domesticated. Claimed for ritual practitioners, we find it as a positive and potentially accessible speaking role in several manuscripts of a Qumran text, as well as in the initiatory model offered by Jesus Christ in Revelation. Evidence from a variety of practical texts, including calendrical, astronomical, physiognomic and medical documents, shows that this divine persona was part of a larger pattern that was both mythic and ritual.

Together, the different approaches offer not a complete new account of apocalyptic religion but a set of complementary new perspectives. The focus is not on tracing linear developments between texts but on how people actively reapplied texts to evolving religious contexts and how they in turn helped change those contexts. I hope thereby to render things more complex by illuminating some of the processes by which both textual genres and human religious subjects *became* apocalyptic.

Chapter One
The Problem of a Babylonian Background
for Apocalyptic Literature

Over the past century of scholarship the apocalyptic heavenly journey has typically been understood in terms of influence and borrowing, both from Biblical and foreign sources. It has also been understood phenomenologically, as an example of a comparative type. This chapter will review the relationship between these two modes of understanding. The past century of work on the Hellenistic Jewish ascent to heaven attests that scholars have exerted a considerable amount of work to construct an ancient Near Eastern background for it, but it has rarely been the same background. A review of the previous studies in this area provokes the question of the privileged relationship between influence and explanation. Given the prominence of a new religious form, why is it that scholars have so frequently emphasized borrowing in their accounts of that form? A closer look at the intellectual climate in which cuneiform materials were first applied to Hellenistic Jewish apocalypses will help explain why scholars have so often concentrated on questions of influence. A survey of later research will suggest the strengths and weaknesses of this approach, and question its dominance. What sort of things does the logic of borrowing draw our attention to? What relationships might it obscure?

For purposes of this chapter I have focused on studies bearing on the Mesopotamian background of one central apocalyptic figure, Enoch. Of all the comparative connections between the ancient Near East and Hellenistic Judaism, this particular one has proven to be one of the most resilient. Interest in Iranian, Greek, and Mandean religion rose and faded, but since Heinrich Zimmern's groundbreaking study of 1903, scholars have returned to his

Mesopotamian comparanda repeatedly, producing a good-sized dossier of work embodying several different approaches and adding a large range of material (though rarely the same material twice). Thus, the topic may help bring the general methodological problems into focus.

1. The Scholarly Construction of Comparisons

A quotation from Helge Kvanvig's introduction to his massive study of the Mesopotamian background of apocalyptic literature provides a point of focus for this chapter:

> "The research history of apocalyptic is...not the history [of] how new methods have been applied to the same texts, but the history of an ongoing expansion of relevant sources..." (Kvanvig 1988:3)

This claim would seem not to demand much demonstration: such a central apocalyptic text as the Ethiopic book of Enoch was not available, except in fragments, to Western scholars until it had been brought from Ethiopia and published in 1821; they could not compare it to cuneiform sources until those had been discovered, deciphered and published in the second half of the 19th century, etc. But the simple relationship between the discovery and application of ancient texts implied by such an account deserves a closer look. The technical and historical issues involved here may even have seemed too obvious to Kvanvig, a scholar well-acquainted with the histories of both Jewish and Mesopotamian research, to mention; his purpose was not, after all, to write a history of the subject. Nonetheless I am going to argue that they render Kvanvig's account untenable. The first issue is the question of how and why scholars were able to excavate, examine and publish these texts in the first place. While the relationship between the Western powers and the Ottoman

Empire at the turn of the century was hardly a straightforward example of colonial domination,[1] it remains true that the possibility of access to cuneiform texts was inextricable from evolving political relationships. The texts' dissemination and study was an affair of journalism, politics, and economics as much as pure scholarship.[2]

It is a striking fact that the excitement surrounding the publication of the Babylonian deluge myth was derived from precisely the same sort of comparison that Kvanvig made: that of Biblical and early Jewish material with cuneiform materials. But at the end of the 19th century the historical situation was different in at least two major ways. First, the texts' publishers successfully stirred up massive publicity and interest. Second, the discovery occurred at a turning point in the history of Western theology and science such that the controversy around the texts changed the face of religious discourse on the Bible in the West. While the discovery of manuscripts of a cuneiform flood account predating the Biblical manuscripts did have inherent significance, it was the circumstances of the texts' reception that made them methodologically significant.

This is demonstrated by the fact that the discovery of the cuneiform documents was not the only threat to the uniqueness of Biblical religion available at the time. The title of Robertson Smith's *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (Smith 1927; first ed. 1889) suggests the challenge to Christian and Jewish self-understanding that his work, as a comparative study of ancient Arabic and Israelite ritual, represented. Smith removed the sacrificial

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[1] At least not in the way that the 19th-century relationship between France and Egypt is construed by Said in his classic *Orientalism* (1978). For the distinctive imperial roles of Germany and England, and the United States, in Mesopotamia see the works of Larsen 1996 and Kuklick 1996, respectively, and the note of Cooper 1992. Essential theoretical questions about Said's approach are raised in Clifford 1988.

[2] See Sweek 1995.

procedures of the Bible from their most conventional context—a unique place in sacred law and sacred history—and placed them into a comparative series where they represented merely another instance of Semitic religious practice.[3] The theological implications of this operation did not go unnoticed: as S.A. Cook notes, even before the publication of the *Lectures,* Smith's theory of sacrifice was understood as one that "cut away the basis on which the whole doctrine of salvation rests".[4] The reaction Smith's work provoked in the Church of Scotland lost him his post at the University of Aberdeen.[5] Yet Smith's materials, unlike the cuneiform texts, did not raise the question of influence in any major way; his Arabic materials dated over a millennium *after* the putative date of the earliest Biblical strata he examined. Smith's challenge was strictly methodological, but its inherent intellectual significance was as great or greater.

This can be seen if one compares the theoretical impact of Smith's work with that of the discovery of the Babylonian deluge myth. It is Smith who is sometimes credited with giving anthropology its first developed theory of ritual. Indeed, *Lectures* stands almost alone among works by Biblicists in having had

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[3] It is here that the complex of Orientalist thought is more apparent: Smith's pre-Islamic and Bedouin Arabic rituals were placed in an evolutionary sequence prior to Israelite and Christian religion and had the rhetorical effect of bringing the Biblical materials back "down to earth."

[4] Cook, introduction to Smith 1927: xxvii n2. Smith's dangerous insight concerned the economy of sacrifice: "In short, the life of a camel, which no longer had the full value of a tribesman's life for ordinary purposes, was treated as a tribesman's life when it was presented at the altar; so that here we have already a beginning of the idea that the victim *qua* victim possesses a sacrosanct character which does not belong to it merely in virtue of its natural kind."(361-2). As Cook points out, recognition that this economy is at work in all forms of sacrifice then forces recognition of the fact "...that what we call 'religion' is, as it were, woven upon a texture of beliefs and customs which cannot be called by that name." (xxxviii).

[5] His troubles with the church were also related to his defense of Wellhausen. On Smith's life and historical context see Johnstone, ed. 1995.

a meaningful impact on the anthropological study of religion.[6] The scholars who focused on the cuneiform texts, by contrast, remained faithful to the paradigm of influence: their methodological significance was found in the Babel-Bible controversy and the work of the Pan-Babylonian school. Both of these tend now to be viewed as mere scholarly curiosities.[7]

A second factor, especially germane to cuneiform studies, is the obvious but crucial fact that the texts do not enter scholarly discourse by themselves. Cuneiformists know how hard it can be to properly edit an unparalleled text for the first time. A reliable first edition can be almost impossible if the text is badly damaged or representative of a new genre. This difficulty is highlighted by the sort of attacks that other cuneiformists sometimes carried out on competent scholars such as Erich Ebeling who went ahead with publishing large quantities of difficult and new material.[8] Both Ebeling and Heinrich Zimmern, author of the most influential study on Enoch's Babylonian background, did major early work on the library of Assurbanipal at Nineveh. Excavations at Nineveh produced massive quantities and varieties of texts, many of which remain unpublished today; any text published was chosen from among thousands. In order to produce his comparanda, Zimmern had therefore not only to publish and edit but to configure the Babylonian texts he chose as relevant to Enoch. Regardless

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[6] On Smith's contribution to anthropology see Johnstone, ed. 1995 and the arguments of Franz Steiner, cited in Asad 1993. Since Smith, few works from within Near Eastern studies have found much response in anthropology; the direction has tended to be the opposite, as exemplified by Mary Douglas' analysis of the dietary laws of Leviticus in *Purity and Danger* (1966). It could be argued that Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos* (1895), an extremely odd and valuable work which could be characterized as a historical morphology of myth, should have had a similar effect, but it would be over half a century before anthropology was willing to fully historicize its objects of study in a similar way.

[7] Though this is an oversimplification, as will be pointed out below.

[8] For an example, see the remarks of von Soden ZA 43 on Ebeling's publication of the badly damaged Assyrian "Underworld Vision," a text which remains unparalleled in cuneiform literature; while it is clear that von Soden understood the text better than Ebeling did, this only testifies to the risk that the first editor of a difficult text takes. Von Soden's understanding has in turn been improved upon by Livingstone SAA III.

of Zimmern's skill (which was great) and his judgment (which was generally sound), his activities highlight the unavoidable role of scholarly selection and interpretation in inserting texts into discourse.

These considerations suggest a different sort of account of the history of research, one whose principles are articulated especially well by the Historian of Religion Bruce Lincoln. Lincoln notes how Indo-European studies exhibits with particular clarity certain features that characterize scholarship in general:

"...[O]ne may observe here how scholars actively construct that which they study through their selection of evidence, a process in which they systematically disarticulate certain data from their original context while ignoring others, and rearticulate those so chosen within a novel context of their own devising. These novel contexts, moreover, are inevitably, if most often unconsciously, conditioned by the interests of their authors (taking "interests" in its bland, as well as its more pointed meaning), for even discourse about the past and the exotic enters the present always and only for reasons of the here and now."[9]

The direct relevance of Lincoln's comment to the history of Enoch research is suggested by three facts: one is that the first successful study, Heinrich Zimmern's analysis of a single anomalous cuneiform text,[10] has remained, for the most part, both central and unmodified. While the two major recent studies have provided philological parallels and rich synchronic discussions of the Mesopotamian material to which Zimmern's text refers, there has been little

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[9] Bruce Lincoln, "Kings, Rebels, and the Left Hand" in Lincoln 1991:244-58. The example Lincoln chose for his study was George Dumézil's insistence that the Roman myths of Cocles and Scaevola "ought be compared first and foremost to those of Odinn and Tyr" rather than other formally similar myths inside or outside Indo-European. This enabled Dumézil not only "to posit a single (Indo-European) prototype for them, but to argue that the significance of this prototype was its schematic presentation of ideal sovereignty as something both magical and legal alike." This is a specific and pointed view of the myths' politics, and not the only one that can be legitimately constructed from the available materials, as Lincoln proves.

[10] Made between the figures of Enoch and Enmeduranki on the basis of a reconstructed common tradition of mantic revelation to a pious hero who stands seventh in an antediluvian line. Although there have been several comparisons with the figure of Utnapishtim, neither Zimmern (551-556) nor Gunkel (134-5) considered this at all obvious.

attempt to place it diachronically: the analyses have become complexly historical on the Jewish side of the comparison while remaining largely ahistorical on the Mesopotamian.

The second fact is that scholars have been able to agree that the figure of Enoch is a Jewish adaption of foreign elements (based, perhaps, on a Biblically defined set of assumptions about what "native" Jewish material could or could not be[11]), but outside of Zimmern's single, apparently clear original connection, they have disagreed on exactly what the other foreign elements are. Each new attempt has brought a different range of material to the topic. The cumulative corpus brought to the comparison has thereby become vast, ranging from Mandaic and Pahlavi compilations dating from the Middle Ages through Hellenistic and Classical Greek sources contemporary with the books of Enoch to Ancient Sumerian and Akkadian texts that precede it by up to two millennia.

The third fact is that while scholars have sometimes continued to compare the same sets of materials over time, resisting certain complexities that new materials have introduced, they have also *avoided* previously introduced comparisons without explicit methodological justification. The history of research is thus peculiarly stratified, with certain older layers repeatedly acknowledged as ancestral and thus exposed and others buried. To use a different image, a chart of this history of research from its apex of breadth with the studies of Jansen in 1939 and Widengren in 1950 which included, among others, a wide range of Iranian and Hellenistic materials would show that, while the cumulative range of materials used has increased, the range of materials

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[11] While he allows for borrowings (Stone 1984), Stone has voiced an important critique of these assumptions: "In principle, there is no reason to think that the body of literature that is transmitted as the Hebrew Bible is a representative collection of all types of Jewish literary creativity down to the fourth century... It is specious... when faced by a third-century phenomenon, to have to choose between seeking its roots in the Bible or relegating it to foreign influence." (Stone 1978:490-91, cited at greater length in chapter 4 below).

actually used in each survey has *contracted* over time. The persistence of

Zimmern's texts, the neglect of some newly introduced material, and the

passing over of previous scholarly work are all due to methodological choices

rather than any straightforward process of accumulating progressively larger

and more illuminating archives of source material. The following review will

stress those methodological choices.

2. Zimmern's Enoch

The context of the first important study of Enoch's Mesopotamian

background is in a series of bitter disputes, now mostly forgotten, which were

nonetheless to prove decisive in the relationship between Assyriology, Biblical

Studies, and the comparative study of religion.[12] In the scholarly climate of the

1900's, the explanatory power of ancient Near Eastern documents was tested in

three controversies: the *Babel-Bibel-Streit*, the Pan-Babylonian controversy,

and the Gilgamesh controversy, of which the third is the most relevant example.

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[12] Hermann Gunkel concluded his devastating review of Jensen's *Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur* with a comment worth quoting at length, both because of its self-consciousness and because it was to represent the dominant trend of the next ninety years; when the school of Pan-Babylonianism returned (Parpola 1993), it was to show most of the features against which Gunkel railed:

"In jeder Wissenschaft kommen auffallende Fehler und seltsame Verirrungen vor, und niemand von uns ist dagegen gefeit. Troztdem darf man sagen, daß die Assyriologie in dem letzten Jahrzehnt uns ein wenig viel davon beschert hat und jedesmal damit auf den öffentlichen Markt getreten ist. Was haben wir alles erlebt! Den jetzt friedlich entschlafenen Bibel-Babel-Streit, den demnächst man darf die Weissagung wagen zusammenbrechenden Pan-babylonismus, zuletzt Gilgamesch. Jedesmal gingen diese Bewegungen von Männern aus, deren Verdienste als *Assyriologen* wir verehren; auch von Jensen sei das, obwohl es überflüssig ist, dies Selbstverständliche auszusprechen, ausdrücklich festgestellt. Aber, so müssen wir denn doch fragen, woher kommt es denn eigentlich, daß diese Dinge immer gerade von Assyriologen in die Welt gesetzt wurden? Woher kommt es, daß der grundstürzende Fehler immer dieser war, daß ihre Vertreter sich nicht genügend auf dem fremden Gebiet, das sie beraten, vertraut gemacht hatten und wohl auch nicht vertraut machen konnten? Andere Forscher sehen auch gelegentlich über die Grenzen ihres Gebietes herüber, aber um sich dort Belehrung zu *holen*, nicht um die Fachgelehrten zu *belehren*. Und warum mußten sich diese Männer gleich an ein größeres Publikum wenden? Möchten die Assyriologen doch wieder werden, was sie einst gewesen und einzige noch jetzt sind, unsere höchst willkommenen *Berater* bei *unsern* Problemen!" DLZ 30 (1909)901-11, repr. in Oberhüber 1977.

Starting in 1906, a fierce debate around the influence of the figure of Gilgamesh on world mythology occurred around the work of Peter Jensen. Jensen was a highly accomplished Assyriologist whose edition of Gilgamesh was praised by no less demanding a critic than Benno Landsberger. In 1906 Jensen produced a massive monograph, *Das Gilgamesch-epos in der Weltliteratur. I Bd.: Die Ursprünge der alttestamentlichen Patriarchen-, Propheten-, und Befreier-Sage und der neutestamentlichen Jesus-Sage.*

The horror which the book's basic claims, apparent from the title, will induce in any sober scholar today may well be deserved, but this revulsion also distracts us from two things: one is the extent to which his work was a part of his environment, the second is the way in which elements of his *modus operandi* remain operative, in modified form, to this day. In the beginning of the book Jensen articulated a set of principles for the disciplined comparison of different myths: isolated parallels were to be discounted in favor of systematic comparisons of narratives. Comparison of any two objects was to be conducted with reference to a third term, a phenomenological type. The principles articulated thus far are not only unobjectionable, but have been defended by contemporary methodologists in the History of Religions as a model for comparison.[13]

But it is the *purpose* of Jensen's comparisons, the element of his work which has proven most durable in the comparative study of ancient Near Eastern religions, which is both most disturbing and least critically examined: similarity between myths was to be understood as evidence of the *historical derivation* of one myth from the other. From a methodological point of view, Jensen's principle of systematic comparison with relation to a phenomenological type is a

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[13] J.Z. Smith 1978.

rich and suggestive one. But while Jensen's technique of typological comparison has been resumed under the rubric of comparative religion, it was the principle that systematic parallels are to be understood chiefly as evidence for a genetic relationship, typical of his time, that has proved dominant in comparative work using Mesopotamian materials.

Three years before the appearance of Jensen's book, the third edition of *Die Keilschriften und das Alte Testament* was published. This edition represented a thoroughgoing revision of a work by the liberal protestant Biblicist and Assyriologist Eberhard Schrader (1836-1908) at the hands of two more Assyriologists: Hugo Winckler (1863-1913), and Heinrich Zimmern (1862-1931). All three were vitally interested in showing and controlling the ways ancient Near Eastern documents could illuminate the Hebrew Bible, but they belonged to different eras, a fact reflected in their work. All three published Akkadian texts and produced works to facilitate their use, but while Schrader had produced a revised edition of de Wette (the "epoch-making pioneer of historical criticism of the Hebrew Bible," in the words of Wellhausen [1885:4]), the two younger scholars were able to utilize a wide range of cuneiform materials and thus become the first generation to use Assyriology as a sort of handmaid to Bible criticism. In this regard they more closely resembled Jensen in the comparative bent of their interests. Winckler, the first editor of the El-Amarna tablets, was responsible for *Abraham als Babylonier, Joseph als Ägypter*[14] and a *Keilinschriftliches Textbuch zum Alten Testament;* more infamously, he was considered the founder of the Pan-Babylonian school. Zimmern contributed a work on *Die Assyriologie als Hülfswissenschaft für das Studium des alten Testaments und des klassischen Altertums*[15], but also

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[14] Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1903.
[15] Königsberg: W. Koch,1889.

vigorously defended Jensen from the scathing attacks of Zimmern's friend Hermann Gunkel. Both Winckler and Zimmern produced studies in comparative mythology; just as significantly, they also worked to both make and control the sorts of comparisons which, by the first decade of the twentieth century, had extended to the New Testament to give us such works as *The Legend of Jesus the Solar Deity, Pagan Christs: Studies in Comparative Hierology,* and *Moses, Jesus, Paul: Three Variants of the Babylonian Divine-Man Gilgamesh.*[16]

While Zimmern was more restrained than Jensen, he shared a number of methods with him; one of the most interesting was the use of cuneiform materials to develop comparative types which were then applied to the Bible. This technique is brilliantly demonstrated in his essay on "Urkönige und Uroffenbarung,"(1903) the first and most influential study of the Mesopotamian background of Enoch. Zimmern analyzed the list of ten antediluvian kings transmitted in the fragments of Berossus as a representative of Mesopotamian tradition. He assumed that Berossus' list had behind it a direct Babylonian *Vorlage* in which the flood hero was also the tenth king, and attempted to reconstruct (what he took to be) the ten Akkadian personal names which Berossus transliterated. In addition, he identified the mythical king Enmeduranki, founder of the divinatory arts of lecanomancy and extispicy, with Berossus' seventh king, whose name, Eudorakhos or the like, is demonstrably related to the Sumerian one. The next logical step was to assume that the Enmeduranki text represented a central Babylonian tradition, reconstructible as

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[16] The list of names is taken from Smith 1990:87-88; for examples of the comparative studies of Winckler and Zimmern see *Arabisch-Semitisch-Orientalisch: Kulturgeschichtlich-mythologische Untersuchung* (Berlin: W. Peiser, 1901) and "Lebensbrot und Lebenswasser im Babylonischen und in der Bibel" ARW 2 (1899):165-77 respectively; for examples of their work at controlling the comparisons of others, *Der alte Orient und die Bibel* (Leipzig: E. Pfeiffer,1906, with a sectionon the *Babel-Bibel Streit)* and *Keilinschriften und Bibel nach ihrem religionsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang: ein Leitfaden zur Orientierung im sog. Babel-Bibel-Streit: mit Einbeziehung auch der neutestamentlichen Probleme* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1903), respectively.

one of mantic revelation to a pious hero who stands seventh in an antediluvian line. Zimmern then compared Berossus' list with the Priestly list, found in Genesis 5, of ten patriarchs culminating in Noah and asserts that the Priestly list and the reconstructed tradition underlying Berossus are fundamentally identical (539).[17] As evidence of this fundamental identity he gave three proofs: 1) the Akkadian names are similar to the Biblical ones, 2) the Second Temple figure of the seventh patriarch in P's list, Enoch, corresponds to that of Enmeduranki, and 3) the long lifespans of the patriarchs and primeval kings are probably corresponding reflexes of Babylonian "great year" tradition. Finally, he made explicit what is already understood: the fundamental identity of the two stories is explained by the Israelite adoption at an early stage of an originally Babylonian tradition.

The results of the past ninety years of Assyriological research may be summed up briefly: not one of Zimmern's conclusions can stand as stated. First,

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[17] It is important to place Zimmern's study in the context of the work in which it appeared; *Die Keilschriften und das Alte Testament* attempted to find reflexes in the Bible or Second Temple literature for virtually all Babylonian myths then known; few of the other comparisons have stood the test of time. One should also remember that Zimmern's comparison was not between two *texts* but between two reconstructed *traditions*. The resort to reconstructed intermediary stages is a prominent feature throughout Zimmern's essay: Berossus' names must go back to (reconstructed) Akkadian names to which the Hebrew correspond; Enoch is solar because his lifespan, 365 years, implies a solar year, and is thus to be seen in relation to Enmeduranki, who comes from Sippar, the city of the sun-god Shamash (who bears an entirely putative relationship to the solar year); the long lives are related because of their common reference to a presumed world-year. In each of these cases, erudition and ingenuity is applied in order to demonstrate identity between the two traditions: note especially the step, which has never to my knowledge been made explicit in any presentation of this theme, from Enmeduranki's local association with Sippar (now known since at least 2000 B.C. from our first exemplars of the Sumerian King list) to his association with Shamash as a patron deity of divination (perhaps triggered in the minds of Nebuchadnezzar's court intellectuals by his Sippar connection) to Enoch's association with the 364-day calendar (his lifespan of 365 years in Genesis, while possibly related, is not necessarily the same thing) in the Astronomical book and Jubilees 4. This last stage seems to be actually attested in a text, as in Jubilees Enoch is described as having been shown the influence of the sun over all things. While the specific comparison detailed here is demanding enough, it must be realized that in *Die Keilschriften...* , Zimmern provided just this sort of reconstructive analysis for virtually every Babylonian myth of which he was then aware, attempting in each case to show systematic analogies, and *therefore historical filiation*, between Babylonian and Jewish literature.

there is a basic problem with the data used: as Amélie Kuhrt points out with

reference to the difficulties in understanding what Berossus' work was actually

about,

> "...by far the most important and fullest quotes from Berossus appear in the
> context of Jewish and Christian apologetic...An important corollary to this is that
> the *same* type of material drawn from the *Babyloniaka* and confirming Biblical
> traditions and chronology is quoted over and over again, while material
> irrelevant to this exercise is extremely scantily preserved." (1987:35-36)

The problem is not simply that the material is taken out of context (as in

Josephus' extraction in Jewish Antiquities 1.158 of a single notice from book

two of the *Babyloniaka* because it concerned a wise man who, like Abraham,

lived in the tenth generation after the flood, pointed out by Kuhrt 1987:46n36)

but the fact that ancient nonbiblical and biblical traditions continued to mutually

interfere with each other for quite some time. Theodore bar Kônî's scholia still

cites Gilgamesh as the tenth and last of a line of ancient kings from Peleg,

contemporary with Abraham.[18]

There are less subtle problems: the king's names in Berossus turned out not

to be Akkadian at all but rather Sumerian; none of Zimmern's Hebrew equations

worked. No further evidence for correlation of their ages has turned up: the

world-year was a scholarly fantasy with no support in the texts. The scheme of

ten kings culminating in the flood hero is wrong: of the seven cuneiform lists of

antediluvian kings of which we are currently aware, no two share the same

kings, or the same order of kings, and the number of kings varies with no

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[18] It is hard to imagine that whatever mix of ancient tradition and Midrash-like reapplication allowed
Josephus to find his wise man was not also at work here; see Lewin, *Die Scholien des Theodor
bar Kônî* p. 2 ll 8-9 and p. 25, cited in Jacobsen 1939:89n128.

discernible original or canonical order from six to ten;[19] the only number attested more than once is eight.[20] Further, while Enmeduranki is the seventh king and the king of Sippar in a number of the lists, not one of the lists identify him with revelation or an ascent to heaven; the list closest in time to the Hellenistic manuscripts of Genesis, that of Berossus, seems to remove even Enmeduranki's association with Sippar (since Badtibira seems to stand behind Berossus' Pautabiblion). This lack of association is not an argument from silence; both of the Hellenistic Babylonian sources available to us (Berossus and the Uruk apkallu list) speak freely of the deeds of the antediluvian sages, but neither see fit to discuss Enmeduranki.

The dominance of local variation in the king-list must be taken seriously for the purposes of comparison: clearly, there is no central tradition but a congeries of local variants. Interestingly, these variants seem to resemble stereotypically oral types of variation.[21] Piotr Michalowski (1983) has attempted a preliminary analysis of motivations behind the variants, with attention to regional and ethnic motivations, which should be the starting point of any new study utilizing the king-lists. It is clear, at least, that in each individual king-list tradition we have to

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[19] Kvanvig's attempt to suggest that the list closest in time to that of Berossus (circa 280 B.C.), the Neo-Assyrian text edited by Lambert 1973, is also close in number (nine kings) is an attempt to salvage a trivial connection; as Kvanvig recognizes, the Uruk apkallu list (circa 180 B.C.) contains only seven kings. It seems to testify to the attractiveness of Zimmern's schema even in the face of massive countervailing evidence.

[20] While Berossos clearly worked from cuneiform sources, it is impossible in any specific instance to rule out rearrangement of his material by the Christian and Jewish apologetic sources through which his text is transmitted. The fact that these religious writers, steeped in the Bible and deeply interested in its historical worth, manage to find a Mesopotamian list with exactly ten kings before the flood hero, exactly like Noah, and a famous wise man in tenth position after the flood, like Abraham (and unlike the postdiluvian cuneiform lists known to us) should raise some sort of suspicion.

[21] The conformity between the concepts underlying Mesopotamian *written* genealogies and Jan Vansina's characterization of notions of historical causality in oral societies (1985:130-2) may provide occasion to rethink our views of both. The flexibility and various local tendencies of the king lists should, at least, call into question the stereotypical view that associates variation with the oral and uniformity with the written.

deal not with uniform transmission but variants and reworkings. The first

question would then need to be not one of Mesopotamian tradition but *which*

Mesopotamian tradition?

There is a concomitant problem in the Biblical sources which is generally

avoided by interpreters. There are two variant genealogies for Enoch: in the

Kenite genealogy of Genesis 4:17-24 (generally attributed to the J source), he is

third after Adam, while the Sethite list of 5:3-31 (P) puts him in seventh position.

In his study of genealogical variants involving the number seven, Jack Sasson

(1976) analyzes a variety of variants which he explains as the result of a

compiler's moving a figure into seventh position as a result of their status *prior*

to the genealogical realignment. In other words, the property of being seventh is

not inherent to the tradition about the figure but is itself an editor's comment on

the figure's status. Sasson proposes that

> "In [the] K[enite genealogy], Lamech is placed in seventh position, likely
> because he was remembered in the famous sword dance of Genesis. 4:23-23
> as avenged seventy-sevenfold (cf. also 5:31 where he is said to have lived 777
> years). In [the] S[ethite genealogy], however, the seventh slot is given to Enoch
> because of the description of his singular fate..." (355).

Finally, W.G. Lambert's publication of some new joins to the Enmeduranki

text added a related text which allows us for the first time to attempt to place the

figure of Enmeduranki in a cultural and historical context. The related text is a

piece of genealogical propaganda on the part of Nebuchadnezzar I, who

attempts to trace his lineage to Enmeduranki (historically most unlikely). To

understand the propagandistic value of this, it is necessary to be aware of a key

point of Mesopotamian royal rhetoric: the wisdom figure par excellence is not

the sage but the king. The mythical role of a being endowed with a knowledge

of cosmic law and the concomitant ability to keep the universe in order, while perhaps originating with the figure of the sage, is transferred very early on to the king.[22]

Thus, the first point that needs to be considered is the argument Ivan Starr makes in his detailed study of Mesopotamian divinatory ritual: the Enmeduranki text seems to be a blend of two sapiential genres that were originally unrelated to divination. Material concerning the latter was attached to it, by accident or design, artificially, thus providing the origins of divination with historical depth.[23] Rather than being some organic part of an extremely ancient and widespread tradition, the mantic figure of Enmeduranki in its first known attestation is part of an innovative and creative Middle Babylonian cultural program seemingly designed to resurrect, or forge, an Old Babylonian heritage.[24] One possibility that can be explored is based on Vansina's principle that genealogies, as social charters, validate relationships between groups (1985:182). The derivation of a scribal-scholarly tradition from a prestigious royal ancestor, as well as the association of a royal ancestor with revealed cosmic wisdom, may have acted to validate and mutually reconcile the king as wise and the scribes as royal; such an association would have been particularly attractive in Nebuchadnezzar's search for legitimacy and roots.

Here Starr's recognition that the tradition, first attested under

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[22] For further discussion of the scribal view of the origins of divination see chapter two.
[23] Starr 1983:56.
[24] All of this is certainly not to deny the possibility of an Old Babylonian forerunner to the Enmeduranki texts published by Zimmern and Lambert; on the contrary, it would be unsurprising to discover such a text. The point is that we now know enough about divination to begin to place Nebuchadnezzar's Enmeduranki in a historical context, and no royal figure, antediluvian or not, is immune to his historical context, which must therefore be considered first, before appealing to assumptions about unattested ancient traditions.

Nebuchadnezzar I in the twelfth century, was an *anachronistic* one is key.[25] The

traditions with which Enmeduranki is associated during this period are

archaisms, probably self-conscious and deliberate (as Starr notes, the Middle

Babylonian text associates Enmeduranki with lecanomancy, not attested after

the Old Babylonian period, and the use of the cedar-staff, which is completely

obscure). It is in the later text from Assurbanipal's library, detached from overt

royal propaganda, that Enmeduranki's revelation is modified and updated,

probably in two stages: the first is the addition of haruspicy, a dominant and

contemporary form of divination, in the body of the text; the second is an

awkward insertion[26] attributing further scribal arts to him. Detached from

Nebuchadnezzar's archaizing propaganda, Enmeduranki becomes a prototype

of the contemporary scribe: especially interesting here is the attribution of not

only original texts but *commentaries* to Enmeduranki's divine revelation. The

Babylonian revival under Nebuchadnezzar, a king actively engaged in the

creation and reinterpretation of his cultural heritage, was an appropriate place

for the figure of Enmeduranki the culture-hero and king. In his second

manifestation as culture-hero, Enmeduranki is explicitly a promoter of exegesis

and reinterpretation.[27]

It should be emphasized that there is a rich Mesopotamian literature on

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[25] The comments of Eric Hobsbawm are in place here: "...insofar as there is...reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of invented traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition." (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.2). The scholar of Second Temple Judaism may have become numb to this phenomenon through repeated encounters with it, but its recognition is vital to the task of recovering the historicity of Mesopotamian religion.

[26] BBR 24:16-18, which Lambert puts in brackets in his translation; Starr (56) comments on the incoherence and grammatical awkwardness of this part in his commentary to the diviner's prayer.

[27] As a figure who is himself probably the product of a contemporary reworking of an archaic narrative, the diviner Enmeduranki might be compared to such a figure as the god Assur, inserted into Enuma Elish by the Assyrian scribes using a paronomastic technique (on which, Lambert 1997).

authorship and divination, and outside of these two anomalous texts it never associates Enmeduranki with divination. Again, this is not an argument from silence: we have preserved a number of catalogues of authors and it is clear that, for Mesopotamian scribes, Enmeduranki was a marginal figure outside of the king-lists. Understandably, in the interest of making his point in brief compass, Zimmern analyzed only the Enmeduranki text in detail.

Zimmern was, however, the only Assyriologist to make an extended comparison between Enoch and Enmeduranki[28], and the single text he chose to apply has become central in the comparisons made by scholars of Second Temple literature. In his discussion of Mesopotamian Divination, James VanderKam refers to this text repeatedly, describing it as "the constitution of the bārûtu," "crucial," and "all-important." (59,58,59 respectively). But the text is no such thing. In its oldest known form, this story is already a myth of origins for a form of divination no longer practiced, written in bad, late Sumerian. While it is clearly a myth about diviners, it appears *not* to be a diviner's myth. It looks more like an archaizing royal attempt to usurp the privilege of a sage, representative of the scribes who dared not assert their authority in narrative form.[29]

While one of Zimmern's insights in this case has stood: that there was a Babylonian tradition analogous to the Biblical one in which a revealer was seen as seventh in the flood-hero's line, we must be clear that Zimmern failed at his own goal of providing a larger systematic set of correspondences between Mesopotamian and Jewish tradition. Furthermore, Zimmern's isolation of the Enmeduranki text has produced a foreshortening effect in which the material

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[28] Borger 1972 is a comparable attempt to derive Enoch from Enmeduranki's apkallu, Utuabzu.
[29] It is no accident that the only two Mesopotamian king lists to add the *sages* associated with the kings of the king-lists, and to describe the sages' exploits (where the earlier texts had described only those of the kings) stem from the Hellenistic period, when there was no longer a Mesopotamian king on the throne. For analysis of these texts see chapter two below.

most clearly analogous with Enoch has been seen in an isolated and ahistorical fashion.

Nine decades of research have produced a more complex and diverse picture: most cuneiform king lists do not list ten antediluvian kings (the only known Seleucid cuneiform king list has seven); the names are Sumerian, not Akkadian; the lifespans do not seem to bear any specific relationship to each other; and it is precisely in Berossus, the only Seleucid Babylonian text to list ten kings, that Enmeduranki is *not* associated with Sippar but with Badtibira. Such revisions are to be expected and in no way detract from Zimmern's achievements. But they bring with them the obligation to treat the texts as representative of a developing and heterogeneous religious life. What needs to be emphasized is that each of the discoveries has moved us away from simple equations and toward differences; the purpose of comparison can no longer be to produce identity but to bring meaning to these differences.

3. Enoch Since Zimmern

In 1939 the first full monograph devoted to Enoch appeared, H. Ludin Jansen's *Die Henochgestalt: eine vergleichende religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung.* The qualifying adjectives in the title are important: while the comparative endeavors of Zimmern as well as those of Hermann Gunkel and Richard Reitzenstein, *inter alia,* were conducted under the rubric of Albert Eichhorn's *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule,* Jansen's study represents a radical departure from Zimmern's methods. His comparison is not merely an attempt to find an older antecedent for the Jewish material, but to examine the Enoch material in terms of comparative religious types and then attempt to find a context for the development of those types. He touches on a vast range of

material, from long-known classical texts to Mandaic texts newly available. His work is unusual both in boldness of comparisons and richness of conception: the comparisons are most interesting when made with respect to phenomenological models (e.g. ideal types, heavenly intermediaries etc.), and least interesting when he is using them as a tool to trace lines of diffusion (as in his somewhat forced reconstruction of a Chaldean wisdom school that transmitted Babylonian material to the Hellenistic world)[30]. Like Zimmern, the use of material is experimental and exploratory, but unlike Zimmern, Jansen's work, while more concerned with the specific historical mechanics and possible avenues of diffusion, did not simply attempt to establish influence.

Instead, we find an entire section on the reflexes of the heavenly intermediary in the flood story preserved in the Mandaic Right Ginza (which had recently been translated into German by Lidzbarski). The results were in many cases convincing: the sorts of systematic correspondences for which Jensen had searched appear clearly in the details of the Mandean flood narrative (Ginza, ch. 11) as well as the story of the Watchers in I Enoch 6-11. It is easily demonstrable that the Mandean material shows direct Mesopotamian influence, and could thus furnish both a comparative model and important evidence for how the story was transmitted in Hellenistic form.[31] But aside from the work of Widengren, the material has simply been ignored in subsequent studies.

Jansen provided an alternative to the way in which Enoch had been studied up until then. He brought a nuanced and holistic literary approach which

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[30] Though see Geller 1997 for a collection of important evidence about survival of Babylonian literary and religious practices in the Hellenistic world, usually described in Classical sources under the rubric of "Chaldeans" or "Magi."

[31] Cf. the names given to the seven dšvs: Šamiš, the sun; Estrã, Venus; Nbũ, Mercury; Sin, the moon; Kšvãn, Saturn; Bẽl, Jupiter; Nerig, Mars (Ginza, book one [Lidzbarski 1925. §192]), and the details of the flood story in book eleven including a conspiracy among these figures to destroy humanity, the role of the raven in the narrative, etc. See further the note at the beginning of chapter two. A recent and illuminating comparative use of Mandaic materials is Deutsch 1995.

differed from, or more likely ignored, the source criticism dominant in his day. Thus VanderKam's criticism (1984:16), that Jansen does not differentiate the different books of Enoch, exposes an important weakness but may also point out a strength: it is not clear that a treatment that sharply differentiates literary units in Enoch and understands each difference between these units as a sign of development is in every case more empirically grounded or productive of insight. Because an element appears in a source argued to be later does not mean that it is a late element. While classification of materials into late and early can be an essential task in the philological analysis of ancient documents, it is not the only legitimate or productive way to analyze the elements of a narrative. An example of Jansen's methodological strength is provided by a weakness in Zimmern's Enoch-Enmeduranki connection: as Hermann Gunkel had succinctly stated, there is no report of Enmeduranki's rapture (1910:135).This major difference led Jansen to make the purely typological differentiation between the heavenly and the earthly Enoch. Much of Jansen's evidence for this figure was taken from the book of Similitudes, which has been argued to be extremely late and is, in any event, not found at Qumran (which leads VanderKam's more philologically grounded study to avoid analysis of the book entirely). While in the two sections of Enoch argued to be oldest, the Astronomical book and the book of the Watchers, there is no real trace of the heavenly Enoch, an examination of the full range of sources at Qumran, including Enoch 105-7, Jubilees, and the Genesis Apocryphon, show that the image of the heavenly Enoch was widely known and referred to by the second century B.C.E. An examination of the broader evidence shows that Jansen's typology is, at worst, not contradicted by our improved knowledge of the sources, and may actually explain them better.

Jansen's literary method was able to produce analyses of substantial cognitive value. As major drawbacks of his method, one might point to his continued reliance on a simple diffusionist hypothesis and the staggering range of material he attempted to analyze, which virtually guaranteed that he would not control all of it. His mechanism for diffusion, a putative Hellenistic Chaldean wisdom religion, was an entirely hypothetical construct. Indeed, it seems that, like Zimmern, much of Jansen's considerable theoretical energy was devoted to the reconstruction of missing information. Nevertheless, in literary and religious insight his work may represent the most successful model.

The study of Geo Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book* (1950) also had an explicitly history-of-religions focus; Widengren was more interested in generating a comparative type than in documenting the influences of one tradition on another. The book contains a number of suggestive proposals for the explanation of Biblical, Iranian, and Islamic traditions in light of a morphology developed along Mesopotamian lines.[32] The chief problem with the book is its excessive interest in sameness: each figure in each religious tradition is described as somehow essentially identical, regardless of historical situation or intervening phenomenological detail; as little can be learned from such a comparison as from one obsessed with irreconcilable, incomprehensible difference.[33]

Next in chronological order was the study of Father Pierre Grelot (1958). This was a more focused study, mainly intended to confirm and enrich Zimmern's work, which it succeeded in doing. Grelot's study was the first to refer

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[32] An impressive feature of the study is that it is based on consultation of original documents in a large range of traditions, and even includes a contribution to the study of Akkadian stress and morphology.

[33] This point is well made by J.Z. Smith in his discussion of Alfred Loisy's homogenizing analysis of *The Christian Mystery*; see Smith 1990:42-43.

to the Qumran Enoch materials, of which Grelot's colleague Josef Milik had made him aware. Grelot's theological goal was to demonstrate that, in contrast to the Mesopotamian flood-hero, whose immortalization is a unique occurrence, the immortalization of Enoch is intended to function as a model for the believer. This point was made extensively by Bousset in his influential *Himmelsreise* article (1901) and already criticized by Gunkel (1910:135): "If men like Enoch and Elijah do not taste death, that means nothing for the common believer! We are not Enoch and Elijah." The point missed by Gunkel here is precisely the thing that makes Grelot's article successful. While it is true that the point of Gilgamesh's visit to Utnapishtim is its crushing failure, that Utnapishtim's immortalization is unique and not a model for humans, and that the Biblical heroes are interesting precisely because they are recognized as *atypical* beings, this does not preclude the essential religious operation of reapplication of mythical models. Indeed, figures such as Utnapishtim or Enoch can always potentially be reapplied and reinterpreted: the question is merely whether or not they actually were. As chapter five will demonstrate, the type of Enoch was in fact used as an initiatory model in the Hellenistic period. As a theologian, Grelot set up a comparison which used development as a vehicle through which an essential difference (the special feature of salvation in Judaism and Christianity) can manifest itself.

In 1984, James VanderKam published *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition*, a traditio-historical study based on a detailed study of the Ethiopic, Greek, and Aramaic texts of Enoch. VanderKam surveyed developments in Assyriology relevant to Zimmern's texts and reconstructed a "mantic" background for Enoch with reference to Mesopotamian divination

practices, based on a theory of H.-P. Müller.[34] This provides a hermeneutic which unifies certain aspects of apocalyptic literature and Mesopotamian scribal thought. For the Babylonians, as well as for Enoch at some points in the text, the natural universe and phenomena in it such as dreams represent a great text in which divine laws and decisions can be read by those schooled in esoteric wisdom. In addition, his study is based on a precise literary and source-critical study of four of the Enochic documents known from Qumran, with reference to the other known early documents such as the notices about Enoch in Jubilees.

VanderKam is clear about his aims: the goal of the study is to reconstruct influences and developments, specifically the foreign influences that produced the Second Temple figure of Enoch. The study thus represents a turn away from Jansen's typological and Grelot's theological investigations and a return to Zimmern's model. More specifically, his basic method for organizing the comparison of texts is that of the development of a Jewish tradition: differences between the documents represent changes that occurred in a chronological order rather than parallels or variants. This means that differences which Jansen would see as representing two synchronically different types of figure, VanderKam sees as representing the views of diachronically different texts, representative of different stages of a single tradition. Similarly, though all the

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[34] There are fundamental question about Müller's category of "mantic" wisdom that have never been asked: was it a natural class of facts that clustered together in the ancient Near East (as for example, the phenomena of writing and *Listenwissenschaft* according to Bottéro 1988 and Goody 1977, or writing and gematria according to Lieberman 1987), or a native construct (packaged together in terminology or genres), or is it, rather, a contemporary scholarly articulation? However one may answer the first two questions, it is certain that "mantic wisdom" belongs to this last category, as shown by other potential articulations of divination: 1) as a form of *primitive classification* expressive/constitutive of the social order in Durkheim and Mauss 1963:77; 2) as an abductive form of *conjectural knowledge*, not proto-scientific but related, in Clifford 1988:37, citing Ginzburg 1980; 3) as a mode of *exegesis* by which ancients "confront the reality which must be interpreted as a whole, with a seamless, undifferentiated hermeneutic" (ignoring Lieberman's frivolous distinction between exegesis and eisegesis) Lieberman 1987:223, Tigay 1983, Koenig 1982.

Enoch documents on which VanderKam bases his chronology are paleographically dated within about two centuries of each other[35], VanderKam sets them in a chronological order partly based on this paleographical dating and partly on historical and intertextual clues, and then discusses the documents separately.[36] His choice of parallels further adds to the picture: he compares the earliest Enochic texts (the Astronomical book) to Mesopotamian texts, the next to Classical Greek sources (the Watchers), and later materials (the Enoch account in Jubilees) to Hellenistic traditions.

The 1988 work of Helge S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and of the Son of Man* is closest to the present one in its extensive focus on Mesopotamian materials. It differs in that Kvanvig also continues to base his approach on the texts and genres deployed by Zimmern, while heavily supplementing them. He brings a

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[35] There may be somewhat more variance in the ages of the Qumran Enoch manuscripts than either VanderKam or Milik allow for: though EnAstr* was not published in Milik's magnum opus (1976), examination of the photographs confirms Milik's statement that its script does not differentiate between final and medial letters. If one follows Cross's typology strictly, this puts the script in the fourth century at the latest. Although one must allow for a considerable degree of variation and possibly for some unusual form of archaizing, this feature would still tend to place the text early in the third century. However, there is another factor which might render the paleography of EnAstr* useless for the dating of the Enoch literature: Milik states that the astronomical material in this manuscript is not parallel to that known from the Ethiopic version of the Astronomical book, nor does it mention Enoch by name. The link to the Astronomical book known to us is provided by a second manuscript which overlaps with both EnAstr* and the putative *Vorlage* of the Astronomical book.Thus, there is no way to discount the possibility that EnAstr* is an entirely separate, older astronomical treatise, which was used as one of the *sources* of the Qumran version of the Astronomical book.

[36] There is an inherent difficulty in this technique: though VanderKam considers P to be prior to Enoch, the oldest known manuscripts of Genesis are themselves probably younger than EnAstr*. This obviously proves nothing about the relationship between the two sources; it is purely an accident of preservation. But if the relative dating of the Genesis and Enoch manuscripts cannot be used as evidence for the dating of the texts themselves, then neither can the relative manuscript dating of the different documents within Enoch. The acuteness of this problem with respect to Qumran evidence is emphasized by Chazon: "[R]elative manuscript dates are not a criterion for priority of composition. Indeed, Metso has shown that older forms of the [Community] Rule continued to be copied well into the Herodian period, long after the full form of 1QS was available." (1998:254) This does not affect the validity of the historical and intertextual arguments about the documents.

provocatively wide range of materials, but they are again restricted to Mesopotamia for developmentalist purposes. Again, Kvanvig states that his influence-tracing goals prevent any comparative-religious analysis. Kvanvig makes a move towards a historical view of Mesopotamian religion, speaking, for the first time in the history of the debate on Mesopotamian background of Enoch, about an element of historical change in *Mesopotamian*, as well as Jewish religion. But this occurs within a schematized and monolithic view of Mesopotamia as a "mythic-historical" society, as opposed to the "historical-eschatological"[37] Israel. In each case, the Mesopotamian structures develop, which is a major step forward, the first, indeed, in the history of this specific endeavor, but the development is undermined by a teleology which sees these as culminating in the Jewish forms. Methodologically this approach still represents an advance beyond those sorts of uneven comparisons concerned with discovering inner-Jewish development with reference to an unchanging and monolithic foreign tradition. Kvanvig ties the advent of the historical component of the apocalypse genre to specifically Mesopotamian developments and thus begins to move, perhaps unintentionally, beyond influence-tracing into a phenomenological comparison when he ends up discussing the paradigmatic exegetical feature of reapplication.

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[37] As Dieter Georgi notes, "eschatological" has become a theologically weighted term in the study of early Christianity: "Whereas for the history-of-religions school the term 'eschatological' described the foreignness of Jesus and of the early church—together with Jewish apocalypticism and other comparable ancient eschatologies—for Bultmann and many contemporary New Testament scholars and Christian theologians the term 'eschatological' stands for the novelty of Christianity, its incomparable superiority, the uniqueness of the victorious religion...Wherever a comparison is ventured, wherever analogies lift their head, wherever challenges are heard from other religious options but the canonical ones, the invocation of the 'eschatological' is made, and the demons, the shadows have to disappear. Historical criticism thus turns into exorcism." Georgi, "Rudolf Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* Revisited" in E.C. Hobbs, ed. *Bultmann: Retrospect and Prospect* (Philadelphia, 1985):82. My attention was drawn to this statement by J.Z. Smith 1990.

4. The Multiple "Backgrounds" of the Enochic Myth of the Watchers

To exemplify the problems raised by explanations that trace single lines of influence in apocalyptic literature, I will now present several treatments of the issue of the origins of the Watcher myth in Enoch 6-11. The narrative contains two competing accounts of the fall of the angels. In the longer version, a group of 200 angels, led by one named Shemihazah, becomes sexually interested in human women. They descend to earth, marry the women, and teach them magic and the use of herbs. Their sexual contact results in voracious giants who begin to eat people after exhausting other food supplies. Eventually the human cry for mercy is heard and the angels who had remained pure bring humanity's suit before God, who ordains several sorts of punishment. These include binding the Watchers under the hills for 70 generations and casting them into a fiery abyss after the final judgment. A variant version, nowhere attested independently but plausibly reconstructed as being interwoven with the first, describes how it is the angel Asael who descends to earth and teaches men to make weapons and women to use makeup. The women then use this makeup to seduce the angels. Asael is then accused by the heavenly angels of revealing heavenly secrets to humans and punished in a way similar to the other version.

VanderKam, following the work of R. Bartelmus (1979), finds systematic parallels (127) between the reconstructed Asael narrative and the Greek Prometheus story, which are understood as a compelling argument for borrowing (128). It should be noted here that Kvanvig performs a similar operation with the Mesopotamian semi-human sages, the apkallū, finding the origins of the angels' fall in the apkallū's angering the gods and being sent down into the abyss. VanderKam's book, by contrast with Kvanvig's, stresses

development within the books of Enoch rather than within Mesopotamian tradition. In this project the Classical Greek parallels fit, for VanderKam, a chronologically ordered pattern of borrowings.[38] They represent the second-oldest type of foreign influence, with the first being the Mesopotamian influences on the oldest Enochic book, the Astronomical Book. VanderKam then finds a third, later stage of progressive borrowing in Enoch's assimilation to the Hellenistic figure of culture hero in a third, later text: Jubilees (180-4). The difficulty here is that although Enoch certainly is a culture hero, the first culture heroes in Enochic literature are actually the Watchers themselves, as VanderKam recognizes by connecting Asael with Prometheus. But Prometheus is already an early Hellenic culture hero, and the Watchers are not so much an analog as an *inversion* of him: the secrets they reveal are all bad, resulting in the destruction of man for the immediate benefit of the Watchers. In contrast to Prometheus, a tragic culture hero, the Watchers are culture antiheroes. This would not render the argument connecting them invalid so much as oversimplified in its view of the way each individual instance of the pattern plays out.[39]

In making this argument, VanderKam cites recent scholarly work in support, including Nickelsburg 1977 and Hengel 1974 (127n65). But while Hengel sees the myth of the Watchers as borrowed from the Greek myth of the Titans, he also

[38] They represent "...the first reasonably certain instance in Enochic literature of Greek influence, since none was discernible in the A[stronomical] B[ook] and surely not in Genesis 5:21-24... "(128)

[39] Additionally, there is an erotic motif in the Watchers story with a specifically ancient Near Eastern context: this is sex as a form of initiation and education. The 7-day sexual contact of Enkidu and the prostitute in the Gilgamesh Epic and Nergal and Erishkegal in "Nergal and Erishkegal" serves to incorporate the heroes into a new sphere, humanity and the underworld, respectively. For the Watchers, the combination of sex and education inducts them into earthly existence, with disastrous consequences. The contact has a threatening, divinizing effect on humanity as they learn secrets to which only God, the angels, and the angel-like Enoch had been privy, as well as a polluting effect on the angels, who are no longer able to ascend to heaven (I Enoch 14).

accepts the well-known view among classicists that the myth of the Titans and

Prometheus is originally Near Eastern; it is borrowed *back* into Hellenistic Near

Eastern religion.[40] VanderKam does not, however, cite in his regard the essay to

which Nickelsburg 1977 was responding: this is Hanson 1977,[41] who argues

that, given the widely-recognized impact of early Near Eastern myths of

rebellion in heaven (attested in Hittite) on Hesiod, and

> "Since Hesiod in turn is a source behind later Greek and Hellenistic myths
> about titanic rebels against the King of Heaven (including Prometheus), the
> possibility of a *common* near eastern origin of such myths and their counterparts
> in Jewish sectarian literature of the late second temple period deserves to be
> considered alongside hypotheses, like that of George Nickelsburg, which detect
> direct lines of influence connecting the Greek and Jewish materials."(204)

Hanson then proceeds to analyze the Enochic materials as a revival of an

old and pervasive Near Eastern myth, attested in Hittite, Ugaritic, and the

Hebrew Bible. As chapter five shows, this myth is certainly being reworked at

Qumran and cannot reasonably be separated from the discussion. Kvanvig

provides a contrasting view:

> "None of the parallels traced in Phoenician, Canaanite, or Hittite mythology
> can serve as patterns for the Watcher story. The parallels indicate the kind of
> material which was adapted into the story and the religious context of the story.
> But the basic structure of the story was...not taken from this mythic material."
> (313-14)

It becomes apparent that issues of general narrative pattern, borrowing,

reborrowing, and cultural convergence have become extremely difficult to

extricate in this debate: each scholar chooses, without substantial

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[40] VanderKam dismisses Hengel's comment: "While this may be true, no oriental parallels are as close, nor would there be any need to posit an eastern inspiration for this motif, if the BW dates from the Hellenistic period." (ad loc).

[41] VanderKam does cite this essay later on, in a different context.

methodological justification, the significance they will attribute to parallels between narratives from different cultures.

VanderKam's discussion of the relation between Prometheus and Asael is based on Bartelmus' summary and does not refer to any specific Greek myths about Prometheus. This is extremely problematic, because Bartelmus conflates myths that are widely disparate in place and time: the Prometheus of Plato and Aesop, the "Works and Days" and "Theogony," and that of Aeschylus.[42] He avoids crucial elements of Plato and Aesop's accounts, which specify that Prometheus actually created mankind. The parallel between the two most proximate *specific* versions is more problematic: Asael teaches men to make weapons and women to wear makeup and is accused and punished justly, whereas Aeschylus' Prometheus teaches humanity all of technology and is unjustly punished in a more complex story that contains a virulent critique of the high god.

There is really no unitary Prometheus myth, but rather a cluster of traditions of different ages and provenances which share some general structural parallels: the versions of the myth in Hesiod take place when gods and men are, for the first time, beginning to separate from each other. They describe Prometheus as having 1) attempted to trick Zeus into accepting the worst part of the sacrifice by concealing bones under an appetizing layer of fat, 2) thus irking Zeus into hiding fire from humans and then, 3) having stolen fire from heaven by concealing it in a reed stalk and carrying it down to earth, 4) spurring Zeus to respond by cursing mankind with the deceptively beautiful but demanding race of woman or hiding grain in the earth, which hitherto had grown without toil. As Jean-Pierre Vernant (1988) demonstrated in a brilliant essay, the stories

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[42] For the different patterns and political functions of Hesiod's Prometheus over against Aeschylus', see Solmsen 1949.

describe double movements along the axes of revealing/concealing and giving/taking which result in the paradoxical institutions of sacrifice, cooking, and marriage. The institutions which make man human are generated in the story, but each item whose "revelation" Prometheus brings about was either previously known (fire/lightning, grain) or not wanted (woman).

But already in the Persian period, the issue for the Greeks is not the original appearance or even the dominant role of the culture hero but rather *reinterpretations* of the culture hero vis a vis the problems of Hellenic civilization. Plato's *Phaedrus* is harshly critical of the god Thoth's invention of writing and represents an attempt to return to the mythic originary point of writing and *interrogate* the culture hero in a way that would have been blasphemous to the Egyptians. Similarly, Aeschylus' account of technology is a return to the mythic granting of technologies to critically evaluate their granting. Thus Enoch and Manetho's and Berossus' characters are better understood as nativistic *revivals* of the culture hero. Earlier, relatively unproblematic culture heroes, "the first to do X", already appear in the earlier Hebrew genealogies of Genesis 4:17-22 in which a figure named Enoch also appears. Vanderkam's choice of Prometheus rather than Near Eastern myths, while plausible in and of itself, ends up plucking one option out of a larger complex, where the similarities are both more abundant and more ambivalent than VanderKam will admit. Perhaps the multitude of scholarly responses here is a result of the complexity of the Mediterranean *Kulturkreis,* where the myths have been borrowed back and forth in a number of ways. It seems we to have to do here with a phenomenon of *overdetermination,* an outcome resulting from a multitude of mutually interfering causes.

Each body of comparative materials: Kvanvig's Mesopotamian, Hanson's

Hittite, Mesopotamian and Ugaritic, Vanderkam's Hellenic; is compiled with little explicit reference to the others and each comparison is based mainly on disarticulating certain parallels from their original contexts and arranging them in a new pattern to prove influence. Given the wide range of legitimate comparanda, it appears that it is each scholar's exclusive concentration on his chosen material which ultimately enables the comparison.

I hope to have shown some of the contents of the dossier of comparative work on the pagan forerunners and analogues to Hellenistic Jewish religion, in whose this work stands and without which it could not exist. But these works, as a whole, are faced with a problem which the present study hopes to avoid: in comparing Hellenistic Judaism to other ancient Mediterranean religions, one is faced with selecting from a wide range of very old religions which have shared influences for millennia, and which have come under a series of common influences, ranging from Bronze Age upheavals to Assyrian to Babylonian to Persian to Hellenistic imperialism. This is certainly not to say that borrowings did not take place; just the opposite, it is to say that borrowings, interpretations, reborrowings, and reinterpretations were probably the rule, resulting in the situation I have described above as one of overdetermination. Indeed, it is virtually certain that Kvanvig and VanderKam have found some of these borrowings. The question is: which ones? Given the confidence and rich evidence with which each of these scholars can propose mutually contradictory borrowings, and the sometimes brief compass in which some of the materials have been brought, it is not clear that attempting to establish single lines of influence will lead to a solution of these problems.

The study in the following chapters therefore attempts a different approach. Rather than attempting to find in a body of foreign materials a pattern which can

be discerned in Biblical or Jewish materials and then used to show influence, the next chapter traces the development of the theme of ascent to heaven in Sumerian and Akkadian texts themselves. Since these texts span almost two thousand years and often appear in richly documented historical and social contexts, they allow us to turn the Babylonian "background" of Biblical patterns and themes into a foreground. Throughout, special attention will be paid to the relationship between myth and ritual, text and application. This will then allow the construction of an independent and well-documented model for the application of myth to political and religious practice and the Hellenization of ancient Near Eastern traditions. In doing this I am of course making a methodological choice, like the scholars I have discussed—one which I hope will open up possibilities for understanding the material in a more nuanced and richly historical ancient context.

Chapter 2
Ascent to Heaven in Ancient Mesopotamia

The present chapter analyzes the Mesopotamian materials on ascent to heaven and the related phenomenon of humans who mediate between heaven and earth in ritual. An attempt has been made to locate, cite and analyze all relevant published texts concerning ascent to heaven. While scholars have previously discussed Sumerian and Akkadian texts relating to ascent to heaven, the explicit criterion for selection has been resemblance to Biblical or Jewish apocalyptic ascents to heaven. I believe that the present work represents the first attempt to describe the phenomenon and its relationship to ritual in Mesopotamia from a strictly Mesopotamian, rather than a Biblical, point of view.

The motivation for the survey is as follows: research in the 20th century has shown a sustained interest in the Jewish apocalypse as a literary type. This interest resulted in the discovery that the Jewish apocalypse belongs to a broader realm of religious forms, both from a phenomenological and a literary-generic point of view.[1] If the fact is clear—that the apocalypse can be understood as an example of a type—scholarly response has been ambivalent. After an increasingly broad corpus of material was brought into systematic comparison with the Hellenistic texts, a backlash grew, and since 1950 the history has been one of narrowing the focus to a controllable body of material; scholars returned to the foundations established by Zimmern, seeking to secure them.[2] They then tended to construct a single background for a single apocalyptic element, generally by examining either Babylonian or Greek materials for literary parallels. These parallels were used to argue historical

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[1] The reader is referred to the detailed discussion in the introduction.
[2] See chapter one.

influence from one of these cultures to another via borrowing and reuse.

Previous comparanda dropped out of scholarly discourse[3] or were polemicized

against.[4]

This change in approach is understandable in light of the problems

inherent in earlier approaches. One difficulty with the broad comparative

approach is its ability to produce uncontrollable hypotheses concerning

historical relationships: the resemblances are counted but less often weighed.

The second difficulty, related but more deep-seated, is that such a comparison

does not treat a single historical human reality or a single historically connected

body of discourse but a set of translated texts, removed from their role in life and

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[3] The reader will recall that Jansen and Widengren's Mandaic materials are outside the compass of both VanderKam and Kvanvig's discussions. Methodologically this choice can certainly be justified, but such a justification would necessarily articulate the fact that verbal and literary Mesopotamian parallels are interpreted as significant signs of influence but the same parallels in Mandaic are ignored. In such a case the main criterion appears to be the dating of manuscripts. The Mandaic reworking of the Mesopotamian Flood myth, found in the Right Ginza (trans. Lidzbarski 1925) includes extensive shared innovations with Jewish apocryphal literature. Its continuity with Babylonian religion is reflected in the verbatim borrowing of all seven Babylonian planetary deities, refigured as gnostic Archons with Akkadian names. This was already noted by Bousset 1901:28-30; for Babylonian planetary omina in Mandaic see the comments of Greenfield and Sokoloff 1989. The textual situation of the Mandaic materials is in disarray, as signaled by the fact that the *only* edition of the Ginza is that of Petermann, 1867. For an overview see Rudolph 1977. The first known Mandaic texts are amulets dated to the third through fifth centuries C.E., which show contact with Jewish magical and mystical doctrines. The oldest ms. of the Ginza is the Bibliotheque Nationale's Code Sabéen 1, dated as late as 1560 C.E. The late medieval dating of the Mandaic manuscripts is not necessarily relevant to the archaism of the material, any more than the Hellenistic date of the earliest bible manuscripts is to the strata of the Tanakh.

[4] Thus Culianu 1983: "The purpose of this book is to uproot wrong "traditional" views in the field of the so-called "Himmelsreise der Seele", a field where the "religionsgeschichtliche Schule" still holds onto its monopoly." (p. 1). This continues a long polemic against the recognition of Iranian elements in both Mesopotamian and Hellenistic literature. The history and motivations of this polemic merit a serious study, but may be related to the complicating role that Iran would play in a model of Christian origins (in Culianu's case this would transcend traditional theological stances). As Smith (1990) has shown, Jewish culture has been used as a kind of filter through which pagan influences can be rendered harmless before being taken up into the body of Christianity. Iran here represents indigestible archaic Indo-European material that cannot be assimilated to "us" in the same way as the Greeks are. As chapter one shows, influence-tracing remains both central and questionable as a comparative method in Near Eastern Studies.

arranged in a pattern by the comparativist.[5] This operation of abstracting is necessary in order to discover comprehensible patterns, but runs the danger of tearing the texts away from history and lived reality. The result is the radical foreshortening of the comparanda into an ahistorical "background" for the subject of the comparativist's interest.

The most recent approaches, such as those of Kvanvig and VanderKam, deal well with the first difficulty but not with the second. They represent sober and thorough explorations of the type of resemblances first pointed out by Zimmern. Their studies still center around the genres Zimmern utilized: lists and etiological accounts.[6]

Zimmern and his successors drew attention to striking literary resemblances. Enoch, described as the seventh antediluvian patriarch, participated in an otherworldly journey and received astronomical revelations. He has similarities to the figure of Enmeduranki, often described as the seventh antediluvian king, whom a heavily reworked first-millennium Babylonian text found in Assurbanipal's library attributes with a revelation concerning the secrets of divination. It is important to be clear about the limits of these similarities: Enmeduranki is not described as undertaking an otherworldly journey, and the references to astronomical knowledge in the Babylonian text

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[5] The use of "translated" here refers to the inevitable need to transfer an ancient text into a comprehensible modern context rather than to any misuse of or incompetence with original texts. P. Jensen and H. Zimmern, philologists of formidable skill, were both the editors of the very texts that they used for comparative studies.

[6] This is less true of Kvanvig, who also attempts to find a Babylonian background to the vision of Daniel 7 in the "Underworld Vision of an Assyrian Crown Prince." His comparison points out potentially significant literary parallels but does not deal with larger historical and generic issues, so the difficulty remains.

are secondary.[7] The formal resemblances remain significant: the world-view

implied by Mesopotamian divinatory literature, including the way it produces

knowledge of divine decisions and the pattern of history, is related to

apocalyptic forms of knowledge. H.-P. Müller argued decades ago for the

existence of a category of "mantic wisdom" as one of the main modes of

revealed knowledge in apocalyptic literature.[8] But is it enough to merely

register this similarity? Clearly, the same type of phenomenon appears twice in

related cultures. But more may be required to render the phenomena

intelligible.

A difficulty appears when we attempt to relate these literary and

conceptual resemblances to historical human experience: it is in fact unclear (1)

how, why, and even whether the lists and divinatory materials became related

to each other *within* Mesopotamian tradition, (2) how deep-seated they are in

Mesopotamian tradition, or whether they are perhaps marginal or anomalous

texts, and (3) how they were used. There is a closely analogous set of questions

concerning apocalyptic literature: (1) how and why apocalyptic arose, (2) who

produced it, and (3) how it was used, or, better, how it took effect. These

questions are suggestive: they compel us to wonder about the effectiveness of

both literatures' claims, but not in terms of a disconnected textual "tradition" or

vaguely conceived human needs. Apocalyptic literature claims to be divinely

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[7] An older, Middle Babylonian text mentioning Enmeduranki describes him as a diviner but makes no mention of a revelation. The assumption that a Mesopotamian diviner's presence in the assembly of the gods implies a heavenly journey is dubious. As will be demonstrated below, the relationship between diviner and gods is described in divinatory literature in terms of analogy, not as a journey. The diviner's presence in the meeting place of the gods does not require a heavenly journey since in Mesopotamia the gods typically meet in the cities of Nippur or Babylon, rather than in heaven or on a mountaintop as in the Bible and Ugaritic texts. I thank Wayne Horowitz, whose 1998 *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography* is highly relevant to these points, for pointing this out to me. The combination of divine revelation and transformation into a cosmic messenger also occurs in exorcistic rituals and traditions such as those of the apkallū or Maqlû, analyzed below.
[8] Müller 1972. His arguments have been defended and expanded by VanderKam 1984, 1997.

revealed knowledge with a binding and transformative claim on those to whom it is revealed. Our questions challenge us to explain precisely how these notions of knowledge became compelling. How might the lofty ideas expressed in the Mesopotamian and Hellenistic Jewish texts play out in the activities of a human body or the thoughts of a human mind? To reverse the question, are there types of ritual behavior or cognitive activity that could *generate* revealed knowledge, the experience of human transformation or an otherworldly journey? The question, ultimately, is if there is any way to discover how the apocalypses or their Mesopotamian analogues came to be and why anyone cared about them. Are there data on social context and ritual performance that might help us answer these questions?

At first glance, they seem lacking for the Jewish apocalypses. Accounts of otherworldly journeys from the Hellenistic period (excepting the third-century C.E. Pahlavi inscriptions of the Zoroastrian priest Kartir, sometimes neglected in this regard)[9] in apocalypses typically appear at an advanced stage in the process of transmission. As pseudepigrapha, these texts provide an account of their original context and function which the historian cannot accept. To the extent that the texts' own accounts of themselves were accepted in ancient times--to the extent that they were preserved and transmitted as authentic--they are further removed from their original contexts. Their new contexts may also be obscure, as primary source material for the religious contexts in which the

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[9] The Zoroastrian high priest Kartir's first-person account of his own otherworldly journey is known epigraphically from four monumental Pahlavi inscriptions commissioned by the author; for the text, translation and commentary see Skjaervø 1983. As Russell (1990) points out, the last king mentioned in them is the Sassanian Bahram II, and the text must therefore be not much later than this king's death in 293 C.E. For a rich religious-historical interpretation of Kartir's otherworldly journey in its political context, see the article by Russell.

Hellenistic apocalypses functioned is often lacking.[10] The simple fact that until

the discovery of Qumran so many were only known in late antique or Medieval

manuscripts should not be underestimated. Even now, the dated,

contextualized documents are of limited range and obscure authorship and

social function, and the reconstruction of these is hotly contested. Modern

reconstructions, marshaling what philological evidence they can, are

necessarily speculative and change regularly.[11]

While Mesopotamian religious texts present the same sort of problems of

context and use, the text sample is something on the order of a thousand times

larger, which brings with it a different set of difficulties and a powerful set of

opportunities. Cuneiform texts display manifold examples of the

pseudepigraphy and reuse we know from Jewish literature[12], but over a period

of more than 2,000 years, in which a large number of the texts appear in datable

contexts. The potential exists to investigate the historical development and

social function of the ascent to heaven with a radically expanded empirical

base. In fact, the abundance of Mesopotamian material has resulted in the

opposite problem from that of apocalyptic literature: there is too much

information to analyze. As a result, it has become a cliché in Assyriology that we

are still in the "data-collecting phase." Yet, as every working Assyriologist

knows, the backlog of "preliminary" work is growing, not shrinking.[13] This

suggests a dismaying possibility: the data-collecting phase may never end.

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[10] "The main difficulty in speaking about 'apocalyptic movements' in ancient Judaism does not lie in the meaning of the term, but in the lack of social documentation." Collins 1991 repr. Collins 1997:37.

[11] Witness the rise and merger in the last ten years of the "Enochic party" with the "Essenes," argued by Boccaccini 1999.

[12] Somewhat more than scholars outside the field have usually recognized.

[13] The reserve of unedited, not to speak of unpublished materials is gigantic and increasing steadily year by year. There is still no remotely complete or up-to-date dictionary of Sumerian, the language of many of the oldest and most important texts, and the grammar remains disputed in a number of important aspects.

Every text edition interprets, and essays make material accessible, but a rich variety of material remains scattered in edited and unedited form across hundreds of publications.

Therefore, the first part of this chapter attempts to simply collect and present the Mesopotamian material, not as background to a Biblical or Jewish phenomenon, but as a phenomenon with its own history. The theoretical approach is to emphasize not isolated literary works or traditions, but culturally embedded, intertextual phenomena as they reappear and change over time. Attention is focused on how things were reused, invoked and transformed in each historical context. While the survey attempts to treat the large narrative works and lists at length, there is a stress on briefer, traditional allusions, and ritual practices as documented in cuneiform texts.

The goal is to provide a model for the development of the theme of ascent to heaven, mediation with the other world, and its relationship to historically attested religious practice. While it will be seen that the Jewish materials continue specific themes and phenomena found in the Mesopotamian materials, the emphasis of this chapter is not on finding "backgrounds" for this or that Biblical or Jewish phenomenon, but on providing a detailed history of development of the heavenly journey and related phenomena in ancient Mesopotamia. The value of this model should lie precisely in its autonomy.

To provide a brief overview: Mesopotamian traditions about heavenly ascent appear in published sources as the ascents of kings, including myths and allusions to the heavenly journey of Etana and references in economic documents to the heavenly ascents of Shulgi and Ishbi-Irra. There are also references to the ascent of the god Dumuzi. There are many references to the ascents of sages, including myths and allusions to the heavenly journey of

Adapa and allusions to the ascent of Utuabzu, which may be the same thing. Both are related to the ritual invocation and/or personification of supernatural sages by the exorcist and the ritual enactment of a divine messenger's journey to realms of the gods on the part of the exorcist in Maqlû.

There are also related areas which do not mythically or ritually depict ascent to heaven but are important because they border on and interact with our subject within Mesopotamian tradition. These are: an inverted mythical form of the sage traditions represented by the exploits of the exorcistic anti-demon Pazuzu, the ritual enactment of an approach to the thrones of the gods on the part of the diviner, and references to ascent to heaven in Wisdom literature.

1. The Ascents of Kings

The Figure of Etana

The oldest known story about ascent to heaven is probably the most widely diffused. This is the story of Etana, a legendary early Sumerian king who rode to heaven on the back of an eagle. The sources concerning Etana are, in chronological order:[14]

i) Akkad period seals representing a shepherd flying to heaven on the back of an eagle,[15]

ii) the Sumerian King List, first composed during the Ur III or Isin period, containing the oldest written reference to Etana, the king of Kish, "the shepherd who ascended to heaven,"

iii) two Old Babylonian Sumerian funerary ritual prayers. One is in the form of

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[14] Since no attempt has been made to evaluate the Etana figure since Meier's entry (RIA, *q.v.*), now thoroughly out of date, an attempt has been made to collect all published references here.
[15] The relation of the glyptic evidence to the literary traditions is the subject of an important recent study by Steinkeller (1992), drawn on below.

an elegy from Nippur:[16]

96.	kalag-ga gilgameš šà(?)-zu(?) [ḫé(?)]-...	In strength [may(?)] Gilgamesh...your(?) heart(?)
97.	*ne-du₈ ù e-ta-na á-daḫ-zu [ḫé-a]	[May] Nedu and Etana [be] your allies,
98.	dingir-kur-ra-ke₄ šùd-dè mu-ra-[ab(?)-bé(?)]	The gods of the Netherworld will [utter(?)] prayers for you,

and one is in the form of a hymn to the sun god and psychopomp Utu:[17]

77.	ᵈBìl-ga-meš ensí-kur-ra-ke₄	Gilgamesh, governor of the netherworld!
78.	*E-ta-na nu-bànda-kur-ra-ke₄	Etana, steward of the netherworld!
79.	[ᵍⁱˢⁱg]-kur-ra-zu gál-lu	Open your [door] of the netherworld!

Both mention Etana alongside Gilgamesh as a powerful figure in the netherworld,

iv) an Old Babylonian Sumerian "ballad of former kings" (the first recorded instance of the *ubi sunt* theme, well known later from the speech of the *Rabshakeh* in II Kings 18:34-5 and the poetry of François Villon) known from manuscripts at Emar and Ugarit,[18]

v) a narrative tradition known in ancient times by its incipit as "the city [the gods]

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[16] Kramer's Pushkin Elegy no. 1; the events of the text are set in Nippur, where most Old Babylonian Sumerian literary tablets come from (p. 71n4). More recently Sjöberg JAOS 103 utilized four Nippur duplicates to improve the text.

[17] See Cohen ZA 67:14.

[18] The text of the relevant section is not preserved on Ug. V 164, a collection of wisdom literature (specifically, mediations on mortality) which overlaps with but is not identical to the selections from Emar and Nippur. However, it is likely that the Ugarit ms. contained our text because the enumeration of kings is part of the same section as is preserved in Ug. V 164, the Ugarit ms. begins two lines after the enumeration ends in the Nippur and Emar mss., and the reverse of the Ugarit ms. begins a new section with a double ruling just before it breaks off, indicating that there would have been at least a few more lines of text after the break.

designed"[19] or by the name of its protagonist as iškur ᵈEtana "the Etana series" and in modern times as "the Epic of Etana"; the tradition is known to us in Old Babylonian, Middle Assyrian, and Standard Babylonian versions. We lack the ending, but the fragments of the beginning and middle parts from each period seem to represent three independent reworkings of a single text tradition,[20]

vi) a reference in the Standard Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh epic to Etana's residence in the netherworld:[21]

197	ana bīt epri ša ērubu anāku	In the house of dust I had entered,
198	ašbū ēnu u lagarru	Dwelt the high priest and the wailer,
199	ašbū išippu u lumaḫḫu	Dwelt the purification priest and Lumaḫḫu priests,
200	[aš]bū gudapsū ša ilāni rabūti	Dwelt the Gudapsū priests of the great gods,
201	[a]šib Etana ašib ᵈŠakkan	Dwelt Etana, dwelt Shakkan,
202	[ašib] šarrat erṣātim ᵈEriškigal	Dwelt the queen of the Netherworld, Erishkegal...

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[19]This is the name the ancient copyists used: see the colophons K 2606, rev II line 2: DUB III KÀM URU i-ṣi-[...] and Berkshire 07.6 (also Nineveh) rev. 48: DUB II KÀM URU i-ṣi-r[u?...]. The title iškur ᵈEtana is known from at least four catalogues: Rm. 618 (Bezold *Catalog* IV p. 1627), K 9717+ rev. 9' (Lambert JCS 16), K 13684+ obv. 5 (Lambert AOAT 25), and the unidentified Kouyunjik text Sayce ZK 1.190:11, where however Etana's name is preceded by the personal rather than the divine determinative. An important question for our purposes is whether these titles all refer to the same text; could they be referring to other Etanas? That the text could be known both by incipit and under a generic name "the Etana collection" is suggested by the fact that catalogs can refer to "the Gilgamesh collection" (e.g. K 9717+ rev. 10', K 13684+ 4) even though Gilgamesh is also referred to by its incipit; in fact the ancient catalog published by Bezold also cites other texts by incipit, referring to a text called "Adapa ina qereb šamê". Why is Adapa not an iškuru? The distinction may be one of length, since the term iškuru applies to multi-tablet works and we know Adapa to have been short, probably a single tablet. The suggestion of Lambert (which I have not been able to document) that an iškuru is a compilation, not necessarily a unified literary work explains the old problem of Gilgamesh tablet XII and also allows us to distinguish between incipit (referring to a specific composition) and iškuru (referring to a topical compilation).

[20] There are two recent editions, as well as a new one being prepared as a Master's Thesis under Brigette Gronenberg. The more comprehensive edition is Kinnier Wilson 1985; the more usable is Saporetti 1990; on the textual history Alster JAOS 109.

[21] VII line 197ff, cited after the SAA Gilgamesh edition. It is significant that Etana is the only human king here (Gilgamesh has yet to join him!) and that he is paired with the god Shakkan, a funerary deity (he receives offerings in The Death of Gilgamesh) and patron god of animals. The flavor of this list may be suggested by the fact that the priestly titles are archaic (or possibly archaizing; išippu is a rare word loaned back from Sum. išib ‹Akk. āšipu› and of high rank; this (along with one Middle Babylonian instance) would be the only post-Old Babylonian appearance of the term gudapsū according to the CAD.

vii) an apparent reference to a weapon *named* Etana which hung at the side of the god Zababa, in a Neo-Babylonian scholarly text from the temple of Nabû ša Harê,[22] and

viii) a Seleucid omen apodosis[23] mentioning "Etana, the king who ascended to heaven". The name of Etana is then lost, with the possible exception of an echo in Berossos, but the motif appears in a variety of forms in classical, Hellenistic and Persian sources and was still found, in a form strikingly similar to the Old Babylonian version, in 20th-century rural Finland.

It is with this last and most distant work that we shall begin. While the Mesopotamian narrative of Etana's ascent to heaven on the back of an eagle appears to be the oldest known example of a heavenly journey, it will be helpful to briefly touch on a strikingly similar recent story in order to prove a point about

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[22] 79.B.1/19 rev. iii 1-7, pub. Cavigneaux 1981:136-7. ana ᵈZababa bēlu rabu mulattu šad abni, ᵈIgalim Šulšagani ᵈŠarur ᵈŠargaz ᵈMettu ᵈLuḫuša ᵈEtani itīšu 7 kakku naklutu "For Zababa, the great lord who shatters the stone mountain: Igalim, Shulshagana, Sharur, Shargaz, Mittu, Luhusha and Etana which are at his side, the seven skillfully made weapons..." The analysis advanced by Kinnier Wilson (127), that the weapon is "of" Etana because Zababa gave it to him, raises the question why the weapons are described as ana Zababa–did Etana give back the weapon the god gave him?
As to the purpose of this list, Cavigneaux proposes that, while an armed statue of Zababa is possible in a temple of Nabû, it may be more likely that the list describes an object in Kish, where Zababa is well in place as the patron god since ED times. Support for this may be found in Etana's special connection to Kish and in Zababa's symbol, an eagle-headed staff (Black and Green 1995:187). Igalim and Shulshagani are otherwise known as siblings, local gods of Lagash and offspring of Bau, who is also sometimes the spouse of Zababa; Sharur is the personified weapon of Ninurta. These last two details are explained by Zababa's identification with Ninurta, permitting him to receive the weapons and spouse of Ninurta/Ningirsu (see the example in the Late Babylonian expository text repub. Lambert JNES 48 ll. 1-5, with Lambert's commentary *ad loc*). Other details in this obscure text may refer to otherwise unknown aspects of the local mythology of Kish.
[23] Clay, BRM IV.13, 33: šumma tīrānu kīma erî⁻ᵈ⁻ᵃᵐᵘᵗ amūt ᵈEtana šarru ša ana šamê ēlû.

how the Mesopotamian evidence should be understood.[24] The story belongs to a widely diffused folkloristic type, as numerous examples from Eastern Europe and Western Asia show.[25] The theme's unusual durability is demonstrated by Martti Haavio's 1956 study *Der Etanamythos in Finland*. A version narrated to Heikki Kokkonen in the year 1909 by one Antti Puhakka in the Finnish village of Revonkylä (7-8), includes most major themes of the Akkadian Etana narrative. These are: 1) the betrayal of one animal by another via an inappropriate division of food, 2) the rescue of an injured eagle by a man, 3) the flight on the back of the eagle, offered in recompense for the man's help, 4) the ascent in three stages, at each stage of which the man and eagle converse on the appearance of the world below and the earth and sea are compared to increasingly small objects, 5) the fall of the man from the eagle's back and the eagle's subsequent rescue of the man, paralleling the man's earlier rescue of the eagle, 6) the fertility of the man's wife in connection with their return from the voyage.[26] The royal nature of the hero and the heavenly ascent are, however,

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[24] On the otherworldly journey in general, including a possible but unprovable representation in prehistoric art, see Coulianou 1991. The classical reflexes include Bellerophon, first described by Pindar, *Isthmian Ode* 7.43-8 (on which see Gantz 1993:313-6), Ganymede (*Iliad* 5.265-7, Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 202-17, which however do not yet refer to Zeus's transformation into an eagle), and Alexander, for which see Millet Syria 4:85-133 and the monograph of C. Settis-Frugoni *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem. Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema*. Studi Storici 80-82. Roma, 1973 (*non vidi*).
For the reflexes of Etana in Persian, which seem to merge with Anzu, see the accounts of the Simurgh and Kay Kaush's attempted flight to heaven in Ferdowsi's *Shah-Nama* (in the translation of Levy 1967:35-8 and 59-61). On the background of the legendary figure of Kay Kaush in the historical figure of Nabonidus, H. Lewy ArOr 17:28-109, really a monograph in article form on Neo-Babylonian history and its afterlife.
[25] See Aro AOAT 25.
[26] Differences, of course, remain, but the instances gathered by Haavio generally include elements 2-5 and have a striking coherence.

totally lacking.[27]

Puhakka's narrative, so close to the Etana myth, was produced almost four thousand years after the Old Babylonian Etana, under different social, political, linguistic and textual circumstances. Yet it can easily be redescribed in terms almost identical to the Mesopotamian story. Whatever this may show about the nature of stories or scholarly redescription in general, it is clearly an example of the fact that the general features of narratives may resemble each other independently of historical and cultural context. A point relevant to the Mesopotamian materials can be drawn from this: recurrence of clusters of narrative features is, in and of itself, without significance. Did the two narratives say the same thing to their performers or audiences? Only by embedding the narratives in a "thick description" of their circumstances, audiences, possible motives, and reception could we begin to answer this question.

The Finnish version of Etana functions as a kind of limit, indeed, a worst-case scenario, for the present study: it would be virtually impossible to produce two texts further apart in time and more removed from each other in context. If it were somehow possible to "trace back" one to the other, such a process would be the proof of its own meaninglessness. The gap between the two texts presents the same problem with respect to time as Levi-Strauss' famous case of "split representation" presented with respect to space: to explain two strikingly similar artistic techniques in the traditional societies of Asia and America by

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[27] The tradition that most resembles the heavenly journey portion of Etana is the Islamic material concerning the miʿrāj of Muhammad, including a passage through seven gates each keyed to a prophet or two, each gate also requiring a prostration . The prostrations have a different role in the Islamic texts, serving to establish Muhammad's preeminence over previous prophets such as Moses, who accepts him as an I mām (prayer leader) and thus confers superior religious authority on him. These texts are also comparable vis a vis the preeminent status of the protagonist.The reemergence of the ritual pattern of passage through seven entrances in the context of heavenly ascent is a useful datum, and "No incident in the religious history of Islam is more commonly represented in Muslim art than this of the Ascension of the Prophet." -Sir Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam.* Oxford: 1928 cited in EncIslam VII.104b.

diffusion over thousands of years and miles would simply beg the question of why the techniques were retained when so much else (language, social forms, modes of dress) was lost.[28] In other words, it forces us to abandon the question of whether one form "should be traced back" to the other or is "just coincidence;" *either way, it is "just coincidence."* That is, because the retention itself is so bizarre, absent a social explanation of the similarity, it appears as an unintelligible and random coincidence.

The oldest possible Mesopotamian instance of the Etana theme is on an Akkad period seal. This is over a thousand years older than the earliest possible attestation outside of Mesopotamia (a man falling from the back of a winged horse on a seventh-century pithos from Crete)[29], making it plausible that all instances of the motif are diffused from Mesopotamia. But the lack of the motif in art of other times and places is not proof of its absence. The Akkad period as we know it is a time of richly mythological glyptic art and no myths; at least, none whose writing is preserved to us. Most of the myths that seem to be alluded to in the art do not ever appear in the later literary texts. From the Old Babylonian period on, the texts represent a variety of myths, while the art seems to refer to much fewer myths. Thus the Etana narrative is known from later Old Babylonian, Middle Assyrian and Standard Babylonian texts, none of which have a reflex in later art. That the one time the Etana theme does appear in Mesopotamian art is also the only time that it does *not* appear in literature simply attests to the incompleteness of our picture of Mesopotamian art and literature. This should inspire reserve: we do not know how old or widespread the motif already was when it surfaced in Sargonic art; we can say only that it is *first* known from Mesopotamia.

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[28] See the brilliant posing of the problem and solution in Levi-Strauss 1963.
[29] Louvre CA 4523, published by P. Demargne *Revue Archéologique* 1972:35-46.

There are at least 21 cylinder seals of the Sargonic period showing a man riding on an eagle's back, usually watched by shepherds and dogs.[30] The seals depicting the "Etana" motif known through the early 60's were collected in Boehmer's standard 1965 work on Akkad period glyptic, still the most thorough single presentation. The seals published through 1990 were listed by Steinkeller in an article which also advances new arguments connecting the texts to the art.[31]

Steinkeller lists 24 seals in toto, of which one he indicates is probably a forgery.[32] Of the remaining 23, two do not clearly show Etana riding an eagle and are not identified by their publishers as Etana scenes; one of these is damaged in the place where we expect Etana to appear. Either or both of the unconfirmed exemplars may simply be pastoral scenes without the Etana motif.[33] This leaves us with 21 confirmed seals, the majority of which show strongly consistent features. Steinkeller hypothesizes that the glyptic art of the Akkad period, including the Etana motif, may represent a specifically Semitic mythology since it is mainly attested in northern areas. The distribution of the Etana seals does not completely fit this hypothesis; of the nine provenanced

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[30] I base this statement on the sources adduced in Steinkeller 1992b:248n10, where he makes a count of 21. He adds three new exemplars in an addendum to the footnote, of which two come from controlled excavations and are described as Sargonic (MacGuire Gibson *Excavations at Nippur, Twelfth Season.* OIC 23 p. 11 and personal communication, 7/22/98; A. Degraeve *Northern Akkad Project Reports* 3 p. 38).

[31] I am not aware of any new publications of Etana seals since 1990.

[32] This analysis is borne out by the design of the seal, which appears in a 1989 Sotheby's catalogue (July 10th; p. 26 no. 28): the crowded registers, deep incision and rough-hewn bodies of the Akkad period are missing, replaced by a jumble of elements from the Etana inventory that appear to float, unrelated, in an unusually empty vertical space. While appraisal of the seal must await the judgment of an art historian, one imagines this Etana motif as being copied ineptly from Boehmer's catalogue itself.

[33] Alternatively, since one of these depicts an eagle perching on a sheep fold, it may represent another scene from the same story..

seals,[34] two come from Eshnunna, one from Tell Brak, one from Kish and one

from Sippar but also one from Nippur, two from Ur and one from Lagash. This

small sample is not particularly clear-cut in its geographical distribution.

The basic form of the seal is a unified panorama which seems to depict a

scene from a story. The elements are: 1) a pastoral scene depicting a man

herding sheep and two men sitting on a roof making cheese balls; one pours

the raw cheese out of a container while the other forms them and sets them to

dry and 2) the uncanny element: a man rising into the sky on the back of an

eagle; two dogs sitting on their haunches directly beneath the man and eagle,

looking up at them. Two shepherds, one on each side of the two dogs, also look

up at the man and eagle. One of the men is sometimes calling to the airborne

pair, and one sometimes holds a stick or a whip. There is a formally related

pastoral scene with some additional elements which lacks the uncanny element

of the man on the eagle's back.[35]

In addition to this standard scene there are three instances in which the

image of the man on the eagle's back has been incorporated into a new format.

The most remote is a seal in which the eagle-rider motif has been placed in a

completely different scene involving an enthroned goddess with serpents on

[34] These are: 1.) As.31:664=Boehmer 1662 publ. Frankfort 1955, T. Asmar, 2.) As.32:816 =Boehmer 908, publ. Frankfort 1955, T. Asmar, 3.) Ur II 180=Boehmer 637, pub. Boehmer 1965, Ur, 4.) Louvre T 97 pl. 5,3 =Boehmer 1663, Lagash, 5.) Ashmolean Kish 1931.114=Boehmer 1664, Kish, 6.) Ur II 208=Boehmer 1669, Ur [dubious example], 7.) 1939.332(216) publ. B. Buchanan, *Catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum*, vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966 no 333, T. Brak, 8.) 12 N 743 publ. Gibson 1987, Nippur, 9.) D 7897, publ. Degraeve *Northern Akkad Project Reports* 3, Sippar.

[35] For a more detailed analysis see M. P. Baudot, "Representations of Glyptic Art of a Preserved Legend: Etana, the Shepherd who Ascended to Heaven" in J. Quagebeur, ed. *Studia Paulo Naster Oblata* II (OLA 13). Leuven: Peeters, 1982:1-8, pls. I-II. In a recent article, B. Hrouda performs a sort of source-critical analysis, finding that the pastoral and uncanny elements are originally separate and that they do not necessarily have anything to do with Etana. Considering the tenacity of the tradition of Etana as shepherd, the first proposal is not convincing. Whether or not one the flying shepherd of our seals was already named "Etana" is immaterial: the seals find their place in the theme of a shepherd's flight on an eagle's back. See "Zur Darstellung des Etana-Epos in der Glyptik" WZKM 86:157-60.

her shoulders, the dismembered parts of a bull, and serpents; Porada suggests

that the design may be Iranian and that the serpents may relate to the snake of

the texts.[35] A second includes the eagle-rider alone rising low between bull-

men; this looks like a combination of two independent and unrelated themes. In

the third, a repeating scene involving heroes slaying animals, the eagle-rider is

set off in its own vertical register by means of a box; a single dog looks up at

him. The presence of the dog is significant because in every other confirmed

example outside of these three, two dogs directly beneath the eagle-rider are

present. That the image of the dog or dogs consistently accompanies the eagle-

rider and even follows him outside the pastoral setting suggests that there is an

integral connection between the two: a story with these elements must lie

behind the scene.

Steinkeller concluded that at the time of the Akkad dynasty, a story was in

circulation involving a shepherd who was taken up into the sky by an eagle in

the midst of his daily tasks. He proposed that the seals and the narrative

represent two divergent images of Etana: the image on the seals reflects a

version where a shepherd ascends suddenly, perhaps unwillingly[37], and is

watched by two fellow shepherds and their dogs. The homely details such as

the cheesemaking emphasize the folkloric and pastoral. That there is both a

separation and a connection between the version of the seals and that of the

texts is strongly suggested by the otherwise incongruent detail in the Sumerian

King List, irrelevant to the narrative, that Etana was a shepherd.

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[35] The flying bull parts surrounding the serpent, on the one hand, and the enthroned goddess, on the other, also suggest connections with the text.

[37] Thus Steinkeller, "The anxiety of the shepherds, the reaction of the dogs, the bucket left by "Etana" on the ground, all suggest that, unlike in the Legend, where the flight of Etana was premeditated, in the Sargonic tale it was an accidental happening." Contrast with Porada's description of the physical attitude of the Etana-figure: "His posture resembles that of a child sitting on its mother's arm, which suggests both the consent and confidence inspired in Etana by the eagle's speech..." 91.

However, there is no way to be sure that the shepherd of the seals is taken to heaven, or that he was known as Etana. As Lambert notes, "..the literary attestation is only known some 200-300 years later than the date of the seals. Also the items commonly associated on the seals with the figure being borne aloft (dogs, sheep, goats, shepherd and potter (?) [or cheesemaker - S.L.S.]) do not appear in the texts."[38] The two stories could have influenced each other at any time, or one could have been transformed into the other. Yet Steinkeller's remains a plausible and coherent reconstruction of the relationship between the two sources.

The earliest written reference to Etana is in the Sumerian King List, the postdiluvian core of which is dated to the first Isin dynasty on linguistic and literary grounds;[39] some scholars such as Jacobsen and Wilcke have argued that its composition can be pushed back to the Ur III period. For our purposes the dating is significant simply in that it lies firmly between the seals and the Old Babylonian version of the narrative. By a simple count of names, Etana is the eleventh king after the flood. But as Glassner (1993:74-76) has recently shown, the postdiluvian king list actually contains an account of the development of kingship in Kish. The first series of names seems to represent a period before royal authority was instituted, as signaled by the name Kullassina-bēl "All-of-them-are-ruler." The names of the second series are simply animals.[40] Thus Etana, the seventh king of the second series, is also the first king. Glassner's analysis helps explain three additional statements made about Etana: that he

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[38] Compare Lambert's "At least no one doubts that the figure being borne aloft by an eagle on Akkadian cylinder seals is Etana, king of Kish..." (Lambert 1987:37). Lambert himself goes on to cite problems with the identification (37n1, quoted above).

[39] For linguistic arguments setting the date in the Isin period or earlier see Jacobsen AS 11. Jacobsen's conclusions have been criticized; for bibliography and historiographical arguments placing the text in the ideological context of the Isin dynasty see Michalowski JAOS 103. Wilcke Fs. Sjøberg uses historiographical arguments to push the date back to Ur III.

[40] With the exception of the difficult Atab, on which see Glassner 1993:76.

was a "shepherd," that he "unified all the lands," and that he " ascended to heaven."[41]

e-ta-na sipa lú an-šè ba-e₁₁-dè	Etana, a shepherd, who went to heaven,
lú kur-kur mu-un-gi-na	who consolidated all lands,
lugal-àm mu 1,560 ì-aₛ	Became king and reigned for 1,560 years.
ba-li-iḫ dumu e-ta-na-ke₄	Baliḫ, son of Etana,
mu 400 ì-aₛ	reigned 400 years.

The additional statements break the typical repetitive pattern of the Sumerian King List and make clear that we have to do here with a special figure: it is also said of Dumuzi that he was a shepherd,[42] but the other two statements are unique in the Sumerian King List. Etana's "unification of all lands" makes greater sense in light of the implication that he is the first real king. His ascent to heaven, apparently for the purposes of securing a royal lineage, is also congruent with his position as *seventh* king of the second series in Kish. The statements are also of interest because of the way they recall the narrative that must lie behind the seals: the image of Etana as a shepherd is merged with the image of Etana as a king of great political significance

The next in order is the narrative itself. This narrative is attested from three periods: Old Babylonian, Middle Babylonian, and Neo-Assyrian; in each period there are significant variations, and the Neo-Assyrian evidence shows that the variations are not merely chronological but attest to parallel editions. Thus Foster:

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[41] Ed. Jacobsen 1939:80-1. This statement, close to the statements made about some of the apkallu, made Gurney misidentify the text he published in JRAS 1935:459-66 (later assigned to the bīt mēseri series by Reiner) as an Etana fragment.

[42] Which may have resulted in a confusion between the two in Berossos; see below.

"[The Neo-Assyrian manuscripts] constituted several editions of the text. Since even the latest manuscripts of the story, from one library, show considerable variation in style, content and arrangement of the text, one can assume that numerous editions of the text were available." (1995:438)

The following analysis will give special attention to the significance of these variants.

The language of the oldest version is Old Babylonian, with the full case endings but inconsistent use of mimation typical for texts from outside of Hammurapi's chancery in the Old Babylonian period. There are a number of copying errors indicating that it is at least a second- or third-generation manuscript, but beyond this it is not possible to go. Since it bears on Etana's literary history, a word should be said here about Kinnier Wilson's suggestion[43] that the text may be a Sumerian composition from Ur III times. When the Old Babylonian Sumerian version of Adapa is published, it may become plausible to posit that the Akkadian Etana narrative was directly translated (as opposed to reworked and integrated into a new story, as in the case of Gilgamesh) from an older Sumerian version. But there is not yet enough evidence to support this. The "Catalogue of Texts and Authors" (ed. Lambert 1966) from the library of Assurbanipal adduces Lu-Nanna, a sage from the time of Shulgi, as author of the Etana epic. But this catalogue is at least 1,300 years later than the alleged composer of the text. This would not be a crippling objection, given the conservatism of cuneiform tradition, were it not clear that the catalogue's compilers were unafraid to ascribe authorship of texts to gods and mythical figures, including the sage Adapa (I 6), the king Enmerkar (III 3-5), and a talking horse (VI 15-6). Lu-Nanna was probably a scholar under Shulgi (with hymns to

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[43] The argument is proffered cautiously in Kinnier Wilson but accepted as proven by Dalley ("the story is certainly much older, for Lu-Nanna, the demi-sage of Shulgi...is credited as the author...") Dalley goes on to cite the Akkad period seals, a different and more reliable sort of evidence (1989:189).

his credit), but this does not mean he is not a mythical figure in the first

millennium, described in the exorcism series bīt mēseri as "only two thirds [non-

human] sage, who drove the Ushumgallu-dragon from Eninkarnunna, the

temple of Ishtar of Shulgi"[44]. Lambert's caution that "the value of the catalogue

lies more in the picture it offers of early first millennium Babylonian scholarship

than in positive information about Babylonian authors" (1966:77) should be

adhered to. While the seals show that a related story was in circulation in the

Akkad period, and the later literary materials indicate that this alternate story

was in some way remembered, the details of the earlier story and its relation to

the narrative of Etana the king await the discovery of more evidence.

The Old Babylonian version introduces its subject thus:

1	rabûtum ⁴Anunna šāʾimū šimtim[45]	The great gods, the Anunna, who decree fate
	ušbū imlikū milikša mātam	sat to deliberate about the land.
	bānû kibrātim šākinū šikittim	The creators of the world, the establishers of creation
	ṣīrū ana nīšī ilū Igigu	. . . .[46] the divine Igigi

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[44] von Weiher SpBTU II no. 8 i 24-7; see the text and translation below.

[45] I cannot understand Kinnier Wilson's statement, *ad loc.*, that there are "probably eight lines missing" from the beginning. As the handcopy clearly shows, the Old Babylonian tablet is intact at the top and the text resembles that of the Nineveh version, which we know to be the beginning because its incipit forms the title referred to in the colophon of K 2606. His statement seems to be based on the fact that the Nineveh version was reworked and material was added to the preamble (for analysis of which see below) but it requires positing either an eight-line tablet preceding this one or the writing of those lines at the end of some other tablet, neither of which seems possible.

[46] I leave this phrase untranslated, with Foster 1995. Kienast AS 16 would render something like "—great things for the people—" here, over the objections of Wilcke ZA 64:157n7 that the solution of taking ṣīrū ana nīšī as a clause in apposition to the nominatives of the previous line is "syntaktisch bedenklich." While indeed syntactically difficult, it must be said in favor of Kienast's proposal that it is appropriate to the rhythm and syntax of the beginning, the first three lines of which contain four short nominal phrases of five or six syllables in length in paratactic relation. Kinnier Wilson assumes a badly garbled text here and emends it based on the Late Version. But such emendations towards the *lectio facilior*, based on a heavily reworked later edition, should only be a last resort.

5   isinnam ana nīšī išīmū[47]   decreed the Festival (of kingship) for the people,

     šarram la iškunū kalû nīšī epištim   (but) a king they had not (yet) established among the many peoples.

     ina šištim la kaṣrat kubšum meānum   At that time headcloth and crown were unworn,

     u ḫaṭṭum uqniam la ṣaprat   nor was scepter inlaid with lapis,

     la banû ištēniš parakku   not a single throne-dias was built—

10   sebetta bābū uddulū elu dāpnim[48]   sevenfold were the gates bolted[49] against the valiant,

     ḫaṭṭum meānum kubšum u šibiru   scepter and crown, headcloth and staff

     qudmiš Anim ina šamaʾi šaknū   lay before Anum in heaven—

     ul ibašši mitluku nīšīša   there was no ruler for the people.

     [šar]rūtum ina šamaʾi urdam   Kingship came down from heaven;

15   [. . . I]štār ša[rr]a[m] išī   [. . .I]shtar looked for a k[in]g.

     [. . . . .]   *text breaks*

The text announces its subject as the adventure of the world's first king. Line 14 is the Akkadian equivalent of Sumerian nam-lugal an-ta e₁₁-dè-a-ba "kingship descended from heaven,"[50] the expression in the Sumerian King List for the first appearance of kingship on earth and its reappearance after the flood. In the Etana epic, Etana is the world's first king. This picture of history

[47] This is the beginning of line 5 on the tablet, but in Kinnier Wilson's edition "the two lines of the tablet have been conveyed as a single 2:2:2 line" because of his emendation and stichometric reconstruction(p. 30n4b). Kinnier Wilson's line 5ff corresponds to line 6ff of the tablet and all other treatments of the text.

[48] CAD emends away the problem by reading da-ad!-mi!, correcting the text in accordance with its later reworking.

[49] As Foster notes in reference to the description of Adapa as responsible for the door-bolt of Eridu, "Fastening the door bolt was a *topos* in Mesopotamian poetry; note that before the institution of kingship the gods had to bolt the city gates themselves [he refers here to the Late Version, for which see below]. When a poet wished to describe the state of a city at night, the bolted gates were his first image..." Or 43:345n5. How does this *topos* work here? At least in Etana and the Prayer to the Gods of the Night, the practical effect of the door being bolted is lack of access. The gods of the day, says the Prayer, have gone to sleep in heaven and are therefore inaccessible, not capable of judging cases or answering prayers. For Adapa to bolt Eridu's door suggests he controls access to Enki. Here it may be access to heaven that is restricted at the beginning of the story.

[50] Thus in lines 1 and 41 of Jacobson's edition.

contrasts sharply with that of the Sumerian King List, which places Alalu as the first antediluvian king and Etana as eleventh after the flood.

Kingship is embodied in objects of ritual and political significance kept in heaven, directly in the presence of Anum. There are gates bolted seven times which keep kingship away from potential kings; these are probably the gates of heaven.[51] The simple, eagle-riding shepherd of the seals, evoked in the king list, is absent here.

The Nineveh version of the text, dating from Neo-Assyrian times, shows significant reworking. Here, eight lines anticipating the selection of Etana as a ruler are added to the beginning. Interestingly, these lines do refer to Etana as a shepherd. While the Sumerian King List's shepherd can only be a literal reference to the profession of Etana[52], "shepherd" is also a political metaphor, used as a stock epithet of Mesopotamian kings. The Nineveh version seems to play on both the literal and figurative senses, transforming the old profession of Etana into a peculiar, half-literalized metaphor.

A second change is the way that the phrase *sebetta bābū uddulū elu dāpnim* seems to have been reinterpreted as referring to a city bolted against other

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[51] There is a grammatical difficulty here; interpretation depends on the reader's construal of *sebetta*. It seems best to take it as an adverbial accusative. But rather than taking the expression "sevenfold were the gates bolted against the valiant" as a figurative expression denoting that heroes were not permitted to exercise power (thus Lambert; Foster follows him and Kinnier Wilson does not translate the phrase), it may be preferable to take the expression literally: the gates of heaven were bolted seven times against anyone who would wish to take kingship from heaven. This proposal has the advantage of recognizing a theme taken up later in the story, when Etana and the eagle indeed pass seven gates in heaven (or at least gates belonging to seven gods; for the problem see below) in their attempt to take the plant of birth, another precious object relating to kingship, from heaven. It is hard to separate the reference to gates and the number seven in the context of the presence of objects in heaven and their lack on earth from the seven gates passed by Etana and the eagle in their subsequent quest for the plant in heaven. Any interpretation of the text's overall structure and meaning should take account of this.

[52] If Etana is described as a shepherd in the Sumerian King List merely because of the standard royal epithet (he is a king who "shepherded" the people), why is Dumuzi, a well known mythological shepherd, the only other king described that way? Did the other kings somehow not "shepherd" their people? The simplest explanation for the epithet's distribution here is that it is being used literally rather than as a political metaphor.

people. In the Nineveh version, the gods had to guard the city and lock its gates themselves. The difference between the two versions goes along with a change in focus and is deeper than a new reading of a phrase: several lines not found in the Old Babylonian version appear here after the phrase, and the references to royal objects in heaven and the verbal echo of the Sumerian King List, referring to the spontaneous *descent* of kingship to earth (as opposed to its *being brought* by some other agent) are gone. The Old Babylonian version involves literal royal objects, originally kept in heaven, descending to earth. When this is lost, the concept of gates being bolted protectively in heaven loses its meaning, to be replaced with the concept of an archaic state of divine labor (cf. "Atra-Hasis").[53]

These two changes involve exegesis within the text itself. The first example shows how a concept of kingship based on the descent from heaven of emblematic objects and a rather obscure phrase involving a difficult use of the adverbial accusative are misunderstood or differently understood and reused to invoke a different mythological theme entirely. The second shows how variant traditions may be both harmonized and obscured through the use of language: the memory of Etana as an actual shepherd, still present in the Sumerian King List, is incorporated into the narrative but reanalyzed in light of the rhetoric of kingship.

After this point we need to use the Middle Assyrian and Nineveh versions to reconstruct the story. It seems that after Etana is appointed king, a crisis occurs in which his wife is rendered barren by disease. She has a dream in which she sees the plant of birth which will make her fertile. Etana prays to

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[53] Thus, Kinnier Wilson's reason for demurral from Lambert's analysis of the Old Babylonian version of this passage, "such a thing could not be what the L[ate] V[ersion] is trying to say"(1985: 43) is precisely the point: as the extensive verbal differences between the texts confirm, they are trying to say different things.

Shamash to "reveal" to him the plant of birth revealed to his wife in her dream. Meanwhile, the protagonists of a fable are introduced: these are an eagle and a snake who swear an oath of friendship and mutual aid, enforceable by Shamash.[54] This oath contains an important provision: līklāšu nērebtāšu šadû "May the mountainland withhold its entrance from him!"[55] The exact terminology of the curse varies between versions, but always keeps some form of this provision, including the reference to the nērebu/tu of the mountains. The mountainlands are the area where large game is to be found, and as part of a hunting alliance the oath's curse finds its point in prohibiting access to them.

After a period of mutual aid, the eagle betrays the snake by eating its children. The ascent theme is foreshadowed in the eagle's imagination. He plans to ascend to heaven and dwell there to escape the vengeance he expects to bring down on his own head: ellī-ma ina šamâmi uš[šab] (Late Version II 44). After the evil deed is done and the snake finds his children have been eaten by his friend, the snake prays to Shamash. The god of justice provides a solution in the form of a ruse: he must lure the eagle into "crossing into the mountainland" (exactly what the oath prohibited and what the eagle does in Late Version II 88), whereupon he can lure the eagle to the ground and attack him, destroying his wings and feathers and casting him into a pit. The eagle who has violated the rules of hunting and friendship is lured to the hunting ground and trapped by his friend.

The eagle in his abjection then prays to Shamash, who arranges to answer his prayer along with that of Etana. Meanwhile Etana is abject too,

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[54] For the fable and its implied ethics, see the intriguing ethnographic study of H. Freydank, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 17:1-13.

[55] I/C I.2 of Old Babylonian version; cf. with this Gilgamesh's fear-struck arrival at the nērebtu of the mountains in the Standard Babylonian version of Gilgamesh IX i 8.

having exhausted his spiritual and material resources in imploring Shamash's help: "You have eaten, O Shamash, the fattest parts of my sheep; O earth, you have drunk the blood of my lambs. I have honored the gods and revered the departed spirits, the dream-diviners have used up my incense, the departed spirits have used up my lambs with sacrifices." (Late Version II 132-6). The request for divine revelation is directly followed by a command to take the same "path" to the mountainland.

There Etana discovers and helps the eagle out of the pit by throwing something into it and repairs the eagle's wings. The meeting is literally the answer to both of their prayers. If one accepts Kinnier Wilson's inclusion of KAR 335 in the text at this point[56] the eagle would undergo a physical transformation that plays verbally and thematically on his loss of identity. The irony of an eagle, who normally ascends under his own power, forced to ascend by means of a ladder (as Etana, who would normally only be able to ascend by some artificial means such as a ladder, will ascend with the eagle's help later) would be verbally embodied in the pun between erû "eagle" and the substance used to repair his wings: erû "copper;" Etana's goal of securing progeny would then be echoed in the third meaning of erû: "be/come pregnant." Regardless of whether one accepts KAR 335 here, the narrative plays on the restoration of fundamental losses: The eagle needs the aid of a human (and perhaps even a substance almost named "eagle") to fly; Etana needs to ascend to the very heavens on an eagle's back to produce progeny.

Etana asks the eagle to "open his eyes" and reveal to him the plant of

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[56] This is by no means certain; while the fragment can easily be reconstructed as continuing the action of the eagle's ascent from the pit, neither Etana's name nor a clear reference to the eagle are preserved. The two most recent treatments of the text, Foster 1995 and Saporetti 1990, accordingly reject this fragment.

birth. But the eagle himself seems not to know where the plant is to be found. In deciding what to do, the eagle has a dream. Thus the Nineveh version:

1 [erû pâšu ēpušam-ma ana ⁴Etana izakkaršu]⁵⁷

   ʳibʼ[rī ušabr]a ilu ʳšuʼ-m[a šutta]

   nēreb ša bāb ⁴Anim ⁴Enli[l u] ʳᵉᵗE[a n]iba²ʳuʼ

   nuškēnu [itti aḫāmeš an]āku u at[ta]

5 nēreb ša bāb ⁴Sîn ⁴Šamaš ⁴Addu u ⁴ʳIštarʼ niba²ʳuʼ

   [nuškēnu itti aḫāmeš] anāku u at[ta]

   āmur bīt aptī X [. . .] kunukku? [. .]

   X X ir asakkip-ma ētarbaš[šu]

   ašbat ina libbi ištēt [batultu]

10 ʳagâʼ ruṣṣunat baniat [z]īmā[ša]

   ᵍⁱˢkussû nadât-ma qaqqa[ru⁶² i]ttakba[š]

   ina šapla ᵍⁱˢkussî lab[ê nadrūti ir]ab[bišū]

[The eagle spoke up and said to Etana:]

[My] frie[nd], ʳthatʼ god [showed me a dream]

We passed through the entrance of the gates of Anum, Enlil and Ea,⁵⁸

We bowed down [together], you and I.

We passed through the entrance of the gates of Sin, Shamash, Adad and Ishtar,

[We bowed down together,] you and I.

I saw a house with windows⁵⁹ [. . .] a seal [. .]

I pushed aside [X] and entered⁶⁰

Seated inside was a [young woman,]

Awesomely crowned,⁶¹ her features beautiful.

A throne was set up and the ground was trodden down,

At the base of the throne [fierce] lions lay

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⁵⁷ Kinnier Wilson's restoration. The eagle's discourse must have opened with a statement like this.

⁵⁸ Dalley has here "gate [sic] of Anu, Ellil and Ea," but ancient lists such as Tintir do not mention any single gates devoted to multiple gods; we must have here an instance of a contextually plural *nomen regens* with singular morphology (cf. GAG §64I).

⁵⁹ I understand a construct chain here, literally "a house of windows;" cf. bīt ḫilāni etc. For the topos of the goddess looking out the window, see the examples collected in CAD A/II 199a.

⁶⁰ Will the traces support Dalley's elegant "I saw a house with a window that was not sealed. I pushed it open and went inside."?

⁶¹ The sign is broken here, though Kinnier Wilson's handcopy (pl. 23 l. 10) shows traces that could well be read as A G A. Kinnier Wilson and Dalley both seem to read agû as an adverbial accusative in its literal sense of crown, so that the D stative ruṣṣunat takes it as an object, though Dalley's "adorned" does not quite convey the imposing sense of raṣānu. Foster, sensing either the grammatical awkwardness or the paleographic difficulty, leaves the word untranslated.

⁶² Tablet: an-qa-[ru]; emendation follows Kinnier Wilson.

atbi-ma anāku labê i[štaḫḫitūni]	as I approached the lions [sprang? at me]
aggaltam-ma aptaru[d . . . . . .]	I started up in terro[r⁴³ . . . . . .]
	here the dream ends

Since the lines are broken in crucial places, it is not possible to interpret the text as closely as the beginning of the story. But elements can be discerned which deserve comment. First, from the continuation of the text, it is possible to tell that the pair first flew up to the heaven of Anu (IV/B l. 39) before entering the gates of the gods. This view of heaven does not square with that presented in contemporaneous cosmographical texts. According to these texts, there are three layers of heaven, each of which has a floor of a precious stone. The heaven of Anu is the highest of the three. Yet there is no mention of flying past the other two stone firmaments in the texts preserved to us.[64]

Most interesting here is the parallel to the seven gates of the Netherworld: while the writing né-reb šá KÁ DN ...u DN ni-ba-ʾ-ʾū' (thus Late Version IV/B 3,5) could be read as referring to a single gate for three and four gods, respectively, this is unprecedented in Mesopotamian temple design. In all periods, it appears to be the rule that a single god is ascribed to each gate. One could assume that the myth simply violates expectations, but the notion of two gates in the heaven of Anu bearing the lopsided numbers of three and four gods, respectively, is implausible. Rather, the cosmography of heaven here parallels that of the netherworld, which requires passage through seven gates in the case of Inanna/Ishtar and Nergal. It is in the light of this symmetry that we can better understand the oath sworn by the snake and the eagle: while nēreb šadû is clearly "entrance to the mountains," šadû also connotes "netherworld;" the ghost

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[63] Lit. "I twitched, I was frightened."
[64] See the note of Horowitz in Or 59 and further in Horowitz 1998.

who is not allowed into the netherworld wanders the earth in a state of torment. It is precisely a nērebu which Etana and the eagle must pass to enter heaven, and thereby the story contrasts the nēreb šadū with the nēreb šamê.

There is a further parallel with netherworld journeys here, stemming from Dalley's attractive suggestion that in his dream, the eagle has found an unsealed window and snuck his way in. This ties into a motif from Ancient Near Eastern literature (and life!): that legitimate entry happens through the door, illegitimate entry through the window.[65] We may recall that Inanna/Ishtar's entrance to the netherworld was similarly uninvited and also involved a dangerous audience. The dreaming eagle wakes up in fear but bearing an interpretable message; as in Dumuzi's dream or tablet VII of Gilgamesh, the dream is a literal premonition of the future. A further fragment of the text describes Etana's death, referring to his ghost and "a death like Etana..." (K 8563 rev.), but it is uncertain where this fragment fits in the story. Still, the theme of Etana as a netherworld hero is the dominant one in literary references outside of the myth.

Lacking the ending, it is not possible to interpret the whole text. But it is necessary to try to evaluate the role of ascent to heaven within it. Ascent to heaven in the Etana narrative stands at the climax of a complex plot. The subplots are narrated in a jump-cutting fashion which hinges on the wonderful circuitousness of Shamash's method of answering prayers: Etana and the eagle are made to rescue each other by helping each other ascend; in answer to both the serpent and Etana's prayers Shamash gives directions through the mountains. Elementary folkloric themes—the serpent's pact, the eagle's betrayal, the quest for a plant of life, and the king in search of an heir—are

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[65] The pattern of this motif in Ancient Near Eastern literature was suggested to me by Douglas Emery in conversations during 1996.

narrated simultaneously as part of an overarching structure whose shape we are now robbed of. *Entrance* and *opening* are dominant movements: the friendship-curse commands that an entrance be hidden, Etana demands that his eyes be opened, and he and the eagle pass through entrances into heaven. The eagle's ascent out of the pit and the characters' passage through the mountains anticipate the ascent to heaven and passage through heavenly gates. But it is also the other way around: the ascent to heaven echos the previous ascents and passages. Thus, it is impossible to say that the text is simply "about" ascent to heaven: rather it *uses* the theme. For the Old Babylonian story of Etana, ascent to heaven (or at least the sky) on an eagle's back is a preexistent theme, already culturally available as the Sargonic seals attest. The first time that ascent to heaven appears in narrative, it is already being *reused* for a complex literary purpose.

The very richness of the text of Etana makes it seem fraught with parabolic weight; one can well understand the allegorical reading given the text by Parpola (1993). While there is no doubt that the Etana story contains the stuff of which allegory is made, Etana is not identified as such a genre, nor is there evidence that it was read in such a way. Every narrative admits of being read as an allegory; as Stanley Fish (1980) has pointed out, modes of reading like this *always* work, producing the answers they are equipped to produce. The only meaningful question with which the Assyriologist and the historian of religions can deal is whether the text in question *was* read as an allegory. So far the answer is negative.

How, then, was the Etana story read? First of all, it is probable that there

were multiple texts available even within a single time period.[66] There is evidence both inside and outside the text itself with which we can begin to answer this question. As argued above, the introduction to the Late Version itself suggests that the Old Babylonian version was reinterpreted in the light of other mythic themes; it appears to have been rewritten in an intrusive way that suggests that the Old Babylonian version was not fully understood in later periods.[67] There is also evidence within the text as to how it should be read: the introductions to both the Old Babylonian and Late versions explicitly state that this text concerns the first king, the founding of kingship and kingship's heavenly origin.

It is this role as early king that is emphasized in one group of outside references to Etana, those in the Sumerian King List and "Ballad of Former Kings." But it is modified heavily: Etana is no longer first, but eleventh, and he is no longer uniquely identified as a shepherd; he shares this distinction with Dumuzi. It is this double modification—the loss of primacy, as a local hero is incorporated into a list of many heroes and locales, and the competition with Dumuzi—which may result in the erasure of Etana from the Sumerian King List tradition.[68]

Etana may play a second role in the story, whose context is lost due to

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[66] Recall here Foster's note that the Assurbanipal mss. "constituted several editions of the text. Since even the latest manuscripts of the story, from one library, show considerable variation in style, content, and arrangement of the text, one can assume that numerous editions of the text were available."(1995:438).

[67] This is not to suggest that the literary tradition was unusually incoherent or that the scribes were not skillful tradents here; the reinterpretation of grammatically difficult passages is a general feature of texts with a long afterlife. On the phenomenon of rewriting of Mesopotamian narratives, see Cooper JAOS 97; for an extended study of the rewriting of a single one, Tigay 1982.

[68] However, Meier in his RlA entry *s.v.* "Etana" recognized in Berossos' "Daonos the shepherd" the name Etana; the Uruk apkallu list follows older Sumerian King List exemplars in putting Dumuzi in this position. Due to the generally but not rigidly consistent fit between the Greek transliterations and their Sumerian *Vorlagen,* Daonos could be derived from Etana, probably more easily than from Dumuzi. However, with current evidence this possibility is unprovable.

the accidents of preservation: an underworld figure. This is the role taken up in the two Old Babylonian Sumerian funerary texts and the Standard Babylonian version of Gilgamesh VII. Also probably related is the divinization of Etana: the Late Version consistently uses the dingir sign to write Etana's name. He is here to be connected with other figures of ambivalent mortality: characters seen in both heaven and the underworld, such as Dumuzi and Ningishzida, as well as characters who skirted death's boundaries only to end up enshrined as its high officials, such as Gilgamesh. Important characters in myth frequently receive the divine marker: thus Enkidu already receives this marker in the Old Babylonian version of Gilgamesh, and Lugalbanda already in the Sumerian King List. Yet the case is different with Etana, because it is only in late texts that he is divine, and here inconsistently: the Nabû temple text and the Seleucid omen apodosis agree with the late version in giving him the determinative; the catalogue citations do not.

What difference does this make? The signal fact here is that the only time Etana is used in ritual it is in two Sumerian funerary texts to call on him for help as a netherworld official: the dead king lives on as a functionary in hell. The only other (semi-)human figure with this role is Gilgamesh, who also took an otherworldly journey. But Etana is never called on for other things and he seems never to be alluded to in letters or inscriptions. His afterlife is confined to lists, remembered in the "Ballad of Former Kings" and Sumerian King List as a dead king who once traveled to heaven and is now gone, confined to history and the underworld.

The myth of Etana represents a royal version of the theme of ascent to heaven, as suggested by the way folk memory handled the theme. It is passed down into Hellenistic and later literature in the form of traditions about kings like

the Macedonian Alexander and the Persian Kay Kaush. The traditions of supernatural sages follow a different path through history and ritual, as do those of the Neo-Sumerian kings.

The Ascent of the King in the Ur III Period.

Surprisingly, the earliest known *textual* references to ascent to heaven in Mesopotamia[69] come not from myths or even king lists but economic records. In an Ur III record concerning payments for activities around the death of Shulgi (BCT 1 132) payments are allotted from when the king "ascended to heaven." The text's publishers edit the relevant section thus:[70]

4.	á.bi 142.1/3 géme u₄ 1.šè	Their [scil. a group of female slaves] work of 142 1/3 female slave days,
5.	u₄ ^dšul.gi an.na ba.a.e₁₁.da.a	On the day when Shulgi ascended to heaven
6.	ì.du₈.àm	and was released,[71]

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[69] Preceding the Old Babylonian text of Etana but following the Akkad period cylinder seals depicting Etana.

[70] Horowitz and Watson 1991:409-17. I have reformatted their presentation but do not deviate from their edition.

[71] There is an alternative possibility, raised by Hallo in Fs. Tadmor, of reading line 6 not as a ḫamṭu form of the verb du₈ "release" (=paṭāru) with the third person singular copula à m (thus Horowitz and Watson, Wilcke, Yoshikawa, Waetzoldt) but as the noun ì.du₈ "doorkeeper" (as once elsewhere in this corpus; see BCT I index) with the copula à m in a predicative function, thus "to be/serve as doorkeeper". Horowitz and Watson admit that the meaning of line 6 is "uncertain;" in any case the copula is singular and must refer to Shulgi, not the slaves. In favor of their reading is the fact that u₄...àm clauses framing subjunctive verbal forms marked with -a (as appears in line 5; the *-a of ì.du₈ would fuse with the copula's initial vowel) are common in Ur III economic texts, while Hallo does not adduce any grammatical parallels. However, the postmortem function of Shulgi as heavenly doorkeeper would parallel that of other beings in Mesopotamian myth who were both divine and capable of death such as Dumuzi and perhaps Ningishzida. On the grammatical role of -à m see Heimpel StPohl 2:33-5 (attached to nouns in descriptions, it interchanges with g i m and both are translated with Akk. kīma; this may present a problem for Hallo's analysis because the usages analyzed by Heimpel pertain to visual resemblance, not identity); on the verbal usages of -à m see Thomsen *Mesopotamia* 10 § 541; on the development of the form Edzard ZA 62:31-2; for the syntax G. Gragg "The Syntax of the Copula in Sumerian" in Verhaar, ed. *The Verb 'Be' and its Synonyms* 1968 (*non vidi*).

7/8.　ki.á.na.na.ta　/　ba.zi　　　was withdrawn against Anana.

In this text line 6 is difficult and may introduce a further mythical element if it admits of reading as "to serve as doorkeeper" (thus Hallo). The dating formula (Shulgi year 48 month 11) places these events after Shulgi's death. This text explains the cryptic reference in Sumerian Temple Hymn no. 9 to šulgi.an.ak "Shulgi of heaven."[72]

These references must be seen in the context of the divinization of Ur III and Isin kings. Starting with Shulgi, Sumerian kings began to attach the divine determinative to their names in inscriptions and assumed other divine ritual roles such as having hymns addressed to them. Recently, Steinkeller has added a second example of this phenomenon from an economic record of Ishbi-Irra. This text records an expenditure of pots for [é]r⟨[A].IGI⟩ gu-la ud lugal an-šè ba-a-da[73] "the great lamentation, when the king ascended to heaven"[74] dated to sometime after the fourth month of Ishbi-Irra's last regnal year: a clear reference to another postmortem ascent. Steinkeller suggests that every king from Shulgi through the Isin dynasty may have been considered as having ascended to heaven. However, Shulgi holds a special role, since he is

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[72] See Sjøberg, TCS 3.24 line 132. "The name...is otherwise unknown to me. Is ᵈšul-gi-an-na the name of the deified Šulgi?" (p. 78 ad line 132) Sjøberg notes that Shulgi is described as "son of An" (or: "son of heaven") in two texts. These are a Drehem offering list (AnOr 7, no. 73.10) and an inscription of Shulgi (CBS 8370 lines 7-8 pub. UMBS 13 no. 29).

[73] Note that the verb itself is missing; Steinkeller (N.A.B.U. 1992 no. 4) explains this as a phonetic or defective spelling of the expected *ba-a-e₁₁-da.

[74] Pub. van de Mieroop BIN 10 190.10-12

recognized as a constellation in other sources.[75] As both Wilcke[76] and Steinkeller have noted, these texts record not a myth but an official public ritual. In these two documents we have an important, if isolated record of the concrete interaction between the religious imagination and ideology in the Ur III and Isin periods.

These texts are anomalous in more ways than one. Mesopotamian kings after the Isin dynasty were not considered divine, and ascent to heaven does not recur in any Mesopotamian administrative or economic text. If this postmortem ascent is an isolated phenomenon within the corpus of economic texts, it is also isolated in Mesopotamian ritual and myth. Other human ascents to heaven in Mesopotamian literature[77] are "round-trip" ascents with the purpose of effecting some kind of change, either in the decisions of the gods (as in Maqlû)[78] or in the life of the one who ascends (Adapa, Etana). The ascent of the divinized kings, on the other hand, is a "one-way" trip in a funerary context, confirming the king's divine status. That it is spoken of as a historical event which can be used to date documents and to which expenses can be ascribed shows that it has the ideological and "historical" character of any public state

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[75] For bibliography and discussion see Watson and Horowitz, *op. cit.*

[76] Wilcke 1988. Note especially "Alle jene Erzählungen [*scil.* Etana, Adapa, Utu-Abzu] stehen in mythologisierenden Kontexten und reden von lang vergangenen Zeiten. Der Šulgi-Text ist aber zeitgenössisch; er trägt ein Šulgi-Datum. Er will auch nicht fabulieren und mythologisieren; er will vielmehr Rechnung legen über den Wirtschaftsfaktor Arbeitskraft: Šulgis Hinaufsteigen in den Himmel ist der Grund für den Ausfall von 142 1/3 Arbeitstagen."(252). On the same page he proposes the development of a kind of Sumerian "king's two bodies" theory (for the concept, Kantorowicz 1957) under Shulgi in which the divine part of the king was conceived as ascending to heaven while the mortal form would descend to become the gidim/etemmu in the underworld. This could be related to the references to the etemmu of Etana at the end of the Etana narrative, but there is no reference yet known to Etana's permanent residence in heaven.

[77] Not including the "ascent into the sky" of those who die by fire, for which see Horowitz and Watson, *op. cit.*

[78] Though the situation here is more complex than that of physical transportation: to some extent, the cosmic destinations of the messenger are collapsed together in the course of the ritual into a single otherworldly "out there;" see the discussion of Maqlû below.

ritual. It is through this enactment that it acquires greater historical and economic reality than myths. No other ascents to heaven have this quality of a public state affair, but, as we shall see later, ascent to heaven does not cease to be inserted into Mesopotamian historical texts for political purposes.

2. The Ascent of the God Dumuzi

There are two references in Mesopotamian literature to the presence of Dumuzi in heaven. One is in a šir.nam.šub of Inanna, perhaps a sort of magical hymn,[79] edited by Kramer.[80] The text does not come from a known context but the other texts of this type range in date from the Ur III through the Old Babylonian periods. The first two sections are poems of reminiscence and lament for Inanna's dying lover Dumuzi. Kramer's edition of the third section reads:

48. lú-ki-sikil an-né gub-ba!-ma-ab	Oh Maid, station him for me at the sky,
49. an-né gub-ba-ma-ab am-e-gal-gal-la-kam	Station for me at the sky the greatest of wild oxen,
50. ᵈdumu-zi-de an-né gub-ba-ma-ab	Station Dumuzi for me at the sky,
51. an-né-gub-ba-ma-ab am-e-gal-gal-la-kam	Station for me at the sky the greatest of wild oxen!

In response to Dumuzi's crisis of death, Inanna requests that her mother Ningal and Dumuzi's mother Zertur (the two alternating in poetic parallel) station Dumuzi in the sky, perhaps as a constellation. This sort of one-way terminal ascent to heaven and possible embodiment as a star parallels that of Shulgi discussed above. It is important to note that this ascent is not described as a *fait*

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[79] On which see Cohen 1975:592-611 and Black AulaOr 9:24ff.
[80] "BM 88318: The Ascension of Dumuzi to Heaven" *Recueil de travaux et communications de l'association des études du proche-orient ancien* 2 (1984)5-9.

accompli but as a plea in the face of Dumuzi's approaching death. The text does not represent Dumuzi's ascent as actually happening, only as hoped-for.

The myth of Adapa seem to presuppose something like the success of Inanna's plea: Adapa is supposed to mourn as if Dumuzi, as well as the parallel figure Gishzida, has died. Yet Dumuzi greets him in heaven where he is serving as doorkeeper (as Etana does in the netherworld in the Utu hymn). Gishzida, too, might be expected to be in the netherworld since his name appears to be a variant of Ningishzida, a well known underworld deity. The myth of Adapa thus seems to itself assume the myth of Dumuzi's death and descent to the netherworld found, for example, in "Dumuzi's Dream." The complication is that it in addition to this myth, Adapa assumes a second, apparently contradictory myth about Dumuzi, that of Dumuzi's *ascent,* as the "reality" which is exposed when Adapa gets to heaven and finds out "what it's really like" in heaven. The way the two myths of Dumuzi may have been worked together is suggested by the recently discovered ending to Inanna's Descent published and edited by Alster (ASJ 1996); Inanna herself decrees that Dumuzi shall spend only half the year in the netherworld, alternating with his sister Geshtinanna. Both "Inanna's Descent" and "Adapa" therefore seem to contain reflection on the mortal status of Dumuzi.

3. The Ascent of the Sage

The Figure of Adapa.

Adapa, semi-human sage of Mesopotamian scholarly tradition, loomed large in the imagination of late period cuneiform writers. As Michalowski notes, "no other hero of a canonical text is so often encountered in other

compositions."[81] What is the significance of this reuse? For Michalowski, Adapa's reuse is connected to the fact that Adapa is an "etiological" figure: his story provides a charter for the specialist's use of magic. Various interpretations of Adapa's significance have been proposed: as Ph. Talon notes, "S'il est un texte qui, dans la littérature assyriologique, a provoqué les interprétations les plus diverses, c'est bien celui que raconte les aventures d'Adapa."[82] This rich variety can be attributed to the richness of the text: the Adapa myth is a multivalent literary work which fully supports multiple readings. Yet the incoherence one encounters from surveying the modern interpretations may also be a product of their goal: to find out what Adapa, in general, *means*. This goal tends to motivate somewhat ahistorical literary readings.[83] For example, the *sincerity* of Adapa, Ea or Anu in their statements and actions necessarily becomes an issue. But in a compact and subtle text whose manuscripts show variance over time, and in a tradition bearing varied allusions to the protagonist outside the text, an attempt to reconstruct the mental states of the characters within the text may be doomed to failure. The text and tradition themselves bear marks of change and reinterpretation. It is not that no specific meaning may be

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[81] Michalowski 1980:77.

[82] BiOr 40:684.

[83] Foster Or 43 is a pioneering exception. It differs from the present study in being briefer and broader: Foster is interested in the profile of the apkallu in general and does not differentiate sharply between Adapa and other apkallu and ummânu, nor does he organize the texts chronologically. A historical statement that does appear in Foster's article is intriguing: he suggests that the fish-like traits featured in apkallu traditions are attributable "to their earliest layer." (353). This statement can be expanded with the discussion of Wiggermann 1992:75 which differentiates the Assyrian bird- from the Babylonian fish- apkallu. Both begin to be attested around the Middle Babylonian period, but the bird-apkallu does not travel to Babylonia until the beginning of the first millennium, when it begins to be assimilated into the tradition. Considering that the fish-apkallu are found in the latest sources, such as Berossos, and that a b g a l are already connected with Eridu and the apsû in the third millennium, it is likely that the fish-form for the apkallu is indeed older and more deep-seated in Babylon than the bird-apkallu. Of course the creatures that appear in the first millennium as bird-apkallu may have had an analogous role in Northern Mesopotamia, unattested in the texts.

reconstructed;.just the opposite: the text itself was different at different times and the figure of Adapa was used differently. The text *had* to have meant more than one thing. Given that the literary artifact's meaning depends significantly on who is reading it and how it is being read, the question becomes one of *whose* reading one chooses.

As in the case of Etana, this study chooses to focus on the ancient Mesopotamians' readings of the myth. It therefore focuses on the non-narrative attestations of Adapa, which have never been extensively analyzed: these represent ancient Mesopotamian interpretations and applications of the figure of Adapa. It attempts attempts to integrate these into a "thick description" of Adapa's ritual and ideological function. The advantage of this is that one may thereby deal with the figure not in an abstract and purely literary way but in a culturally embedded fashion, through the eyes of ancient Mesopotamians. Without engaging in elaborate reconstructions, this study hopes thereby to be historical: to provide concrete evidence for shifts in Adapa's roles and to correlate them to documented changes in Mesopotamian history and ideology.

The following survey builds on the sources collected by Picchioni 1981.[64] The attestations are organized by genre below.

i. Public Inscriptions.

1. Cylinder Inscription of Sargon II at Dūr Šarrukīn (Fuchs *Zyl.* 28)[65].

šarru pēt ḫasīsi lēʾi īnī kalama šinnat apkalli ša ina milki nēmeqi irub-ma ina

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[64] Picchioni performed a great service by compiling and editing all the texts available to him. However, he focused on appearances of the *name* Adapa and did not analyze the non-narrative sources

[65] Cited after the reedition of Andreas Fuchs, *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad.*(Göttingen: Cuviller Verlag, 1991)37.

tašīmti išêḫu

"The king: open-minded, sharp-eyed, in all matters the equal of the Sage, who became great in counsel and wisdom and grew old in understanding."

There are four places in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions that the term šinnat "rival, equal" is used in reference to the king; all compare him to an apkallu.[86] The other three are inscriptions of Sennacherib, Essarhaddon and Assurbanipal discussed below, where apkallu is used as a title, "the Sage," in apposition to Adapa. Considering the sustained pattern in Neo-Assyrian official discourse of comparing the king to Adapa, it is likely that there is a specific Sage referred to here and that Luckenbill, Fuchs and others are correct to render "the Master (Adapa)" or the like. The language of rivalry, as opposed to superiority (more typical of comparisons in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions) is significant. While the king is always under the gods and above other kings, he is placed just on par with the great intermediary figure Adapa; the comparison simultaneously politicizes Adapa and intellectualizes the king.

The reference to Adapa appears in the middle of a ten-line passage discussing the king's physical renewal of the land of Assyria (34-43). The passage's unity, and perhaps its non-essential character, is indicated by its absence from the short version of the inscription.[87] The passage follows a typical Neo-Assyrian paean to the king's power to punish foes and suppress rebellion through terrifying violence. The section begins with Sargon's unprecedented activity of planting "in barren wastelands that had not known a plough under previous kings" (36). The comparison to the apkallu is made in 38,

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[86] The lexica register three, since the Assurbanipal variant from Prism E discussed below was published after the completion of the relevant CAD and AHw sections. See Weissert and Onasch, Or 61.

[87] Fuchs *ad loc.*

after which the resulting abundance in the land is reported: even beggars have a choice of beverages. The account then moves to a similarly divinely inspired and historically unprecedented building project. This inscription introduces a pattern: the king is compared to Adapa with respect to his skill at accomplishing physical tasks to achieve public benefit. We will see this pattern shift as the physical tasks move toward the manipulation of texts and the achievements become cognitive and ritual.

2. Annals of Sennacherib (OIP II, 117, 4): The inscription is concerned with Sennacherib's building program. It begins with a list of epithets and then moves to the divine sanction of the king's conception and development. Sennacherib describes himself thus:

[4]NIN.ŠI.KÙ iddina karšu ritpāšu šinnat[88] apkalli Adapa išruka palkâ ḫasissu
"Ea gave me broad understanding, endowed me with vast knowledge   ·
equivalent to that of the Sage Adapa" (CAD s.v. šinnatu).

Next, it states that Marduk brought the people of Mesopotamia into submission under him, describes his conquests, his use of forced labor, and then moves to an elaborate description of his building program. Sennacherib's innate virtues make his conquests and building campaign possible, but these acts are also proof of his special qualities. Frahm's analysis shows the developing logic of the comparison with Adapa. Not only did the Sargonids multiply the ritual activities performed and the texts transcribed and collected at the center of the empire, but they incorporated various textual genres into their inscriptions, so that the royal texts themselves became icons of the

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[88] Thus, against Luckenbill's šun.

comprehensiveness of Assyrian knowledge and power. Further,

"[d]a sich aber in der Person des assyrischen Königs der assyrische Stadt inkarnierte, mußte der König selbst im Besitze allen Wissens sein. Am deutlichsten hat diesen Anspruch Assurbanipal in seinem berühmten L⁴-Text zum Ausdruck gebracht...Aber auch Sanherib pflegte ein entsprechendes Image. [our text 2 is cited] Nicht zuletzt dadurch, daß er Elemente verschiedenster Text-genres in seine Inschriften einzufügen veranlaßte, verlieh Sanherib solchen Ansprüchen ein *fundamentum in re*."[89]

3. Prism of Essarhaddon from Kalhu (Borger, Esar §21:45-7).[90] This

inscription is concerned with his rebuilding of the arsenal at Kalhu.

Essarhaddon begins by listing his previous temple-building and statue-

restoring achievements, then speaks of his conquests and plunder. Finally he

relates how he got the idea of rebuilding the arsenal. He describes himself as

šinnat apkalli Adapa ša išruku rubû ⁴NIN.ŠI.KÙ
"Rival of the Sage Adapa, who Prince Ea endowed (with wisdom)"

in the context of him forming the idea of expanding the arsenal's terrace. Like

Sargon and unlike Sennacherib, Essarhaddon describes his achievements

before making the comparison to Adapa.

4. Assurbanipal Inscription L⁴ l. 13 (Streck Assurb.254).[91] The inscription

describes Assurbanipal's building program, but the emphasis on acts of ritual

piety and Assurbanipal's own legitimacy is higher than in the other royal

inscriptions mentioning Adapa:

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[89] Frahm, AfOB 26:280.
[90] Pub. Wiseman *Iraq* 14.54-60, now see Borger AfOB 9:32-5.
[91] cf. Borger BIWA, who comments on but does not edit the text, in anticipation of Weissert's forthcoming reedition.

[ši]pir apkalli Adapa āḫuz niṣirtu katimtu kullat ṭupšarūte
"I grasped the work of the Sage Adapa, the hidden treasure of the whole scribal art."[92]

Assurbanipal may be here attributing the invention of cuneiform itself to Adapa. A recently published textual variant from Prism E produces a different reading: šinnat apkalli A[dapa āḫuz niṣirtu katimtu kullat ṭupšarūte] "Rival of the Sage A[dapa, I grasped the hidden treasure of the whole scribal art.]"[93] As Weissert notes[94], this reading resolves the awkward syntax of L⁴ with its two objects (šipru and niṣirtu) positioned before and after the verb. In the inscriptions of Assurbanipal this access to hidden cosmic secrets, articulated as scribal knowledge, is central to his self-conception. The next line claims his presence in temples and the puḫur ummâni "council of scholars," then describes his ability to interpret dreams and tablets. After this is his heroic education: riding, shooting etc. The emphasis on the secret nature of scribal art is not hyperbole but ideologically significant rhetoric. The quoted passage is not connected to ostensibly public achievements like building or war but to the king's inherent qualities: decreed in the womb for kingship, subject of a reliable oracle, Assurbanipal masters the reading and writing by which the very decrees of the gods are produced for human consumption. As Frahm notes, this is a period which witnessed an explosion of commentaries and ritual texts. While

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[92] Interpreting šipir- here as "the work of, the doing of" with Unger, Sumer 8:195.

[93] For the variant, Weissert and Onasch Or 61:71, with full commentary, also edited in Borger BIWA as "Stück 2." The text of L⁴ appears to have been corrected by the scribe. The problem is that within Neo-Assyrian royal discourse, the expected phrase when an apkallu is mentioned in connection with the king is ši nnat, which we find in the variant text of E. As Weissert and Onasch note, in L⁴'s reading [š]i-pir, the pir is written over a nat sign. The scribe of this text corrected to another expected reading, šipir DN "spell" or "creation" of DN. We therefore have the paradoxical textual situation of two "easier readings".

[94] Personal communication 9/98.

accidents of preservation may explain the number of such texts, it does not explain the appearance of whole new discursive forms such as the "cultic commentary;" a significant feature of these new forms is their sheer difficulty. The difficulty of the materials may derive from their in-group nature. The removal of statements and ideas from living language and their encoding in a fixed, replicable form is described by linguistic anthropologists as *entextualization*.[95] Scholarly traditions were disarticulated from a shifting oral discourse and entextualized into the sometimes baffling "explanatory" texts which we have from this period.[96] That the texts were torn from the context that would have facilitated their understanding is thus not *merely* a frustrating fact for scholars: the very presence of such texts in royal libraries itself stands as the record of an extension of Neo-Assyrian centralizing power into the realm of writing itself.

This text thus provides a propagandistic self-conception of king Assurbanipal modeled on the ideal figure of the sage. The profile includes rivalry with a supernatural intermediary figure, schooling in cosmic secrets, the decipherment of encoded messages, and presence in the counsel of the learned. It may be compared to the more limited propagandistic description of Nebuchadnezzar I as descended from Enmeduranki, a Sumerian king described as performing extispicy and lecanomancy (see below, s.v. "The Figure of the Diviner.") Nebuchadnezzar does not claim any divinatory ability for himself, but retrojects this ability into an invented past. It is significant, then, that Assurbanipal's scholars also utilize this type of ancestral ideology, claiming

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[95] For the phenomenon of entextualization and its social and political potential, see Briggs and Bauman 1992.

[96] The elliptical character of these texts thus bears comparison with other forms of condensed scholastic discourse such as the Talmuds or the native grammars of Sanskrit, with their supercommentaries. These texts, far from being transcripts of oral discourse, are rather written artifacts which encode an *ideology of orality*: they seem designed to be impossible to unpack outside of oral discourse, and thus implicitly propagate native scholarly values and authority.

that the king is descended from a sage and Adapa (SAA X 174; see below s.v. iii.1). The Neo-Assyrian kings adopted scribal features, but thereby also further politicized the figure of the scribe.

5. Cyrus's Verse Account of Nabonidus (BM 38299 V 2-3)[97] describes Nabonidus as having created a statue of Sin that:

[pitiqšu][98] la iptiqu ⁴Ea-Mummu u ul īdi zikiršu ummânu (or: U₄-⁴Anum)[99] -Adapa. "Ea-Mummu did not shape [its form], the wise (or: U-an)-Adapa did not know its name."

The point is that Nabonidus' religious innovations were so bizarre that he created things that beggared the imaginations of the gods and sages, the very beings who are said to have imagined everything. Ea is understood as having formed the shapes of every known thing in the apsû, the primordial water which is also the matrix of all form and knowledge. Correspondingly, Adapa is described as the one who knows the names of all the things Ea formed. Adapa's mythic role as a knower of names is connected to his role as the scholar *par excellence* (much of Mesopotamian scholarship is organized around knowing names) and the related role of exorcist *par excellence*: the

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[97] The most recent edition of column V is that of Beaulieu 1989:215.
[98] The restoration is from Landsberger and Bauer, ZA 3:90n2.
[99] The writing here is a scribal pun: UD-ma-⁴A-num-Adapa can be read either as as the name U-An-Adapa or as an epithet ummânu Adapa "the scholar Adapa." Landsberger and Bauer, *op. cit.*90n4.

knowledge of the name is part of the diagnosis and treatment of illness.[100] The

role of Adapa as a knower of names is thus somewhat like Adam in Genesis 2

or God in Psalm 147,[101] both of whom *name* entire classes of things (animals

and stars, respectively) but perhaps more like Enoch in certain passages of

apocalyptic literature, who is permitted to enumerate and learn the names of all

the stars as part of a revelation.[102]

Further on in this inscription, Cyrus puts the following words in

Nabonidus' mouth: (*ibid* V 12)

U₄.SAR[103]   ⁴Anim ⁴Enlil ša ikṣuru Adap[a] elîšu šûtuqāk kal nemēqu [...]

"The Series/Lunar Crescent of Anu and Enlil,' which Adapa composed—I excel

him in all knowledge [...]"

The name of the "text" referred to here is highly improbable: enūma Anu

Enlil   is the only astrological series, other than MUL.APIN, known with certainty

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[100]The centrality of this concept in Mesopotamian exorcism is suggested by the existence of the category of mimma lemnu "whatever evil": it is especially the *unspecified* evils that must be named. I will not discuss the putative universal magical value of names here. In the Mesopotamian cultural context, the use of a substitute name with the meaning "unnamed" (mimma lemnu or mimma šumšu) can be considered one of two ways of expressing unknown information in medicine and exorcism. The recent study of Tim Collins, "The Lists of Illnesses in Incantations Against 'Various Illnesses'" (paper read at RAI 45, 1998) details the other technique for expressing unknown information: the listing of a large (though not exhaustive) range of possible names.

[101] Lines 4-5: "He reckoned the number of the stars; to each He gave its name/ Great is our lord and full of power; His wisdom is beyond reckoning." For this passage's development in apocalyptic literature see chapter 3 below.

[102] I Enoch 33:3-4; Enoch's cognitive power as expressed in knowing the names of stars is further extended in II En 40:2-3, where it becomes independent of that of the angels.

[103] The sequence UD.SAR is read us/z/škāru "(lunar) crescent" but there is no text with the title uzkār Anim Enlil attested anywhere else. Kraus RA 68:92-3 argued that the reading here is the result of a textual error. For a convincing argument that the reading is in fact a propagandistic pun see Machinist and Tadmor in Fs. Hallo.

to exist in this period (Weidner AfO 14:180).[104] But the "Verse Account" is a well-informed, well-crafted and wicked parody whose purpose was to delegitimate Nabonidus and extol Cyrus. It plays heavily on Nabonidus' deep interest in Sîn and his religious innovations. These were well-known facts about Nabonidus that he emphasized in his own inscriptions. It is the program of the "Verse Account"'s rhetoric to remind the reader of these facts and systematically use them against Nabonidus. Thus, the writing UD.SAR U₄ a-nim ᵈen-líl-la is probably not a *Hörfehler* but a pun designed to make Nabonidus look both arrogant and ridiculous: Nabonidus has corrupted even the title of this most standard and widely-known scholarly text into the name of the god of his obsession.

This text thus contains a parody of Assyrian scholarly and royal mysticism. It reverses the previous four uses of Adapa as a figure of comparison; here Nabonidus' self-predications comparing himself to Adapa are outlined in terms of ridicule, making him a figure of hubris. Such an attack on the figure of the Assyrian king becomes possible with the advent of his defeat and the loss of native kingship in Assyria. In this inscription, a king's comparing himself to an apkallu is depicted as blasphemous. This may be indicative of a larger shift in sensibility.

Cyrus's Verse Account marks a major change in Mesopotamian genres. The Akkadian genre of "royal inscription" does not end, but the institution of native kingship and thus the relationship of the writers of royal inscriptions, now

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[104] Beaulieu (215n47) cites a reference to this text in the Catalogue of Texts and Authors published by Lambert JCS 16. But the reference is not physically present; Lambert reconstructed the title of the text in the Catalogue from a single partly preserved lá sign, based exclusively on the text which Beaulieu himself is editing. Lambert's lá could as easily be read as the ending of the standard Enūma Anu Enlil.

foreign, to native traditions, does change.[105] Henceforth there will be no more

Mesopotamian royal inscriptions by kings from Mesopotamia; the genre will be

exclusively a tool of foreign imperial power. In this regard it is significant that the

last royal inscription mentioning an apkallu is a political parody at the expense of

a native king.

What happens when the personnel of a Mesopotamian royal court

operate without a Mesopotamian king? It appears that the scholarly groups that

had always administered the details of Mesopotamian tradition continued in

prominence,[106] and increasingly took charge of its public forms, in collusion with

the changing political powers. The textual traditions themselves had always

represented continuity with the gods and the past, but with the disappearance of

the Mesopotamian king, the scribes were increasingly alone in assuring this

continuity. It is under these conditions that cuneiform texts are produced in the

Persian and Hellenistic periods, and it is these conditions which account for our

next text.

6. Inscription of Anu²uballiṭ - Kephalōn[107], Uruk city magistrate under

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[105] Though every new king adopts, in some measure, the social facade and discursive forms of previous kings; the achievement of political continuity during transitions between kingships often requires minimizing the gaps between successive kingships. Absent a nativistic ideology, the difference between foreign and native kings can be merely one of degree.
[106] For a general study see McEwan 1981.
[107] He names himself in lines 1-2 ; editio princeps by Schroeder apud Jordan WVDOG LI p. 41 & PL. 108; Van Dijk has a typo, calling Kephalon "Nicarchus" in his "Inschriftenfunde" in Lenzen, *18 Vorläufige Bericht* p. 47; van Dijk's typo is repeated by Lambert JCS 16:74.

Antiochus IV (175-64 B.C.E.)[108]

'Reš ša ina maḫri ᵐu₄-ᵈAni-[Ad]ap[a] īpuššu'[109]   The Reš shrine which Oannes-Adapa
                                                      built of old.

This dedication is on the Resh[110] temple of Anu in Uruk.[111] Building

inscriptions were historically used by Mesopotamian rulers to show their power

and piety by continuing an ancient past, rebuilding the works of prestigious

royal ancestors. As such, the buildings were attributed to kings (occasionally

governors), functioning political powers. It is therefore extremely striking that a

public dedicatory inscription attributes the building of a temple in ancient times

to a mythical sage. This is further evidence of significant revisions in the

retrospective status of kings and foundational sages in the Seleucid period. The

role of sage as builder is, however, precedented in myths about Uruk. When

Gilgamesh's achievement as builder of the city is described, the perfection of

the foundations is compared in Gilg. I 19 (and repeated in the *inclusio* of XI,

309) to the work of the "Seven Counselors," certainly apkallū.[112] While a

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[108] During the Seleucid period, ancient Mesopotamian traditions probably underwent their most significant changes. As Akkadian died, Mesopotamian culture had to be translated into Greek and Aramaic for native as well as foreign audiences. The complexity of this interaction has probably only been glimpsed so far. Thus Brinkman: "[In scholarship], the era of Mesopotamian-Greek contact that has fared the worst to date is that which is best documented, namely the time of the Seleucid empire." Brinkman 1989:70 w/ useful bibliography in nn79-80) and recently the thought-provoking article of Geller 1997, which presents the cuneiform texts that bear Greek transliterations. Geller argues for strong Mesopotamian continuity into the Hellenistic world but does not emphasize the archaeological evidence (which is decidedly mixed, as the major temples were either rebuilt or destroyed in this period) nor the cultural changes within Mesopotamian tradition in this period.

[109] Original edition of the inscription in Falkenstein, *Topographie von Uruk* p. 6 w/notes 3-11 for mss. and readings. The reading adopted here is that of van Dijk "Inschriftenfunde" in Lenzen, *18 Vorläufige Bericht* p. 47, which finds support in Falkenstein's epigraphic notes *ad loc.*

[110] For which see Downey 1988:17-24.

[111] North, Or 26:228-33. The other central temple in Seleucid Uruk was the Irigal, in which Kephalon wrote his Greek and Akkadian names in Aramaic on two sets of glazed bricks. For the reading of the brick inscription, Bowman AJSL 56 and for the context North *op. cit.* 237-9.

[112] My attention was drawn to this connection by Wayne Horowitz 9/98.

complete survey of building attributions in inscriptions has not been made, the present instance would appear to be unprecedented and unique in Mesopotamia

The author of the inscription is also responsible for two sets of Aramaic glazed-brick inscriptions on the other main temple of Uruk, the Irigal. The prominent public use of non-cuneiform languages in Uruk is significant here. The Anu'ubalit-Kephalon who rededicated the Resh is probably a representative figure. In Seleucid Uruk, rulers thoroughly integrated into Mesopotamian society and economic life could inscribe their Greek-Akkadian names, in Mesopotamian style glazed bricks, on Mesopotamian temples, in Aramaic script.[113]

ii. Catalogues of Texts

1. Catalogue of literary texts (Bezold, Cat. IV p.1627 = Rm 618.3-4)[114]

Adapa ina qereb ⌜šam⌝[ê] (⌜AN⌝[-e])/ enūma Anu ᵈEnlil
"Adapa, in heaven.."/When Anu and Enlil..."

These appear to be the titles of two literary works (the same catalogue also mentions Etana, for which see above). Picchioni suggests that the first title is the incipit of the myth of Adapa known to us. However, since there are no manuscripts that preserve the beginning of the myth this is unprovable at

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[113]"The most striking characteristic of the Kephalōn family is the large number of persons with Greek names....by the fourth attested generation the names of family members are overwhelmingly Greek...insofar as name-giving is an indicator of cultural integration, we can say that the Kephalōn family represents a Hellenized Babylonian family, while the Nikarchos [the other governor of Uruk under Antiochus IV] family maintained its Babylonian identity. But as far as participation in those aspects of the business life of Uruk which continued to be documented in cuneiform is concerned, there is no perceptible difference."(111) Doty, "Nikarchos and Kephalon" in *Memorbuch Sachs*:95-118.

[114] cf. Hallo JAOS 83:176. The text is misread in Sayce ZK 1.190

present. Whether or not this is the incipit of the myth, it is interesting to note that the apkallū are identified as ša ina qereb [place] ibbanû "stemming from [place]" (see the bīt mēseri fragment, discussed below), which includes various ancient cities as well as the river. This incipit may be an abbreviated form of such a reference, which would have read *Adapa (ša) ina qereb šamê ibbanû "Adapa, stemming from (lit. who was formed in) heaven" or the like.

2. Catalogue of Texts and Authors. Lambert JCS 16 (K 2248 obv. 5-6)

[enūma[115] Anu ⁴Enli]l : mà.e.me.en.nam ⁴Enlil [annūtum ša][116] ⁿU₄-Ana-Adapa [. . .] idbubu

["When Anu and Enli]l;" "I, Even I, am Enlil", [these are the ones that] Adapa [. . .] spoke.

Here Adapa is credited with the composition of two texts. For Adapa as author, see the incantations framed as pseudepigraphic letters cited below.

3. Catalogue of Texts and Authors. Lambert JCS 16 (K 9717+ 15-16)

[ša Ada]pa ina pîšu išṭuru   [which Ada]pa wrote at his dictation (only prob.)

4. Seleucid List of Authors. van Dijk-Mayer 1980 no. 90. (W.20030/84), a
small Seleucid fragment from the top edge of a catalogue of texts and authors, on its first line names 'U₄-⁴60=U-An as an author of a text whose name is

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[115] Lambert restores here UD.SAR Anu Enlil, based on the Verse Account. For the argument that the title in the Verse Account is parodic, see discussion above and Machinist/Tadmor in Fs.Hallo; Kraus (*RA* 68:92-3) argues that it is a textual error. In either case one would wish to restore the title of the conventional astronomical series instead.

[116] This restoration is based on the formulaic pattern in which these attributions are presented, for which see edition.

broken.[117] Significantly, it was found in the Resh temple at Uruk (see text ii.6 above).

iii. Royal Correspondence

1. Letter from Marduk-šumu-uṣur, chief haruspex, to Assurbanipal. SAA X 174.7-8

⁴Aššur ina šutti ana abi abīšu ša šarri bēlīya	Aššur,in a dream, called the grandfather of the
apkalli iqtib[aššu] šarru bēl šarrāni liblibbu	king, my lord, a sage; the king, lord of kings, is
ša apkalli u Adapa š[u] tušātir nēmeqi apsî	the offspring of a sage and Adapa; you have sur-
u gimir ummānū[ti.]	passed the wisdom of the Abyss and all scholarship.

The praise of the king in this letter is unusual in actually placing the semi-human sage into Assurbanipal's lineage. While this functions more as flattery than as a genealogical statement, it is part of a significant pattern in the construction of the king's persona as we know it from the texts: first, in the veneration of Sennacherib and second, in the extremely high priority that Assurbanipal gave to incorporating scribal attributes into his own self-presentation. It is appropriate to Assurbanipal's image and difficult to imagine in a letter to any other king.[118]

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[117] See Van Dijk- Mayer 1980:20 and pl. 40
[118] The translations from SAA X are those of Parpola.

2. Letter from Marduk-šakin-šumi, Chief Exorcist, to Essarhaddon in response to an inquiry about the queen mother's health. SAA X 244 7-9.

ummi šarri [k]ī Adapi [t]ala²î   The mother of the king is as able as Adapa!

3. Letter, sender and receiver unidentified. SAA X, 380 3'-4'.

epšētu ša šarri [bēlīya] ana ša Adapi muš[la]   The deeds of the king my lord are

like those of Adapa!

4. Letter from astrologer Balasî to Esarhaddon. SAA X, 40 4-7. Broken context.

šarru bēlni...Adapu....   The king, our lord...[is like?] Adapa...

5. Letter, sender unidentified. CT 53 963 r9. A badly broken undated letter where "the king, probably Essarhaddon, is complimented using a-da-p[i] as a suitable simile for the king's capabilities".[119]

iv. Ritual Texts

iva. Incantations

1. Old Babylonian Sumerian Forerunner to Udug-Hul from Nippur (MS. A in Geller 1985 p. 22, l. 59).[120]

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[119] *Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, volume A (Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press, 1998) p. 43 s.v. Adapa. I owe the reference to Shelley Luppert-Barnard of the Oriental Institute.

[120] This incantation appears to be a forerunner of the one in the Kouyunjik Udug Hul text (iv.2) and one may be used to restore the other. The line numbering below is according to Geller's score; the text and restorations are his and the interpretation follows his closely.

55	[én] é-[nu-r]u	Enuru [incantation]:
56	[ᵈen-k]i e-ne [ᵈnin-ki] ʳe-neˈ	The Ea[rth Lord]s, [the Earth Ladi]es[121]
57	[ᵈen]-ʳkùm ᵈnin-kùmˈ	[En]ʳkum and Ninkumˈ
58	[. . . . .]-ʳkeₓˈ e-ne	By the [. . . . .]s,
59	[a]-ʳda-pàˈ [abgal eriduᵏⁱ]-ga me-en	I am [A]ʳdapaˈ [sage of Eridu]
60	[gá-e lú(?) ᵈas]al-lú-hi me-en	I am [the man of (?)] Asalluhi.[122]
61	[níg-tu-ra-ni lú til-la-n]i-šè	To [cure the man in his illness]
62-3	[en-gal ᵈen-ki-keₓ mu-un-ši-in-g]en-àm	[Enki the great lord sent] me.

This is the earliest published Adapa reference. It is especially important because it is part of a text compiled for exorcistic purposes. This editorial activity shows Adapa's presence in a corpus which already in the Old Babylonian period is beginning to assume the shape of later exorcistic traditions.[123] The restoration of his name is fairly certain, because it is difficult to imagine another figure named X da pa with whom it would be considered helpful for an exorcist to identify. This section is paralleled by other self-predication formulae within Udug-Hul such as the following:[124]

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[121] On the Earth Lords and Earth Ladies see Green 1975:110-11.

[122] There is a typo in the placement of the bracket in Geller's translation at the beginning of the line: me-en "I am" in this line is clearly preserved, as the transliteration and handcopy show.

[123] Thus Geller: "...this ms. contains incantations from two tablets of the late Series, III and IV, in the same sequence in which they occur in the late recension...the sequence of these particular incantations must have already become fixed at an early date..." (6). Though the text already has some sort of identity in this period, there is no evidence for a fixed order of Udug Hul at this time, the only real criterion for Mesopotamian "canonicity" according to Rochberg-Halton JCS 36. And evidence for its application is virtually nonexistent: "As for the rituals, the information provided in these forerunners is so sparse as to provide almost no notion about how, when, and where their incantations were applied, or against which ailments." (5)

[124] Udug Hul tablet III 237-8 in the edition of Thompson, *Devils* p. 24=BM 38594 (which should be col. v 32-3, reckoning from the composite copy in CT 16 6).

lú-mu₇-mu₇ nun-ki-ga-ke₄ mu-un-ud-da me-en

ašipu ša ina Eridu ibbanû anāku   I am the exorcist formed in Eridu!

which suggest that the exorcist is personifying an apkallu in more than one incantation.[125] This incantation is the direct forerunner of the following incantation known from Babylonia, and (not atypically) had an identity and currency independent of the Udug-Hul collection.[126]

2. Udug-Hul tablet III (CT 17, 47-8 lines 107e-f Thompson *Devils* I.12ff). The text is classified as belonging to the Legitimationstyp by Falkenstein.[127]

107c én ᵈen-ki-e-ne: ša ᵈMIN šūnu, ša ᵈMIN šūnu:[128] The Earth Lords,

    ᵈ[nin-ki-e-ne]   [the Earth Ladies]

107d ᵈen-ku m-e-ne   The Enkums

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[125] The language of this self-predication is extremely close to that of the apkallu list in bīt mēseri: "Piriggalabzu, formed in Eridu." (Or 30 p.3:18'-21', paralleled in the version presented below).

[126] Assuming Köcher AfO 21 17:34 refers to this spell rather than a spell such as begins Udug Hul tablet 15, which has an identical beginning (CT 16 18 = Thompson p.86:1-4).

[127] 1931:20, though there is some question as to how closely the Old Babylonian text fits this generic form. Thus Geller: "The later text transforms the passage into a traditional 'Legitimationstyp' sequence [Geller is referring here specifically to the first three lines, which typically contain the "Einleitungsthema" describing the demons and was understood this way by the later redactor-SLS] which may not have been the intention of the Old Babylonian forerunners." (90). The division of the text in Falkenstein 1931 is not totally clear from the text-lists, where CT 16,3,107a-111 is listed under "Legitimationsthema" (p. 23), which would describe the exorcist (and includes line 107a, the end of the previous incantation and clearly separated by the rubric of 107b from the following incantation), but lines 107c-e of the same text are also registered under "Einleitungsthema"(p. 21), describing the demons! That Falkenstein's Legitimationsthema section has some typographical error is suggested by the fact that lines 100-107a are then correctly registered again under "Schlußthema" (28). His attribution of line 107e to the Einleitungsthema suggests he was influenced by the Akkadian translation.

[128] The Akkadian translation of the first line is wrong, since the plural form would require a Sumerian e n e n e or the like. It may be influenced by the native Akkadian understanding of other incipits such as the beginning of Tablet 15 or Tablet 5, lines 28-9. Geller suggests that e-ne is "corrupt for e-ne-ne"(90); is he implying that the Sumerian has been rewritten to fit later models but then corrupted back to an earlier form?

ᵈnin-ku[m-e-ne]   The Ninku[ms]¹²⁹

107e a-da-pà abgal Eriduᵏⁱ-ga [me-en]¹³⁰   [I am] Adapa, sage of Eridu,

107f gá-e lú-mu₇-mu₇ ᵈEn-ki-ka.[ke₄ me-en]   I am indeed the exorcist of Enki,

107g gá-e lú-kin-gi₄-a ᵈAsar-lú-ḫi [me-en]   I am indeed the messenger of

                                                                   Asalluhi—

107h níg-tu-ra-ni lú ti-la-a-[ni-šè]   To revive the sick man

107i en-gal ᵈen-ki-ʳke₄ʼ mu-un-ši-in-[gen-àm] the great lord Enki has sent

                                                                   [me]

3. Lamashtu tablet II Incantation 6 (quoted from forthcoming edition by W. Farber).¹³¹

The purpose of the incantation is to gain Adapa's help against Lamashtu. Like the witch of Maqlû, this text attempts to render Lamashtu helpless by sending her off on a sea voyage. For Pazuzu, another prominent figure used against this demoness, see discussion below.¹³²

20. ušar kabki šar erbetti   I will make you ride the four winds,

21. umalla eleppaki simmânâ atarradki kâši I will fill your boat with travel provisions, will
                                                                   send you, just you, off;

22. eppêš [var: êpiški]¹³³ Adapa apkal Eridu The clever [var: the one who casts spells on you]

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¹²⁹ For these figures, who frequently accompany apkallū, see Green 1975:109f and Wiggerman 1992:71.

¹³⁰ The restoration of me-en rather than Thompson's e-ne is supported here, despite the appearance of the Legitimationsthema beginning only in the next line with gá.e, by two facts: 1) the Old Babylonian fragment clearly has me-en and 2) the self-predications of the Legitimationsthema can appear with both gá-e and me-en, or either form alone.

¹³¹Mss. include IV R2 58, I, 22-28// PBS I/2, 113, II. 57-60 and three additional duplicates edited by Farber.

¹³² The text is that of Farber's edition and my interpretation is indebted to his, though the translation and minor details of presentation are mine.

¹³³ Farber's edition supplies the correct nominal form in parentheses; I give here the two attested variants from his score. eppêš is a significant reading here. Aside from a single attestation as an epithet of Ninurta, CAD only records the word as an epithet of Ea in personal names and in connection to nun.me.tag in lexical lists.

Adapa, sage of Eridu,

23. dāgilki[134] ina Eridu inattalki kāši	Is the one who looks at you, in Eridu he will scrutinize you, just you,
24. unakkar imatki inassah qātīki	He will neutralize your venom, he will keep your hands off,
25. ina zumur šerri mār ilišu annî	From the body of this infant, under the protection of his god,[135]
26. putrī atlakī	Be off, go away!

4. Incantation in Pseudepigraphic Letter Form. R.C. Thompson AMT.52

(K 2537=K 191+ dup. BAM 574iii 65 ff)[136] Incantation and medical instructions in the form of a pseudepigraphic letter from Adapa to an otherwise unknown figure; the name may be intended to give an archaic flavor, as it closely resembles one known from the Kassite period.[137]

1. ana Libūr-zāninī qib[ī-ma]	To Libūr-zāninī, spea[k]:
2. umma Adapa apkallum-ma	Thus Adapa, the sage:
3. ganna atta u anāku kullat māti nītiqam-ma	Let us go and traverse the entire land.
4. mê būrti halilūti [. . .]	[draw] halilu-water from a well,
5. annanna mār annanna niddīma [. . .]	throw it on PN, son of PN [. . .]
6. qāti marṣi ṣabat šipat Ea idīšum-ma	Take the hand of the sick man, cast the incantation of Ea on him
amīlu liblut [tē šipti]	so that the man will get better!

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[134] Taking the form as a participle, literally "your looker".

[135] Lit. "the son of his god."

[136] The text I give is based on the edition by Tim Collins in his Oriental Institute dissertation being written under Walter Farber; it updates the treatment of Ebeling *TuL* nr. 6. I thank Mr. Collins for his generosity.

[137] "May my caretaker be well" or, if the name is hypocoristic, "May the caretaker of X be well." The name is of a common type: Libūr X "may X be well", already known in Old Akkadian (see lexica). A personal name Libūr-zānin-Ekur "may the caretaker of the Ekur be well" appears in two Kassite period kudurru's (MDP 6 pl. 9 iii 17 and BBst. no. 4 ii 6) and seems to belong to the same individual, a šaqû official, but the figure of Libūr-zāninī is otherwise unknown (though von Soden cites an unpublished text K 8515, 15 in this regard [AHw 108b]).

7. ka-inim-ma libbašu [kāsūšu/ṣābissu][138]   incantation (for when a man's) belly

[is binding/seizing him]

5. Incantation in Pseudepigraphic Letter Form. STT 176+185, rev. 14'-21'. A pseudepigraphic letter from Adapa to Alulu containing magical-medical prescriptions. Unedited.[139]

14'-15'   ana ꞌAluꞋluꞋ qibī-ma um[m]a ꞌAdapa apkallum-ma umma ana ꞌAluꞋuluꞋ...

"Say to Alulu: thus the Adapa the Sage; thus to Alulu..."

The text is complicated by cracks, an uncertain join (is the top line of STT 185 rev. to be aligned with line 18' or 19'?) and many uncertain readings but appears to recommend such exotic *materia medica* as libbi sîsi "the heart of a horse" (18') and give instructions to suḫul libbi ina tarbaṣi[140] "pierce the heart (of one of?) the herd" (19') and suꞋḫulꞋ libbi serrēmi binût ꞋṣēriꞋ "pierce the heart of a wild ass, the creature of the steppe" (20'). While the instructions are bizarre they are not to be seen as gibberish; the other contents of this tablet are coherent texts with a place in the medical tradition.[141] The addressee of the letter, Alulu, is significant as both the first Mesopotamian king and a king of Eridu, Adapa's original mythic home.

6. Headache Incantation? Picchioni 1981:96-7 (K 9288 r. II 13-16 dup. K 3304-9217). The translation is conjectural.

[138] The restoration is that of Collins; for parallel cf. Hunger SpBTU I 44:62.

[139] STT 176 has been discussed a number of times but aside from a remark by Foster Or 43 this section has not been subjected to any sustained analysis.

[140] Either CAD S 29b: suḫul libbi alpi ina tarbaṣi "pierce the heart of a bull in the herd" or Gurney's handcopy is wrong here; there is no room for a sign that could be read alpi in the copy.

[141] For which see the comments of Civil JNES 26:208.

én sag-ki mu-un-dib sag-ki mu-un-dib	Incantation: he seized the forehead,
sag sahar-ra mu-un-dib mu-un-dib mu-un-dib	The head in the dust he seized, seized, seized,
a-da-pà abgal eriduki-ga-ke, sag-ki mu-un-dib	Adapa, sage of Eridu seized the forehead,
sag sahar-ra mu-un-dib tu$_6$-én.	he seized the head in the dust. End of incantation.

This Kouyunjik text is of uncertain significance. It is possible that this is a headache spell, in which case it may follow the typology in which the traveling evil body part encounters a famous healing figure.[142] Or, considering the medical term sag-ki-dab-ba "seizure of the head" (cf. the Akkadian loanword sagkidabbû), we may have to do here with a historiola in which Adapa himself is the cause of a head ailment. This would be significant because it would represent Adapa's only fully negative role outside of Ms. D of the myth (for which see below), where he is probably seen as the source of illness in the world. But the Sumerian may well be abracadabra formed out of the language of other incantations, considering its lateness, apparent incoherence, and divergence from known Sumerian incantation forms.[143] Regardless, the text is evidence for the preeminence of Adapa as a magical healing figure in the Neo-Assyrian period.

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[142] The idea of a split head as an active demonic character is known from classical sources and the motion of an afflicted body part from Mesopotamian medical incantations, as well as various folk medicines.On some aspects of the language of headaches in Sumerian see Civil, "From Enki's Headaches to Phonology" JNES 32. For the typology in antique and medieval European magic and some Babylonian connections, see the spellbinding essay of Barb 1966. For a thorough presentation of the theme in Babylonian medicine and magic, with some notes on the folk-medical aspect, see the forthcoming Oriental Institute dissertation of Tim Collins.

[143] Miguel Civil (personal communication 8/98) notes that none of the usual magical actions is present and views the spell as probably meaningless, esp. considering its lateness.

7. bīt mēseri tablet III incantation 1. ed. von Weiher SpBTU II no. 8.[144]

1 én u₄.an.na giš.ḫur an.ki.a šu.du₇	Incantation: Uanna, who completes the
2 MIN mušakkil uṣurāt šamê u erṣeti	plan of heaven and earth,
3 u₄.an.né.du₁₀.ga lú'⁴⁵ geštú dagal.la šum[.mu]	Uanneduga, endowed with broad mind,
4 MIN ša uznu rapašti nadnaš[su]	
5 en.me.du₁₀.ga MIN ša šimtu ṭabti šimassu	Enmeduga, ordained with a happy fate,
lú nam.du₁₀ tar.r[a.bi]	
6 en.me.galam.ma MIN ša ina bīti ibbanû	Enmegalamma, formed in a house,
lú é.a ù.tu.ud.da	
7 en.me.bùlug.gá MIN ša ina usalla irbû	Enmebulugga, who grew in a field,
lú ú.sal.la bùlug.gà	
8 an.ᵉen.líl.da MIN'⁴⁶ išippi ša Eridu	Anenlilda, incantation-priest of Eridu,
išib NUNᵏⁱ.ga.ke₄'⁴⁷	
9 ù.tu.abzu lú an.šè MIN ša ana šamê ēlû	Utuabzu, who ascended to heaven:
ba.an.e₁₁.de	
10 suḫurᵏᵘ⁶ zalág.ga suḫurᵏᵘ⁶.a.ab.ba	They are the seven brilliant Purādu-fish,
imin.na.ne.ne	Purādu-fish of the sea;
11 purādu namrūtu purād tâmtim sebetti šunu	
12 imin abgal íd.da mú.mú.dè	Seven apkallū formed in the river, who
giš.ḫur.an.ki.a si.sá.e.ne	keep the plans of heaven and earth
	in order.

13 sebet apkallūm ša ina nāri ibbanû

[144] A fragment of the incantation was first published by Gurney JRAS 1935 as a text concerning Etana because of the broken reference to a figure who ascended to heaven. The text was improved with new material and reedited by Reiner in Or 1960 who first recognized that it was an exorcistic ritual invoking sages. In a 1974 JNES article R. Borger identified new joins and duplicates which led him to suggest that the seventh sage in the series, "Utuabzu, who ascended to heaven," was the Babylonian forerunner of Enoch. The text Borger worked from, W 22762/2, was published by von Weiher in 1982. There is no connected English translation of this manuscript, the first fully preserved exemplar, hence the somewhat lengthy treatment here.

[145] von Weiher's transliteration has here a typo, "lugal," for the lú reflected in his handcopy and translation.

[146] von Weiher's transliteration has here an extraneous šá not reflected in the Sumerian, his handcopy, or his translation.

[147] The formula here may be reduced from a longer phrase in which the .e of Eridug.ak.e served a function.

muštēšerū uṣurāt šamê u erṣētim

14 nun.gal.pirig.gal.dím abgal ᵈEn.me.kár   Nungalpiriggal, apkallu of Enmerkar,

    ᵈInnin šà.é.an.na.ke₄ an.[ta.]e,,.dè   who brought Ishtar down from

15 MIN apkallum MIN ša ᵈIštar ištu šamê ana   heaven into the Eanna.

    qereb Eanna ušēridu

16 pirig.gal.nun.gal šà kiš˥'.ta ù.tu.ud.da   Piriggalnungal, formed in Kish, who

    ᵈiškur an.ta šúr.ḫuš.a   angered Adad in heaven so that

17 MIN ša ina qereb MIN ibbanû ᵈAdad ina šamê

    ušāzizu-ma

18 mu.3.kam im.sèg ú.sim kur.t[a n]u.un.gál.la   he did not let there be rain or vege-

                                        tation in the land for three years.

19 3 šanātu zunnu u urqitu ina mā[t]i la ušabšu

20 pirig.gal.abzu šà Adabki.ta ù.tu.ud.da   Piriggalabzu, formed in Adab, who hung

    ⁿᵃᵈkišib.a.n[i] s[u]ḫur.máš bí.in.lá   his seal on a Seal-fish

21 ᵈEnki ab.[zu.t]a šúr.ḫuš.a ˡᵘazalag   and thus angered Enki in the Abzu so that

    ⁿᵃᵈkišib z[i.p]a.ág ba!.an.gaz   a fuller struck him with his own seal.

22 MIN ša ina qereb Adab ibbanû kunukkašu

    šuḫu[rmāši] u[šqali]lu-ma

23 ᵈEa ina apsi ušāzizu-ma ašlaku ina kunuk

    napištīšu urassibušu

24 [kam.ma Lu-]ᵈNanna 2/3 abgal.ke₄   Fourth, Lu-Nanna, two-thirds apkallu,

    Eninkiagnunna.ta   who from the Eninkiagnunna,

25 rebû MIN šinnipat apkalli ša ištu bīt MIN

26 é.ᵈInnin.na.ᵈŠulgi.ke₄ muš.ušumgal è.dè   the Istar temple of Shulgi, drove out a

27 bīt ᵈIštar ša ᵈMIN ušumgallum ušēšû   dragon.

28 4 abgal ù.tu.ud.da nam.lú.u,ₐ.lu ᵈEnki   Four apkallū of human descent, who Lord

    en geštú dagal.la šu.du,.e.ne   Enki endowed with broad understanding.

29 erbēt apkalli ilittu amēlūtu ša ᵈEa bēlu

    uznu rapaštu ušaklilšunūtu

---

30 ana pāni 7 šalmāni apkalli purādi ša ina

    gaṣṣi u IM.GI₄ uqqû

31 ša ina lāt kummi ina igāri eṣrū tamannu

Before the seven Purādu-apkallu who are
striped with plaster and black paste,
which are drawn on the wall of the side
of the sanctuary, you recite (the above).

This is the first incantation of the final tablet of the Neo-Assyrian exorcistic text bīt mēseri "the house shut (against demonic invasion)."[148] There are several features worth noting here: the first is grammatical. In the Akkadian text, except for two parallel statements expressed with participles, all of the verbs appear in the preterite, framed in relative clauses. They refer to the past, describing the attributes and histories of the apkallū. The participles, appearing in parallel statements, and the verbless sentences express timeless general features of the apkallū, such as that Uan and the seven fish-apkallū keep the universe in order. There are no imperatives or duratives; more importantly, there is nothing like a performative function[149] or references to the here-and-now. Isolated from the rubric of lines 30-31 which gives the magical praxis, the text appears to be simply giving information about the apkallū. There is nothing unusual about this: the purpose of this incantation is not to accomplish a medical-magical task by itself, but to set one up. This is made clear by the rubric, which shows us how the text is to be applied: the list of apkallū is recited before images of apkallū. The incantation identifies and defines the apkallū so that they may be made present and their power may be drawn on in the rest of the ritual.

The second feature is source-critical: while the seven fish-apkallū referred

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[148] The name could also be interpreted as "house of confinement," but the stationing of supernatural guardian figures around its perimeter make clear that the goal of the text is not to keep the victim in but to keep his demonic assailants out. The admittedly awkward "house shut" attempts to convey this.

[149] For the lack of explicit morphological marking and the need for context to determine performatives in Akkadian, see the note below on Maqlû tablet I, *ad loc.*

to in the incantation also appear in the praxis (30-31), painted on the wall, the four anthropoid apkallū are not mentioned in the praxis.[150] This raises the possibility that this second list of four may be extraneous. An analysis of the names might bear this out: three of them are constructed formulaically by combining piriggal "great lion" with a sacred cosmic location the abzu) or a god's name (Nungal).[151] Lu-Nanna is the name of an Ur III sage who acquired legendary ancestor status. However, this observation inevitably leads back to the "original" list of seven, whose names are just as transparently constructed on formulaic lines.[152]

The section begins with a reference to "Uanna, who completes the plan of heaven and earth" as the first of seven apkallū. Thus, U-An-Adapa appears in first position. The epithet is presumably identical to the phrase characterizing all seven nonhuman apkallū in lines 7'-8' below. There are two major features notable here: the first is the splitting apart of epithets that are typically clustered: "who keep the plans of heaven and earth in order" and "of great understanding" are typical of apkallū in general and Adapa in particular. Here they seem to be differentiated: the nonhuman apkallū, and U-An-Adapa in particular, "maintain the plans of heaven and earth," while the human-descended apkallū have "great understanding." Similarly, ascent to heaven is elsewhere only predicated of Adapa among the apkallū. Here, Utuabzu is said to have ascended to heaven while Utuaabba is described as an.ta[.è.dè?] "[(who) descended] from heaven" (obv. II.2). Adapa's round trip, too, may have been split up. How are we to

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[150] This praxis is followed by another one mentioning seven apkallū of wood, probably anthropoid, but again there are seven.
[151] On Nungal see Sjöberg's edition of "Nungal in the Ekur" AfO 24.
[152] One notes the prominence of two forms, u-an and an-me, that are used to form five of the seven names. As Hallo long ago suggested (JAOS 83:175-76), some of the names are also reminiscent of the incipits of texts.

understand this splitting of epithets and attributes?

In the case of Utuabzu's ascent, we do not have a myth but a formula: almost verbatim the Etana formula. It has been objected that this ascent of Utuabzu may have been one-way.[153] It is more likely that this is merely an effect of the diction, where "ascending to heaven" stands for a round trip: every reference to Etana outside of the myth refers to him in exactly this way. In any case, no Mesopotamian myth preserved to us describes a human or sage resident in heaven. The only clear one-way ascent to use this formula appears over a thousand years earlier in reference to dead Neo-Sumerian kings, in a totally different genre of text, and it never recurs. The formula is used in the mainstream of Mesopotamian tradition only for the "round-trip" ascents of Adapa and Etana.

Yet the possibility cannot be ruled out. The objection was understood by VanderKam as disqualifying Utuabzu from a connection with Enoch: If Utuabzu's ascent is indeed one-way, it is assumed that this would make him somehow be "less comparable" to Enoch than Enmeduranki. Yet it is never said of Enmeduranki that he had any ascent at all, one-way or round-trip. But the entire objection is puzzling. A one-way ascent would accord perfectly with the Biblical figure of Enoch: "And he was no more, for God took him." What Utuabzu would not, then, reflect is an exclusively apocalyptic aspect of Enoch: that he underwent a round-trip ascent during his earthly existence and a one-way ascent at the end of it. But of course, no one has argued that any figure in Mesopotamian myth has both of these features. The figure "Utuaabba, who descended from heaven," should probably not be seen in isolation from the association between Utuaabba and Adapa in Igiduh (for which see v.2 below).

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[153] VanderKam 1984:50.

In general, there is a great deal of recombinance in the lists: Adapa switches

from Enmerkar to Alulu and thus from a later to the first position, while

Nunpiriggaldim is matched with Enmerkar in the bīt mēseri texts; the first

position is occupied by yet another apkallu in the Uruk list, etc.

Borger argues that the association of Utuabzu with Enmeduranki,

attested in the Uruk apkallu list (and thus centuries later than bīt mēseri)

provides a paradigmatic picture of a sage who ascended to heaven, was

seventh in a list, and received a revelation. But the association of the two in a

single list does not necessarily mean they were associated anywhere else. It is

most important to recall the genealogical ordering principle described by

Sasson (1976) whereby redactors tend to move prominent figures into seventh

position. And Borger is right that the Berossos list, Uruk apkallu list, and bīt

mēseri lists are strikingly close, showing almost the same seven apkallū in the

same order. As Borger notes, the tradition of seven apkallū goes back to

Sumerian literature and is at least as old as the Ur III period.[154] Along with this

pattern, one should note the pattern discerned by Glassner (1993:75-76) in the

Sumerian King List, according to which Etana, who ascended to heaven, is the

seventh king in a well-attested variant list of the first postdiluvian dynasty of

Kish. Thus, both VanderKam, with his insistence on Enmeduranki as the

seventh ruler, who received special revelation, and Borger, with his argument

about Utuabzu, the seventh sage, who ascended to heaven, are correct when

they wish to apply it to Enoch. And also wrong: the pattern of the seventh having

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[154] Sumerian Temple Hymn no. 10, lines 139-40, describes the temple of the god of exorcism (in the edition of Sjøberg TCS 3).

abgal-imin-e sig-nim-ta šu mu-ra-ni-in-mú-uš The Seven apkallū have enlarged it (*scil.* the foundation) everywhere

nun-zu nun-kal-kal ᵈasar-lú-ḫi... Your prince is the highly esteemed prince, Asarluḫi

special contact with the gods is real, but there is no single figure underlying it; it is applied differently in each of the three different cases.

ivb. Other Ritual Texts

8. New Year Ritual for Ishtar at the Resh temple in Uruk (AO 7439+, ed. Lackenbacher RA 71:39ff).

[an]a kisalmāḫi ur[rad . . .]	[DN? will go]down [t]o the main courtyard...
[. . . . . . ᵐU₄ᵈ]An-Adapa	[...U]-An-Adapa...

The formula DN ana kisalmāḫi urrad is frequent in the Seleucid Uruk ritual texts published by Thureau-Dangin. It describes the assembly of gods in the Resh (as in Antu...[ina] kisalmāḫi ina muḫḫi šubat ḫurāṣi...uššab "Antu takes her seat on a golden throne in the main courtyard" [100:20]) and the approach of the priests to perform rituals in the same area [136:273]. Considering Adapa's preeminence in Uruk at this period it is unsurprising that he appears in such a ritual but frustrating not to know how he appears: is it in the divine assembly in the form of a statue, or personified by a priest?[155]

9. Prayer to Marduk. Lambert AfO 19.64, prayer no. 2 (K 6906 +).

71.   ša ina uggat libbišu ... [. . . . .] .. inašši rēssu

   The one whom he .. in his fury [. . . .] he honors[156]

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[155] See also the comment of Pongratz-Leisten BaFo 16:44.

[156] Lambert, *ad loc.*, translates "he promotes."It is possible that this is a reference to the Adapa story, in the more positive form that may have existed in the late period. See the discussion of the narrative below.

72. ⁴Marduk ana ardīka Adapa ša .. [. . . . .] ... rišîšu rēm[u]

Marduk, on your servant, the sage, who [. . . .] ... have mercy on him!

73. šutbīma bēl[um] annašu p[uṭu]r enness[u]

Take away, Lord, his guilt, remove his punishment.

74. ḫiṭīt ubl[a] pîšu iq[bi. . .]...

His mouth has confessed the sin he committed [...] . .

This allusion to Adapa is exceptional because it is in a prayer which does not evoke the wisdom and authority of the subject, as in the exorcistic texts, but his penitence: he has angered Marduk but he has confessed his sin and thrown himself on the god's mercy.[157] Yet the references to Adapa that evoke his wisdom and authority are all in royal, historiographical, or magical-medical contexts. This text evokes a different aspect of Adapa, the one who went to heaven clad in mourning because of a transgression. This is the sage as a figure of hubris, known from the bīt mēseri fragments: "Piriggalnungal, stemming from Kish, who angered Adad in heaven so that there was no rain or vegetation in the land for three years..." and Piriggalabzu who "angered Enki in the abzu." Kienast suggests that these allude to stories in which "Nicht eine bewusste 'Revolte' gegen die Götter, sondern ungewollter Frevel und spätere Reue bilden den Gegenstand..."[158] Is the speaker adopting the role of Adapa as penitent with a special relation to the gods? This possibility is strengthened by the fact that the aforementioned litany of transgressions of the apkallū appears not in a historical or literary text but precisely in the midst of an exorcistic ritual

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[157] The difference, though marked, must nonetheless not be overstated: both Udug-Hul and the Shu-lla prayers rhetorically evoke the power and presence of the patron deity in the performers and hearers of the text in order to accomplish the desired goal. In both this prayer and the exorcistic texts cited above, the speaker characterizes himself with reference to Adapa to accomplish this goal. in both cases, the ultimate goal is to stand in the same relationship to the gods as Adapa did.

[158] Fs. Böhl:239.

which draws on the power of the transgressing sages. It is through disasters as well as victories that such beings mediate between heaven and earth.

V. Lexical and Historical Lists

1. Esagila Chronicle.33-5 (text ed. Al-Rawi Iraq 52, translation and bibliography in Glassner 1993 no. 37).

33-34 apkallu Adapa...[. .]...[. .ina k]iṣṣīšu elli [i]šme-ma ana ᵈEnmerkar irur ...

The Sage Adapa...[. .] ... [. .i]n his pure shrine he heard, and cursed divine Enmerkar..

The section concerning Adapa and Enmerkar seems to have to do with a transgression on the part of Enmerkar (l. 32 'Enmerkiri šar Urukᵏⁱ nammaš[še] ušalpit) "Enmerkar king of Uruk destroyed the population"[159], whereupon Adapa apparently curses him. The text contains important novelties in both form and content. The Esagila Chronicle (formerly known as the Weidner Chronicle)[160] is a generically unusual text, framing a chronicle with a pseudepigraphic autobiography containing some features of wisdom literature, the whole introduced as a letter from one king to another. We seem to be in the presence of an inchoate genre of the Neo-Assyrian period.

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[159] Compare the cryptic transgression of Enmerkar at the end of the "Sargon Legend", and his similar transgression in "Naram-Sin and the Barbarian Hordes," ed. Westenholtz 1997.
[160] The new term is Glassner's; since the text is based around the Esagila and is now known from two chief manuscripts, not just Weidner's, the old name has ceased to be useful.

The argument of the text is simple: as Glassner (1993:215) puts it, "tout roi qui néglige le culte de Marduk est écarté du pouvoir." This list of kings and their exploits is organized around the principle that the person who performs the purification rites for Marduk and provides fish for his temple, the Esagila, in Babylon will become king. It is to be recalled that Adapa also went fishing for the temple of his god and provided all his food. As a point of contact between the ritual activities of Adapa as a priest and royal ritual activities in the Neo-Assyrian and later periods this is worth noting: while piety and attention to divine messages are already historiographic principles in early Mesopotamian literature, it is specifically the ritual task of the ideal priest which now becomes the activity that makes or breaks kingship. It is in fact this ideal priest, Adapa, rather than a god, who punishes Enmerkar for neglecting his duties. The text attests a shift in values in historiographic sources, as the criteria of piety that were used to describe Adapa in Eridu are claimed by kings, and the authority to punish a king is granted to a sage.

An additional point of interest is Adapa's possible relocation to Uruk; he may be serving as the king of Uruk's advisor (as in the story of Adapa and Enmerkar, mentioned below). Again, the transfer of the attributes of Eridu to Uruk is already attested in Old Babylonian times (e.g. in "Inanna and Enki"), but the theme is renewed and reconfigured here, continuing the sustained historical-religious phenomenon of the transfer of Eridu cult to the north. As in the Uruk prophecy, the principles of the Sumerian King List are taken up: kingship is a gift from heaven that is removed and replaced; but now conferral of this kingship is based on a principle of piety.

2. **Igi.duh I** 107: words for "wise" (VAT 10270 and 10485+, cited in Lambert

AfO 19).

ù.tu.a.ab.ba = a-da-pu[161]

Lambert notes that this Neo-Assyrian lexical list cites "Adapu" in words for

"wise." The previous line registers the form nun.me.tag[162] (the fuller writing of

the Sumerogram nun.me, read apkallu), corresponding to other words for

knowing (CAD a/l 102a).

3. The Uruk apkallu list. van Dijk 1962 (W 20030,7 line 1).

1. [ina ta]r[ṣ]i 'Aiālu šarru 'U-An apkallu	In the time of King Aialu, Uan was Sage.
[ina ta]r[ṣ]i 'Alalgar šarru 'Uanduga apkallu	In the time of King Alalgar, Uanduga was Sage.
[ina tarṣ]i 'Ammeluanna šarru 'Enmeduga apkallu	In the time of King Ammeluana, Enmeduga was Sage.
[ina tarṣi] 'Ammegalanna šarru 'Enmegalamma apkallu	In the time of King Ammegalanna, Enmegalamma was Sage.
5. [ina tarṣi] 'E[nm]eušumgalanna šarru 'Enmebulugga apkallu	In the time of King E[nm]eušumgalanna, Enmebulugga was Sage.
[ina tarṣi] "Dumuzi rē'û šarru "Anenlilda apkallu	In the time of King Dumuzi the Shepherd, Anenlilda was Sage.
[ina tarṣi] 'Enmeduranki šarru 'Utuabzu apkallu	In the time of King Enmeduranki, Utuabzu was Sage.

The Uruk apkallu list was found in the archive of the Resh temple in

Seleucid Uruk. It is dated to Antiochus year 147, in the time of Antiochus VII, c.

133 B.C.E. It was found in context with a cluster of ritual texts for the Resh

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[161] The entry does not appear in Igiduh short (AfO 18).

[162] The form is interpreted by van Dijk as "the great gilding of the ME" (*Sagesse* 18)

duplicating those published by Thureau-Dangin.[163] The Resh itself is said to have been built by U-An-(Adapa). It begins by associating U-An with Aialu, whose name is probably a variant of Alalu, the first king and the king of Adapa's city, Eridu, according to the Sumerian King List (cf. the association of Adapa with Alulu in the pseudepigraphic letter, iv.5 above). According to a variant tradition preserved in the story of Etana, the first king was Etana, who ascended to heaven.

The Uruk Apkallu list represents a new form of scholarly list, in which the ancestors of the scholars themselves take center stage along with the kings. It fuses the list of seven apkallū known from bīt mēseri[164] with a version of the first seven kings known from the Sumerian King List. It thus appears to rework two previously separate genres: incantation and king list. More broadly, it represents an insertion of revealed ritual knowledge into history.

Most significantly for our purposes, it is Enmeduranki's sage Utuabzu (spelled ū-tu-abzu in both the incantation and the list) "born-in-the-abyss" who is attributed with an ascent to heaven. As noted above, when correlated with Glassner's reconstruction of the Kish king list, a pattern emerges whereby the seventh, whether sage or king, has special contact with the gods.

4. Berossos, *Babyloniaka*. Verbrugge and Wickersham 1996.

This is a rendering into Greek of various Babylonian traditions which was written for Antiochus I (281-61 B.C.E.). The text preserves Hellenistic Babylonian traditions, often with accuracy: there is a close fit between the lists in bīt mēseri, the Uruk apkallu list mentioned above, and the list of kings and

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[163] The ritual text mentioning Adapa is cited above s.v. iv.7

[164] Which it replicates exactly,with the exception of orthographic variations in the first two names.

monsters given in Berossos. The material must be used with caution. The text has a complex history, and our sources for the relevant sections are preserved in Medieval Armenian (a translation of Eusebius) and Byzantine Greek (Syncellus) sources at fourth-or fifth hand.

At several points the accounts report Berossos as describing a semi-human being with fishlike features (in accord with the type of apkallu to which U-An-Adapa belonged: the fish-apkallu). Syncellus[165] cites Alexander Polyhistor thus:

"In the very first year there appeared from the Red Sea in an area bordering on Babylonia a frightening monster...It had the whole body of a fish, but underneath and attached to the head of the fish there was another head, human, and joined to the tail of the fish, feet, like those of a man, and it had a human voice....Berossos says that this monster spent its days with men...it taught men all those things conducive to a settled and civilized life. Since that time nothing further has been discovered. At the end of the day, this monster Oannes went back to the sea and spent the night."

The accounts differ about when he appeared:

"During [the reign of Ammenon the Chaldean, in this section listed as fourth, not first king] the monster Oannes, the Annedotos, appeared from the Red Sea. Alexander Polyhistor claims he appeared in the first year, Berossos after forty *saroi*, and Abydenos says he was the second monster...who appeared after twenty-six *saroi*.[166]

Despite the variance in the texts, there is a striking coherence. It is clear that Berossos worked from a Babylonian *Vorlage* extremely close to the Uruk apkallu list. It was immediately noted by Van Dijk (1962) in his publication of the Uruk apkallu list that one of the lists in Berossos shows the same seven apkallū

[165] *Ecloga Chronographica* 51 in the translation of Verbrugge and Wickersham 1996:44. This useful and up-to-date collection does not outdate the analysis in Burstein 1978, which should be consulted first.
[166] Syncellus, op. cit, 71, trans.Verbrugge and Wickersham 1996:48.

in the same order, beginning with U-An (Oannes) and ending with Utuabzu.

One important difference has been neglected in treatments of the problem, perhaps out of a desire to find correspondences. The final apkallu in both the Uruk list and the bīt mēseri fragments is Utuabzu. In place of this, Berossos reads here Anōdaphos.[167] This word requires a good deal of manipulation to produce the reading Utuabzu.[168] As Geller has recently show, the cuneiform tablets with Greek transliterations show a relatively consistent method for rendering Sumerian and Akkadian into Greek.[169] Following these rules, the word already corresponds well to U-An-Adapa. This alternative provides us with a potential twist to our story: by the Seleucid period, U-An-Adapa may have been split into at least two figures, U-An and U-An-Adapa.

vi. Myths

1. "Adapa and Enmerkar" Picchioni 1981:105-9.

This text, too badly broken to make much narrative sense, was edited by Picchioni from five fragments and more recently translated by Foster.[170] Because of the condition of the text, discussions of form and editing will not be touched on and only the sense of the clearly readable portions will be discussed. The composition begins by stating that someone, perhaps Adapa, ˹ana˺ ⁴Bēl iṣarraḫ "was wailing to Marduk" (l. 5). The gods react somehow to the lament but do not seem to help. Enmerkar, king of Uruk, becomes involved and together with Adapa descends into the earth and enters a tomb; they may be engaged in

[167] Or, in a different position, Odakon.
[168] As none of the consonants of Anodaphos are the same as Utuabzu, VanderKam (1984.47-48n80) ignores the first syllable (An-) of the Greek name, thus identifying the od- with Utu, and proposes a graphic confusion in the Greek here between phi and psi, leaving us with ˀōdapsos. While this reconstruction is possible, the technique of textual emendation used to get it is powerful enough that it could have produced an equally "correct" reading from almost any sequence of letters of approximately the right length.
[169] ZA 87.
[170] Probably due to its awful condition, the text has not been widely discussed; cf. summary in Foster 1995:435.

some form of necromancy:

24	šalamta labirta ša ult[u] ūmē rūqūti [. . .]	an ancient corpse from remotest times[.....]
25	ušelmin[17] rigma ina ekal[li . . . .]	He made a terrible clamor in the pala[ce....]
26	9 ammāta ušappal[ū apsâ . . . .]	They went down nine cubits [in the depths..][172]
27	[9 ammā]ta qaqqara ušappilū [. . . . .]	[Nine] cubits of earth they went down [......]
28	[bā]b kimahhi uhall[iq/u . . . .] . . .	He/they destroyed the door of the tomb [...]....

There follows some sort of traumatic experience: when the text becomes readable again, they have a smith reseal the tomb nappāhu...ina dannat šēressu[173] irkusu-ma "the smith..who securely shut its bar" (rev. 4-5). Adapa seems to encounter the smith again and anxiously ask him if the door to the grave is secure. Thus the reverse:

6	[. . .Adap]a sūqa ina ba'īšu	As [ ] Adapa was passing through the street,
7	nappāha ēmur-ma kīam iqbīšu	He saw the smith and said to him,
8	[. . . . . . .]... ina dannat šēretka šal⌜mat⌝	"[ ] is your bar really securely shut?"

There are two ways that this text is important for the development of the figure of Adapa: the first is as evidence of his insertion into the legendary past, as an advisor or companion of Enmerkar, king of Uruk. The second is that it displays a variation on the pattern of Adapa transgressing the boundaries of heaven and hell, life and death. In the earlier myth he causes a disturbance in

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[171] If the reading of ú-še-él-min in l. 25 is correct, this would be the first attestation of lemēnu in the Š stem.

[172] Restored from line 20; see Picchioni 1981:106.

[173] For an interpretation of this word as "ring" and its etymological relationship with šeršerratu "chain" see Livingstone NABU 1990/87.

heaven; here he may be causing one in the netherworld.[174] Adapa tries to rectify the disturbance himself; by the end of the preserved text he is anxiously insisting on securing the barrier to the world of the dead, thus replicating his role as one who secures the door-bolt of Eridu (ms. A 17f).[175] Adapa is joined here to a royal figure who is also remembered as a transgressor: cf. the Weidner chronicle, quoted above.

2. Two small literary fragments of uncertain significance. Von Soden AOAT 25. The first is K 10147, a heavily broken text, too badly broken to translate.[176] It is clear, however, that it refers to Adapa procuring food as in the beginning of the myth in line 12': ana ipê NINDA...The second text is K 9994, probably an Neo-Assyrian variant of the Amarna Adapa narrative.[177]

3. "Adapa and the South Wind" Picchioni 1981:112-123.

The longest and richest text about Adapa is the narrative called "Adapa and the South Wind" in modern times.[178] Versions from Amarna and Ninveveh dating from the Middle Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian periods, respectively, have been published. In 1993 Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi announced the existence of an Old Babylonian Sumerian version from Tell Haddad and recognized another Old Babylonian Sumerian duplicate from Nippur.[179] The Middle Babylonian ms. represents a different recension from the Neo-Assyrian

[174] The threats of Ishtar to break the doors of the underworld and bring up the dead to devour the living are relevant here: like Ishtar, Adapa's descent threatens to shatter a cosmic boundary.
[175] It might also be possible to connect this with the gates which are bolted "sevenfold against the valiant" at the beginning of the Old Babylonian Etana epic.
[176] Bezold ZA 9:405, Von Soden AOAT 25:431-2
[177] Also discussed by von Soden, *op. cit.*
[178] The ancient title may be represented in text ii.1 above, which is probably an incipit: Adapa ina qereb ʾšam¹ [ê] "Adapa, in heaven..." listed in Rm 618.3 (Bezold, *Cat.* IV.1627). Since none of the extant mss. preserve the beginning of the text this remains uncertain.
[179] Iraq 55:92. The duplicate is Ni 4436 (ISET I, 156).

mss. Considering the major differences in the Middle Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian recensions of Nergal and Erishkegal, there is no reason to assume that the Middle Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian recensions of Adapa have the same ending.[180]

As currently known, the Adapa narrative is preserved in five published Akkadian manuscripts, one of which (A) is duplicated by a smaller fragment (A,). There are two other Nineveh manuscripts: C may belong to the same tablet as A, D may belong to the same tablet as A,.[181] What is certain is that all of these fragments represent a different recension from the Amarna version (Ms. B). B overlaps substantially with C, where it shows verbal differences but apparently the same narrative. B also overlaps partly with D, where it seems to have a different ending; in D, Adapa may actually receive immortality at the cost of inflicting disease on humanity. As we learn from the parallel in the Sumerian Tell Haddad text, D's ending, including an incantation against illness, dates back to the Old Babylonian period at least.[182]

A review of the literature on Adapa produces the effect of a series of diametrically opposed readings: the South Wind is either beneficial or demonic, Ea is either a steadfast benefactor or an inscrutable trickster, and Adapa is either a knowing and pious expert or an innocent blunderer who damages the South Wind by accident. The focus of the narrative is either Adapa's foolish loss of immortality or his narrow aversion of instant death, and the role of the story is either to express Mesopotamian existential pessimism or to function as a social charter for magic. The problem is not a lack of close reading: the story has been

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[180] For the recensional analogies between Nergal and Erishkegal and Adapa, see Böhl WdO 2; for an extended argument in favor of different endings, Roux RA 55.

[181] For this suggestion, see Schramm Or 43:164.

[182] Ms D ends with an incantation calling upon Gula; as already observed by Xella OrAnt 12:258, the framing of the story of Adapa as the etiology of disease and thus as pretext for a spell makes the myth into a historiola. Cf. simply the Erra epic and its functions as detailed in Reiner JNES 19.

discussed numerous times over the past century, with extensive excerpting and analysis of the text.[183]

Much of this ambiguity has to do with the condition of the text: while we can piece together a complete story from the various fragments, we do not have a single complete version. As with Etana, some of the interpretive diversity is literally inherent in the text. The recensions of Adapa themselves seem to preserve different opinions about what happened at the climax of the story. A second problem is that many of the interpretations are based on chains of inferences. For example, Kienast's nuanced and original reading of Adapa as an accidental magician and innocent penitent, while it fits with Adapa's role outside of the narrative as a figure of transgression and repentance (see the discussion of texts iv.8 and iv.9 above), is based on a highly debatable reading of the syntax of Adapa's curse.[184] A second crux in the story is interpreted according to a second possible, but not inevitable reading of the syntax.[185] In a

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[183] An exhaustive bibliography through 1980 is available in Picchioni.

[184] Kienast, Fs. Böhl argues that Adapa does not have magical powers up until his breaking of the south wind's wing. This is partly based on Adapa's use of a precative formula rather than an "incantation" formula ("deutlich von ein Beschwörungsformel unterschieden" [237]) where, according to Kienast, either a stative or a precative drawing on divine authority ("may god X break") is expected. But independent precatives are already found in magic in Old Akkadian and remain productive in Standard Babylonian. Old Akkadian: lu tummu'at "may you be conjured" Gelb MAD 2:220 citing RA 23:25; Standard Babylonian: the chain of precatives in Maqlû I 56-9 is not unusual: lilsâki mma la tappalîšinâti / liqbânikki mma la tašemmîšinâti / lulsîkimma apulinni / luqbâkkimma šimînni yâti (for context, translation and analysis see Maqlû section below). Adapa's power over supernatural beings is already attested in the Old Babylonian period, as we see from the UHF text, which would not matter if one could prove this was an etiological story, but such evidence is not forthcoming.

[185] Kienast's interpretation of Adapa's refusal of the food of life as an avoidance of hubris is interesting and would fit well with Adapa's extremely pious character (237-8) but is based on a slightly surprising reading of the sentence ammîni lâ tâkul lâ taltîma lâ baltât[a] as "Warum hast du nicht gegessen, nicht getrunken; denn dann wärest du nicht (mehr) am Leben". This reading inserts a hypothetical counterfactual clause; contrast the more straightforward (if archaizing) rendering of Speiser: "Why didst thou neither eat nor drink? Thou shalt not have (eternal) life!" (ANET³ 102). Yet Kienast's drawing our attention to the *possibility* of this less obvious reading may itself be a more important contribution to a literary understanding of the ambivalences of the story.

way this is not really a difficulty: Adapa and the South Wind is a short, dense story with an almost parabolic flavor and it seems intended to conjure up simultaneously feelings of loss, puzzlement and wonder. Understanding such a text is a more intricate process than simply sifting and discarding various readings; all literature worthy of the name demands rereading.

Native Interpretations of Adapa

But there is a different question one can bring to this text: how does it relate to other texts about Adapa, the apkallū, and ascent to heaven? What is the Mesopotamian evidence for how Adapa was read and used? For these questions we have already compiled a dossier of concrete evidence. If we read the text in relation to this dossier, the emphasis moves from the artistic world of drama, plot and word play within the text to the larger world of ritual practices, scholarly traditions, and retrospective imagination in which it is enmeshed.

The first traditional aspect of Adapa reflected in the text is his role as ritual practitioner *par excellence*; the story states that he is literally a *desideratum* of sacrifice and feeding the gods: "without him the table cannot be cleared" (A l. 14). Adapa's total dedication to the performance of ritual and his intense connection to Ea and Eridu appears in the narrative as something pedestrian: he is a dutiful, predictable servant. But it is precisely this perfect ritual relationship that renders him a fearsome force in the exorcistic battle against demons. Falkenstein described statements of the type: "I am Adapa, exorcist of Eridu" as *legitimation* formulae. Such a statement legitimates by claiming that the speaker has the authority to perform certain ritual acts (he is the "right man," stemming from Eridu, the source of secret knowledge and the home of magic). The statement also implies, by association with Adapa, the

performer of ritual *par excellence*, that the speaker has the skill to consummate the exorcism perfectly (a crucial issue, since the Mesopotamians were very alive to the possibility of ritual failure; in the case of an exorcism this would subject both patient and exorcist to demonic retaliation). The claim to be Adapa thus serves in the same exorcistic function and formal place as the claim to be a divine messenger. From the point of view of ritual performance, we see here attention to exactly those features necessary for a speech-act's effectiveness: being a qualified person ("I am Adapa, exorcist of Eridu..") and correct performance (considering that Adapa could be considered something like the patron saint of Mesopotamian ritual).[186] Yet of course, the fact that they are preserved to us *in* ritual texts, rather than in records of their performance, shows that they are precisely not what they say they are. The criteria for performance have themselves become entextualized. For the contextualization of this identification between ritualist and sage we will have to look further.[187]

A second central feature in the narrative that is also found and utilized in ritual, myth and propaganda is Adapa's close relationship with Ea. This is expressed in the Amarna text by a blurring of their features: in lines 5-6 it is syntactically possible to read that "Ea, apkallu of Eridu" created Adapa (while context suggests that it is Adapa, apkallu of Eridu who was created by Ea, the point is the play of ambiguity). Line 2 reads "his command was...like the command of the god [Ea(?)]". This equation of the words of the subject with the words of a god finds a closely analogous situation in the legitimating mechanisms of the exorcism rituals. The incantation that Falkenstein designated the "Marduk-Ea type" contains a narrative in which the exorcist

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[186] The reader may wish to refer to the treatment of this subject in the introduction.
[187] Subtle but important evidence of this relationship in its historical development is to be found in the seal impressions and non-ritual texts, as the discussion of scribe-apkallu identification in Seleucid Uruk, below, indicates.

repeats a spell which is framed as having been transmitted verbatim by Enki. The words of the speaker and the god are one. In the "Verse Account," everything that Ea-Mummu makes, Adapa knows the name of; they are complementary as the former of all things and the recipient of their complete revelation. There is a relationship of virtual cognitive identity between Adapa and Ea.

But if Adapa is close to his god, it is an ambivalent closeness. As the bīt mēseri list emphasizes, the powers and adventures of the apkallū are bound up with transgression and overreaching: one of the entries describes the apkallu who "brought Ishtar down from heaven;" recognizing the blasphemy involved, van Dijk (1962) actually translated this line as "who Ishtar brought down from heaven," against the grammar, for what he described as "religio-historical reasons." In the case of Adapa, this conflict extends to an antagonism not merely with Anu but with Adapa's own patron god, Ea. This is the text of Adapa's curse, as edited by Izre'el:[188]

3 ana pî t[u'i̯y]a ušamṣî	I . . . according to m[y spel]l.
4 [. . . .] šūtu [ša]rāni aḫḫēki mala i[dannî nū][189]	[Call,] O South Wind, [the (other) win]ds, your brothers, as [strong as they may be]
5 ka[ppa]ki lūšebbir	(nevertheless,) I shall break your wing!
6 kīma ina pîš[u i]qbū ša[šū]ti kappaša ittešbir	As soon as he spoke, the South Wind's wing broke.

Adapa recognizes in his own verbal power the potential to defeat not just his opponent, but every single wind. But Adapa's real problem lies in the fact that the winds are also very close to gods. For it is precisely the South Wind that is

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[188] Ed. in Fs. Leslau I:764-67.
[189] Or: i[bašū] "as many [as they may be]."

consistently identified with Ea himself in scholarly tradition.[190] This wind is not just an anonymous natural power but a supernatural personality with a specific identity. Naturally it has both destructive and beneficent features: as Roux demonstrated, the South Wind is essential to Mesopotamian agriculture, but it is also listed as the first of the Seven demons in Udug Hul tablet 16.[191] Most importantly for the story, the South Wind (IM.GIŠGAL, IM.Ux.LU or šūtu) is associated with Enki from Old Babylonian Sumerian literature through to Neo-Assyrian texts: in "Enki and Eridu," Enki is described as having "raised up the South Wind raging over the Euphrates."[192] It is the wind consistently and without exception associated with Ea in later prayers, royal inscriptions and lists:[193] The South Wind is "beloved of Ea"[194], the wind that "stands before him,"[195] and in one list it is simply equated with Ea himself: ᵐšūtu ᵈEa abu ilāni "the South Wind is Ea, father of the gods."[196] Whether this association, known mostly from Neo-Assyrian and Standard Babylonian texts, was intensified under the influence of

[190] I have not been able to find any study of Adapa that recognizes this fact, which would seem to be basic to the story's interpretation.

[191] For a list of authors who think the wind is harmful versus those who think it is beneficent, see the useful bibliography in Picchioni, who however misses the wind's relationship to Ea (see references already gathered by Nougayrol RA 60 (1966)) and oversimplifies Roux's position by listing him in the "pro-South Wind" party. For the South Wind in agriculture, see Roux RA 55 at great length.

[192] "Enki and Eridu" l.84, trans. Kramer and Maier 1989:72.

[193] In lists there is a set order of winds: South, East, North and West (a testament to this list's fixity is the fact that the name of the south wind can be written IM.1 "wind number one") and a relatively fixed order of gods associated with these winds: see the duplicate texts K 8397.1-4 (excerpted in Bezold, *Cat*.III.923) and STT 400.37-40; CAD also notes TIM 9 60 iii 2 . In all of these Ea is first, associated with the South Wind. In narrative sources North may alternate in order with East (see.g. EE IV 43, Lambert-Millard *Atra-Hasis* 122 U rev. 6). The list of four comes from the conceptual world of geography. In contexts such as incantations the number may be seven, influenced by the ritual practice of enumerating things in sevens, but when seven winds are enumerated, they are not named.

[194] šūtu narāmti ᵈEa; AfO 12 143:24. The text is a Neo-Assyrian incantation to protect travelers; each wind is described as beloved of a god and asked to accept the traveler's prayer. The god-wind relationship is not always unique: in this text the west wind is beloved of both Ea and Anu (l. 27) but more usually the west wind is just associated with Anu (RA 60 73:6').

[195] šūtu šāri ša ina maḫar ᵈEa izz[izu] in a building inscription RA 60 73:2'.

[196] K 8397 = Bezold *Cat* III.923, line 1 duplicated by STT 400:37.

the Adapa story sometime after the Old Babylonian period or whether a fully-formed tradition lies behind this element of the narrative does not matter: by the Neo-Assyrian period, a reader schooled in Mesopotamian tradition would have associated the two.

Adapa has magically attacked and crippled a supernatural being elsewhere identified with his own god, not coincidentally the god of magic itself. As we shall see, his manner of assault associates Adapa, the primordial exorcist, with a peculiar and virulent Mesopotamian demon. What is important to recognize here is that the one published manuscript of Adapa that actually contains a ritual application also appears to demonize Adapa himself. Further, this version is supported by the Sumerian *Vorlage* according to Cavigneaux and Al-Rawi. The following text appears at the end of Ms. D, which represents a different, probably older edition of the narrative with a significantly different ending.

12	[x x x] x Adapa zēr amēlūti	...mortal Adapa
13	[ša x] x -ʾniʾ-šu šalṭiš kappi šūti isbiru	[who...]...Lordlike, broke the South Wind's wing
14	[ša x x] ana šamê ēlû šî lu kīam	[who...] ascended to heaven—so be it!
15	[x x x x š]a zāqša lemniš ana nišī ištaknu	[... w]ho set her blowing evilly over humans,
16	[simmu] murṣu ša ina zumur nišī ištaknu	[the grievous] sickness that he set in the bodies of humans
17	[　　　] ellūtum ᵈNinkarrak unaḫḫu	[...] pure Ninkarrak will relieve
18	[　　　 i]ltbēma simmu murṣu lišḫur	[　 when it] arises, may grievous sickness turn back!
19	[　　　 š]uātum ḫurbāšu[197] limqutma	[　　 th]at one, may chills fall (on him)
20	[　　　] x šittum ṭābtum la iṣallal	[　　　] ... may sweet sleep elude him

[197] Note that it is elsewhere Gula who cures chills (see text cited in CAD B.249a; of course, she cures all disease!); here it is perhaps her, as guarantor of the curse, who deploys them.

21 [   ] x BU-ú-du nûg libbi niší   [   ] .... happiness for humans

After enumerating Adapa's two most salient acts, breaking the wind's wing and ascending to heaven, it goes on to describe the establishment of disease in the same syntactic form (relative + preterite)[198] and in terms reminiscent of the establishment of disease in "Atra-Hasis." This makes it likely that the text places Adapa himself at the center of the etiology of disease. As in "Atra-Hasis," the imagery of wind is evoked (zâqša, l. 15); further, the specific term têbu is invoked for the outbreak of disease, which is elsewhere used in prophetic discourse to evoke the onset of an evil force, figured as the South Wind, and Adapa's breaking of its wings (see below, "Breaking the Wings of the Wind"). In the last preserved portion of the text, someone is cursed. Could it be Adapa himself?

4. The figure of Pazuzu

The demon Pazuzu is, like Adapa, a complex and contradictory figure, heavily drawn upon in ritual, where he is evoked in physical form via plaques and head-shaped amulets. Incantations mentioning him are also present in numerous textual collections, recently edited by Borger.[199] Pazuzu is also involved in the Lamashtu rituals, where he is depicted as physically attacking and pursuing Lamashtu across the sea while the apkallū stand over the patient.[200] The majority of texts come from images of the demon, and in this class there is a striking fact: all of these incantations are cast in either the first or second persons; the texts are either spoken in the demon's voice or address

[198] That line 13 began with a ša or other relative marker is clear from the subjunctive -u at the end of isbir-, such a particle is probably preserved at the beginning of 15 and definitely in line 16.
[199] Fs. Reiner. The edition is a "score" only; for translation, commentary, and a critical edition of some of the most important texts see Lambert 1970.
[200] For a striking example, see the "Plaque des Enfers", Louvre, Ancienne collection De Clerq, reproduced in Farber's RlA entry on "Lamashtu" (RlA 6:442).

him directly.[201] Both the grammatical usage and the form in which the text usually comes to us emphasizes the demon's ritual presence, a process of *Vergegenwärtigung*, "making present." This combination of text and image correlates most closely with one other known figure in Sumero-Akkadian ritual: the apkallu.[202]

Below is the single best-attested Pazuzu incantation, for which Borger was able to find no less than eleven exemplars. The text is based on Lambert's reconstruction of the Sumerian incantation, supported by Borger's synoptic edition.[203]

1   gá-e   ⁴Pà-zu-zu   dumu-⁴Ḫa-an-bi   lugal-líl-la-ḫul-a-meš
       I am Pazuzu, son of Hanbi, king of the evil wind-demons

2   ḫur-sag-ta   kalag-ga   mu-un-ḫuš   ba-an-e₁,-dè   gá-me-en
       I myself climbed the mighty, quaking mountain

3   im-ne-ne   lú   šà   gin-na   im-Mar-tu   igi-e-ne-ne   ba-an-gar
       the winds, against which I went, had their faces set to the west,

4   dili-e-ne   pa-e-ne-ne   ba-an-ḫaš
       one by one I broke their wings.[204]

The relationship between this self-predication and Adapa's curse can be analyzed thus: In the Amarna version, Adapa challenges the South Wind to call up the other winds, "as [many]" or "as [strong]" as they are, and then breaks the

[201] The texts on the heads are edited in Lambert 1970.

[202] The correlation between Adapa and the demon Pazuzu was noted and analyzed in Michalowski 1980.

[203] The presentation here differs only in following Borger's text with regard to deleting Lambert's line 2, found in Lambert's reconstruction and perhaps the *lectio dificilior* but not supported by the texts presented in Borger. Lambert's reconstruction is also in slightly better Sumerian than the majority of the texts (thus i g i .e n e n e for Lambert's i g i .b i in line 3).

[204] Note a possible possible pun in the Akkadian translations, where izrū can be either a loan from Aramaic meaning "arms" or an Akkadian word meaning "curses"; the Sumerian p a .e n e n e is clearly "their wings" here.

South Wind's wing using a verbal formula. After this, Adapa is taken up to heaven under the power of the messenger of Anu.[205] But this feat is remembered differently: compare the historiola in Ms. D.13-14, which simply speaks of Adapa who "lord-like, broke the South Wind's wing, Went up to heaven..." Anu's pronouncement ends by describing Adapa himself as a bringer of disease, which must then be alleviated by Ninkarrak (identical with Gula, the goddess of healing). Adapa, the exorcist, has become demonized. In this later recapitulation, Adapa is analogous to Pazuzu, who ascends a cosmic mountain under his own power and breaks the winds' wings by main force. Pazuzu, as a *Schützdämon*, an anti-demon, is an ambivalent force who must himself be protected against in other incantations. Here Adapa himself has acquired the same dark ambivalence.

The mythic and verbal similarities between the apkallū in general and Adapa in particular and Pazuzu are paralleled by their ritual roles: both are mythological figures who are made ritually present in exorcism via verbal markers: equation of the speaker with Adapa and direct address of Pazuzu, respectively. Additionally, both are represented through art in the ritual so that the āšipu can draw on their power.[206] Thus the ritual praxis backs up the verbal deixis. What the figures have in common on an abstract level, as Michalowski (1980) observed, is that they are supernatural mediators, with one foot in this world and one foot in the other. Both are famous because of their ability to bridge the gap between the two, demonstrated in a mythic feat of ascent. This is reflected in their very bodies: the bird- and fish-apkallū combine the features of

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[205] 37   [ḫarr]ān šamê ušebiššūma a[n]a šamê īt[eli] "He (the messenger of Anu) put him on the [ro]ad to heaven, and he asc[ended t]o heaven."
[206] It is interesting to note that while Enoch, Adapa's typological counterpart, became an angel in later traditions, Adapa instead parallels a demon.

humans and animals that either fly through the heavens or swim in the depths;
the fish-apkallū are sent down to the apsû (the "Erra Epic") and sleep at night in
the ocean according to Berossos. Pazuzu's inhumanity reflects his more
strongly negative character through a merger with more than one animal: his
wings are icons of this ability to travel between realms but his leering face,
toothy mouth and long claws mark him as a demon rather than a sage. Both
figures are known for a mythic feat of hubris which proved this ambivalent
power, figured in the apkallu traditions as angering a god, bringing a god down
from heaven, or breaking the wing of the wind, and in the Pazuzu incantations
as battling and breaking the wings of the winds.

"Breaking the Wings of the Wind:" Medical Power and Political Authority

So far we have seen the act of supernaturally breaking the wings of the
wind or winds attributed to supernatural intermediaries whose function in
Mesopotamian ritual is mainly medical: Adapa and Pazuzu are called upon to
defeat disease-causing demons; these irresistible but ineffable forces are
figured as winds. This action is also alluded to in two prophetic discourses,
where a god speaks through the mouth of a human, assuring the king that the
god breaks the wings of winds:

1. **AEM 200, prophecy** of the ecstatic (ˡˢangu) Hubatum reported in a letter
from the high priest Ahum to Zimri-Lim:

[7]...šāru ana māt[im] [8]itebbêm u	...A wind is rising up against the country, but

ka[p]pīš[u] ⁹ù 2 takkā[tīšu] ¹⁰ašalšunut[i]   I will put its wing and two necks[207] to

the test.

The god does not identify himself in the prophecy. A subsequent letter (AEM 201) records the transmission of authenticating materials (a clipping of hair and the cord of the garment of the ecstatic). The expression "two necks" is difficult, but the letter goes on to talk about the god's support of the king against two threatening enemy forces: the Benjaminite tribes and the army of Eshnunna. Since it is clear from this letter and the following Neo-Assyrian reference that "wind" is used as a political metaphor for threatening forces, it is most plausible to understand the language here as evoking a two-headed monster bird.

2. SAA IX.1, oracle of encouragement pronounced by Issar-la-tashiyat of Arbela to Esarhaddon:

6'	ai'u šāru ša idibākani	What wind has risen against you,
7'	aqapušu la aksupuni	Whose wing I have not broken?

This prophecy is pronounced by a speaker who three times identifies herself as Ishtar of Arbela over the course of 20 lines. Other than this, the force of the discourse is remarkably similar to that of AEM I 200. A thousand years later, a god again reassures a king, using different language but the same image. These two disparate texts thus testify to an extremely durable theme: the power of a divine force to repel malevolent influences is figured as an act which a myth attributes to Adapa and a ritual attributes to Pazuzu.

[207] Following Durand's proposal to read this word as a variant of tikkum; for the rest of this line see the parallels adduced by Durand *ad loc.*

The material thus implies a three-way link: between Adapa and Pazuzu as intermediaries who assume divine protective power, and the human oracle who personifies a deity ("I am Ishtar of Arbela") and speaks, in the first person, of breaking the wings of the wind in order to support the king's rule. Acts associated with exorcistic figures, called upon in medical rituals, are thus evoked in political contexts. But by the Neo-Assyrian period it is not just the mythic image of Adapa's act or his personality that is called upon to support the ruler's power; exorcistic ritual as well as mythic discourse is employed. In fact, the single record we have of a performance of the Maqlû exorcism ritual occurs in royal correspondence: SAA X 274:7-r.1 instructs Esarhaddon: "At night the king will perform Maqlû, in the early morning the king will perform the balance of the ritual." From the context of the letter it is likely that this performance is not in response to a particular crisis but is rather part of a preset calendrical cycle of rituals for the month of Abu, designed to protect the king from supernatural attack.

A History of Adapa and the Apkallū

The oldest known ritual text using Adapa is in the first person. When we first meet him Adapa is a ritual persona adopted by the exorcist for expelling demons. Clearly, both the ritual and literary attestations of Adapa are originally Sumerian and appear first in the Old Babylonian period. But there is already a remarkable consistency between the roles played by Adapa in the ritual texts and in the myth. The features of the myth of Adapa that interact most extensively with his role in texts outside the myth involve the etiology of a mediator figure: how Adapa, the priest, became a figure who went, not only ritually but quite literally, between heaven and earth, someone who explored the margins

between human and divine. In Udug Hul, it is precisely as a go-between, a messenger of Asalluhi, that Adapa is first personified and evoked.

In the royal inscriptions and correspondence of the Neo-Assyrian period we see his first political role. Adapa is the mythic figure to whom the king is most often compared. The king's deeds are like those of Adapa, his wisdom rivals that of Adapa, even his mother's health is like that of Adapa. This cannot be understood outside the developing persona and self-image of the Assyrian king himself. In these cases the underlying logic is that Adapa is a figure of special piety and ritual ability in an intimate (if troubled) relationship with the gods. In Akkadian texts in general, the figure to whom the lexicon of wisdom is most frequently applied is that of the king.[208] It is primarily in connection with his activities of temple building and restoration, acts of both political power and piety, that the king is described as wise. It is this which sets the scene for the introduction of Adapa as a political figure. A later context in which royal wisdom is evoked is then that of scribal art: Assurbanipal assumes the virtues of the cuneiform scholar, learned in the reading of tablets and interpretation of astronomical omen series.

A second significant development in Adapa's ritual role is the rise of

[208] Sweet 1990. This study, basically lexical (pp. 46-7), does not differentiate sources along historical, regional or generic lines. This leads to difficulty when the survey, confined to royal inscriptions, states that "In Mesopotamian society, the king was regarded as possessing an unusually large measure of god-given wisdom."(57). One must ask: in what way are Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions representative of "society?" How would one go about distinguishing between a deep-seated and long-enduring popular belief (as "was regarded" might imply), a form of rhetoric typical of an era, or a propagandistic project conducted in a very specific time and place? In short, who is doing the regarding? Fales and Lanfranchi 1997 differentiate diachronically and produce a different conclusion. While admitting that the king was always *described* as wise or clever, they find that "in the Sargonid period a new dimension to the royal figure is added: that of technical expertise and of overall knowledge...This element seems an innovative model of the traditional profile of the Assyrian king. As we well know from periods before Sargon, self-reflection had been concentrated for the most part in the sphere of military prowess." (p.111). Fales and Lanfranchi make exceptions for Shulgi and Hammurapi and his heirs, though they also note the possible distorting effect of inherited stock epithets in the case of the latter's heirs (n44).

pseudepigraphy. The old exorcistic function of Adapa continues to be attested, both in the later exemplars of Udug Hul and in other rituals materials such as the Lamashtu series. In these he serves a positive role, either transmitting knowledge to humans or serving to protect humans from the attacks of demons. A unique new use of Adapa appears in the two letters from Adapa containing incantations. In terms of genre, these play upon a well-distributed Near Eastern literary form, the letters to and from gods. As medical incantations, they stand in a line of descent from the framing device of the Marduk-Ea type in Sumerian, where the message of the incantation is contextualized as the direct discourse of a conversation between the god of exorcism and the god of magic. A significant development may be indicated here by the way *writing* now appears as a tool for communicating supernatural knowledge: rather than the form of an oral dramatic dialogue, the instructions appear in epistolary form, from the hand of a well-known recipient of supernatural knowledge. These changes can be correlated with a rise in interest in the concept of authorship in Mesopotamia in the first millennium. It is in the contemporary scholarly catalogues that Adapa first appears as a pseudepigraphic author of texts.

It is at the same time that the sages begin to enter history. The human sages, ummânu, appear for the first time in Neo-Assyrian king lists,[209] and in the bīt mēseri fragments of the Neo-Assyrian period the superhuman apkallū are for the first time listed by name and correlated with legendary and historical kings. While Mesopotamian kings remain on the throne, the apkallū remain confined to myth and ritual. In the Seleucid period, after the loss of native kingship, the apkallū enter history. They appear, opposite rulers, in king lists and Adapa takes on the attributes of a king at Uruk. It is this ordering of evidence, as much as

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[209] Numbers 14 and 15 by Grayson's ordering; see s.v. "Königslisten und Chroniken" in RlA 6.

anything else, that confirms that the king lists were really living political documents. At Uruk, we find a new ordering principle: the lists are now structured according to scribal, not royal genealogy, a principle that fits with the identity of the new rulers of Mesopotamian culture. Further, the correlation between the status of the sage in historical texts and the status of the exorcist in Mesopotamian society is suggested by the evidence from Seleucid Babylonia: "The āšipu would seem to have been the most important of these priest/experts during the Hellenistic period. For, although the astrologer was certainly important, we find the āšipu mentioned more often in documents from all centres of Hellenistic Babylonia."[210]

Evidence of a historically developing identification between the Mesopotamian ritual practitioner and the apkallū in general and Adapa in particular finally emerges in Seleucid Uruk. It is here, where the ritualists operated a massive shrine attributed to Adapa, who figured in its rituals and in their genealogies, that we also find the apkallu as a personal emblem of scribal families. As Ronald Wallenfels has recently demonstrated, it appears to be after a scribe reaches full status in the temple hierarchy that he assumes the use of an apkallu seal.[211] While use of these seals is not completely restricted to scribes, the pattern is so well-attested that it can be asserted beyond doubt.

But if the identification has become clear in the Hellenistic period, the cognitive and ritual mechanisms of the identification are still not clear. An exorcist may claim to somehow "be" a mythical figure, but the rituals are full of such claims and statements: "I am this, I am not this, you are that, you are not that." How are we to understand these ritual roles as historical entities,

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[210] McEwan1981:21.
[211] BaMi 24.

conditioning human experience in particular situations? As noted above, we lack any sort of record of personal experience or diaries documenting the subjectivity of a ritual practitioner.

While the experiences of the participants are not accessible to us, the scripts for those experiences are. By investigating the structure of an extensive ritual, we can see how Mesopotamian religious traditions are called up, activated and altered when they are applied to a contemporary situation. In the process, it is possible to detail the positions that a ritual participant takes in interacting with tradition, the places from which the participant speaks and acts in a religious context.

5. The Reconfiguration of the mannam lušpur formula.

The Ritual Persona in Maqlû

We will now trace the history of an important incantation formula, and its role in a ritual involving ascent to heaven. This formula finds its context in the tradition of Mesopotamian medicine. Like the practice of the Jews of late Antiquity known from the incantation bowls, Geniza fragments and Talmud, the practice of Mesopotamian medicine cuts across modern boundaries of exorcism, prayer, and professional medical procedure. The āšipu "exorcist" was a central part of both temple and community who performed all of these roles.[212] This tradition is embodied in a corpus of texts with a wide imaginative and practical range, including everything from helping babies to sleep to sending demonic illnesses back to the netherworld.

Within this textual tradition, a durable formula is the question mannam

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[212] Treatment of illness was often divided up between the activities of the āšipu "exorcist" and the asû "physician", but the boundary was not firm. On the distribution between the professions see Ritter 1965 and Biggs' entry in CANE, esp. p. 1914.

lušpur-*"whom shall I send?"*[213] Mannam lušpur is a rhetorical question, a form of apostrophe in which the exorcist elicits the attention of a divine helper. The reciter wonders helplessly out loud how he will get the attention of those powerful but distant beings. The objects of his query include the daughters of heaven, who are in heaven and the hero Enkidu, who is dead and hence presumably in the netherworld.[214] The rhetorical question itself, by the simple act of addressing the gap between victim and divine helper, helps close it; the question is always followed by a series of precative forms, addressed to the very beings who were so far away in the previous line. Part of the magic of the incantation is the very way that the expression of a lack resolves the lack.

Walter Farber has recently edited the texts containing the mannam lušpur formula and described the character of these incantations, with their tight poetic structure and concrete images presenting and resolving the problem, as likely products of a form of folk poetry.[215] It was probably used by local healers and reused by the scholars and priests of the Mesopotamian city-states and empires. While the wording and imagery vary around a central theme, the pattern is expressed simply and coherently. Below is a representative Old Babylonian example, numbered 2.3 in Farber's edition and translation:[216]

[description of diseases plaguing patient]

[213] Farber 1990a. To the material collected there add now von Weiher, ed. SpTU II 25, which appears to be the first anti-witchcraft use of the mannam lušpur formula outside of Maqlû. SpTU II 25 may add to the case for Maqlû's uniqueness in that it is closer in form to other Standard Babylonian instances of mannam lušpur than to Maqlû. I thank Tim Collins for this reference and for saving me from several errors here.

[214] There are 12 preserved references to the Daughters of Heaven ranging from the Old Babylonian to Seleucid periods; the reference to Enkidu is in OECT 11,2, Farber's 2.8.

[215] For this argument see Farber 1990a and, in more detail, 1990b.

[216] I give a normalized text based on Farber's edition. Farber's presentation should be consulted for a fuller picture. For the background of this theme in older Mesopotamian magic, the essential discussion is Falkenstein 1931, especially his "type IIIa". For an up-to-date survey with a useful catalog of texts see Cunningham 1997.

1. ...manna lušpur u luwa""ir[217]	Whom shall I send with orders?
	[hendiadys: lit. whom shall I send and order?]
2. ana mārāt Ani sebetti u sebetti	To the daughters of Heaven, seven and seven,
3. ša kannūšina ḫurāṣu karpātūšina	whose pots are of gold, whose jugs
4. uqnû ellu	pure lapis lazuli.
5. lilqiāni kannīšina ša ḫurāṣi	May they take their pots of gold,
6. karpātīšina ša uqnî elli	their jugs of pure lapis lazuli,
7. lisābāni mê tâmāti ellūti	May they draw pure sea water,
8. lisluḫā libillê...	may they sprinkle, may they extinguish! (the diseases)

In the first millennium, elaborate new literary and ritual contexts appear, and old formulae find their way into them. Typical of these extensive new works is the complex series of rituals known to ancient scholars and exorcists as *Maqlû*, literally, "the burning," because of its structuring themes of purifying flames and burning images of the witch. It is the longest and most elaborate exorcistic ritual that we have preserved in anything like a complete fashion from Ancient Mesopotamia.[218]

Maqlû was assembled from multiple fragmentary cuneiform copies and first edited by Knut Tallqvist in 1896.[219] It was the subject of an important

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[217] Note here the D form of âr u with the sense "command, send", in hendiadys with šapāru, which will be utilized in a radically different fashion later in Maqlû.

[218] There are other rituals such as bīt rīmki and bīt mēseri whose length is harder to gauge, but this is precisely because they are not very well preserved. In ancient times, Maqlû's contents were conventionally divided into nine tablets, where "tablet" is a technical term for a unit of text, much like the 24 Homeric "books" of the Odyssey and the Iliad. It is in this division into a standard length and number of parts and a relative fixity of contents that the cuneiform analogues to late antique notions of "canonicity" lie. As Rochberg-Halton JCS 36 has shown, the standardization and formalization of cuneiform texts was not accompanied by notions of exclusive authority and sanctity; there is no such thing as Mesopotamian "scripture."

[219] This edition is still of value, containing material not included in Meier 1937, as well as extensive commentary. The printed "copies" are unfortunately in cold press cuneiform type, but they are based on Tallqvist's handcopies (now in Abusch's possession), which have proven to be scrupulous, at least when collated with the photos.

reedition in 1937 by Gerhard Maier, as well as various comments and references, and extracts from Maqlû appeared in handbooks of ancient magic, but it was not until Tzvi Abusch began a series of detailed textual and religio-historical studies that the text began to emerge as a meaningful and coherent whole.[220] In the introductory section of Maqlû, the speaker claims that he is besieged by an evil force. The force is personified as a witch or witches of uncertain identity but of overwhelming knowledge and power. The Maqlû ritual therefore constructs a persona for the exorcist which is powerful enough to locate, immobilize, and defeat the evil force in magical and legal battle before the courts of heaven and the underworld. I present a large excerpt here to portray the structure and rhetoric of the text:[221]

Maqlû Tablet I[222]

Incantation 2

37	šiptu irṣitu irṣitu irṣitum-ma	Incantation: O Underworld, Underworld, Underworld!
38	ᵈGilgameš bēl māmītīkunu	Gilgamesh is the enforcer of your Oath!
39	mimmû attunu tēpušā anāku īdi	Whatever (magic) you (witches) have performed, I know,
40	mimmû anāku ippušu attunu ul tīdâ	Whatever (magic) I may perform, you do not know,
41	mimmû kaššapātī ippušā egâ pāṭir pāšir	Whatever (magic) my witches may perform,

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[220] See Abusch 1995b for bibliography of Abusch's previous work.

[221] Cf. the version of Abusch 1995b:469-71 (transl.) 490-91 (text). My version was prepared independently but is indebted in every way to Abusch's work.

[222] The line numbering is based on K 3294+, which was used by Meier as the base text for his edition. The text presented here is based on that of Meier, but grammatically correct forms have been supplied. Photographs of all known exemplars were also consulted as part of the Maqlû critical edition project at Brandeis in which I participated during Winter of 1996-97. The manuscripts consulted, according to their sigla in the forthcoming edition, were: A (K 43+) B (K 3294+) P (BM 43826+) F (STT 78) J (Assur 1223).

lā iraššī	no matter what,[223] there is no one to unbind it or release it![224]
tê šipti	End of incantation.

Incantation 3

42	šiptu ālī Zabban ālī Zabban	Incantation: My city is Zabban, my city is Zabban,
43	ša ālīya Zabban šitta abullātūšu	Two are the gates of my city, Zabban:
44	ištēt ana șīt šamši šanītu ana ereb šamši	The first in the east, the second in the west,
45	ištēt ana șīt šamši šanītu ana ereb šamši	The first in the east, the second in the west,
46	anāku ēra ḫașba maštakal našāku	I am holding up a broken-off twig of Mashtakal.
47	ana ilāni ša šamê mê anamdin	I bring water to the Gods of Heaven!
48	kīma anāku ana kâšunu ullalukunūši	Just as I purify you,
49	attunu yâši ullilâinni tê šipti	So you purify me! End of Incantation.

Incantation 4

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[223] Literally, "whatever [magic] they have done or left undone," translating with CAD E p. 49b and understanding the expression as an idiom for "anything one does;" cf. the negative version in Enuma Elish V.7 ana la epēš ana la egû "so nothing would go wrong."

[224] Abusch 1995b:474 provides a strong argument for reading this statement ("there is no one to unbind or release it") as referring to the exorcist's own incantation against the witch, which is figured as a counter-complaint the exorcist is bringing before the divine courts, saying that the witch has falsely accused the victim. The witch is to be held liable for her false attacks against the victim, no matter how the witch tries to deny them. This constitutes one level of the exorcist's magical counterattack, which the witch will try unsuccessfully to dispel/refute. Abusch cites a compelling parallel from MAL A 47. An exorcist addresses the accusers in a witchcraft case, who are trying to escape the consequences of having given a false accusation under oath: māmīta ša...tam'âtani la ipaššarakkunu "No one shall release any of you from the oath you swore..." (ed. Roth 1995). While it is not certain that the Middle Assyrian Laws reflect "social obligations" applying to "individual citizens" (thus Abusch 1995b:475), it is undisputed that they are representative of a type of legal discourse that continued in scribal tradition from the Middle Assyrian through Neo-Assyrian periods, and was hence available for reapplication by the exorcist.

50 šiptu akla nēbera aktali kāra	Incantation: I block[225] the crossing, I have blocked the quay,
51 akla ipšišina ša kališina mātāti	I block the magic of all lands!
52 ⁴Anu u Antu išpurūinni	Anu and Antu sent me, (saying:)
53 manna lušpur ana Bēlet Şēri	"Whom shall I send to the Mistress of the Steppe?"
54 ana pî kaššāpīya u kaššāptīya idi ḫargulla	Put a muzzle on the mouth of my warlock and my witch!
55 idi ši passu ša apkal ilāni Marduk	Put the seal //pun: spell// of Marduk, the Sage of the Gods, there!
56 lilsâkimma la tappalīšināti	May they call you (f.s) and you not answer them!
57 liqbânikkimma la tašemmīšināti	May they speak of me to you and you not hear them!
58 lulsîkimma apulinni	May I call you and you answer!
59 luqbâkkimma šimînni yâti	May I speak to you and you hear me!
60 ina qibīt iqbû Anu Antu u Bēlet Şēri	By the decree that Anu, Antu and the Mistress of the Steppe spoke!
tê šipti	End of incantation.

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[225] Translating *akla* in lines 50 and 51 as a performative preterite, literally "I hereby (magically) block...". However one decides to translate the forms, one must take account of the fact that in 50, *akla* is being used in parallel with *aktala*. Unfortunately the grammars are little help in translating this passage. The note on this subject in GAG §80c is extremely brief and Huehnergard mentions the phenomenon only in passing (*A Grammar of Akkadian* (Atlanta, 1997)158); Buccellati's work is mentioned below. Detailed discussion of performatives in Akkadian begins with Heimpel and Guidi "Der Koinzidenzfall im Akkadischen" *ZDMG Supp. I* (Wiesbaden, 1969)148-52, which demonstrates that preterites can be used as performatives and differentiates the performative from the 'epistolary perfect' (written statements which describe the action of the writer from the temporal perspective of the reader such as "I have sent you a sheep") Mayer *Untersuchungen zur Formensprache der babylonischen "Gebetsbeschwörungen"* (Rome, 1976)183-201, argues that the performative is a logical rather than a morphological category (cf. Austin's grammatical characterization of English performatives, described in the introduction) and brings evidence of both preterites and perfects with performative use. Pardee and Whiting "Aspects of Epistolary Verbal Usage in Ugaritic and Akkadian" BSOAS 1987 refine the categories, showing clearly the distinction between an epistolary perfect and a performative and providing a thorough discussion of the background in linguistic theory. I confess that I do not understand G. Buccellati's treatment of the subject in *A Structural Grammar of Babylonian* (Wiesbaden, 1996), which seems to define performatives in exactly the way Pardee and Whiting define epistolary perfects (p. 420, cf. pp. 427-28).

Incantation 5

61 šiptu šaprāku allak u^{pp}urāku adabbub	incantation: I am sent—I go! I am ordered[226]—I speak!
62 ana lēt//līt kaššapīya u kaššaptīya	To /pun: against the power of/ my warlock and my witch
Asalluḫi bēl āšipūti išpuranni *[incantation continues...]*	Asalluḫi, lord of exorcism, has sent me!

The mannam lušpur theme is incorporated into Maqlû in a radically new form: all 21 other known instances are brief individual incantations focused on solving a concrete problem, usually what we would call medical, in the here-and-now: a disease causes suffering, a woman is in the dangerous period of giving birth, a baby is crying. In Maqlû, by contrast, the mannam lušpur formula is integrated into a vast ritual complex, designed to take place over a night and half of the next day, in which dozens of older themes and phrases have been reworked and interwoven.[227] Its role in Maqlû is also more complex. The incantation containing our formula is so different from its 21 other known exemplars because of its incorporation into a much larger ritual structure. On a micro-level, the formula no longer coheres: the structure only becomes apparent in the larger context.

The main themes of our Old Babylonian incantation are all present, but they have been taken apart and stitched into three separate contiguous incantations (incantations 3, 4, and 5), preceded by an introduction. Before the

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[226] Note the reappearance of the paired verbs from the beginning of the Old Babylonian incantation.

[227] On the nature and function of *Maqlû*, I follow the arguments of Abusch 1974 and 1989a. New supporting evidence for Abusch's arguments as to the character of the month of Abû as a time when the barriers between the netherworld and this world appears at Emar. These mid-second millennium Syrian texts (Emar 452 and 463) describe rituals for opening and closing the cemetery gates during Abû.

mannam lušpur theme is introduced, the speaker makes a claim to superior knowledge (incantation 2): he knows what the witches have done (in the past, using a preterite form). But they do not know what he is doing right now (using a present-future form). Yet his knowledge is no use: there is no one to unbind and release the spell they have cast.[228] He identifies the problem and its extreme nature: the lack of an agent powerful enough to solve it. This already articulates the essence of the mannam lušpur formula: an expression of despair at the lack of a helper is itself an invocation of the helper. The speaker then sounds the old theme of the water-carrying, known from many mannam lušpur incantations, but there is a crucial change: this time it is the speaker himself who is carrying the purifying water to the gods.[229] He has advanced himself in a preliminary way to the level of the daughters of heaven by acting as a water-carrier; the action is now reciprocal as he asks them to purify him for his mission.

Now, the claim on the part of an exorcist to be a divine messenger sent to the present place to solve a problem in the here-and-now is known already from Sumerian incantations. It was described by Falkenstein as the "Legitimationstyp", whereby the exorcist legitimizes himself as the one sent by the god(s) of magic. Generally the incantation begins with a description of the life and nefarious activity of the demon causing the problem, a kind of antithesis to the legitimation of the priest, which follows closely afterward. Here the exorcist claims that the power of Enki's circle of gods stands behind him. This serves the function of protecting the exorcist himself from demonic attack by claiming that he is only acting on "higher orders." Falkenstein quotes an example whose relevance to our texts is obvious: "The lord sent me, in

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[228] Reading here against Abusch's interpretation.
[229] Unfortunately, the ritual tablet is basically destroyed here so we cannot see what actions accompany these speeches.

É.engur.ak he sent me" [230]

It is important to note that the mannam lušpur formula is specific to Akkadian magic. It never appears in Sumerian, and all instances of the mannam lušpur formula outside of Maqlû are distinct from the *Legitimationstyp* in that they summon a divine being who is *different* from the speaker; they do not legitimate the speaker as a divine messenger. In Maqlû, by contrast, these two distinct forms are worked together. For the first time in the history of the mannam lušpur theme, the speaker himself claims to be the one sent, as he boldly asserts at the beginning of incantation five, which picks up on the language of the Old Babylonian exemplars using both šapāru "send" and âru "commission, order" in the first person stative, predicating them of himself: "I am sent!...I am ordered!" in a very literal act of authorization.

But there is also an important cosmological difference. Here, for the first time, the divine messenger is not sent to *come down* from heaven to earth to solve the problem in the here-and-now but to go *out* from earth to the Mistress of the Steppe in order to prepare to indict the witch in the court of the gods. The location of the Mistress of the Steppe is collapsed with that of the heavenly gods by the process of invocation, which activates first the gods of the night sky

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[230] UMBS 1, 2, Nr. 128 IV 20-21 plus duplicates, cited from Falkenstein 1931.25. Note the form, written é-engur-ra-ka, to be analyzed as É.engur.ak.a with the locative morpheme -a denoting the place where the act of ordering was performed. In all such situations, it is assumed that the messenger is present at the place that the comission is taking place (the alternative would be to postulate the sending of a message to the messenger ordering him to deliver a message!). However, there is often a collapse between the present space of the messenger and the place of ordering. Comparison with Isaiah 6, which also describes the speaker as commissioned in a heavenly/earthly temple and sent out of it on a mission to earth, is important for understanding the locative collapse that takes place in Maqlû. For a detailed phenomenological analysis of this collapse see Morray-Jones 1998 and note the testimony of the Rabbinic commentators on Isaiah 6. Unlike the Sumerian or the Hebrew texts, the speaker of Maqlû is not being sent to *earth* to solve his problem, but outward to the margins of the universe, but the place of ordering is ambiguously in and out of this world.

(incantation 2), then the axis mundi (incantation 3), then the celestial gods along with Bēlet Ṣēri (cf. line 52 with line 60). The problem is not solved in a few lines. For Maqlû, the enemies are too big for that. Instead, we have an entire section, a cluster of rituals, devoted merely to preparing the speaker to plead in front of the courts of the gods, in a kind of collapsed otherworldly space that renders the authorities of heaven and the underworld accessible at once. The changes worked in the speaker's identity are part of a drama of cosmic judgment which it is the business of this ritual to precipitate.

Maqlû therefore seems to represent an incipient new phenomenological type of Mesopotamian ritual. The situation of Maqlû may be described thus: there is something deeply wrong with the world as the result of the actions of a demonic force. The ritual functions to advance the speaker to a level of divine knowledge and power such that he can elicit cosmic judgment against this evil force and set the universe back in order. It does this via a series of ritual actions (such as burning of incense and figurines of the witch) and verbal statements which cast the speaker in the role of a divine messenger with the cognitive power to recognize the witch and the magical authority to journey to the otherworld to accuse the witch. Just as significantly, the speaker places himself in this position by inverting a traditional formula.

6. The figure of the diviner

Finally, there is a figure whose role in scholarly tradition and ritual is so closely analogous to that of the apkallu, āšipu, and other supernatural mediators that he is worth investigating. While there is no clear evidence that any diviner ascended to heaven, the diviner is considered to routinely approach the divine assembly and disclose secrets of cosmic judgment. To understand this paradox

of simultaneous proximity to the thrones of the gods and absence from heaven is to explore an important but neglected aspect of Mesopotamian cosmic geography as it relates to divine-human contact.

The practical function of the diviner is expressed well in a text first edited by Zimmern; an important parallel text was reedited by Lambert-Millard and allows a fuller restoration.[231]

BBR 95:3-8 parallel BBR 89-90+K 3654+:2-9[232]

3. [4]Šamaš bēl dīnim [4]Adad bēl bīrī anaššīkunūši akarabakkunūši[233]

Shamash, Lord of Judgment, Adad, Lord of Divination, I bring you a sacrifice[234]

4. [4]Nisaba ellīti šaruḫti, mārat [4]Anim šasât ilāni rabūti[235]

Nisaba the pure, exalted daughter of Anu, who summons the great gods,

5. šasât ilāni dayyānē mupaḫḫirat ilāni rabūti[236]

Who summons the divine judges, who convenes the great gods,

6. mupaḫḫirat ilāni dayyānē i tupaḫiramma ilāni rabūti[237]

Who convenes the divine judges—may she convene the great gods!

7. i tupaḫiramma ilāni dayyān[ē][238]

May she convene the divine judges!

8. [. . . .]...dīnī dīnā[239]

[. . . .]...judge my case!

Examples of this basic pattern may be multiplied in the extispicy

[231] Note that I cite here the edition of Zimmern and only use Lambert-Millard for reconstructions because BBR 95 contains a fuller range of formulae and Lambert-Millard's edition is incomplete since it was made for the purpose of illustrating a grammatical point.

[232] For reedition with new join see Lambert-Millard *Atra-Hasis*.154.

[233] First half of line restored from BBR 89-90:2

[234] Hendiadys; lit. "I bring you, I sacrifice to you."

[235] First half of line restored from BBR 89-90:4

[236] First half of line partly restored from BBR 89-90:5-6

[237] First half of line partly restored from BBR 89-90:6-7. For the grammar of the Babylonian 3fs. form i taprus see Lambert-Millard op. cit.

[238] Restored from BBR 89-90:8

[239] Note that the language here is identical with that of Maqlû incantation 1, discussed below.

literature: the gods are entreated to assemble in the presence of the diviner's celestial proxy, in this case the daughter of heaven. In other prayers they are requested to assemble in the presence of Shamash and Adad: "Invite the gods by means of (cedar) resin...Let the judges, the great gods, who sit on golden thrones, who eat at a table of lapis lazuli, sit before you."[240] They are entreated, analogously, to manifest themselves in the presence of the diviner himself: "Cause the god, lord of the extispicy I perform, to stand (in my extispicy). In the extispicy I make place a true verdict. In the manifestation of the great gods, in the tablet of the gods, let the organ be present."[241]

The enthronement in gold thrones is a double activity which must take place in heaven enacted by gods and on earth enacted by humans: "There is a marked interplay between the celestial and terrestrial judicial roles in the rituals of the diviner. The one played by the gods in the celestial sphere is transferred to the diviner in the terrestrial sphere, where the latter is depicted as judge, just as the gods are in their assembly. Like him he sit in the judge's seat and makes oracular pronouncements." (Starr 1983:57-58) Thus BBR 1-20:122 "The diviner sits in the judge's seat before Shamash and Adad." As a human judge in a law court is invested with the authority of his role to act as a conduit for the judgments of the law (in some way, it is the "system" as a whole which produces the judgment— the codes, precedents, modes of legal argument and the jury, as well as the judge), so the diviner performs the actions necessary for the system of extispicy to produce the judgment of the gods. The authority of each

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[240] Cited from the edition of the Old Babylonian "Diviner's Prayer" HSM 7494, lines 5 and 18 (Starr 1983).

[241] Starr, *op. cit.* lines 15-16. I cite his translation but have modified the last line from a literal to a glossing translation by rendering the word takaltum, which Starr leaves untranslated, as "the organ." The general sense of the request, to make the decision of the gods present in the body of the animal, is not in doubt and the lexical question can be restricted to precisely which organ it is, as Starr's commentary *ad loc.* makes clear.

part of the system is fused by the action of divination into one.

The common typology of exorcistic and divinatory ritual

While exorcistic and extispicy texts are associated with different professions (the āšipu and the bārû respectively, though especially in the first millennium many scholars practiced both) and are the historical result of different ritual practices and editorial methods,[242] they show important points of contact. Among the clearest points of contact are the ways the gods are invoked, which show a consistent linguistic pattern.[243] Compare the beginning of Maqlû:

1	šiptu: alsīkunuši ilāni mušīti	Incantation: I invoke you, gods of the night;
2	ittikunu alsi mušītu, kallatu kuttumtu	with you I invoke Night, the Veiled Bride!

[the reason for invoking the gods, namely a complaint of witchcraft against the victim, is given...]

13	izizānim-ma ilāni rabûti šimâ dabābi	The Great Gods are ready—heed my suit!
14	dīnī dīnī, alaktī limdā!	Decide my case, give a decision![244]
15	ēpuš şalam kaššapīya u kaššaptīya	I have made an image of my warlock and my witch,
16	ša ēpišīya u muštepištīya	Of he who bewitches me and she who bewitches me.
17	aškun ina šaplikunu-ma adibbub dīnī	I have put it before you so I can plead my case,
18	aššu ipušā limnēti ištēʾā la banāti	For they committed a crime, they poisoned me![245]
19	šī limut-ma anāku lublut	May she die, but I live!
20	kišpûša ruhûša rusûša lu pašrū	May her witchcraft, magic and bonds be dissolved!

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[242] Some fundamental redactional issues for Sumerian exorcistic texts are discussed in Michalowski 1992 and Geller, introduction to *UHF*. For important points concerning the Akkadian texts, see the introduction to Reiner 1958, and Abusch 1991.
[243] For a collection of examples see Starr 1983.58-9.
[244] For this translation see Abusch 1987a, who adduces a battery of cases where such a reading is either the most suitable or the only satisfactory one.
[245] Lit "they made me drink something not good."

Both cases address the same ritual situation: a human being wishes to cause the divine assembly to convene. In such a task, authorization is an issue. Both texts therefore begin with the protocol of invoking a divine being or beings who themselves are capable of convoking other divine beings. The specific judicial purpose of the assembly of the great gods is given, and the gods are asked in a series of precatives (they are requested either by proxy, through Nisaba, or directly by the speaker of Maqlû) to judge the speaker's case (dīnī dīnā).

Spatially, the metaphors begin with those of signaling (šasû) and move to those of assembly (paḫāru, izzuzzu) and judgment (dânu). Socially, the metaphors are juridical, involving a convocation for the purposes of judgment and the rendering of an authoritative verdict. But there is a critical difference in the speaking roles of the exorcistic and divinatory texts: in the extispicy rituals, the texts set up a relationship of *analogy* between the diviner and the gods: as the gods render judgment in the divine realm, so the diviner expresses this judgment on earth. The two realms are intimately connected, but do not blur. For the exorcist, by contrast, personification and hence the blurring of realms is already described in the Old Babylonian texts: "I am Adapa, exorcist of Eridu." The important transition here is in the discourse of Maqlû, where the exorcist casts himself as the divine messenger who is sent to address the courts of heaven and the netherworld. The old and unchanging divinatory relationship between this world and the celestial one was one of analogy: "as in heaven so on earth". The relationship in exorcism is more volatile: since the early Sumerian incantations, the exorcist brings divine forces into this world for healing purposes. In Maqlû, however one construes the exact movement of the

exorcist, he is clearly casting himself as a messenger whose goal is directed *outward,* toward otherworldly authorities and an otherworldly opponent.

An understanding of this difference can be developed by examining the social context of divination. A rough sketch, touching only on some obvious points of contrast between texts from the Old Babylonian, Middle Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian periods, may be helpful despite the gaps that inevitably remain. We begin by discussing the basic nature of Babylonian divination. On a purely practical level, the knowledge contained in the liver omen could not be decoded and thus socially produced without the background information, interpretive principles, and ritual actions of the diviner. The ominous liver, amūtum, probably derived from the same root, awû "speak" as produces awatum "word," māmītum "oath" etc., [246] is itself considered to be the "tablet of the gods", [247] which only becomes legible as discourse through the activity of the diviner. The divination process produces the text. Therefore on a social and practical plane the diviner is actually the one who produces the ominous knowledge. This tension may be represented by Old Babylonian references to the power and role of the diviner as "the one who sits before the king", who can betray his secrets or undo him in other ways. [248]

The literary pattern within the divinatory texts thus reflects a political concern. This is evident from contemporary letters from Mari, where the diviner's reports are state secrets. Thus the diviner Ibal-pi-El [249] reports to the

[246] As proposed by Nougayrol, "Note sur la place des 'présages historiques' dans l'extispicine babylonienne" Annuaire EPHE 1944-5:14n54, with further arguments by Jeyes 1989:17.
[247] On this expression see Vanstiphout and Veldhuis AIOUN 55.
[248] For this epithet see Jeyes 1989:23 and her survey of Old Babylonian terminology on pp. 15-36.
[249] He appears to have been the head of the diviners at the court of Ishme-Dagan. But as Durand remarks, "Le grand nombre des porteurs de cet anthroponyme rend difficile, tant que le dossier des lettres signées de ce nom n'est pas systématiquement déchiffré, d'identifier les documents à attribuer au devin de ce nom." AEM 1/1:239.

king that certain suspect individuals have ousted the other high officials and now serve as the bēlû piriŝti "lords of council" (but of course also "possessors of the secret") for Hammurapi. They have insinuated themselves so deeply into the state apparatus that the diviners' findings are reported to them, and ullân [p]iriŝ[t]i bārê mīnum piriŝtum ŝanîtum "if the secrets of the diviner are not secret, what is?[250] This discourse of secrecy seems to extend to describing the diviner(s) in terms of the divine council itself.[251]

At the same time, the secrets that divination discloses are produced by a basically technological method that is supposed to be completely explicable. The stages of the process can be described to and understood by the king.[252] Divination is not a personal visionary experience; its claim to authority lies precisely in that it is not. Rather, it proceeds from observation of physical phenomena that can be elicited at any time, seen by anybody, and are interpretable according to a complex but explicit set of rules and precedents. This is why the *details* of the observation can be meaningfully reported to ruling officials. Nor does the act of extispicy ever appear in myth as an ascent to heaven. The meetings of the gods to reveal decisions are located in a place accessible to both gods and humans.

Politically the role of the diviner is always overtly subordinate: while on a social plane he may act to generate divine knowledge through his exegetical activities, on the level of the texts and rituals he never assumes charge of the

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[250] Literally "Aside from the secret of the diviner, what other secret (is there)?" See AEM 1/1 nr. 104 [A.98+M.6634], ll. 14-15.

[251] For this argument see Jeyes, though the reserved comment of Starr that "The question...merits further study, to determine, if possible, in which instances the references are to diviners or to others in the royal entourage" (BiOr 48:175-6) is as far as one can reliably go without extensive further investigation.

[252] Hence the presentation of technical details in reports to royalty: cf. AEM 1/1 no. 454 and p. 63. The high officials and royal people understood the basics of divination though they probably could not perform the operations by themselves.

information himself. He is not described as a messenger or traveler to other realms but a reporter of cosmic law, a scientist who generates the information and makes the state secrets present to the state council. As Durand AEM 1/1 writes, "le devin procède lentement et laborieusement à l'interrogation, les dieux décidant parfois de se taire et de le laisser dans l'indécision. L'interrogation oraculaire ne va pas *de soi* et ne peut pas exister par *elle-même.*" (62)

There is a certain retrospective shift in the view of the diviner and the nature of his knowledge with the tendency toward serialization and canonicity[253] and the growth of the concept of authorship during the Middle Babylonian period. A striking example of this new movement appears outside of the divinatory corpus proper, in a royal inscription of Nebuchadnezzar I who refers to himself as "Distant scion of kingship, seed preserved from before the flood, Offspring of [Enmeduranki], king of Sippar, who set up the pure bowl and held the cedar-wood (rod), Who sat in the presence of Shamash and Adad, the divine judges (ilāni dayyānī)."[254]

As we have seen, invoking the presence of Shamash and Adad, the divine judges, before the diviner is the standard protocol for divinatory rituals: in this text, Enmeduranki is represented as a diviner, and Nebuchadnezzar's descent from him is proof of a lineage of wisdom. Here divination is attributed to a specific human being as a special attribute. When we next see Enmeduranki, he appears in an expanded text from the Neo-Assyrian period in which he not only performs the typical protocols of divination but has its techniques revealed to him. Rather than being an anonymous technology, divination acquires a

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[253] Using the minimal definition presented by Rochberg-Halton, for which see note on Maqlû above.
[254] Ed. Lambert JCS 21 lines 8-10.

pseudonymous inventor. This may be connected with the new interest in attribution that arises in first-millennium historical memory as attested in the scribal lists and catalogues.[255]

The conceptual background of this genealogical connection is probably to be found rather in a sort of Mesopotamian royal rhetoric: the wisdom figure par excellence is not the sage but the king. The role of a being endowed with a knowledge of cosmic law and the concomitant ability to keep the universe in order, perhaps originating with the figure of the sage/craftsman,[256] is transferred early on to the king; the significance of this transference grows in later periods. This process culminates in Assurbanipal's inscriptions and correspondence, which show a self-conception modeled on the persona of an apkallu, specifically Adapa (see above s.v. i.4). The appearance of this self-conception in inscriptions allows us to classify it as intended for the reading and listening public and hence "external," "artificial," and propagandistic. The appearance of the same conception in private royal correspondence, while clearly falling under the rubric of flattery, raises questions about where the persona ends.

The propagandistic adoption of a sagelike persona for the king results in a contradiction between the account of wisdom in royal propaganda, especially of the Neo-Assyrian and Babylonian periods, and the accounts of revelation within literature by and for scholars. The scribal colophons, catalogues of texts and authors, etc. attribute texts to gods or legendary scribal ancestors, from

[255] As noted in chapter one, these texts about the background of divination are important to contextualize because they have, since Zimmern, served as the central point of departure for studies of the transmission of Mesopotamian traditions into Hellenistic Judaism. For example, Lambert's edition of both Enmeduranki texts is reproduced by VanderKam and Kvanvig in their studies of the Mesopotamian background of the Enoch figure.

[256] See the note above on wisdom as a royal feature. That descriptions of the king's wisdom are explicitly modeled on the professional skills of craftsmen is apparent already in the elaborate literary depiction of Gudea's crafting of the first brick of the temple foundation; see the discussion of Heimpel JNES 46:205-211.

whom they are passed down to contemporary scribes through family and guild lines.[257] The Enmeduranki text attributing a king and not a sage with the founding of divination deviates from the pattern of the attributions in colophons. But in the king-lists mentioning Enmeduranki, no such revelation is ever attributed to him.

Indeed, there is no evidence that this tradition concerning Enmeduranki related to the main stream of scribal practice. The working divinatory literature; that is, the omen lists, prayers, protocols, and other ritual texts, as well as the scholarly catalogues, are familiar with the concept of the "secret of divination" but make no mention of Enmeduranki.[258] Zimmern, the first Assyriologist to make an extended comparison between Enoch and Enmeduranki[259], ended up enshrining this text in the comparisons made by scholars of Second Temple literature with Mesopotamian literature. While the basic claims of similarity between the figures of Enoch and Enmeduranki are well-documented, the significance of Enmeduranki within Mesopotamian tradition itself is not particularly great: Clearly a myth about diviners, our text appears *not* to be a diviner's myth—at least, diviners showed no interest in it outside of a single manuscript. It looks more like an archaizing royal co-optation of a scribal claim to knowledge. The scribes, who dared not assert their authority in narrative form, had their revenge in the lists, with the death of native kingship after 539 B.C.E. and the rise of the lists of ummânū and apkallū.

It is the politics which provide a key to the historicity of the diviner-king

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[257] On this pattern see the basic study of Lambert JCS 11.

[258] For niṣirti bārûti see Borger, BiOr XIV:190ff. and the list in RlA III s.v. "Geheimwissen", texts 16-17 and 27-31. The secrets of divination are transmitted by Ea to scribes, not Shamash and Adad to a king, in K 3819+, 1 and BBR 1-20, 11. For the texts and philological analysis see BiOr XIV:192.

[259] Borger JNES 33 is a comparable attempt to derive Enoch from Enmeduranki's apkallu, Utuabzu.

relationship. It is no accident that the only two Mesopotamian king lists to add the *sages* associated with the kings of the king-lists, and to describe the sages' exploits (where the earlier texts had described only those of the kings) stem from the Hellenistic period, when there was no longer a Mesopotamian king on the throne. In the Enmeduranki texts the king is depicted as seated in the diviner's chair. While the king is actually on the throne and the scribes actually beholden to him this results in a royal co-optation of scribal modes, but with the fall of native kingship we begin to see the reverse: the scribal assumption of royal genres and prerogatives. In addition to the changes in genealogical lists, the building inscription of Anu'uballit (i.6 above) testifies to a situation where a scribal ancestor is put in the place of a king, taking over a uniformly royal activity rather than vice-versa. The scribe now sits on the throne.

The image of enthronement leads to a final question. The assembly of great gods is portrayed in the Old Babylonian ritual as taking place on gold thrones. The later text concerning Enmeduranki as diviner also refers to him as being taken into the divine assembly and seated on a gold throne along with the gods, and as later taking other men into this assembly and seating them on gold thrones. For the purposes of this study it is important to determine if this assembly is taking place in heaven. This is not stated in the text, though conventionally Shamash's judgments do take place in heaven, and he is said to have opened the gates of heaven and ascended a lapis lazuli ladder before his activities as judge are addressed in the Diviner's Prayer (ed. Starr). The question is the later Enmeduranki text's picture of the cosmological location of divine judgment. If this is heaven, it would represent the only case in Mesopotamian literature of humans being enthroned in heaven.

The first point to consider is that the rise into heaven and the opening of

doors is a stereotypical activity of Shamash, that could well be be automatically incorporated when the activity of the sun-god as judge is being invoked. It does not necessarily cohere with the later description of the gods' meeting. Second is the fact that the issue of the location of the divine assembly *is* explicitly addressed in the rituals of the diviner; this is a consistent aspect of the prayer for a true omen. The gods are asked to assemble and be directly present at the sacrifice and reading of the omens. The assembly of the gods is thus not localized in a constative fashion here; it is not described as taking place in a special locale but as a hoped-for possibility that might take place in the immediate presence of the diviner.

When humans visit the council of the gods, the picture is complex: Adapa is explicitly described as meeting the gods in heaven—he takes a path to heaven as does Shamash—they decide not to confer immortality on him. Utnapishtim is taken into the assembly of the gods when they decide the same sort of question—they confer immortality on him—and there is no mention of an ascent or of the council's location. In Enuma Elish, on the other hand, when the meeting place of the gods is named and localized it is clear that they meet not in heaven but on earth, in a part of Babylon called Ubshukkinakku.[260]

Enuma Elish's picture is more representative of the mainstream. The picture in most myth is consistent: the divine assembly meets in a city: either Nippur or Babylon.[261] There is also a second, minority view probably produced under West Semitic influence, according to which the assembly of the gods

[260] On this see the note of Horowitz 1998:111n6, and further Wilcke in K. Raaflaub, *Anfänge politischen Denkens* (Münich, 1993) (*non vidi*).
[261] For an early literary representation of this, see "The Voyage of Enki to Nippur" in Kramer and Meier 1989. The status of Nippur and Babylon as divine meeting places was laid out in Jacobson's famous articles on "Primitive Democracy in Ancient Mesopotamia" JNES 2 (1943) and "Early Political Development in Mesopotamia" ZA 52 (1957). For bibliography and updated discussion see Lieberman 1992.

takes place on a mountain.[262] The ritual picture also involves a different mode not amenable to a simple geographical description. This is what we might call the jussive mode: the location of divine judgment is not given but hoped for; the desired location is wherever the ritual is taking place.

We may conclude that the Enmeduranki texts are not clear evidence for any kind of heavenly ascent. Rather, they point back to the larger issue of human access to divine judgment. They remain relevant for the discussion of ascents to heaven in ancient Mesopotamia because of two factors: Enmeduranki's status as a mythical proto-bārû and culture hero, and his associated apkallu Utuabzu, who ascended to heaven.

7. Ascent to Heaven in Wisdom Literature

The Poem of the Righteous Sufferer, first attested in Assurbanipal's library but thought to date to the Kassite period, comments in its second Tablet on the vagaries of human moods and rhetoric: "when starving they become like corpses, when replete they vie with their gods. In prosperity they speak of

[262] Mark Smith SVT 55.229 cites Lambert BWL 12 as saying that a "late recension of Gilgamesh" places the Sumerian pantheon on Mount Hermon, which would represent the influence of a "West Semitic" idea. He may have misunderstood Lambert's reference, which is to an Old Babylonian fragment of the Gilgamesh epic from Ishchali, ed. Bauer JNES 16; this is in fact part of the *first* known recension of the Gilgamesh epic. Gilgamesh and Enkidu are fighting Humbaba in the cedar forest; local color is provided. The mountain here goes by the name Saria, a name identified by Bauer as Hurrian; in light of our expanded knowledge of Hurrian grammar this may be due for reassessment. In any event it provides a clear etymology for BH שִׁרְיוֹן, (possibly the source of the name Syria) and appears in the text with "Lebanon" (ša-ri-a ù la-ab-na-na: 256 rev. 13). Whether the idea is "Canaanite" (as Lambert states—it is unclear whether he is using the term geographically or culturally), Hurrian, or something less obvious, the derivation is not certain. The first attestation of the theme is in an Akkadian text from the Isin-Larsa period, using what appears to be Hurrian terminology. This "Canaanite" derivation thus appears in Mesopotamia at least 500 years earlier than its first West Semitic attestation, in the Ugaritic Baal epic (KTU 1.4 VI 19-20 and 20-21), where it is adapted to West Semitic parallelistic diction. While it is surely a regional feature of some sort, its cultural and linguistic provenance remains to be determined. In general, scholarly discourse about "Canaanite" and "West Semitic" in the second millennium tends to be somewhat anachronistic. Smith notes that this view of Mount Hermon also provides a background for Enoch 6:6, 13:7.

scaling heaven (ina ṭābi ītammâ ilī šamā'i), under adversity they complain of going down to hell. (ii 44-47).[263] The final proverb that the clever but nihilistic slave of the "Dialogue of Pessimism" cites is framed in advice to commit suicide: "What, then, is good?" "To have my neck and your neck broken and to be thrown into the river is good. 'Who is so tall as to ascend to the heavens? (ayû arku ša ana šamê elû) Who is so broad as to compass the underworld?'" (80-84)[264] Compare, in "Nergal and Erishkegal:" "we cannot go down to you, nor can you come up to us;" (nīnu ulu nuradakki u atti ul tīlînnaši EA 357:5, cited from CAD e/118a) "should I go up to heaven?" (iii 38' with duplicate ed. Hunger SpBTU I; Erishkegal is speaking sarcastically, as Dalley 1989:177n12 notes). These may be taken to reflect a commonsensical view that the barriers of heaven and hell remain closed to humans and, incidentally, gods as well.

The exception, as in Maqlû, is divine messengers:
"Namtar, my minister, I will send you to the heaven of Anu, our father."
(ᵈNam⌉[tar sukkal]i lušpurk[a ana] ⌈šamê ša ᵈAnim abīni⌉ STT I no 28 i 52')

A close look at the form in which these statements appear may refine our view of how they connected to Mesopotamian beliefs. Formally, Wisdom Literature is typically understood to include, *inter alia*, gnomic statements and rhetorical questions, cited for the pragmatic purpose of stating the sober, common view of reality, "the way things really are." But formally similar types of discourse: that is, conventional statements about the way things are and rhetorical questions expressing known limitations, appear in the mouths of supernatural beings themselves. In the myth of Nergal and Erishkegal, the gods articulate belief in the impossibility of heavenly gods entering the netherworld,

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[263] Ed. and trans. Lambert, BWL:40-1.
[264] Lambert BWL:148-9.

and netherworld gods entering heaven, in gnomic form as if they are expressing a commonly known and accepted reality. Erishkegal uses a rhetorical question to emphasize the impossibility of her ascending to heaven.

But myth just as easily expresses the opposite phenomena: heavenly gods entering the netherworld and netherworld gods appearing in heaven. In these cases, other linguistic forms, such as self-predication, may be used to depict a violation of exactly the limitations expressed in gnomic form. These violations also take the more "objective" form of narration; rather than a gnomic form expressing a principle, narrative describes events in the omniscient third person: "Ishtar set her mind on (going to) the Netherworld," (incipit of "Ishtar's Descent") "He set Adapa on the path to heaven." (Adapa Ms. B 45). As we have seen, epithets are used to *allude* to journeys to heaven and hell as if they are known events: "Etana, who ascended to heaven," "[Utuabzu], who ascended to heaven."

Thus, to take the linguistic forms of "wisdom literature" as representing the bedrock of Mesopotamian reality, rather than a specific form of discourse with its own presuppositions and rhetorical goals, is as dangerous as taking the linguistic forms of divine discourse in myth as representing inviolable theological precepts rather than a different form of discourse with other presuppositions and rhetorical goals. Both cases do more than reflect a putative "common Mesopotamian belief;" they had a complex relationship with a living and diverse conceptual world. In such a world the expression of a limit or impossibility in one form of discourse might have served not to contradict but to enhance the authenticity and effectiveness of breaking this limit in another form of discourse. As we have seen repeatedly in this study, different modes of discourse concerning otherworldly journeys were taken over and applied in

different genres of writing, speech and ritual.

Conclusion

Mesopotamia knows two detailed stories of ascent to heaven: the epic of Etana and the myth of Adapa. Etana's ascent on the back of an eagle is an old and familiar motif, already the subject of diverse traditions by the Old Babylonian period. After extensive revision over the course of the history of the text, the traditions seem to petrify and the character loses importance. In the realm of ritual Etana is only called upon in Old Babylonian Sumerian texts and is rarely alluded to thereafter. The motif of Etana's flight, the daring journey of a king on the back of a fabulous winged beast, emerges later in Greek and Iranian sources about the follies of kings and heroes as a literary figure for hubris, and the motif reappears in Islamic miʿrāj traditions as an important vessel of Islamic mystical speculation and practice. Yet the most detailed parallel outside of Mesopotamia appears in Finnish oral tradition, over 2,500 years after the latest cuneiform manuscript mentioning the myth. This fact serves as a warning about the use of literary parallels: in and of themselves they prove neither meaning nor historical proximity.

Concrete evidence of the religious significance of Etana is only available for the Old Babylonian period, where he is evoked in two Sumerian funerary prayers; there he appears as an underworld figure alongside Gilgamesh. According to the current evidence, Etana is only depicted as functioning when dead: as a mortal king, he must die and gain a fixed place in the underworld in order to become ritually accessible in the human sphere, and like Gilgamesh he is only called on to act *in* the Netherworld. In this regard it is significant that the only post-Old Babylonian literary reference to Etana outside the narrative itself,

in Gilgamesh tablet VII, is in a list of obscure and archaic priestly figures, generally with Sumerian or Sumerian-sounding names, resident in the Netherworld. Etana is remembered as otiose.

Adapa, though mortal in at least one myth, has an entirely different history due to his position as a ritual persona. As a sage of ambiguous origin, he is not really a figure of history or of death, but someone who is capable of being invoked, over and over, both in situations of physical crisis and political rhetoric. The outline of Adapa's life in Mesopotamian tradition is therefore defined not primarily by literary texts, though he is important here, but by memories embedded in ritual practices and historical texts.

There is a demonstrable, historically developing identification between the Mesopotamian ritual practitioner and supernatural intermediary figures, including apkallū such as Adapa and other divine messengers. The internal cognitive processes of this identification are not accessible to us, but the linguistic forms that make the identification are. The exorcist was able to draw on a traditional persona associated with revealed knowledge and perfect ritual ability. The technical correctness and ritual purity of this persona was itself constructed and represented in the rituals through a series of purifications and self-legitimations. Within the limited time and space of the ritual, the persona was not just adopted, as an inert, conventional relic, but constructed over the course of the ritual, for the purpose of a performance combating demons who represented both physical illness and, in the first millennium, cosmic evil. The writers and ritual practitioners who held Mesopotamian tradition in their hands at the dawn of the Hellenistic period then wrought major changes in it, changes in which these ritual personae played a large part.

A second type of adoption of the persona of the apkallu appears in royal

propaganda. While there is no evidence for ritual behavior, it is clear that by the time of Assurbanipal the comparison of the king to an apkallu was more than a perfunctory form of praise. Assurbanipal places an elaborate comparison of himself to a sage prominently in several of his inscriptions. This comparison includes rivalry with Adapa, schooling in cosmic secrets, the decipherment of encoded messages, and presence in the counsel of the learned. It is comparable to but goes beyond to the limited propagandistic self-description of Nebuchadnezzar I as descended from a diviner-king. The royal correspondence of Assurbanipal includes a flattering genealogical statement about his descent from "a sage and Adapa". Whether or not Assurbanipal believed he was related to a supernatural intermediary figure, such claims were a part of his public and private persona.

During the Neo-Assyrian period human sages, ummânu, first enter the Mesopotamian historical tradition in the king lists,[265] and in the Seleucid period Adapa fully enters the light of history (to the extent that this can be said of imaginary figures). This is the time when the entirely mythic apkallū begin to appear in the king lists, both in the Uruk list and in the *Vorlage* to Berossos' list, which both differentiate nonhuman sages from human scholars. An area of knowledge that we first learn about in exorcism rituals[266] is thus transferred into historical writing.

The movement of traditions from genre to genre and the transformation of the genres themselves cannot be seen in isolation from the new purposes to which the production of texts was put. After the Neo-Babylonian period, the chief public function of court scholars—to produce royal propaganda and other

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[265]Numbers 12 and 14 by Grayson's ordering; see s.v. "Königslisten und Chroniken" in RlA 6.
[266] The bīt mēseri apkallu list, which was originally misidentified as a fragment of Etana!

politically useful forms of knowledge—disappeared. Their mastery of tradition, the source of their creative and preservative powers, had to find new goals. It is in this context of new genres and functions for old traditions that we can place texts such as the Uruk prophecy, with its use of a tactic of political propaganda, the *vaticini ex eventu*, to emphasize the worship of Anu in Uruk, and phenomena like the rise of the figure of Adapa in the cosmic and architectural context of the Resh temple.[267] Like the Middle Babylonian revival that produced the Enmeduranki text, the construction of the Resh itself was part of a Hellenistic movement of revival on the part of the Seleucid rulers and priestly governors of Uruk. Here, centuries after the overthrow of Babylonian kingship, we find the construction of the largest ziggurat ever found in Babylon.[268]

The Resh temple, a new structure on a scale never before seen in Babylon, is "rebuilt" by a governor of priestly lineage and attributed to Adapa himself.[269] As a recent essay has it, "The Seleucid rulers apparently fostered a revival of traditional religious forms and practices in the old Mesopotamian cities, notably Uruk and Babylon. In fact, one might even suspect that they actually, like many later colonisers, had 'invented traditions' as part of their ideological programme."[270] A consideration of the earlier role of Adapa and the apkallū in Mesopotamian ritual and tradition supports this conclusion, but inverts its application: it was not the colonizers who were responsible, but the natives themselves. Comparison with earlier Mesopotamian sources shows that the Seleucid memory of the apkallū incorporates a large amount of earlier materials

[267] Beaulieu has written two fundamental studies on the religious and political context of Seleucid Uruk: see ASJ 14 and Fs. Hallo.

[268] "...zwar die umfänglichste, der jemals in Babylonien existiert hat." Heinrich 1982:328.

[269] "Die Grundkonzeption ist bei den Bauten des Nikarchos und denen des Kephalon aus gleichem Geist geschaffen." Heinrich, *loc. cit.*

[270] Lise Hannestad and Daniel Potts, "Temple Architecture in the Seleucid Kingdom" in P. Bilde et al., eds. *Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom*. Århus: Århus University Press, 1990:107

into an elaborate new structure, for which the imposing and unprecedented physical space of the Resh and its accompanying ziggurat may stand as a figure.

The motif of ascent to heaven and the figure of Adapa, which live through texts but exist and function beyond them in ritual, outlast both literary genres and political functions. They allow us to stand witness at the combination of old genres and the birth of new ones. One striking movement in this regard begins with the increasing veneration of the sage in the Neo- Assyrian period, as evinced in the genres of royal inscription, royal correspondence, and lists of texts and authors. At this point, a list of sages emerges within the genre of exorcistic incantation. By the Seleucid period, this list has entered into "historical" records as well. The sages now appear in genealogies at Uruk, their line of descent as important as a royal lineage used to be, and the scribes visually identify with them by using images of apkallū as personal identifying marks on their seals.

A second significant development, relevant to the history of genres, is the rise of pseudepigraphy. There are forms resembling pseudepigraphy that go back to early cuneiform literature: fictional first-person narratives with some form of historiographical *Tendenz* are at least as old as the Old Babylonian Sargon narratives and letters.[271] Combination of these two with the epistolary and king list form, as found in the Weidner Chronicle mentioning Adapa, is new, as are the two incantations in the form of letters from Adapa. The Neo-Assyrian period is a time of genre recombinance, in which Adapa figures, addressing a king or

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[271] For which see the texts edited by Goodnick Westenholtz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*: "I, Sargon" (34-5), the Sargon letters edited there in chapter five, esp. p. 142, and the beginning of "Naram-Sin and the Barbarian Hordes". The interesting study of Tremper Longman on *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1991) is to be used with caution; see the review by Farber JNES 56:228-30. An intelligent recent study is Greenstein's "Autobiographies in Ancient Western Asia" in CANE IV.

figure of the past in three pseudepigraphic letters. The possibility of intercepting direct discourse from Adapa in the form of a supposedly recovered ancient literary text, imitating the veridical effect of another literary genre, should be seen in connection with the ritual operation of rendering Adapa and other mythic figures present. It is when incantations, including ones preserved in working collections of medical recipes (such as STT 176+), play on "textual" literary features that we can begin to recognize a ritual aspect to writing itself: the adoption of the first person pronoun, the mention of the personal name, are themselves conventions of self-predication whose full powers are only unleashed in myth and ritual.

A final important point of genre should be introduced here. The "Underworld Vision of An Assyrian Crown Prince" (ed. Livingstone SAA III 32) is the first first-person visionary account of a journey to hell. It contains a pattern of deictic pronouns in response to the curious visions of the underworld.[272] A body lying before the baffled visionary is described in patterns reminiscent of the discourse of the interpreting angel in the visions of Zechariah and later apocalyptic tours of hell, "This [corpse] which (lies) buried in the underworld, is that of the proud shepherd..." (r. 22) and "He is your father, the eminent one..." (r. 26). The visionary is returned to the world above bearing a message of judgment. The list of monsters he sees there is related to other generic forms like scribal lists of gods and demons. The Underworld Vision thus combines features of the scholarly commentary, the list, and the royal vision to produce a first-person account of an otherworldly journey.

Over time, the theme of ascent to heaven moves from a generic association with myth to increasingly personal forms. A crucial point in the

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[272] Compare the analogous pattern discerned by Himmelfarb in her *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (1983:41-67).

transformation is represented by Maqlû. It contains an arsenal of techniques for combating cosmic evil, representing a wide range of materials known from such texts as Udug Hul, the mannam lušpur-formula, etc. What is striking about Maqlû is the way that a variety of originally separate themes, including identification with divine beings, cosmic travel and invocation of the heavenly court are worked together into a coherent, highly structured complex. The result is a unique and new whole, involving the journey of the victim himself out of this world as a divine messenger, empowered to pronounce divine judgment against the witch.

This brings us to the close association, both in the morphology of the rituals and the history of traditions, between divination and exorcism. The picture that emerges from these texts is of a shared group of overlapping motifs involving (1) the travel across or breaching of cosmic boundaries for the purpose of (2) gaining access to cosmic authority. Authority in this picture is not separable from knowledge but is involved in its creation by the pronunciation of authoritative utterances. Instances of authoritative utterances can include oracular decisions, magic spells, and legal verdicts. There are two different practical contexts for this attempt to access cosmic authority: the goal of the diviner is to produce informational discourse, while the goal of the exorcist could be said to be to produce a performance, deictically inserting himself into a mythic situation, adopting a mythic persona, and attempting to affect its outcome.

Chapter 3
Torah and Apocalypse

Chapter three is the first of three comparative essays that examine the relationship between ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic Jewish textual genres with respect to contact with heaven and the mediation of revealed knowledge. The goal is to trace the minute workings of fundamental but sometimes almost invisible processes that structured both ancient Israelite *and* apocalyptic texts and ritual practices. This chapter's interest is what might be called the textual politics of heavenly revelation. The chapter attempts to provide a model for an extremely complex process of interaction between texts and history, and I do not believe that its arguments have been made before. Therefore, I will now lay out the theoretical stance of the chapter and then outline its arguments before proceeding.

The fundamental problem with revelation in the Bible is its mediation: how revelation goes from being *law* in *heaven* to being *action* on *earth*. Biblical revelation is beset by a pair of basic paradoxes, one having to do with genre and one having to do with location. First, the Biblical account of revelation consists of a narrative about the giving of laws that must be *told* to their recipients, and whose performance must be shown to be enacted in narrative. The paradox here is that a genre of law is only transmitted through a genre of narrative, which legitimates the law by embedding it in history but also undermines it by making it susceptible to contingency: the vagaries of retelling and reenactment. To take effect, laws must be followed exactly, their text repeated by being enacted in life; but since this enactment is contained in discourse, the laws are *never* repeated exactly: the story that transmits law promotes law's authority and ensures its continued existence only by making it

vulnerable to transformation.

There is an analogous problem with the physical location of revelation. Unlike ordinary human discourse, divine law in the Torah is depicted as originally residing with God. It has no inherent power to compel assent (it relies on promises and threats and is followed by the Deuteronomic history of endlessly reiterated disobediences) but gains distinctive authority because of its divine author and original heavenly location with him. The revealed law is mediated to Israel by being brought down from heaven and repeated verbally by Moses at Sinai.[1] Since it reveals a national destiny in a national territory, it is a process which helps constitute Israel as a people and as a land—though its mediation by Moses originally occurs outside that land. But this process of relocation from heaven to earth and from divine to human discourse also necessarily raises the problem of diluting the distinctiveness and thereby the authority of revelation as it goes from heavenly and divine to earthly and human. This problem is dealt with by reenacting the handing down of revelation, in the land of Israel itself.

The arguments of the chapter are as follows: if apocalyptic is characterized by a diffusion of Torah's authority via multiplying the transmissions of revelation,[2] then the seeds of apocalyptic exist in the Torah itself and are even essential to it. The transition from command to fulfillment, figured by crossing the physical border of the Jordan into the land of Israel, is simultaneously a crossing from Torah into the rest of the Bible, but this crossing is figured not as a crossing into something entirely new but rather as a series of reenactments. The giving of revelation is connected on the one hand to the formation of a nation and on the other hand to claims to land, so that the

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[1] An issue which has not been unimportant in the history of theology.
[2] For this conceptualization of apocalyptic, see the introduction.

erection of stelae at Sinai, Gilgal and Gerezim each time represents a new

inscription of heavenly revelation on earth and a new foundation of Israel. Each

new inscription extends the authority of Torah and advances the development

of Israel but also runs the risk of diluting or distorting it, and, as comparison of

the variant literary editions of Joshua shows, the texts' editors were reacting to

this problem: each retelling of the act of inscribing heavenly revelation solves

the problem differently. This sets the stage for seeing apocalypses as further

extensions of this process of reinscription, founding a different kind of nation

with a claim to an otherworldly territory.

1. The Problem of Comparing the Bible With Apocalypses

Attempts to relate the Jewish apocalyptic ascent to heaven to the larger

history of Israelite religion have tended to focus on mythological material and

stress one of two aspects of it. They tend to either emphasize the archaic nature

of the myths, native but long-dormant[3], or the foreign element: the result of

external cultural influence.[4] Both sorts of account have merit, and neither claims

to be exclusive or complete, but in their focus on remote influence—whether in

time or space— and their very mode of argument they necessarily emphasize

the break that apocalyptic literature makes with its Biblical context. But it is

possible to provide a different account of the relationship between apocalypse

and Bible, one that emphasizes the reworking and transmission of themes

already in the Torah within the heavenly ascents themselves. While such an

account will be no more exclusive or complete than the other two, it will draw

our attention to certain *common* religious issues and textual phenomena that

helped generate the both the Bible and the genre apocalypse.

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[3] Thus Cross 1973.
[4] Thus VanderKam 1984, Kvanvig 1988.

There is also the historical question of causation concerning the rise of ascents to heaven in the Hellenistic period. Why a flight away from the world to God or gods, and why after Alexander's conquest of the Mediterranean? One prominent way to connect the change in history to the change in literature has been to argue that one caused the other—an assumption known in logic as *post hoc, ergo propter hoc.* This argument finds that apocalyptic follows necessarily from the Hellenistic situation. In the words of J.Z. Smith, "If the Temple had not been destroyed, it would have had to be neglected."[5] Smith's argument is well-known and compelling: Mediterranean religions such as ancient Judaism had been based on national boundaries and native kingship. Removal of the people from their land or the king from his throne occasioned disaster, the yanking out of a cosmic pivot around which the world revolved. After Alexander finally destroyed the institutions of native kingship, the notion of a Davidic king in the land of Israel became the subject of intense nostalgic yearning. The return of a native, non-Davidic kingship under the Hasmoneans may have sated this nostalgia in some, but it also stimulated messianic and apocalyptic yearnings in others, as we know from the anti-Hasmonean *Psalms of Solomon.*[6] Then came the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E., and the very possibility of a centered universe in the here-and-now was destroyed. This argument would then take one solution to this problem to be the sacralization of exile as embodied in the Mishnah, and another to be the apocalyptic ascent to heaven, a journey out of this world to a remote cosmic center.

Yet again, there is something lacking in such a treatment. Of course, religions outside the Mediterranean have heroes and sages who find themselves able to travel to other worlds under conditions other than

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[5] See the Afterword to "Earth and Gods," in Smith 1978:128.
[6] See the analysis in Collins 1995:49-51.

colonialism.[7] But closer to home, the difficulty is that the argument assumes that historical and social circumstances completely determine religious development: the fundamental real-life base of history is merely reflected in the secondary, cultural superstructure of religion. This argument may be attributing an unjustified flatness and simplicity to the history of religion itself. One could also ask: to what extent does the religious imagination have an autonomous history, one that interacts with and mutually influences social history?[8] Additionally, as will be shown below, Smith's argument does not fully recognize what is happening in the Bible itself. Thus the following chapter, and the rest of the dissertation, attempts to attack the issue of the relation between history and religion more precisely by looking at specific places where Hellenistic Jews imagined and participated in their own history through religion.

The distance of the apocalyptic ascent to heaven from its Biblical antecedents is emphasized by John Collins in his account of heavenly ascent in pre-Christian Judaism, claiming that "[t]he editors of the Hebrew Bible were not sympathetic to accounts of ascent to heaven." (1995:139) Collins states that this opposition may have been for "ideological reasons." While it was not Collins' purpose to detail this ideology, the question of its existence and nature is important. The wide distribution of myths of ascent to heaven in Mesopotamia[9] suggests that similar myths may well have been culturally available to the writers and editors of the Hebrew Bible. Do Biblical texts show awareness of such myths by polemicizing against them? If so, how do they provide a competing account of access to the divine? To suggest how ascent to heaven

[7] Otherworldly journeys in various world civilizations are insightfully surveyed in Coulianu 1991.
[8] A similar argument is made by Moshe Idel in "Models in Kabbalah and Hasidism" (part I of Idel 1995).
[9] As chapter two demonstrates, myths of ascent to heaven were prominent in Mesopotamia from at least the Old Babylonian period through the Seleucid era.

might have fit into a Biblical ideology, it will be useful to pause with the first text

Collins quotes, a Deuteronomic account of ascent to heaven. In Deuteronomy

30:11-14, Moses admonishes:

"Surely, this Instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for
you, nor is it beyond reach. It is not in the heavens, that you should say, 'Who
among us can go up to the heavens and get it for us and impart it to us, that we
may observe it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say 'Who among
us can cross to the other side of the sea and get it for us and impart it to us, that
we may observe it?' No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your
heart, to observe it.'"

One should first note the practical role the admonition plays in

Deuteronomy. It appears after a long and complex speech on the part of Moses,

which runs for 22 chapters. Moses' long speech is designated as the "covenant

of Moab" after it ends, in Deuteronomy 28:69, and constitutes the literary and

legal core of Deuteronomy. The passage from Deuteronomy 30, quoted above,

helps frame this speech. The passage is part of a series of claims, threats, and

promises that follow the covenant of Moab and whose purpose is to impel the

Israelites to observe its rules. Within this context, the above statement mentions

ascent to heaven and travel across the sea as acts of mediation, heroic or

impossible efforts to transmit a message.

But, given that Moses describes his teaching as physically present,

embodied not just in a text but in memory and practice on earth, exactly what

point is being made by the contrast with heavenly or oceanic revelation? Is it a

very general sort of rhetoric, emphasizing that, by contrast with these entirely

hypothetical, impossible attempts at mediation, the covenant of Moab is real? Or

does it contest an extant, opposing revelation that, during the editor's lifetime,

in fact did claim to be mediated by transportation from heaven or across the

sea? In this case the rhetoric would work very differently, claiming that Deuteronomy is superior not because it is the only available revelation but because it is older, already known, embedded in practice, "in your mouth and in your heart." While the general role of the statement is clear, the issue of what it is responding to seems undecidable.

For us, the salient point is not whether or not the Deuteronomic editor who added this admonition knew of competing ascents to heaven. What is unarguable is that he *imagines* a competing claim to revelation, coming from a journey to another world. In other words, while we do not have decisive evidence that it was filled, the above text shows the Deuteronomic editor articulating the *pattern* of ascent to heaven for the purpose of receiving a revelation. Thus, while Collins is surely correct that there are no descriptions of a "round-trip" ascent to heaven in the Hebrew Bible, there may be subtler ways that Torah imagines apocalypse, ways that the religion of Moses may not be quite as far from the religion of Enoch as it appears.

2. The Torah's Heavenly Mediator

One of the defining literary features of apocalypses is the mediation of revelation at the hands of an angelic figure. This provokes a line of investigation for the Torah itself: how would Moses himself fit into such a typology? At the end of Deuteronomy, Moses is distinguished as the only prophet "whom the Lord singled out, face to face" (34:10b). Moses' uniqueness and authority as a mediator of revelation is expressed by the (literal as well as figurative) contact between his face and that of God. But how could this contact occur, and if it did, how could the Israelites know about it? In the Hebrew Bible, denial of God's corporeality and bans on his depiction coexist uneasily with a God who

appears:[10] In Exodus 33, Moses is expressly *denied* a vision of God's face but

allowed to see His back, a disturbing affirmation that there was indeed a body to

see and an intimation that even the strongest denials of God's body must

somehow be articulated physically. Directly after this vision, Moses' own face

undergoes a transformation. He is coming down from Mount Sinai, where he

has spent forty days and nights reinscribing the Ten Commandments. During

this time he has not eaten or drunk. Thus Exodus 34:29:

וַיְהִי לְחֵת הָעֵדֻת בְּיַד-מֹשֶׁה בְּרִדְתּוֹ מִן-הָהָר וּמֹשֶׁה לֹא-יָדַע כִּי קָרַן עוֹר פָּנָיו בְּדַבְּרוֹ אִתּוֹ:

"…And as Moses came down from the mountain bearing the two tablets of the
Pact, Moses was not aware that the skin of his face *radiated (horns?)*, since he
had spoken with Him."

Moses' *appearance* terrifies the Israelites, who shrink away when he

comes down the mountain, until he calls out and reassures them with his *voice*.

But it has never been clear exactly what the Israelites saw. Without raising the

full range of lexicographic issues,[11] the problem in interpreting the text is in

separating the verb qāran, which appears three times in this passage describing

the skin of Moses' face, from either the sense of radiating light or the sense of

sprouting horns, which is the unambiguous meaning of the verb the one other

place it appears in the Bible.[12]

It is certain that something divine has changed the way Moses looks, but

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[10] Elliot Wolfson provides a rich and nuanced discussion of the problem of visualizing God in the Hebrew Bible and Judaism in "Israel: The One Who Sees God," chapter one of Wolfson 1994b.
[11] The most up-to-date discussion, with bibliography, is that of Dozeman 1999, which integrates treatment of the lexical problem with the larger question of the function of Moses' transformation within the Torah.
[12] Psalm 69:32, where the form appears in the Hiphil; however one construes the morphological difference, the two verbal instances should not be seen in isolation from each other. William Propp (1987) compares, for the sprouting of horns, Psalm 132:17, "There I will make a horn sprout for David, I have prepared a lamp for my anointed one."

we are faced with a problem of visualizing it: no matter whether we take it as metaphor or as literal description, something seems to be left over. The difficulty is well expressed by William Propp: "...it is hard to see any connection between 'horn' and 'light,' though we should note that Sumerian s i can, in fact, denote either a horn or radiance. However, no Semitic language makes such an association."[13] By this Propp presumably means that there are no words in Semitic lexica that contain both of those senses. But it is an entirely separate question whether ancient *speakers* of Semitic languages made such a connection, and one worth investigating.

There is a good deal of evidence on this question from Mesopotamia. Babylonian astronomy equated the celestial bodies with gods, and the literal nature of this equation is clear in the way celestial observation of omens directly affected government policy. The visualization of divine radiance was a daily activity for the astronomer, who was faced with a problem of both physical and cosmic interpretation when he saw the moon eclipse the sun, throwing the entire sky into darkness. Thus, in The Babylonian Astronomical Series Enūma Anu Enlil, the astronomer is advised:

šumma ūmu s i-šu imqut-ma Sin adir mītūti ibaššū ina barārīti Sin atalā išakkan-ma s i=qarnu s i=šarūru...[14]

"If the sun's horn (s i) fades and the moon is dark, there will be deaths. (*explanation:*) in the evening watch, the moon is having an eclipse (and in this context,) s i means 'horn', s i means 'shine'..."

The text contains a commentary which tells the reader how to think about

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[13] Propp 1987, which provides a thorough treatment of the translations and history of interpretation of the passage; the quote is from 381.

[14] Virolleaud, ACh Adad 33:21. I thank Wayne Horowitz for discussing the text with me.

what he is seeing and reading. It explains that what he sees is an eclipse and that the word "si means 'horn,'[15] si means 'shining;'" after reading the commentary, the person who sees the thin shining rim of the sun should think of it as both a horn and as light. Another commentary adds:

si=qarnu, si=šuḫarruru, si=arāmu, si=ṣētu, si=šarūru, si=nūru[16]

"si means 'horn,' si means 'to daze,' si means 'to mask,' si means 'shining,' si means 'radiance,' si means 'light.' "

Here the range of associations is extended to both the affective—the word translated "be dazed" can also mean "be numb with terror"—and the physical: light can mask, cover over and block things like a fog.[17] This phenomenon is not just found in the sky. The range of associations is embodied in the Mesopotamian mythological object called the melammu, a blinding mask of light.[18] The melammu is the property of gods and monsters, as well as the sun, and one is conferred by the gods on the king at his coronation. This mask of light is thus cosmic, physical and political at once, a somatic mark of divine rulership, and it is external to the body, even alienable, as the theft of Mummu's melammu in Enuma Elish (I 68) shows.

The pattern of features provides us with a model for understanding what happened to Moses' face: it is not the face itself but its surface, the skin, which radiated. Moses' physical proximity to the source of revelation added a kind of layer to his appearance, a physical mark of inhumanity, and it is possible that

[15] Note that the Akkadian here is qarnu, cognate with Hebrew qeren.

[16] Babylonian Astronomical Commentary CT 26 43 viii 5-10, cited after CAD s.v. šarūru, lexical section, which contains an abundance of further examples of the association detailed here.

[17] The sheer *physicality* of light in Mesopotamian literature is beautifully illustrated by the description of the sun's radiance in the Great Shamash Hymn: "Shamash, you are binding like a cord, you are choking like a mist;Your broad canopy is overreaching the lands." (BWL 128:39-40).

[18] On which see Oppenheim 1943 and Cassin 1968.

the Israelites shrank away from Moses simply because they did not recognize him behind his divine persona. The Exodus passage introduces the religious problem of how divine radiance might be visualized and incorporated into the body.[19] It also makes a political point: Moses' radiance is unique, a historical singularity connected to his unique and exclusive contact with God and transmission of divine revelation, embodied in the Torah and reinforcing its authority.

This observation is the first step in building a picture of the Torah as *parallel* with the apocalypses in the account that it gives of its origins and mediator: the Torah is transmitted to Israel by Moses, a sage who ascends like Enoch to behold God (Exodus 24), writes down a revelation (Exodus 34:27-8) as does Enoch, and becomes angel-like, imbued with a terrifying supernatural light. Here he is also analogous to the transfigured visionaries of the apocalypses such as Levi and Enoch.[20]

Morton Smith added a crucial third point of view, which is generic: the speeches of God and Moses in the Torah must be considered the first cases of Jewish Pseudepigraphy.[21] The literary phenomenon of composition via the citation and shifting of the grammatical person of an authoritative text is an important structural feature within the Hebrew Bible which we will explore in Deuteronomy and Joshua. This mode of composition was already recognized by Yadin as "one of the principal characteristics of certain pseudepigraphical

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[19] A question posed and resolved in a much more corporeal way at Qumran, as Dimant 1998 has demonstrated and as will be shown in chapter five.

[20] The significance of this role of this transfiguration in Hellenistic religious practice was analyzed in a provocative but speculative article by Morray-Jones 1992, with substantially improved arguments and evidence in Morray-Jones 1998.

[21] For this argument see Morton Smith 1971; for its consequences see the treatment by Levinson 1997:6.

works...."[22] This points toward a view of how certain essential literary and religious processes generative of Torah may also have generated much of apocalyptic literature.[23]

3. Joshua as a Textual Citation and a Ritual Enactment of Deuteronomy

It will be useful to first place the events commanded in Deuteronomy and narrated in Joshua in the context of the Deuteronomic History of which they form a key part.[24] The book of Joshua narrates the foundation of the land of Israel through ritual and conquest. What is striking about Joshua is that it is always more than the narrative of occurrences—it also always narrates a complicated *act* of obedience. The task of the book is to narrate the ritual performance of commandments made in the book of Deuteronomy. But as a narrative, it drastically complicates its status as a description of a ritual performance.[25] Since Joshua is a story made of problems and contingencies, the narrative events in Joshua are necessarily in tension with the law that has been given

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[22] Yadin 1983 I:71, and cf. the discussion in chapter five of the "Self-Glorification Hymn"; for contemporary bibliography and a useful discussion of the redactional techniques mentioned by Yadin see White Crawford 1998.

[23] This connection is not sufficiently explained by historical influence. As chapter two showed, the myth of a sage who is the mediator of authoritative texts ascending to heaven and the phenomenon of diviners standing before the thrones of gods to mediate divine legal decisions by writing is already well in place in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian period. While the relation between Torah and apocalypse cannot be separated from the issue of influence—the apocalypticists used Torah as a model—neither of these can be separated from their Near Eastern context, in which Mesopotamian divination texts are certainly older than Torah or apocalypse and demonstrably influenced the latter, as has been demonstrated by scholars such as Zimmern, Müller, VanderKam, and Kvanvig.

[24] It should be emphasized that the following is not a standard Biblical textual commentary. It does not attempt to resolve all of the potential source- and text-critical issues. It is based instead on a tightly limited literary and ritual analysis of the text as it would have been available in the first century B.C.E.. The major questions which this text raises will then be used to introduce the textual witnesses of the Septuagint and Qumran, again only with regard to certain literary and ritual questions. It is hoped thereby to shift the emphasis from excavation and reconstruction to reading, while still analyzing a historically contextualized document in the light of the available empirical evidence for its historical development.

[25] For the distinction between written, textual performatives and actual performances, including events such as speech acts, see the introduction.

before it. The reader waits to see how or if the law is fulfilled.

The commands of Deuteronomy and their fulfillment in Joshua are part of a history of the rise and fall of the Israelite state that stretches from Deuteronomy through Kings. This history is unified by the themes of national loyalty to God's law and disloyalty to God's law, punishment by God and repentance before God, and the problem of kingship: being ruled by a man rather than by God. This history shows unity in its language and beliefs, but because it speaks from more than one point of view in time,[26] it is apparent that the Deuteronomic history as we have it is the product of a *tradition* rather than an author.[27]

The Deuteronomic tradition gives a kind of definition of Israel's territory and rituals by virtue of the events that happen in it. From a quantitative point of view, the Deuteronomic history narrates both the *expansion* and the *contraction* of sacred space. Joshua and the Judges move through the land fighting famous battles and making monuments and altars. Their story makes a map of important places. After narrating the culmination of this place-making, the construction of the Jerusalem temple, the book of Kings describes king Josiah's brutal cultic reforms in which he attempted to destroy all sanctuaries outside of

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[26] For example, the Deuteronomic history speaks from the point of view of Josiah's reform and attempts to carry forth his political agenda, but also describes his death and contains reflections on the exile. By stating these basic points in the theory of the Deuteronomic History I wish to register my acceptance of the basic hypothesis without becoming caught up in the controversies between the different versions of this theory.

[27] The thesis of the editorial unity of this material was cast in its classic form by Martin Noth and developed in greatest depth by Moshe Weinfeld. For up-to-date bibliography see Levinson 1997. In more recent years, literary studies such as those of Robert Polzin (1980, 1989) have begun to see the narrative as bound together by a web of tropes and analogies that reflect on each other: commandments given in Deuteronomy may be fulfilled in Joshua, while events further on in Samuel will in turn make us question statements in Deuteronomy. While I concur with Polzin in reading the late Deuteronomistic work as it stands, I am interested in reading *all versions of it* as they stand, not just the one presented in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. I view his polemics against textual criticism as merely replacing one sort of negligence with another. As this chapter will show, text-critical issues in the Deuteronomistic work point to crucial literary and religious problems that faced the ancient editors and are empirical evidence of ancient processes of reading.

Jerusalem. The history begins with the creation of the sacred terrain of Israel and the multiplication of commemorative topoi during the early Israelite period and ends with its centralization, involving the reduction of those topoi, under the monarchy.

Joshua 3-5 narrates the Israelites' crossing of the Jordan, construction of their first altar, and performance of their first sacrifice in the land of Israel. These acts are central to both the story and the law because the laws of Deuteronomy are framed as an anticipation of the story: the laws are commanded either, "so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you."(Deuteronomy 4:1) or they are "to be observed in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy..." (6:1)[28] The forms are worthy of note: the first one is in order that the Israelites *can* enter the land, the other is *to do once they enter the land;* both appear frequently. These reminders set up a tension wherein entry into the land is both dependent on and fulfilled by the performance of the Law.[29] The crossing is then the act that makes all other legal acts possible once in Israel.

Since the entry into the land activates Israelite law, which was agreed to in a covenant ceremony by all Israel, it is represented as being done by all Israel. The entry is a collective action, demonstrating Israel's obedience to the command of God, but it is actually commanded hierarchically, transmitted by Moses to Joshua to the officials and then to the people. The commandments come in a series of intricately framed reported speeches. And the actions have immediate ritual consequences which we learn about through reported

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[28]Another example, "..See, I have imparted to you laws and rules...for you to abide by in the land that you are to enter and occupy." (Deuteronomy 4:5)
[29]Compare the following statement with 6:1, cited above: "You shall faithfully observe all the Instruction that I enjoin upon you today, that you may thrive and increase and be able to possess the land that the Lord promised on oath to your fathers"(8:1)

speeches, sometimes from the participants, sometimes from the narrator.

To go from being wanderers to being Israelites, the children of Israel cross a natural barrier, the Jordan river, which is also a territorial boundary and, it will emerge, a cosmic boundary. As the Israelites cross it, the Jordan river stops, piling up into a tower of water and thus symmetrically reflecting the miracle of the Exodus, putting it on a formally equal par. The event thus assumes its place in the litany of events constituting the extended myth of Israel's creation. The Exodus, Wandering, Crossing, and Conquest establish the people of Israel in a central and uniquely suitable place in the universe, one which their activities helped to found. The establishment of the monarchy and Temple in Jerusalem both advance and reiterate these founding events, actually repeating some of their rituals and providing a geographic and political lynchpin for the whole structure.

In this sequence, the rituals prescribed in Deuteronomy 27 act as a fulcrum since they instruct the Israelites how to enter and consecrate the land of Israel. Yet they present a disturbingly complex and overworked surface. As Tigay notes:

"The multiplicity of ceremonies that Deuteronomy 27 prescribes for mounts Ebal and Gerezim may be due to the momentous nature of the event these ceremonies mark: Israel's long-awaited arrival in the promised land. In its importance, this event is comparable to the Exodus, which is also accompanied and commemorated by ceremonies that are described with seemingly redundant and overlapping details (Exodus. 12-13). It seems that momentous events were felt to require various ceremonies to express their significance, that there were different traditions about what was required, that these variations required editorial skill to harmonize them, and that continuing reflection in the light of later experience attracted revisions of earlier writings about them."[30]

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[30] Tigay 1996:488-89. Compare the similar nation-building border-crossings in I Sam 6 and II Sam 6; for an examination of the ritual aspects of the latter, with broader consequences, see McCarter 1983.

Yet there is a single constitutive act around which the text and its problems will revolve. The specific law to be fulfilled on entry into the land is given in Deuteronomy 27; the fulfillment is narrated in Joshua 3-5. The bond between this command and its performance, which stretches between Deuteronomy and Joshua, the Torah and the Prophets, serves metaphorically as a bridge uniting two texts. The crossing between Wilderness and Israel is a crossing from Torah into the rest of the Bible and also stands as a figure for that larger structuring tension in the Tanakh between law and obedience.

Because of its nature as a constitutive ritual commandment, the framing devices of Deuteronomy 27 deserve special attention. The commandment is framed thus (27:1a):

ויצו משה וזקני ישראל יאת־העם לאמר

Moses *and the elders of Israel* charged the people, saying:

To understand the importance and complexity of this phrase, formally unique within Deuteronomy, a basic fact must be emphasized: the heart of Deuteronomy is a long speech by Moses, the "covenant of Moab," which has at this point run continuously for 22 chapters.[31] Deuteronomy 27 now interrupts

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[31] On reported speech in the Tanakh, see the important principle articulated by Alter, "Discourse, Direct and Indirect" in ABD: "The rule of thumb is that whenever a character repeats in dialogue what either the narrator or another character has said, small but significant changes are introduced—in the suppression or alteration of a detail, in a choice of terms, in the order of items—that tells us something about the position and attitude of the speaker or the audience he or she is addressing."(II.212)

this massive speech which Moses began back in Deuteronomy 5.[32] For the first time since Moses began speaking, in Deuteronomy 5, the voice of the speaker switches from the first to the anonymous third person and the narrator announces that "Moses *and the elders of Israel* charged the people, saying..." It also must be noted here that from the point of view of authority, this command is unlike every other commandment in Deuteronomy because it is not transmitted by Moses alone but by Moses and the elders of Israel.

[1b-3a] Observe all the Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day. As soon as you have crossed the Jordan in to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones. Coat them with plaster and inscribe upon them all the words of this Teaching when you cross, so that when you enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD the god of your ancestors commanded you...

Then the text seems to reiterate, with a significant addition—thus, verse 4:

"then upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, *on Mount Ebal,* and coat them with plaster."

The pervasiveness of reworking is clear. But beneath this worried surface, this statement also offers an unusually simple textual problem which will emerge in our analysis as an unusually complex ritual problem based on a problem of cosmic geography. The Samaritan version of Deuteronomy reads here not *Ebal* but *Gerezim.* This may seem predictable, considering the

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[32] A speech which also anticipates (or, depending on one's presuppositions, partly duplicates) the very commandment that interrupts it: see Deuteronomy 11:29-30, "When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and possess, you shall pronounce the blessing at Mount Gerezim and the curse at Mount Ebal.—Both are on the other side of the Jordan, beyond the west road that is in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the Arabah—near Gilgal, by the terebinths of Moreh." Note there are several different Gilgals other than this one mentioned in the Bible. These are: east of Jericho in Joshua 4:19,20 etc.; on the border of Judah and Benjamin in Joshua 15:7; in northern Israel south of Shechem and southwest of Shilo in 2 Kings 2:1, 4:38; and an obscure district mentioned in Joshua 12:23.

Samaritan theological position that Mount Gerezim, in their territory, rather than Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, was the true chosen place of God prescribed in the Torah (Samaritan version of Deuteronomy 12:5).[33] Yet the variant is not tendentious but probably original. This is suggested by the Old Latin, which reads here *Garzin*. Since it is difficult to imagine that the Samaritans in Israel influenced this translation, originally done into Latin by Christians in Africa, using old and independent versions of the Septuagint, it appears likely that the Samaritans were actually correct here, and that it was the prestige of the Masoretic Text that caused the other versions' tradents to correct to "Ebal."

There you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them; you must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it burnt offerings to the LORD your God and you shall offer sacrifices of well-being and you shall eat there and rejoice before the LORD your God, and on those stones you shall inscribe every word of this Teaching most distinctly." (Deuteronomy 27:5-8)

In addition to being given by more than one person, the command is plural in another way as well because it seems to enjoin the building of a monument at least twice; only the second time (v. 4ff) is the location on Mt. Ebal specified. The Rabbis already found a problem here, because it appears that Joshua did not cross the Jordan anywhere near Mount Ebal. Gilgal, the point of crossing in Joshua, is thirty miles from Ebal and Gerezim and over 4,000 feet downhill from Ebal and Gerezim.

That the Israelites traveled from Shittim, East of the Jordan, to Gilgal, then

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[33] Other relevant Samaritan beliefs include that Gerezim is the center of the universe, which existed before creation (Marqeh 68a), that it alone escaped the Flood, and that it alone will survive Doomsday (see Gaster 1962). It will be recalled that the Samaritans reject the Prophets and Writings and have their own version of the Torah which is an old and independent text but one that has been heavily re-worked—for example, adding the command to sacrifice at Gerezim into the ten commandments. On the textual independence and value of the Samaritan Torah see the comments of Tov 1992.

30 miles north and 4,000 feet uphill in a single day has long been recognized as a singular claim.[34] In the Babylonian Talmud the *stam* (the anonymous editorial voice) comments at *Sotah* 36a:

"Come and see how many miracles were performed on that day. Israel crossed the Jordan, came to mount Gerezim and Mount Ebal, (a distance of) more than 60 *mil*, no creature was able to withstand them..."

The contradiction is played out more sharply in the Jerusalem Talmud:

"This refers to Mount Gerezim and Mount Ebal in Samaria," the words of R. Judah.
R. Eliezer says, "This does not refer to Mount Gerezim and Mount Ebal in Samaria,"
...In the view of R. Judah, they traversed a hundred and twenty *mil* on that day. In the opinion of R. Eliezer they did not move from where they were." (7.3)

In fact the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds offer us mutually contradictory explanations here: the Babylonian Talmud (33b) explains that the Gilgal of the crossing was *not our Gilgal* but a northern Gilgal near Shechem;[35] the Jerusalem Talmud (7:3) depicts R. Eliezer as saying that it was *not our Ebal and Gerezim*, but two mounds of dirt that the Israelites piled up and designated Ebal and Gerezim. Of the two, the alacrity of the second in jumping to such an extreme solution suggests an unusually urgent exegetical problem. The Jerusalem Talmud seems to want to deny that such an important event was actually performed in the north, and it wants so much to deny it that it is willing to imagine that the Israelites made *replicas* of Ebal and Gerezim, ritual substitutes.

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[34] This problem generated a spectrum of responses in the history of exegesis. In keeping with our attempt to situate these texts within a single cluster of traditions, the analysis will limit itself to two paradigmatic Jewish responses.
[35] There is in fact another site with the name Gilgal: the modern Jiljiie; however, it is dubious that this was *our* Gilgal.

The urgency of this denial is explained by the location of the Jerusalem Talmud's redactors in the land of Israel, which is shared with those very Samaritans who believe that mount Gerezim is the center of the universe. That the Rabbis paid close attention to this belief in the centrality of Gerezim is clear. Indeed, Gerezim is claimed to be the single taxonomic issue that divides Samaritan from Jew in the post-Talmudic tractate *Kuttim* ("On the Samaritans"), which asks: "At what point can the Samaritans be accepted into Judaism? When they reject their belief in Mount Gerezim." (*Kut.*, end) We have to do here with a conflict over sacred space that seems to start well before the finalization of the Masoretic Text and extends until after the completion of the Talmud, in fact until today.

Let us move from geography back to narrative and complete our look at the discourse of the commandment. Moses' and the Elders' command about the future crossing of the Jordan is itself then interrupted by a command about the present, this one in the imperative voice of Moses *and the Levites*, a second group assuming the mantle of authority by commanding the people. Thus Deuteronomy 27:9-10:

"Moses and the levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: Silence! Hear, O Israel! Today you have become the people of the LORD your God: Heed the LORD your God and observe His commandments and His laws, which I enjoin upon you this day!"

Now, this command cannot come to tell us that Israel has just become God's people, an event described as happening 40 years prior (Exodus 6:6-7; 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 4:20). Yet this is exactly what the command appears to be doing. In the text as it stands, this commandment contests the authority of Moses

by calling all the previous performances of the commandment into question.[35] The order is now, for the first time, not transmitted by Moses alone, but by a composite authority. If the speakers have become multiple, the commandments to become God's people have too, and it is now entirely unclear which time, if any, the commandment really took effect.

In the following verses, Moses resumes speaking, instructing the people of Israel as to where they will stand for the blessings and curses on the mountains. Moses then speaks to the Levites, commanding them with the specific curses they are to pronounce after the Jordan Crossing. Moses is back in command as the sole transmitter of the divine Law, with the Levites now clearly one step down the chain of transmission. If the authority behind the covenant is becoming less clear, the force backing it up is reasserted.

4. Descent from Heaven and Claims to the Land

But what sort of ritual is being commanded? It is clear from Deuteronomy 27, despite the reworkings and redundancies, that the Israelites are to cross, pile stones plaster them, write the Torah, and finally pronounce blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerezim. They are given each of these commands twice in Deuteronomy 27, except for the last which is given once in chapter 27 and once in chapter 11:30. It is clear that this is intended as one ritual, to be performed at one time. Clearly, the actions have the shape of a covenant, where the inscription of the Teaching serves as the text and the blessings and curses as the sanctions. But another ritual form is being evoked here simultaneously, and one crucial for the understanding of the overall set of events.

As Cooper and Goldstein (1993) have recently shown, Deuteronomy 27

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[35] As Polzin (1980) has pointed out.

fits into a well-attested Biblical typology wherein the erection of stelae, the construction of an altar, sacrifice, and the direct invocation of God's name or word is connected to claims on the land. The first time this happens is in Genesis 12, when Abram arrives in Canaan at the oracle terebinth of the Shechem sanctuary. The Lord appears, promising him two gifts, offspring and land, and Abram responds by constructing an altar. On his way toward the Negev from Shechem, Abram encamps between Bethel and Ai, building another altar and invoking the name of the Lord."[37]

A second important instance of this form occurs at Exodus 24. In the preceding chapter, the Lord has promised to send an angel with the peculiar quality that "my Name is in him." The angel is to go before the Israelites, leading them into the land and destroying their enemies. To keep the angel's services the Israelites are charged with strict obedience, and commanded to destroy their enemies' sacred places as they encounter them. As Ahituv (1997) has shown, it is not coincidental that it is precisely this angel that is in the later *Hekhalot* literature exegetically connected with Metatron, the angel of the presence who was once the heavenly traveler Enoch. And it is crucial to note here that the angel corresponds to the ark, leading the Israelites into the land and ensuring their victory on condition of obedience. In the ritual of Exodus 24, Moses sets up an altar with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes and sacrifices are offered. He reads the record of the covenant, the people consent and are anointed with the blood of the covenant, whereupon Moses and the elders of Israel ascend Mount Sinai to heaven.[38] The first instruction Moses receives

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[37] Summary from Cooper and Goldstein 1993:289.

[38] Or rather, they ascend to see heaven collapsed with the top of a cosmic mountain. As will be shown in chapter four, the "pavement of sapphire, like the very sky for purity" under God's feet is to be understood in light of the Mesopotamian cosmological concept that the highest heaven was made of sapphire.

during the following forty days and nights is for the construction of the Ark, the same Ark corresponding to the angel that is to lead the Israelites across the Jordan to claim Israel.

We have seen that the command of Deuteronomy 27 is marked off as a special kind of speech—it is spoken through Moses, the elders, and the Levites, and interrupts the largest and most important speech of Deuteronomy, perhaps eroding its authority. Not only is the command communicated in a special way, but it is a ritual document of great density and evocative power, simultaneously reminding us of the giving of the commandments and Moses' ascent at Sinai and setting the pattern for the entry into the land that is to come. The ritual is also an act of colonization in the ancient Greek ritual sense of founding new territory. The typology, which has been detailed by Moshe Weinfeld (1993), involves a divine promise of land under conditional laws, priestly guidance, the setting up of stelae and altars, and even the inscription of a self-referential narrative.[39] In Joshua's act of colonizing, stones are set up to mark out a commemorative *place*, a topographic sign, but are then plastered over into a literal blank slate so that the first ritual action in the land of Israel can reenact the inscription of the Torah. The territorial claim is staked twice: once by placing a mound of rocks, and then by *writing the law*, by a reinscription of the Torah on those rocks, allowing the giving of the Torah to happen in Israel.[40]

This returns us to the buried controversy about where these events are supposed to take place, which comes down to where the giving of the Torah is to be reenacted. The Masoretic Text tells us Ebal, which is startling because

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[39]All of these features are evoked by the stela at Cyrene "which opens with the words of the god Apollo, saying that the laws which he commanded were given so that they would be fulfilled in the new settlement of Lybia." (1993:36-7) See "The Pattern of Israelite Settlement: A Comparison with the Pattern of Greek Colonization" in Weinfeld 1993.

[40] Note that this practice is consistent with Near Eastern political ritual from the Old Akkadian *kudurru* stones down through the dedicatory inscriptions of Kuntillet Ajrud and later stela-writing.

Ebal is of no importance at all in the Hebrew Bible except for exactly here. The altar is never mentioned again. The alternative, Mt. Gerezim, is an old sacred location that the redactors of the Jerusalem Talmud are so anxious to negate that they are willing to introduce the blatant fantasy of two *artificial* mountains. From the point of view of "which could have given rise to which,"[41] the answer is already clear: Mt. Gerezim is more plausible as the original. But this does not help us to understand how the text before us actually plays out the alternative it has chosen.

We must therefore move on to see how the commandments are renarrated in Joshua's voice and then enacted. The events narrated in Joshua 3-5 are complex in every way, from the point of view of text criticism to the point of view of narrative,[42] and it will suffice here to give a summary of the ritual acts performed. First: the people march to the bank of the Jordan. They camp for three days, waiting. After the waiting period, officials go through the camp and instruct the people:

"When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God being born by the levitical priests, you shall move forward. Follow it—but keep a distance of some two thousand cubits from it, never coming any closer to it—so that you may know by what route to march, since it is a road you have not traveled before." (Joshua 3:3b-4)

The ark is dangerous because of what it contains: a written copy of the covenant (I Kings 8:21=II Chronicles 6:11; Exodus 25:16,21), and the physical presence of God. In fact, there are a multitude of facets that the ark has, and it is difficult to fix a definite picture of it, precisely because of the various ways it is

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[41] Probably the most universally valid text-critical principle, on which see McCarter 1986.
[42] They are in fact interdependent points of view: the narrative framing, the exact designation of actors in the story, etc. is often only fully understand by reading the versions.

specified. These include God's indwelling presence; his throne, befitting a Northwest-Semitic Wargod; his battle palanquin; or the sign of his unique covenant with Israel.[43] From a phenomenological point of view the tension between these images itself constitutes the ark's role. We have already seen it analogized to the angel of God's name, and it may be best here to take a cue from Numbers 10:35-6, which explicitly identifies the entire ark with the Lord. Here, one of the most common textual variants is also one of the most significant. The Septuagint, surely reflecting an archaic reading, in the Jordan crossing narratives often simply reads here "the Lord" where the Masoretic Text reads "the ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God." In the Old Greek, Israel crossed not before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, but before the Lord himself.

Resuming their task of moving God and the Law, brought down from Sinai, to a fixed place in the holy land, the people purify themselves, and the priests take up the Ark, marching in front. Joshua instructs them that a miracle is about to occur, and what to do when it happens. As soon as the priests' feet touch the Jordan's waters, the river piles up "in a single heap (נד)" (thus recalling the language of Exodus 15:8) and the people cross over.

Now the Lord transmits an important new detail to Joshua while the miracle is occurring:

"Select twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and instruct them as follows: Pick up twelve stones from the spot exactly in the middle of the Jordan, where the priests' feet are standing; take them along with you and deposit them in the place where you will spend the night."(4:2-3)

But when the twelve men, one from each tribe, are actually instructed by

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[43] These views are summarized in the standard Bible lexica, such as IDB and ABD.

Joshua, immediately after the Lord's command, Joshua does not give a

command to the men but implicitly to the reader:

"Walk up to the Ark of the LORD your God, in the middle of the Jordan, and each
of you lift a stone on his shoulder—corresponding to the number of the tribes of
Israel. This shall serve as a symbol among you: in time to come, when your
children ask, "What is the meaning of these stones for you?' you shall tell them,
'The waters of the Jordan were cut off because of the Ark of the LORD's
Covenant...' And so these stones shall serve the people of Israel as a memorial
for all time."

As instructions for a ritual performance Joshua's statement is inadequate.

He does not tell the men what to *do* with the stones; rather, his command

breaks out of the frames of the narrative to tell the reader what to do with these

stones at the time of reading: see them and remember the Jordan crossing, a

further ritual act of commemoration. After this, every one of Joshua's commands

is performed exactly as given, with one addition: Joshua adds a ritual act that

was not commanded or predicted, placing another twelve stones in the middle

of the Jordan, an invisible marker replacing the twelve stones that had been

removed into Israel.

5. Joshua's Commands: A Failed Ritual?

The commands of Deuteronomy are being interpreted, nuanced and

reapplied in Joshua itself. The command to make a sanctuary at Ebal, which

may have once been a command to make a sanctuary at Gerezim, becomes a

command to make a sanctuary at Gilgal. Furthermore, the commands are then

given and reinterpreted *within* Joshua itself—a command from God to Joshua

within the story becomes a command from Joshua to the readers outside the

story through an extra stage in the chain of command. Here we recognize a

principle concerning ritual law in the Bible: it is typically applied and reinterpreted within the text itself.[44]

What follows (5:2-9) is the ritual of circumcision, which begins with a new toponym, Gibeath-haaraloth ("the Hill of Foreskins"), and ends with a second toponym, Gilgal. It is this act that is represented as finally concluding the Israelites' period of wandering in the wilderness, a liminal period when they were "neither here nor there." Not only were they in neither freedom nor slavery, Israel nor Egypt, but the men—and the men only—were subject to the peculiar condition of being physically neither Jew nor gentile. Upon the entry into Israel, it emerges that the males born during the wandering had not been circumcised, and it is circumcision which, along with the proper ancestry, constitutes the category of male Israelite. By being initiated into a new stage of existence, the males were made what they already really were, but what slavery and wandering in the wilderness had prevented them from being. When the circumcision is complete, God speaks to Joshua: "Today I have rolled (גלותי) away from you the disgrace of Egypt."(5:9) Then the narrator speaks to us: "So that place was called Gilgal, as it still is." This ritual concludes with the Passover, a Deuteronomic sign of completion.

When we examine the texts of the command and its fulfillment in Joshua 3-5, it is apparent that the crossing, altar-building and sacrifice were narrated with care for ritually significant detail. Correct performance was stressed, understandably so in a situation where a single misstep could destroy the whole enterprise: it is relevant here to emphasize the text's own reiteration of calls for correct performance and to recall that Moses was barred from entering Israel for a single transgression. Yet at the same time the narrative expands the

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[44] This mode of exegesis by actually writing *in* the text, producing not marginalia but accretions, is most thoroughly explored by Levinson 1997.

law, reflects back on it and flagrantly violates it. Because if we take that ritual caution into consideration, another thing becomes apparent: *The writing of the Torah and pronouncement of curses are entirely lacking.* Therefore, the crossing *has not yet been performed correctly* and it is open to question whether it has been performed at all. This is due to the remarkable resolution, or lack thereof, of the geographical problem which we noted from the Talmuds.

If we continue in the Masoretic Text we find that it places the ritual of writing, blessing and cursing in 8:30-35, weeks after the crossing, and with relentless insistence that the Deuteronomic command is in fact being fulfilled to the letter. "as is written in the Book of the Teaching of Moses" (8:31) "...just as is written in the book of the Teaching. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua failed to read in the presence of the entire assembly of Israel..." (8:34b-35a). An explanation for this text's location in the Masoretic Text is near at hand: Ai is the closest spot on Joshua's military itinerary to Gerezim and Ebal. The period of rest right after the battle of Ai thus suggests itself as a likely point for insertion. If this is the case, the tradition in the Masoretic Text seems to have decided on a *geographic* solution, one that pays attention to logistics at the expense of ritual.

The classic historical-critical view is that the Deuteronomic tradition is working with an older independent source in the case of Joshua, one that did not know about a ritual at Ebal but rather one at Gilgal.[45] Because Deuteronomic tradition's hermeneutic mode is not harmonization but incorporation, we have the opportunity to watch the tradition at work both ritually and exegetically. This explanation makes sense, but the tradents thereby emerge as ritually inept, unconcerned about the fulfillment of the

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[45] A recent treatment of this, integrated with the Qumran evidence, can be found in Ahituv 1995.

commandments they are transmitting.

So there is a much deeper issue here, one that source criticism appears unable to handle. Is there any explicit, empirical way to tell if those writers and readers who hide under the mask of the "Deuteronomic tradition" cared about the command's fulfillment and noticed the problems seized upon in the Talmuds? It seems difficult to see on the face of it if Israel has in some way "really" not been crossed into and possessed, or if this is not just a distortion that might result from an overly detailed study of the ritual aspects of the text. The text as we have it is sanguine, insisting that everything was done "just as is written in the book of the Teaching." Getting behind this would require us to read a concern of the text that is not actually written in it but may lie repressed, in its past and under its surface.

In fact, comparison of the newly published Qumran material with long-known variants in the Septuagint makes it possible in this case to track the command's fulfillment outside of the Masoretic text using nothing but manuscript evidence. The Septuagint has here the same material in a significantly different order. After the Israelites' total devastation of Ai (8:29), it depicts the inhabitants of the land reacting in terror: "When all the kings west of the Jordan...learned of this, they gathered with one accord to fight against Joshua and Israel." The Masoretic Text, on the other hand, places this material at the beginning of chapter 9. It thus describes the exact same behavior as a reaction to the inscription of the law. In the Masoretic Text, they react to a ritual, in the Septuagint to a battle. Which one of these is original? In fact it would be methodologically incorrect to attempt to adjudicate before exploring what is implied by the existence of these two options.

It has long been recognized that the Hebrew text of Joshua from which

the Septuagint translators worked was meaningfully different from the version preserved in the Masoretic Text.[46] This is not an isolated instance, but is also true for the Biblical books of Samuel, Jeremiah, Proverbs, Psalms, Esther and Daniel. Scholars have shown that at many points in Joshua there are systematic differences between Septuagint and Masoretic Text.[47] The differences could not have come from the translator, who is typically careful and follows the Hebrew closely. Instead, we find such things as an extended Greek plus at the end of the book, after 24:33, in which we read *inter alia* about the flint knives buried in Joshua's grave, a tradition which looks like the preservation of religious relics at a pilgrimage site.[48] The plus also contains a number of similarities to Judges, which suggests that the plus reflects an early and more original stage in the development of Joshua-Judges in which the two books were combined and the first two chapters of Judges were lacking.[49]

In another striking ritual variant, the conquest of Jericho in Greek does not include the famous ritual procession around the city for seven days and has no role for the priests and trumpets that entered tradition through the Masoretic Text.[50] Individual details are debatable but the ensemble strongly suggests that there were two separate literary editions, one of which was the basis of the Septuagint translation, one of which is preserved in the Masoretic Text, both at hands of Deuteronomistic tradition, both in the same style. While some of these differences are genetic, as in the Joshua-Judges fusion, where the Greek may

[46] Holmes 1914, with references there to the earlier work of Hollenberg.
[47] See Mazor 1988, 1995; Rofé 1982, 1994; Tov 1978, 1986, 1987.
[48] This small detail affects Joshua's image in the book: if a warrior is buried with his weapons in the ancient Mediterranean and Joshua is entombed with the knives of circumcision, this recasts him as a kind of heroic circumciser, an unexpected ritual role. The variant also may attest to the early presence of a form of popular piety, veneration of the dead, clearly important among Hellenistic Jews. See the comments of Hare in his preface to the Lives of the Prophets in Charlesworth, ed. 1983-5 II:379-84.
[49] Tov 1986.324.
[50] See the analysis of Mazor 1995.

preserve a text that "came first," one cannot get from one of these ensembles to the other by the usual processes of revision. This is why one must speak here instead of *parallel* literary editions.

The new textual evidence from Qumran, 4QJoshᵃ (ed. Ulrich 1995), an independent and often reliable source of readings, has the writing and reading at the end of Joshua 4, the place one would expect from the Deuteronomic commandment.

top margin

[בספר]הֿתֿוֿרֿה ³⁵לֹא היה דבר מכל צוה מֹשֹׁה אֿת יהֹ[וֹשע אשר לא קרא יהֹשֹע נגד כל   1

[ישראל בעברו]את הירדֿ[ן]הֹנֹשׁים והֹטף והֹגֹ[ר] ההולך בקרבם ⁵·ˣ⁴אחר אשר נתקֹ[ן]   2

[א]   [   ]אֿת ספר התורה אחר כֹן [   ] לֹ·◦ נושאי האֿרֹ[ון]   3

[.]⁵·²בעת [הֿהיא אמר יהוה אליהֹשֹע עֹ[שֹ]ה לך חרבות צרים]   4

[ושוב מל את בני ישראל ⁵·³ויעש]לֹו יֿ[הֹשע חֿ]רבות צֹ[רֹ]ים וימל את בני ישראל אל]   5

[וגבעת הערלות ⁴וזה הדבר אשר מל יהושע כֹ[ל] [הֹעֹם הֹיֹצֹא ממצרים הזכרים כל]   6   ᶠ²

[אֿנשי המלחמה מתו במדבר בדרך בצאתם [מֹמֹצֹרֹיֹם ⁵כֹי] מלים היו כל העם היצאים]   7

[וכל העם הילדים במדבר בדרך בצֹ[אֹתם ממֹצֹרים לא מלו ⁶כי ארבעים שנה הלכו]   8

[בני ישראל במדבר עד תם כל הגוי [אֿנֹשׁי המלחֹ[מֹ]ה היצאים ממצרים אשר לא שמעו]   9

[בקול יהוה אשר נשבע יהוה להם לב[ל]תֿי ראות את הֿ[ארץ אשר נשבע יהוה לאבותם]   10

[לתת לנו ארץ זבת חלב ודבש ⁷וֿאֿת בני]הֿם הֿקֹ[ים   [11

translation:⁵¹

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⁵¹ N.B. likely reconstructions are in italics and brackets; certain reconstructions are in roman and brackets; preserved text is in roman.

1 [*in the book of*] the Teaching, there was not one word of all that Moses commanded [Jo]shua that Joshua did not read before all

2 [*of Israel* when they crossed] the Jorda[n], and the women and the children and the stranger traveling among them. After that,...[ ]

3 [   ]..the book of the Teaching. After this, [   ]...carrying the
Ark [   ]

4 [At]that [time], the Lord spoke to Joshu[a: "M]ak[e *for*
yourself flint knives and]

5 [*again circumcise the people of Israel." And*] Joshua [made] for [himself fl]int kn[ives *and*
circumcised the people of Israel at]

6 [*Giveat Haaralot. And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised:* a]ll of the militia that wen[t out
from Egypt, all the males, the]

7 [*men of war, died in the wilderness on the journey* going out] of Egypt. Whereas [*all the militia*
that went out had been circumcised,]

8 [*none of the militia that were born in the wilderness on the journey* g]oing out of Egy[pt *had*
been circumcised because the people]

9 [*of Israel had traveled forty years in the wilderness until the whole nation,*]the men of wa[r, *who*
went out of Egypt, died—who had]

10 [*not heeded the voice of the Lord, to whom the Lord had sworn that* they wo]uld not see the
[land *that the Lord had sworn to their*]

11 [*fathers to assign to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.* But he had r]aised up their [sons...
          ]

Beginning with the second preserved word of line 1, we recognize the distinctive closing lines of the ceremony of curses and blessings: "there was not one word of all that Moses commanded...". After one and a half lines of otherwise unknown transitional material, the text goes into the beginning, not of chapter 9 but of chapter 5—precisely what we would expect from the Deuteronomic commandment, and a geographic impossibility. 4QJosh[a] represents an edition of Joshua which fulfills ritual at the expense of geography.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, there are two related motives for the variant literary editions of the Jordan Crossing narrative. The first is geography, since the Israelites were known traditionally to have crossed at Gilgal, and Ebal and Gerezim are 30 miles and 4,000 feet uphill from Gilgal.[52] The second motive is a conflict over cosmic geography, recalling the Samaritan belief that Mt. Gerezim is the cosmic center and the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch has a different reading here that might well be original. Ulrich notes that the whole passage would be even more simple if there were no mountain mentioned at all here. While the relevant portion of the text is not preserved, this is what 4QJosh[a] may represent. As Ulrich (145-6) has argued, the entire conflict may have been the result of a polemical *addition* of Mt. Gerezim into an original text that did not specify a mountain. Regardless of the prehistory of the texts, we now have evidence for an important variant concerning the ritual enactment of a Deuteronomic command. When we take into account other ritual variants, such as those concerning the conquest of Jericho and the burial of Joshua, we can derive another principle about ritual in the Bible, which is that it can be applied and reinterpreted differently *between* the texts.[53] The forces that generate the Bible as we have it can still be seen at work.

It now remains to theorize this variation. In the reconstruction of ancient Israelite religion in the tradition of Albright and Cross, a central point is the importation of Canaanite features into Israelite sacred space. The Lord as a divine warrior marching forth from his mountain on Zion assumes older traits of the divine warrior Baal marching forth from his holy mountain, often identified as Zaphon.[54] A strange feature of this Mt. Zaphon is its ability to reproduce itself:

[52] This was, as we recall, obvious to the Rabbis, who advanced *opposite* arguments at Y. and B. Sotah 7:3, to explain this!
[53] A principle assumed in Mazor 1995.
[54] A treatment of the cosmic geography involved is available in Levenson 1985.

not only does the original Zaphon, north of Israel, appear in altered form as Sinai and Zion, but there is also a Mt. Zaphon in Egypt which has the same myth of cosmic combat attached to it. When trying to comprehend the multiplication of cosmic mountains in Canaanite myth, the Jesuit scholar Richard J. Clifford (1972) imported a concept from medieval Catholic sacred geography, conveyed by the Latin ecclesiastical term *translatio. Translatio* refers to the transfer of the features of a saint or shrine to another person or place.

The sacred geography of the Jordan crossing is a series of acts of *translatio.* The features of Sinai, analyzed in the first part of the chapter, are translated by means of the planting of stelae and the inscription of the law to Gilgal and Gerezim, and then to Ebal.[55] The Bible represses the excess of cosmic centers that this process produces because the various centers are in competition with the Jerusalem temple.

Evidence of the further trajectory this *translatio* is to take in the Hellenistic period emerges in the New Testament, where a fascinating statement on the status of Gerezim as a cosmic center in opposition to that of the Jerusalem temple is found. In John 4:20-1, Jesus is sitting at the foot of Gerezim, near the tomb of Joseph and Jacob's well (4:5-6) and encounters a Samaritan woman, who tells him: "...Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." The next stage of the *translatio* is out of this world entirely.

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[55] That this relationship also held between Sinai and Zaphon is suggested by the Aramean variant of Psalm 20 preserved in Papyrus Amherst 63 (trans. Richard Steiner in Hallo and Younger, eds. 1997), which has ṣpn in place of Psalm 20's Sinai.

To reiterate and conclude: The question of how we got from Torah and the sacred land of Israel to apocalypse and Utopia begs the question of how we got to Torah and Israel in the first place: it assumes the presence of new sorts of religious thinking and writing, without addressing the prior question of how new those sorts of thinking and writing really are. The Deuteronomic History is a good test case for studying older forms of the creation of scripture and the creation of sacred space. We can see the Deuteronomic creation of scripture and nation through its creation of sacred space in the Jordan Crossing narrative. Each new instance of claiming land, of erecting stelae and inscribing the law, is both a constitutive act that extends the authority of divine revelation to earth and a reworking that potentially dilutes it. Similarly, each citation of a divine commandment leads toward both its fulfillment and its distortion. Examination of the Septuagint led scholars to hypothesize that it was translated from a meaningfully different Hebrew text that solved problems of location— the blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerezim, the burial of Joshua—in different ways. Comparison of the Qumran material suggests this was the case because the Qumran text solves one of these problems in a different way yet in the same Deuteronomic style: it manipulates the same block of material as the Septuagint and Masoretic Text, showing that the variations are not random but rather evidence for a real ritual concern and direct manuscript evidence of an ongoing process of edition—at least two editions in the same style and with the same concern for the foundation of sacred space. The creation of Israel's sacred space is in the end inseparable from the creation of Israel's sacred text.

The generative problem here appears to be not the need for sacred space, but an excessive production of it. The process of *translatio* leaks, and its byproducts need to be repressed. But it is exactly this process of leakage and

repression to which we need to attend closely if we wish to see sacred space and the text in the making. The movements of *translatio,* whereby new sacred spaces appear and call previous ones into question, represent evidence within the Tanakh for the exegetical changes that later produced the apocalypses. *Translatio* within the Bible is continuous with the *translatio* outside it and after it.

Chapter Four
From Temple Hymn to Mystical Liturgy

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ברוך אתה יהוה אדיר בחדרי שירה
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"Blessed are you O Lord, mighty in chambers of song!"
—*Maaseh Merkavah* (ed. Scholem), §5

Accounts of the history of Israelite religion differ about the mechanism by which Jewish apocalypticism arose. Frank Moore Cross' *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (1973) describes apocalyptic as "the recrudescence of myth", and Gershom Scholem's *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1954) makes an analogous argument about Jewish apocalypticism as the return of the mythic after its suppression in Israelite cult.[1] Neither specifies the mode by which this mythic material was transmitted, nor do they explain the precise mechanisms by which it became a prominent religious form in the Hellenistic period and later. To the extent that Scholem does provide a mechanism by which the mythical imagery of apocalypticism could have been generated, it differs substantially from the "recrudescence" model of a return of repressed ancient myth. This is that the visionary element of apocalypticism is exegetical: the preexisting materials of Jewish tradition were subject to *reinterpretation* according to a different set of values.[2] The notion is suggestive, and is shared by scholars of

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[1] Scholem's model is yet more complicated (and flawed) because he sees the period prior to the typological-developmental stage of Mysticism as "the creative epoch in which the emergence, the break-through of religion occurs. Religion's supreme function is to destroy the dream-harmony of Man, Universe and God, to isolate man from the other elements of the dream stage of his mythical and primitive consciousness."(1954:7) Scholem describes religion itself as a "break-through" into a dreamworld where god is indistinguishable from human. This approaches the notion of *Urdummheit* "primordial stupidity" in the primitive mind, preventing (happily, in Scholem's depiction) the savage from making distinctions such as those between god and human. This notion has been put paid to a number of times in the past half-century of anthropological research. For a survey see J.Z. Smith's "I am a Parrot (Red)" in Smith 1978:273ff. It is interesting that for Cross, the invasion occurs after his period of specialty; for Scholem, prior to it. For Scholem mysticism is itself a reaction to an invasion by religion.

[2] 1954:11. A nuanced study of early Jewish mysticism as exegesis is Halperin's *Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (1988), the core assumptions of which are stated in the subtitle.

Qumran and apocalyptic literature, who often explain what is new in Hellenistic Judaism as bearing an exegetical relationship to the texts that make up the Biblical canon.

But if there is one thing that the finds from Qumran reveal, it is that the Hebrew Bible represents a significantly narrow sample of ancient Judaism's literature and religious practice. In the Qumran texts we find not only new interpretations but entirely new episodes, themes, words and ideas.[3] To some extent, the desire to explain these texts as themselves dependent on older and long-familiar texts may be a way of coping with the disarray into which the flood of material throws the Biblicist. Stressing the element of exegesis of known texts within the Qumran corpus, rather than the element previously unknown to us, is a way of mastering the corpus and fitting it into the apparatus of biblical scholarship.[4]

Would it be possible to take a different path, and attempt to use these new findings in an expanded view of the history of the religion of Israel? The following chapter attempts to do this, recognizing the substantial technical difficulties besetting such an endeavor. Because of the nature of the Hebrew Bible's editing, it is a partial and limited source for the history of the religion it describes. Alternative sources in the ancient Semitic and cuneiform languages cannot simply be ransacked for isolated parallels but must be placed in as rich a context as possible and seen in their individuality. The archaeologically available traces of human behavior must similarly be examined to see what

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[3] The problem is represented *in nuce* by the early debate over whether to call the text now known as the "Genesis Apocryphon" a Targum, a Midrash, or something else entirely. As is now agreed, it is all three.

[4] To some extent, this attempt at explanation also represents a move away from the methods of the school of Albright and Cross, which was willing (with due caution) to acknowledge the way that new materials could expand our view of the complexity and interconnectedness of the Near Eastern world.

independent picture they present.

1. The Replacement of the Earthly Temple by the Heavenly Temple

Perhaps the single most prominent mythic vision in the Hellenistic Jewish apocalyptic literature is that of the heavenly temple.[5] Since there is a substantial ancient Near Eastern literature concerning temples, which includes myths, hymns, rituals and building accounts, and there is also an extensive quantity of excavated material informing us of the physical features of earthly Near Eastern temples, the theme of the heavenly temple appears to be a promising point at which to integrate the new Hellenistic material into the history of the religion of Israel.

First we will recapitulate and amplify the previous chapter's conclusions. So far we have discussed how the idea of ascent to heaven in the Hebrew Bible exists in a larger context of ritual and writing. In its late Hellenistic form the Hebrew Bible narrates a series of switches by which the sacred mountain Sinai is configured first as an access route to the location of God (Exodus 24), then as a type for other mountains where the inscription of revelation and law takes place (Ebal and Gerizim) and finally fully replaced as *axis mundi* by the land of Israel itself because of the presence of the revealed law there and the possibility of fully enacting it in (and only in) the land of Israel. It remains to be added here that the special status of Israel is metonymically transferred to Jerusalem (as Mt. Zion) and, in a second metonymic transfer, to the Jerusalem Temple. Israel is figured as a utopian and otherworldly place marked off from the world by ritual obligations and prohibitions. Within the land of Israel, the Jerusalem Temple is marked off by a further set of rules. And ritual behavior

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[5] When capitalized, this term refers to the Jerusalem Temple; other references to temples are lowercase.

within the Temple itself is structured according to a principle of increasing sacredness moving toward its center.[6]

This chapter therefore proceeds from the conclusion that the way heaven has been imagined is bound up with the way the temple has been imagined. But how does one investigate the history of the imagination of such an object, and how does one correlate it to historical human reality? Does the Tanakh's chronological order correspond to any historical order? It is notoriously difficult to place ancient ideas about the Jerusalem Temple securely in history. While the architectural record manifests more or less convincing parallels to the architecture described in Kings, Chronicles and Ezekiel, our only direct evidence about the early history of the Jerusalem Temple is contained in the Hebrew Bible itself. There are limitations on the reliability and independence of this information, which must be derived from source-critical reconstructions. With the current evidence, the Temple's physical origins cannot be placed directly in history.[7]

In later periods, historical changes may be more clearly correlated with changes in the role of the Temple. The exilic and post-exilic periods have provided scholars with somewhat firmer means to correlate ritual, history, and religious imagination *vis a vis* the Temple. Probably the most influential theoretical model holds that the crucial change in the image of the Temple came as a response to its decline. As the Temple's rituals became invalid in the

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[6] The fundamental work on Jerusalem Temple ritual is Haran 1978. For a theory of the relationship between the architecture and ritual of the Temple, based mainly on Ezekiel's vision, see J. Z. Smith 1987. Certain of Smith's conclusions may require modification in light of the materials discussed in the present chapter.

[7] This is not to say that the descriptions of the Temple's origins as presented in Kings and Chronicles are not a plausible representation of historical reality. It is to say that at the current time it is impossible to separate out any given detail of that presentation from the known pattern of retrojecting Omride riches and prestige into a Solomonic past that may well have been poorer and less cosmopolitan.

eyes of some groups, they "spiritualized" the concept of the Temple: the real Temple moved from earth to heaven, becoming physically unreachable where it had been present before.[8] While the Temple had always had a dual quality, existing both in this world and the other, trust in the Temple's this-worldly legitimacy began to wane. A second version of this idea describes a different form of spiritualization in which the real Temple is now said to be composed of a human community and its ritual activities.[9] In this model, the "spiritualizing" dissidents were an avant-garde whose utopian views the larger Jewish population were eventually to follow. The two models may be combined in chronological order, seeing Ezekiel as a forerunner of the Qumran sectarians,[10] or the two models may be seen as existing simultaneously. But the outcome is the same: when the second Temple was destroyed, its religious role was transformed into a system of common public prayer and ritual purity on the one hand and esoteric mystical visions of its architecture on the other.[11]

What all of these views have in common is the absolute centrality of the physical edifice and mental image of the Jerusalem Temple. Religious changes in later periods are rendered comprehensible as one form or another of reaction to the unquestioned predominance of the Temple and the universally compelling drama of its fortunes. The consensus, in other words, requires a certain uniformity of imagination on the part of the ancient Israelites.

This consensus has had consequences for our understanding of how heaven itself was imagined. The prominence of the Jerusalem Temple is understood as having initially grown at the expense of interest in access to the

[8] Himmelfarb 1993:10-16.
[9] An idea critiqued in Dimant1986.
[10] Thus Wacholder 1992.
[11] The substitution of prayer for Temple service is a basic principle articulated, for example, in b. *Berakhot* 26b. For an application of this argument to the history of Jewish Mysticism see Elior 1995.

presence of God by other routes. With the first and second destructions, this process was reversed. In the Hellenistic period, the heavenly Temple waxed as the earthly Temple waned in Jewish apocalypses. Revelation, the Apocalypse of Abraham, the Enochic Book of the Watchers, and the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice[12] are understood as the products of a sort of compensatory biblical exegesis, motivated by longing for return to the Temple as it had once been. If so much Hellenistic and especially post-Destruction Jewish creativity was an attempt to compensate for the loss of the Temple, the central *topos* of national religious life, this suggests the natural explanation of the heavenly Temple as a projection of the Jerusalem Temple.

2. The Problem of the Exegetical Foundations of Apocalyptic Literature

A second, related consensus is that the Hellenistic Jewish visions of God's dwelling and angelic prayer represent essentially literary developments, constructed out of material contained in canonical books of the Bible.[13] Ritual sources such as liturgy and possible unwritten or undiscovered sources that may be reflected in nonbiblical texts are not taken into account. An example of this type of reasoning is found in Martha Himmelfarb's analysis of the throne vision of I Enoch 14:18-19. First, the vision itself, from Knibb's translation of Rylands Ethiopic MS.23:

"And I looked and I saw (in the heavenly temple) a high throne, and its appearance (was) like ice and its surrounds [Greek: its wheel][14] like the shining sun and the sound of Cherubim. And from underneath the high

[12] Hereafter often referred to as the Shirot.

[13] Generally understood as primarily Ezekiel and secondarily Isaiah and Daniel; for this sort of exegesis see the work of Himmelfarb, as well as the commentary sections in Newsom 1985, and her reedition in DJD XXI.

[14] See apparatus to the edition of Knibb 1978 vol. 2.

throne there flowed out rivers of burning fire so that it was impossible to look at it."

One may note five features of the throne: 1) it is described as "high," 2) its appearance is like ice, 3) it is surrounded by (or has a wheel or wheels of) a sunlike radiance, 4) it is accompanied by supernatural sound, 5) blinding rivers of fire flow out from under it. Of these, Himmelfarb chooses one feature, based on the Greek text, as a conclusive indicator of the vision's derivation:

"The source for the picture of the throne of cherubim Enoch sees in the heavenly sanctuary is not the Second Temple, which no longer contained these central symbols of the First Temple...but rather Ezekiel's visions of the chariot that carries God's glory (Ezekiel 1, 8-11, 43). The line of descent is made clear by the wheels of the throne, which appear only in Ezekiel among biblical works[15] and which no longer have a function in Enoch's ascent..."(1993:11)

Accepting that the Greek here represents an original Aramaic reading גלגלא or the like, and that the reference is therefore indeed to Ezekiel, the closeness of the text to its presumed exegetical source is not striking. For the only description of the material and luminosity of the wheels in the Ezekiel passages is that they are תרשיש (אבן) כעין "of the appearance of (stone of) Tarshish"[16] 1:16; 10:9; there is no mention of the sun, light, fire etc. A text not mentioned by Himmelfarb in this context is Daniel 7:9, which describes God's throne thus:

כרסיהשביבין די-נור גלגלוהי נור דלק

"His throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire"

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[15]This statement is strange considering the Daniel text mentioning the wheels of God's throne cited below.

[16] The nature of Tarshish as a stone is disputed; if it is connected with the place-name Tarshish and thus with Topaz, as does Galling (ZDPV 88 [1972]11) then the association is with the sky; if with Chrysolite (an association made by the Septuagint only once, in Exodus 28:20), as the RSV, then its association is indeed solar.

If one had to choose a source for the Enoch passage, this passage would certainly be as good a candidate as the Ezekiel text, especially if one considers fire to be more like the sun than "Tarshish." In addition, aside from the sound of the Cherubim, which could be connected to either the Ezekiel passages or to Isaiah 6, *each one* of the other features in the Enoch text is paralleled in a biblical source outside the Masoretic Text of Ezekiel. The height of God's throne recalls Isaiah 6, where the Lord is seated on a "high and exalted throne." The icelike appearance of the throne may be connected with the tradition reflected in Targum Jonathan on Ezekiel 1:22, which describes the firmament as like "ice" (גלידא).[17] And the rivers of fire recall the נהל די-נור of Daniel 7:10, a phrase which follows directly the description of fiery wheels.

Furthermore, the description of the fiery wheels and river may well be a special trait of Daniel 7, difficult to separate from this specific passage. As newly published Qumran texts reveal, most of the features of Daniel 7's throne-theophany find close verbal parallels in a passage from the Aramaic Book of the Giants,[18] suggesting that the two texts share a common throne-theophany tradition. But it is precisely Daniel's description of the throne's wheels and river of fire, paralleled in I Enoch 14, that is lacking in the Book of the Giants and thus perhaps original with Daniel. If the throne description in Enoch could only be explained by totaling up distinctive parallels and assigning an exegetical source, we would be forced to derive this part of Enoch from this part of Daniel.

But what this analysis suggests is that the reality behind these texts was

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[17] This is the meaning of Ezekiel's term קרח elsewhere in the Tanakh, but the divergence of this Enoch passage from the understanding reflected in the Septuagint's rendering, *krystallos*, shows that it is still not enough here to simply talk about derivation from Ezekiel; the question is now, "which Ezekiel?"

[18] Analyzed in Stuckenbruck 1997.

more complex. The assumption that one can safely proceed by tracing literary

influences through parallels to canonical texts is dubious, as the new Book of

the Giants evidence indicates. As Michael Stone wrote in response to a related

text,

> "In principle, there is no reason to think that the body of literature that is
> transmitted as the Hebrew Bible is a representative collection of all types of
> Jewish literary creativity down to the fourth century...It is specious, therefore,
> when faced with a third-century phenomenon, either to seek its roots in the
> Bible or to relegate it to foreign influence. Circles other than those transmitting
> the biblical books existed, or else those involved in transmitting the biblical
> books did not allow a considerable part of the intellectual culture of their day to
> be expressed in them..."[19]

The tracing of influences from canonical texts is often performed as if

Hellenistic Jewish writers had access to few cultural forms outside of what was

to become the *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. But if one hopes to catch the full

range of historical human realities underlying the texts, it seems necessary to

cast a broader net.

3. Outside the Jerusalem Temple

> "Is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away
> and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'Ye shall worship before this altar
> in Jerusalem'?" (II Kings 18:22)

As Himmelfarb pointed out, we already see a coherent position opposing

the Jerusalem Temple articulated in texts that can be clearly dated to the exilic

period. Specifically, within Ezekiel the argument is developed that the Temple,

though still standing, is no longer a valid place of worship, as the presence of

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[19]Stone 1978:490-91.

God has departed it. The heavenly Temple had been identifiable with the earthly Temple, since God dwelt there; from the point of Ezekiel's vision onward, the divine presence must be sought in heaven.

By the Persian period there were of course substantial numbers of Jews living far away from Jerusalem and firmly embedded in local economies and cultures. What was their relationship to the centralized Temple? We know that the members of the colony at Elephantine considered themselves Jews, retained Israelite names, and observed the Sabbath and Passover.[20] They kept in regular contact with the Jerusalem religious authorities. Their temple, whose dimensions were comparable to that of the Jerusalem Temple, had been built some time before the Persian conquest of 525 B.C.E. and was destroyed at Egyptian instigation in 410 B.C.E.[21] The Elephantine Temple's restoration may have coincided with the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple, which would then be seen as one among several. Interestingly, the Jews of Elephantine worshipped hypostatized temples and elements of temples,[22] including the gods bytʔl "The Temple,"[23] ḥrmbytʔl "Sacredness/Sacred Enclosure of the Temple,"[24] ʔšmbytʔl "Name of the Temple," and ʕntbytʔl "Sign of the Temple." The phenomenon reaches back further than this in West Semitic religions, already

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[20] See the discussion of these issues in Porten 1968, esp. p. 172.

[21] As documented in the two drafts of the official letter most recently edited in Porten and Yardeni 1986-1993 vol. 1: A4.7, A4.8; for analysis see Porten 1968:110.

[22] For a lucid presentation of this phenomenon in its first-millennium context, see McCarter 1987.

[23] Construing ʔl here as a generic term, with Porten, McCarter, and others; there is no evidence that the word retained its force as a proper name.

[24] See Porten 1968:168 and McCarter 1987:147.

well-known by the seventh century.[25] Indeed, the process of hypostatizing and personifying religious architecture can be seen in the Bible itself, where Jacob's altar at Shechem was called "El, God of Israel" (Genesis 33:20) while the altar at Bethel was named "El of Bethel" (35:7).[26] The phenomenon of proper names for temples is well known elsewhere in the Near East, where every Mesopotamian temple receives an individual name and a large corpus of hymns naming and detailing the physical features of the temples was in use, evolving from the earliest literary texts through the Seleucid period.[27] With the exception of the pillars Jachin and Boaz, such naming is not predicated of the Jerusalem Temple.

Thus, the Jerusalem Temple's very political centrality must have made it religiously anomalous. Indeed, the Temple's greatest prominence may in fact have been in the Hellenistic period, when it is safer to assume that in the diaspora, as in the land of Israel, "the formal focus of religion was the Temple."[28] The biblical prescription of pilgrimage on Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot appears to have been followed by many;[29] the political power and conceptual significance of the Jerusalem Temple was preeminent.[30] Yet as Safrai notes,

[25] See e.g. the treaty of Esarhaddon with Baal of Tyre, which is already able to invoke bytʾl and ʿntbytʾl as an authoritative pair of gods capable of enforcing an oath: "May Betel and Anat-Betel [deliver] you into the paws of a man-eating lion" (ed. in SAA II 5 p. 27 with parallel section in Esarhaddon's succession treaty SAA II 6 p. 49). These clearly West Semitic gods seem to be placed at the end of the Assyrian section of the god-list, after the Sibitti, a fact which requires further study. The likeliest possibility is that they were adopted under Aramean influence into a version of the Assyrian pantheon; note simply the Aramaic structure of the name *Bayt-Il (⁴ba-a-ti−DINGIR.MEŠ), with uncollapsed diphthong. If the writing of the logogram with the plural marker is significant, it points to the continued semantic transparence of the name Bayt-Il, which would have been understood by the scribe as referring to a divinized temple.

[26] As pointed out, with further evidence, by Porten 1968:168.

[27] For a detailed presentation of examples see George 1993. The earliest example is edited in Biggs 1971; for the late transmission of this material see Geller 1997.

[28] Thus Grabbe 1995:62.

[29] Jos. *Ant* 4.2-3-4,13:337-9; *Wars* 2:43, 5:243-4; Philo *Spec.* 1:69; also see m. Hagiga 1:1, Tos. Meg 3:6; Acts 6:6

[30] H. Hegermann, "The Diaspora in the Hellenistic Age" in Davies and Finkelstein, eds. 1984-II:154-5 and 141 for the example of the conflict with the Oniad temple at Leontopolis.

even then pilgrimage was not necessarily a particularly important form before the late Hellenistic period.[31]

This makes it difficult to reliably separate out the strands of development. It is not possible to state with certainty how dominant the Temple was or how far back opposition to the unique cosmic status of Jerusalem and the Temple goes. However, it appears likely that there was no point in Israel's history at which it was universally accepted.[32] This perspective is reinforced by independent study of the archaeological evidence.

In his groundbreaking study of "Religion in Israel and Judah Under the Monarchy: An Explicitly Archaeological Approach,"[33] John Holliday notes that from a strictly theoretical perspective, "Corporate religious expression in a typical Iron II Syro-Palestinian nation-state should have operated on several different levels, each with its own place in the social order and each with its own set of material affects."(267) An important correlate of this was his initial discovery that "every Israelite and Judean cult center so far identified (whether correctly or not is another story) seemed to represent a different tradition." (251). His theoretical model produced an expectation of a variety of levels of structure, from central town buildings to smaller shrines to surreptitious, concealable sites,

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[31] "The Book of Nehemiah, which specifies the duties of the people regarding the Temple, does not mention the commandment regarding pilgrimage, neither does it mention pilgrimage proceedings. Nor are pilgrimages an outstanding phenomenon in literary sources post-dating the Hebrew Bible. This creates some doubt as to whether pilgrimages from the diaspora were customary in the early period of the Second Temple. We find that reports on pilgrimages from the diaspora as well as from Israel are increasing towards the end of the Maccabean period and become prominent at the latter period of the Temple from Herod up to the destruction. From then on tens of thousands of pilgrims are mentioned who came from Israel as well as from the diaspora, filling the city and its surroundings. Pilgrimages then became a part of life in Jerusalem and a powerful means whereby the people formed an attachment to the city and to the Temple." From the *precis* of Safrai 1965 in Immanuel 5:55-6.

[32] Typical is Isaiah 66:1 and the closely related statement in Solomon's dedication prayer for the Temple itself in I Kings 8:27. Yet such rhetoric really remains within the narrow parameters of Jerusalem cult since it does not really acknowledge the existence of any temple ritual *outside of* or *parallel to* that of Jerusalem.

[33] Holliday 1987.

and his survey of sites justifies this. The general picture the survey produces supports the classic reading between the lines of the prophetic jeremiad: at no point was the cultic picture in Israel or Judah anywhere near uniform, and at no point was the Temple the only option.

This picture is accepted in broad outline by many scholars. But the consequences for textual study have not been followed through: if alternative physical models for sacred sites were constantly available and utilized, then there must have been corresponding alternative verbal models for imagining and describing sacred space. A discourse of pilgrimage to Temple courtyards (Psalms 84, 135) and a mountainous, fortified holy site (Psalms 24, 87 etc.), while potentially reapplicable to locations other than Jerusalem (as it has been at least since the destruction of the Second Temple) would not be expected in the liturgy of a small shrine or a minimal, mud-brick cella. The divergence in physical cultic situations would be expected to correspond to a diversity of mythic and ritual complexes in Israelite tradition.

One reconstruction of such a complex from the archaeological record was provided by Ahlström in a brilliant article on "Heaven on Earth - at Hazor and Arad."[34] After noting the common ancient Near Eastern view that the temple can represent heaven on earth,[35] Ahlström began his analysis by describing the layout of the broadroom sanctuary 3136 in the last stratum of Hazor, datable to the 13th century. This room appears to have been an open-air sanctuary

[34] Ahlström 1975.

[35] On pages 68-9, with associated footnotes. The sources do not actually cohere: the Anu temple in Uruk "descended from heaven" while the Enlil temple in Nippur forms the foundation for both heaven and earth (citing *Sumerian Temple Hymns* nos. 26 and 2 respectively, and following Sjöberg's interpretation). The temple of Ningishzida in Gishbanda (no. 15) is "the place where the sun rises," while an Egyptian word for "shrine" means "doors of heaven" (citing Cerny JEA 34/48.120). But in this grocery list of varying local traditions and religious terms, none of the conceptions expressed are identical and several are mutually exclusive. Ahlstöm's conclusion, that "the temple of a heavenly god is 'heaven on earth'" (69), remains simply one possibility among several. Nevertheless, for the sites in which we are interested it is the most plausible.

enclosed by a *temenos* wall, oriented on a northwest axis with a niche in the

northwest wall. The room contained a podium and a basalt statue of a seated

man with a cup in his right hand, found *in situ* in a row with ten stelae. The

statue's chest and one of the stelae bore lunar crescents and other iconography

indicating that they represent gods; an offering table faced the stelae.[36] While it

has been proposed that the assemblage represents a funerary shrine,[37] this

proposal was based on assumptions about the cult of the dead in Syria-

Palestine that have recently been subjected to severe criticism.[38] The only

plausible alternative is that it represented a group of gods. Ahlström argues that

"It is at this point that the idea of the temple as heaven on earth, the realm of
the god(s), can be helpful. If two of the stelae are deities, then the other
stelae would likewise be symbols of other deities of the pantheon, standing
in attendance upon the two main gods of the temple..This cult niche at
Hazor has thus furnished a rare archeological illustration of the religious
phenomenon of a Canaanite divine assembly." (79).

Similar phenomena are identifiable at Iron Age Israelite sites. The example

utilized by Ahlström was the Arad sanctuary, described by Mettinger in his

definitive study of Israelite aniconism as "what seems to be the clearest

example of all" of a maṣṣēbôt cult.[39] The dating of this sanctuary is uncertain:

lifespans from the 10th-7th century and from the 7th-beginning of the 6th

century have been proposed.[40] For our purposes it is enough to place activities

at the site sometime in the Iron Age. The general axis of the shrine is east-west,

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[36] For the iconography, see Yadin 1970 and Keel and Uehlinger 1995:58-60. For further
arguments concerning the divine nature of the statue, see Ahlström 72-3.
[37] Galling ZDPV 75 (1959):6-7.
[38] For a systematic and sometimes devastating treatment, see Schmidt 1994. While the book's
conclusions are often overdrawn, its organization of a wide range of materials and questioning of a
series of old interpretive principles remains extremely valuable. Questions regarding the cult of
the dead remain open, but will require a higher standard of positive demonstration in the future.
[39] Mettinger 1995:143. For further examples see 143-68.
[40] See the summary of the "Aharoni-Herzog" versus Ussishkin positions in Mettinger 1995:143-5.

but as at Hazor we find the NW corner of the shrine marked, this time with a

bāmâ:

> "Behind this there was a slab of flint leaning on the back wall and partly covered with plaster. On the right of the door, near the spot of the smaller altar, there was a similar flint stone, also covered with plaster. These stones may have been maṣṣēbôt. A stone lying on the floor of the shrine, left of the bāmâ, was without doubt a maṣṣēbâ. This stone is of hard, well-dressed limestone...it is flat on its face and rounded on the back and the sides. Traces of red pigment are evident."[41]

We appear to have to do here with three sacred stones: a large one with

red pigment and two smaller ones with plaster.

Again, Ahlström:

> "Assuming that all three stelae from Arad are maṣṣēbôt, how should this phenomenon be interpreted? Once again, the idea of the temple as heaven on earth suggests, as mentioned above, that they are deity symbols. Thus, these stelae would be a parallel to the Hazor occurrence. Also, as has already been mentioned, the Israelite mythology included the concept of YHWH having a divine assembly."(82)

Considering the nature of this shrine, integrated into a fortress which

epigraphic evidence proves was an Israelite outpost, its iconography is

especially interesting. The most plausible explanation of the multiplicity of

maṣṣēbôt would appear to be Ahlström's "divine assembly" hypothesis. Obvious,

but worthy of emphasis here is the absence of any kind of ark, cherubim or

throne.[42] We have to do here with an official place of worship that presents an

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[41] IEJ 17 (1967)248 with plates 46B and 47. Sy Gitin informs me that the negatives for these photographic plates were accidentally reversed, meaning that the orientation of the photos is the opposite of their real one. This explains the reference on p. 247 to a smaller altar buried on the "right side" of a step and a larger alter to the "left," where in the photo (46B) the large altar is shown on the right and the small one on the left.

[42] This is not likely to be an accident of preservation or discovery. While seated statues are well known from Mesopotamian and Syrian temple sites, nothing like an ark or cherub throne is found in Syro-Palestinian temples, whose sanctuaries are typically provided with altars and offering benches and, less often, niches, maṣṣēbôt or basins. The parallels found in Phoenician art are relevant but not entirely compelling.

iconography, and thus a visual and spatial experience, significantly different from that of the Jerusalem Temple. Yet the broad outlines of the Arad sanctuary do mirror those of the Jerusalem Temple, including a basic three-room structure, the presence of a debîr, and a pair of pillars. Not only this, but the Arad sanctuary appears to have been accepted by members of the Jerusalem priesthood, as we learn from offering lists found near the temple which lists Meremoth, Pashhur, and the sons of Korach as contributors (Arad ostraca 50, 54, 49 respectively).

What are the consequences of such a site, in contact with but divergent from the institution of the Jerusalem Temple? What the Arad sanctuary, and its continuities with both the Hazor and Jerusalem Temple, makes clear, is that there existed not only abstract alternative "streams of tradition" outside of those of the Bible but alternative physical places where rituals divergent from those of the Temple were carried out. These places, as sites of human religious activity, must have had their own prayers, blessings, and versions of myths. By contrast, the liturgical and ritual material preserved in the Tanakh is centered on Jerusalem and is not likely, in its present form, to have been used in a temple outside of Jerusalem. As physical icons of the location of the divine assembly, these alternative sites could have been the places where alternative visions of heaven were cultivated.

4. The Heavenly Temple in the Texts

It will now be necessary to look more closely at how such visions of heavenly or ideal temples were constructed in the texts preserved to us. A brief survey of the biblical texts from the point of view of genre will be useful, as much for the forms that do not appear as for those that do.

The first extended treatment of this theme in the Hebrew Bible comes not as a description but as a set of instructions. Strikingly, it follows immediately upon the Bible's first vision of a piece of actual heavenly architecture, in the form of God's throne (Exodus 24:10).

ויראו את אלהי ישראל ותחת רגליו כמעשה לבנת הספיר וכעצם השמים לטהר

"And they saw the God of Israel, and beneath his feet was something like a brickwork of lapis lazuli, like the very heavens in purity."

Remarkable in the above passage is its brevity: we are told exactly one concrete detail about what the Israelites see, modified by one descriptive term: the material beneath God's feet has the shape of brickwork and the visual appearance of lapis; the one trait of this brickwork is that it looks pure. Especially interesting here is the comparison to brick. While it was still a common building material in Iron Age Syria-Palestine, brick is a low-prestige material in the Tanakh. Not one brick is used in the construction of the Temple, the Tabernacle, or Solomon's palace, and brick construction, as opposed to stone, appears to be the subject of a barb in the Tower of Babel story.[43]

The immediately following account of the Tabernacle begins, like the description of God's throne, as a vision (Exodus 25:9):

ככל אשר אני מראה אותך את תבנית המשכן ואת תבנית כל–כליו וכן תעשו:

"Exactly as I show you—the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings—so shall you make it."

The key term is tabnît, which has the connotation of a heavenly visual model. That this special force of the term continues to be available is shown by

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[43] Genesis 11:3b "They used brick for stone and bitumen for mortar," which seems to be a polemical reference to Mesopotamian temple-building. I thank Professor Ralph Klein for pointing this out to me.

its use later in the Qumran Shirot Olat HaShabbat, where it also denotes the visual appearance of something in heaven. But in the passage that follows, we are not shown a vision: the plan for the tabernacle is framed, instead, as direct discourse from God in the form of a set of verbal commandments. In place of a vision, we have ritual instructions. The instructions concerning the ark and the priesthood, and only these instructions, are framed as given in heaven. The building of the ark is a ritual procedure initiated and concluded by sacrificial offerings, followed by a similar set of commands ordering the priests to serve the ark, and then dictating the construction of their clothing and their ritual sanctification. This is followed by the rituals for the ark and the appointment of specific craftsmen to build it. This chain of commands demonstrates inseparable paired interests in architectural construction and ritual instruction. Its format also, perhaps, is indicative of a privilege granted to Moses but denied to those who hear his words but cannot be shown what God has shown him: a heavenly vision.

The construction of the Jerusalem Temple in 1 Kings 5-7 is, by contrast, a complex narrative. Rather than God speaking to Moses, the project of building the Jerusalem Temple is initiated in the quoted text of a letter sent by Solomon to the Phoenician king Hiram. God's verbal mandate to build the Temple is quoted in turn within this letter. The discursive framing signifies a deeper difference: in contrast to the Tabernacle, the Temple is to be a political affair, initiated in talk between rulers. The rest of the account is narrative, interrupted by a warning from God at the point when the physical structure is finished. The building account concludes without any substantial description of ritual practices or personnel, and is followed by a separate section describing how God comes to dwell in the Temple. Of crucial importance is the prayer which

Solomon prays: while it raises a number of political and theological points, the most relevant for our analysis are the ritual instructions it contains (8:31ff). They are directed to the people of Israel, concerning how to use the Temple in times of need; no instructions are directed toward the priests.[44]

Thus there are two main contrasts between the building accounts of the Tabernacle and the Temple. Generically, the Tabernacle's construction is *commanded* by God while the Temple's construction is *narrated* by the authorial voice of I Kings. Ritually, the Tabernacle account instructs the priests in how to perform its cultic operations, while the Temple account contains nothing of the sort.

The account of the new temple in Ezekiel 40-44 represents a third related type. In a divinely inspired vision the temple's space is shown and measured by an angel and the instructions for its rituals are commanded by God through the angel. Ezekiel's vision fits formally with the similar account of a divine vision and ritual instructions given to Moses while he is with God in Exodus, but it is narrated as a first-person account and the contact with God is indirect, mediated through an angel. Ezekiel's temple is usually seen as an improved form of the Jerusalem Temple, but his vision itself is formally distant from the Solomonic account. Ezekiel's vision also contains a significant difference from the Tabernacle and the Temple accounts in terms of content: while there is a limitless interest in the temple's physical layout and dimensions, not once does it mention the building materials of the temple itself.[45]

In the Hellenistic period, there appear to have been two strategies for

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[44] It should be noted here that the later chapters of Chronicles add substantial details concerning the organization of singers and clergy. For analysis of these see the forthcoming commentary of Ralph Klein.

[45] There is some mention of stone altars, though this is, strictly speaking, simply part of the sacrificial protocol.

imagining the Temple: one is that of the Temple Scroll[46], where Torah is rewritten in accordance with an Ezekielian architectural program, to be carried out on earth. The second is the transfer of the Temple to heaven. But while the architecture and rituals of the Temple Scroll have been subject to careful scrutiny, the shape of this new heavenly temple and the specific mode of its construction has never specified. Is the heavenly temple of apocalyptic literature in fact the Jerusalem Temple, mapped onto heaven?

5. Maps of Heaven in Apocalyptic Literature

To open up this issue will require us to return to a classic problem in apocalyptic literature: the differing numbers of heavens. In Hellenistic Jewish literature, certain apocalypses contain seven, while others contain only three heavens.[47] The origin of these conceptions has long been a cause of contention. It is impossible to derive them from Biblical exegesis since there is no mention of a specific number of heavens in the Tanakh, though the different words used to denote the celestial regions were later reinterpreted as referring to individual layers of heaven.[48]

The classic analysis of the numbers of heavens was that of Wilhelm Bousset (1901) who, in keeping with the presuppositions of his time and school, provided a genetic explanation. The three-heaven model goes back to a Persian ancestor while the seven-heaven model, by far the dominant one in

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[46] For the exegetical elements see Swanson 1996. For the architecture and ritual, the work of Lawrence Schiffman, most recently RQ 1996. The Qumran Aramaic New Jerusalem text also has close connections with Ezekiel.

[47] I mention here only the examples discussed by Adela Yarbro Collins 1995. Three: II Corinthians, the early Greek recension of the Testament of Levi;   Seven: The Life of Adam and Eve (Greek version), the late Greek recension of the Testament of Levi, the Apocalypse of Abraham, 2 Enoch, The Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah. 3 Baruch describes five, but his heavenly journey is incomplete.

[48] As we learn from the Shirot Olat HaShabbat, this change has not yet taken place at Qumran; see the index to Newsom's edition s.v. רקיע.

Jewish apocalypses, is the result of the influence of the Babylonian notion of seven planets. Subsequently, Ioan Coulianou (1983) demonstrated that the seven-planet scheme could not serve as the origin of the seven layers of heaven because Babylonian astronomy viewed the seven planets as moving on a single plane, not in superimposed layers. Almost a century later, Adela Yarbro Collins was able, with the assistance of the Assyriologist Francesca Rochberg-Halton, to show that in fact models of both three and seven heavens were available in ancient Mesopotamian tradition.[49] If both cosmological models are equally derivable from Mesopotamia, the tracing of influences in and of itself cannot bring order to the situation. A more useful question would be: what are the *functions* of the different schemes of heaven within Mesopotamian literature?

One striking parallel is that between the apocalyptic descriptions of three heavens and the Mesopotamian speculative text KAR 307 which describes three heavens and three layers of earth, in the lowest of which the fallen gods are imprisoned.

"The upper heaven is Luludānītu stone of Anu. He settled the 300 Igīgū inside. The middle heaven is Saggilmut stone of the Igīgū. Bēl sat on a throne within, on a dais of lapis lazuli (unqû). He made glass and crystal shine inside (it). The lower heaven is jasper of the stars. He drew the constellations of the gods on it."[50]

Of special interest here is the fact that the dominant god's throne is on a surface supported by lapis lazuli. Consider further the vocabulary used in Mesopotamian lists to describe jasper, the material of the lower heaven: kīma

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[49] See her article cited above. Yet there appear to be no comparable contemporary data from Persia, due entirely to accidents of preservation. The possibility remains open that the apocalypses were influenced either by autonomous Iranian traditions or Mesopotamian traditions adapted and transmitted at Iranian hands.

[50] KAR 307=VAT 8917 obv. 30-33, as edited and translated by Livingstone1986:82-3.

šamê zakûti "like the pure heavens"[51] The combination of an epithet of the material of the lower heaven with the material under the high god's throne makes it clear that not only the late apocalyptic three-heaven conception but even the picture of God's throne that appears *already in Exodus 24* is known from Mesopotamian cosmological speculation.[52]

The following four lines (34-37) describe how Marduk (=Bēl) settled Mankind and Ea on the upper and middle earths and imprisoned the Anunnaki (perhaps defeated gods who become cthonic deities) in the lower earth. As Livingstone notes, the mythological picture here fits the Old Babylonian/Kassite period, though the cosmological structure is only known from Enuma Elish and later texts. Similarly, the conception of three lower earths is well known (e.g. from "Atra-Hasis") but the terminology used in the text "is clearly by analogy with the layers of heavens."[53] We seem to have to do here with a reworking of Old Babylonian traditions from the Kassite period or later.

A similar structural parallel is known for the seven-heaven conception. The most important examples appear not in speculative texts but as a common formula in exorcistic rituals. The ritual invocation of the seven heavens and seven earths is already found in a number of Old Babylonian Sumerian incantations such as this one, edited by J. van Dijk:

én-nun-ùr-ri ḫé-en-dadag-g[a]	Incantation: Be purified
an ᵈen-líl ᵈen-ki ᵈnè-i ri₁₁-gal	by Anu, Enlil, Enki, and Nergal!

[51] From the Mesopotamian treatise on the properties of stones abnu šikinšu (STT 108:76, cited from CAD i/j 328 s.v. jašpû "jasper"). On the nature of this list see Reiner 1995. Livingston 1986:86, notes that the parallel text BAM iv 378 has here kīma šamê nesûti "like the *faraway* heavens."

[52] A fact that has been noted by several Assyriologists; see Parpola, SAA 9 n249 with previous bibliography.

[53] Livingstone 1986:87.

an imin-bi ki imin-bi   by the seven heavens, by the seven netherworlds![54]

du₆ imin-bi bára imin-bi   by the seven hills, by the seven thrones![55]

The incantation summons the power of the totality of the universe, symbolized by the gods of heaven and the underworld and the full physical extent of the heavens and the netherworld themselves. These forces are called upon to exorcise Lamashtu (ᵈDIM.ME; see ll. 8-10). One finds here a general principle of sevenfoldness connected to primal cosmic objects. In the descent of Inanna and later similarly in the "Descent of Ishtar", the goddess descends through seven gates and at each gate is forced to remove a single article of ornament or clothing. In each case the article removed is not a mere decoration but an object imbued with a me, a numinous force essential to Inanna's power and dignity. When she finally reaches the throne-room of the underworld she is helpless and abased. An analogous situation occurs in the Sumerian myth "Inanna and Shukaletuda" (ed. Volk), where the gardener Shukaletuda removes Inanna's loincloth of me's while she is asleep, making her physically and sexually vulnerable. In the story of Shukaletuda only one act of removal is required dramatically, and only one garment appears. What the parallel suggests is that the number of objects covering Inanna when she descends was not predetermined but related to Inanna's movement through space and interaction

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[54] While "seven earths" would of course be possible, with our world appearing as one of the layers as in KAR 307, this would leave us with a sixfold netherworld, unattested elsewhere. For a different view, see Horowitz 1998.

[55] My translation of ll. 1-4 of LB 1005 (Böhl, Medelingen 29) as edited by van Dijk in BBVO 1:102, without translation or commentary. The text exists in at least five exemplars, of which four (LB 1005, YBC 5627 (= YOS XI, 89), Iraq 38 p. 62, TIM 9 63) were used by van Dijk. An edition including the fifth exemplar, OECT V 55, and extensive commentary appears at the hands of Tonietti in Or 48, to which I am indebted for understanding the text. I thank Father Marcel Sigrist for help with this material.

with the number of gates she had to go through.[56] These seven gates develop a ritual role analogous to that of the seven heavens and netherworlds in later exorcistic texts.[57]

The evidence surveyed suggests that the use of the number seven in Mesopotamian texts dealing with heaven, earth and the underworld are not so much an inherent part of a fixed notion of the cosmos as the result of a multiplying operation. This operation seems to be a device of ritual language whereby an anonymous cluster of objects is transformed into a sharply defined and unified group.[58] This would explain why it is only in texts with strong ritual associations that parts of the cosmos are divided into seven. Specifically, the Old Babylonian Sumerian incantations, Inanna and Ishtar narratives, and Utukki Lemnûti texts are the ones which refer to seven heavens, earths, or gates of the netherworld. It is in speculative texts such as KAR 307 and narratives without strong ritual associations such as Etana that alternate pictures such as that of three heavens emerge.[59]

This conclusion is in substantial agreement with that reached by Rochberg-Halton, who suggests that "the seven heavens may be another derivation from the magical properties of the number seven, like the seven demons or the

[56] The Standard Babylonian version of "Nergal and Ereshkigal" does not neatly fit this pattern; the text is a narrative with no direct ritual associations. However, the fact that Nergal enters the gates equipped with a "ghost chair," a device known from the armory of the exorcist, suggests that it is incorporating conceptions from Babylonian ritual in a literary form.

[57] As indicated by the formula in Utukki Lemnûti (ed. Thompson) V 46-7: "Be exorcised by the seven gates of the netherworld! Be exorcised by the seven bolts of the netherworld!"

[58] In addition to the well-known examples of the seven demons and sages, the application of the number seven to the six visible stars of the constellation Pleiades, known in Akkadian as the sibitti, might be adduced here. It is explicitly stated in Classical texts that only six members of this constellation were visible to the naked eye, but that the number of stars was recognized as seven (see the contribution of Puhvel to Fs. Leslau). At least one culture outside of the Mediterranean traditionally counted only six: note the modern logo of the Japanese Subaru ("Pleiades") automotive company and its six stars.

[59] For the lack of Mesopotamian religious interest in Etana see the survey in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

seven thrones, rather than evidence of an early stage in the development of a consistent cosmography."[60] It only remains to be added that "magical" is too limiting a term here (the association is with ritual behavior in general)[61] and that a fully "consistent cosmography" does not seem to have developed in Babylonia. The seven-three distinction cannot be ordered chronologically but may correspond to a rough generic distinction between texts that prescribe or represent ritual activity and those that do not.[62]

The picture is strongly paralleled in the Hellenistic Jewish visions of heaven. Here, texts with strong liturgical and mystical associations such as the Apocalypse of Abraham and 2 Enoch describe movement through seven heavens or heavenly sanctuaries correlated with song. In particular, the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice , preserved in first-century B.C.E. manuscripts from Qumran, is the earliest securely datable Jewish text which uses seven as a central structuring principle in describing the heavenly temple.[63] It is also of a different genre than the others; rather than a narrative description of an ascent

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[60] These are the conclusions of Rochberg-Halton as summarized in the article of Yarbro Collins 1995:65.

[61] Such a taxonomy, short of a strenuous apologetic maneuver, would also classify Isaiah's "Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth" (1:2) as magic, since it personifies and invokes elements of the cosmos in the same manner as our Sumerian incantations. I have no interest in engaging the "magic-religion" debate here; the distinction is historically rooted in religious polemic and legal accusation. While this makes it potentially useful as a classificatory antinomy (see above all Versnel 1991a), laying the methodological groundwork for such a use would be an essay in itself.

[62] The fullest exemplar of a Babylonian treatment of cosmic geography, KAR 307 obv. 30-37, is a somewhat muddled conflate text (as Livingstone has demonstrated) and does not have any inherent connection to other descriptive texts such as the Babylonian *mappa mundi* recently reedited by Horowitz Iraq 50 (1988) 147-65. That cosmological traditions were sometimes integrated with each other is suggested by texts like AO 6478, which discusses seven nag û "regions" of the world and then moves to a discussion of the paths of the ziqpu stars, whose analysis is connected with the calculation of the 364-day year (edition and analysis in Horowitz 1998:182ff). These nag û appear in the *mappa mundi* and also lie behind the geographical conceptions of the Enochic Book of the Watchers, while the Astronomical Book provides an astronomical argument for the 364-day year.

[63] The words "seven" or "seventh" appear approximately 130 times in the cave 4 and Masada documents alone. This rough count includes several duplications but does not include the cave 11 materials.

through heaven, it is a ritual text which itself constructs and portrays a progressive movement through the heavenly temple. The oldest known Jewish text connecting seven with the heavens is itself a liturgy. In the Babylonian realm, it is in texts with ritual functions or associations that the sevenfold quality of otherworldly areas may have been generated. If this is so, the Shirot and later texts represent a parallel not merely of form but of function. The ritual function of the Shirot may provide the context that generated the vision of seven heavens later represented in a literary form in apocalypses and mystical texts.

6. The Materials and Building Techniques of Heaven

If the overall architecture of heaven has a ritual association, what of the building materials? In an important note on the Canaanite background of biblical and apocalyptic images of heaven, Mark Smith (1987) pointed out that some of the materials and building techniques of Baal's house corresponded to those of the heavenly temple in Exodus and the Shirot Olat HaShabbat. The building of Baal's temple is described thus: first, the materials are commanded (CAT 1.4 V 18-19, 33-5)

wbn.bht.ksp.wḫrṣ	And build the house with silver and gold,
bht.ṭhrm.iqnim	The house of pure lapis lazuli

When it comes time to actually build, the house is burnt, a process that transforms the precious metals into usable building materials: (CAT 1.4 VI 34-8)

sb.ksp.lrqm	The silver had turned to building material[64],
ḫrṣ/nsb.llbnt	The gold had become bricks!
šmḫ/aliyn.bˤl	Mightiest Baal rejoices:
<b>hty.bnt/dt.ksp.	"My house I have built of silver,
hkly[.]dtm/ḫrṣ	My palace of gold."

Now, the construction of bricks and the use of lapis in Baal's temple provides a background for the appearance of God's throne in Exodus 24, as is commonly recognized in the commentaries.[65] But these texts are in turn part of a larger picture: Avigdor Hurowitz (1992) points out that there are significant parallels between the Baal narrative and West Semitic building accounts such as the Aramaic Barrakib inscription (KAI 216) and the biblical texts. These include 1) "the hiring of an artisan who is mentioned specifically by name" (Bezalel and Oholiab in the Tabernacle story, Hiram in the Temple account, Kothar-wa-Hasis in the Baal epic), with no significant parallel in the Mesopotamian writings (102-3) and 2) the statement that the recipient of the new structure "had no house, and afterward the text goes on to state what substitutes there were for the missing house." (103) These features seem to be shared by West Semitic accounts over against the Mesopotamian ones.

But, as Hurowitz demonstrates, the overall structure of the account of Baal's

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[64] Taking *rqm* here as a collective noun *riqmu or the like, akin to Mishnaic Hebrew *reqem "worked material" (only attested in the plural) and reflecting the semantics of the Mishnaic piel of רקם "to shape, form," said of a fetus. The relation of these to the noun רקמה "embroidery, piecework" and other biblical uses of the root related to "variegate," may be clarified by their common connection to the act of "piecing together". As Edward Greenstein suggests to me, laying bricks is also a form of putting pieces together. The usual understanding of Ugaritic rqm, as a plural of a noun like Arabic raqqaqa "flattened (metals)" (cf. the glossary of Gibson 1978), is not satisfying from an architectural or a morphological point of view.

[65] See e.g. Childs 1974:509.

temple fits the standard pattern of Mesopotamian[66] building accounts. These

include 1) a request to build; 2) obtaining the approval of the high god; 3)

negotiating divine obligations[67] ; 3) brickmolding; 4) building; and 5) dedication

festivities. Hurowitz points out that in addition, "in certain details the Baal epic

loudly echoes several characteristically Mesopotamian ideas." These include

similarities to the dedication festivities in Gudea Cylinder B, "Enki's Journey to

Nippur," and "Enuma Elish."

"[T]he idea that the head god of the pantheon must approve the building of
temples and cities for lower ranking gods is also well documented in
Mesopotamian building accounts. The use of silver, gold and lapis lazuli in
buildings is also a sign of the Mesopotamian tradition[68]...It goes without saying
that the use of bricks in monumental building is so characteristic of
Mesopotamian architecture and literature that mentioning it in a western myth
practically compels us to seek a Mesopotamian background." (104).

A question raised by neither Smith nor Hurowitz now suggests itself. What

is Baal's temple at Ugarit, the one his worshipers would have seen and entered,

actually made out of? The fact is that the temple walls, preserved in several

places, are constructed of large, well-cut stones, carefully assembled on

massive stone foundations.[69] This fact in itself is unsurprising because stone

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[66] There are certain taxonomic features, such as associated blessings and curses, common to the Assyrian and biblical accounts which seem to represent the political situation of the Neo-Assyrian period.

[67] Including the striking detail of El's emphatic refusal to perform manual labor. What is strange about this speech, as Hurowitz points out (105), is that nobody had *asked* El to help build the temple. Hurowitz notes that Mesopotamian tradition knows a series of conflicts concerning the gods' performance of manual labor. In "Enuma Elish" VI 59-60, the gods all mold bricks for Marduk's temple as part of his elevation to dominance over them as an act of political subservience. Similarly, in "Atra-Hasis" and "Enki and Ninmah" the younger gods rebel against Ilu/Enlil and Enki, respectively, so that they do not have to work. Once again, a fragmentary theme in Ugaritic is, unsurprisingly, filled out by other second-millennium cuneiform texts.

[68] Here Hurowitz cites "Enki's Journey to Nippur" 1-17.

[69] Thus Yon: "Le temple lui-même, dont l'entrée ouvre vers le sud, est construit sur de puissantes fondations, et la partie inférieure conservée des murs est faite d'un appariel de gros blocs de pierres taillées et tres bien assemblés....À droite en entrant, une partie de cette salle est occupée par d'énormes massifs construits en blocs taillées, qui supportaient la première volée d'un escalier..." (1997:119-20).

was the prestige material of construction in the West Semitic world, as the stonework of the Jerusalem Temple and the jibe at mudbrick construction in Genesis suggest. But it leads to a more surprising observation: the mythological imagination of both Ugarit and Israel represents the heavenly temple as constructed with a low-status building technique. To be sure, the precious materials are those befitting gods. But they are assembled by means of a technology which the builders of the gods' temples on earth would have considered outmoded.

We are forced to the conclusion that neither in Biblical nor Ugaritic myth is the physical construction (as opposed to the architectural plan) of the heavenly temple modeled on that of the earthly one. Rather than a projection of the earthly construction of Baal's temple, the tradition embodied in the Baal epic reflects older mythological conceptions. This tradition finds a closer fit with archaeologically attested practices when it appears almost a thousand years earlier, in the first-person account of temple-building in Gudea Cylinder B. Like Baal, Gudea burns the area where he is building, and molds bricks; unlike Baal, Gudea's gods were actually worshipped in brick temples. In the contexts in which the Baal epic was used at Ugarit,[70] its images were already archaic.

7. The Liturgical Construction of the Heavenly Temple

If the lack of fit between the temple materials of Baal's textual and physical throne is significant, the distance between the brickwork of Exodus 24 and the materials of the Jerusalem Temple is a striking reccurrence of the same

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[70] For a detailed study of the evidence for ritual use of extracts or variants of the Baal epic, see the discussions accompanying the edition of Pardee 1988. It is worth noting that the phenomenon Pardee discusses here, namely the use of myth in incantation, fits a generic type widely known as the "historiola" (now recognized by Pardee—personal communication, 4/98). See further my contribution to RAI 45.

phenomenon. The phenomenon reaches its extreme in the following text from the eleventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice, 4Q405 19 a,b,c,d 2-7:[71]

2	ושבחוהו בני אלוהים רוחי קו[דש רוחי קודשים	[....] לבתי[כבד מדס
3	דבירי פלא רוחי אלי עולמים כ]ל[ ] .... [דב]יד מלך מעש 72ר[ה]קמ[ת רקיע פלא
4	ממלח טוה[ר ח]וחי דעת אמת]וצדק בקדש קו[דשים צ]ורת אלוהים חיים צורי רוחות
5	מאירים כו]ל[מע]שיהם מקו[ד]שי פלא דבקי שו[רוחי [ ] רוקמת ב]רני צורת אלוהים מחוקק
6	סביב ללבני כ]בודם צורת כבד למעשי לבני[הוד והד]ר [אלוהים חיים כל מעשיהם
7	וצורת בתיהם מלאבי קודש מתחת לד]בירי] הפלא קול דממת שקט אלו]היהם מברכים

2 And the figures of the divine beings praise Him, the h[oliest] spirits [   ] . . . the glorious [figures], the floor of 3 the wondrous debirim, spirits of eternal angels, all [   ] . . . . [the deb]ir of the King. The pi[ece]work of the wondrous firmament is 4 brightly mixed,[75] [sp]irits of true knowledge and righteousness in the holy of [h]olies, [im]ages of the living God/living divine beings, images of bright spirits. 5 A[l]l their workmanship is of holy, wondrous joining, [spirits (formed of)] piecework, [fi]gures of the shapes of divine beings engraved 6 around their [gl]orious bricks, glorious images (formed of) splendid and awesome b[rick]work. Their construction is all of the living God/living divine beings 7 and the appearance of their figures is (that of) holy angels. From

[71] I give the reading of this text as edited by Newsom DJD XI p. 339; epigraphic details have not been shown and for a full treatment the reader is urged to consult the edition.

[72] Reconstructing ריקמת here (as in 402 2,3 and 405 14-15 i 6 where מעשי also appears in construct to it) in place of Newsom's רוחות, which is very difficult to understand.

[73] Newsom reads here רוקמה, a form unattested elsewhere. This may indeed be "an example...of the preference in Qumran Hebrew for *qutl* forms over *qitl*" (DJD XI.225) or, considering the spelling ריקמה elsewhere in Qumran Hebrew (War Scroll V 6,9,14; VII 10), it may simply be a misreading of waw for yod.

[74] The reading is epigraphically uncertain and produces the unparalleled phrase שו[רוחי דבקי פלא.

[75] Literally "salted with purity/brightness." I follow Newsom (342) here, who follows Strugnell's suggestion that "salt" has here the (otherwise unattested, to my knowledge) transferred meaning of "mix."

beneath the wondrous d[evirim], a sound of silent stillness, div[ine be]ings

blessing...

What is immediately apparent is the text's deep and detailed fascination
with the physical construction of the heavenly temple. If our previous texts
narrate heavenly architecture, this passage detonates it. Much of what we see
can be glimpsed in the Tanakh, but appears now as something else entirely.
The visual field focuses on the static cherubim of the Temple walls, here
vibrating with wildly energetic life.[76] Exegetical or intertextual elements are
apparent, for example, in the rendering of I Kings 19:12's difficult קול דממה דקה[77]
by the clear קול דממה שקט "a sound of silent stillness." But the text as a whole is
something new: with its syntax often reduced to strings of construct phrases
trailing adjectives and its relentless, tangled vocabulary of appearance and
form, the text is generically and linguistically removed from our other
descriptions of the heavenly temple. From a generic point of view, it is a hymn,
evoking and praising the details of the heavenly temple. Linguistically, as Smith
notes, it bears an important continuity with the older narratives. As in the Baal
epic and comparably to Exodus 24, the walls of the heavenly shrine (debîr),
which seems to shift in and out of phase between a singular and plural
existence, are said to be made of brick. Not only this, but the brick itself seems
to be both engraved with and constructed from angelic beings. A further verbal
parallel is likely, since the Ugaritic word rqm is probably cognate with our ריקמה

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[76] Both those of the tabernacle: Exodus 26:1, 31; 36:8, 35 and of the Temple proper: I Kings
6:29; 7:29, 36 (cf. 2 Chronicles 3:7 and Ezekiel 41:18-20,25).
[77] Beautifully rendered by Halperin (1988b:52) as "a sound of delicate silence"

(line 5).[78]

Further, the imagery here cannot be simply derived from a Biblical text. If the relation to I Kings 19 is exegetical, the use of two words from Exodus 24:10, שחר and לבנה, is not, since they are not used in a similar way or associated with each other.[79] Instead, the words appear in phrases unparalleled in the Bible. Indeed, one reason for the difficulty in interpreting this passage as a whole is that it appears to have a set of idioms and a technical vocabulary with which we were previously unfamiliar.

This combination of ancient architectural concerns, which seem in some way to bypass those of the Bible, with a pervasive concern with the number seven as a physical structuring principle, suggests that we have found essential elements in this text which can neither be derived from Bible interpretation nor imagined as springing full-blown out of the minds of the Qumran sectarians. The question of the Shirot's language returns us to the issue of its genre. The enormous and ever-shifting detail with which the heavenly temple's physical features are described, as well as its "numinous" syntax,[80] appear to be unparalleled in the Hebrew Bible. While there are a number of references to the Temple in the Psalms, and even one Psalm praising the Temple, their language is restrained and abstract. Psalm 84, generally recognized as a pilgrimage Psalm, uses exactly one adjective, ידידות "lovely," to describe the Temple. There

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[78] We would then have the word-pair lbnt and rqm in both Baal and the Shirot, though not in the Tanakh. While this could simply be a combination that did not make it into one of the canonical Hebrew texts, the appearance of both in the restricted lexicon of temple architecture of Ugaritic and the Shirot (compare the greater detail in Kings, Ezekiel) makes it possible that they represent a stream of discourse marginal to that of the Jerusalem Temple.

[79] They thus fail to fit Michael Fishbane's criteria for exegetical reuse: "...where the second text...uses a segment of the first...in a lexically reorganized and topically rethematized way." (1984: 285).

[80] The discussion below attempts to bring some specificity to this far too vague term.

is a single architectural detail provided: the Temple has "courts" (line 2).[81] This meager vocabulary represents the apex of biblical liturgical detail concerning the Temple, and in turn demonstrates a striking fact: the entire body of liturgical and poetic material in the Tanakh shows almost no interest in the appearance or features of the Temple.[82] From a strictly formal point of view, the Shirot's closest relatives are the (earlier and contemporary) Sumerian Temple hymns and the (later) Hekhalot literature.

It is therefore relevant to note that the bulk of the Jewish mystical writings of late antiquity known as the Hekhalot ("Temples"—and here the name is important) literature consists precisely of prayers, songs and incantations.[83] Further, the Hekhalot literature displays a consistent topographical interest in the heavenly temple, its layers, and its physical features. As Karl Erich Grözinger (1980) has demonstrated, the Hekhalot literature deploys song as a form of physical movement that itself maps a topos and creates a ritual geography: the heavenly temple or its components are said, again and again, to be *built* out of song. To some extent, this represents a generic and exegetical

[81] The expression of desire to be a "doorkeeper" (10) seems figurative, and even if it is not it does not convey any particular information other than that the Temple had a door.

[82] The question is not, of course, whether or not the reader or participant could take these features for granted; it is whether there was any interest in articulating them. It would be possible to explain a certain amount of this lack of detail as due to a kind of "monotheistic" austerity. Such an argument would have to contend with two difficulties: 1) it would require a methodical treatment of the question of the abstractness of biblical language in general (as raised in the groundbreaking study of Hillers 1987) and 2) it would have to demonstrate that the wealth of visual and ritual detail found in early Rabbinic (e.g. m. *Middot*) and mystic literature (an early example is quoted above as 4Q405 19 abcd; later examples abound in the Hekhalot corpus) is somehow "less monotheistic" than the sparse details of the liturgical material provided in the Bible. The prospects of such a project's success are not encouraging.

[83] For a general characterization see Schäfer 1992; for a critical review of recent literature Elior 1990. The question of the dating of this material has gone back and forth since Scholem's "The Merkabah Hymns and the Song of the Kine in a Talmudic Passage" attempted to show that the poetic structures and vocabulary of the Hekhalot literature were already found in a liturgical text cited in a number of early Rabbinic sources (Scholem 1965: 20-30). The evidence of the Shirot, when combined with analysis of the liturgical passages of Revelation and the Apocalypse of Abraham, offer proof that these patterns represent compositional techniques already highly productive in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

transformation of ancient biblical themes: within Ezekiel the language of theophany and temple description has the ring of technical prose (with the exception of the angelic prayer to God's unknowable physical location in Ezekiel 3). The language of Isaiah 6 more fully incorporates description of space into poetic terms. As scriptural citations of angelic direct discourse, the prayers of Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 3 are cited repeatedly as prayers in the Hekhalot literature.

But in its most pronounced features: its concern with the animacy and identity of the heavenly temple, its use of the structuring principle of seven (supplemented with larger numbers), and, as we shall see, its very compositional techniques, the Hekhalot literature can be said to form a unit with the Songs. This unit's identity is neither explicable from biblical sources alone nor isolated in Hellenistic Jewish texts.

As Allison (1986) notes, the theme of the animacy of temple architecture in heaven is shared by the Shirot with the book of Revelation. As two pieces of Hellenistic Jewish literature with close linguistic and phenomenological ties to the Hekhalot corpus, the Shirot and the portions of Revelation depicting liturgical activity in heaven stand together. Specifically, both represent a climax of revelatory activity with sevenfold praise in heaven, compounded in multiple ways (4Q403 1 i 1-29: seven words, seven psalms, seven princes, seven powers); in Rev 8-11 the sevenfoldness appears in the form of seven angels who blow seven trumpets seven times, each time calling down a portent from heaven. The sixth blowing calls forth "a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God" (Rev 9:13-14). Further examples include the transformation of the righteous into a pillar in 3:12, following the initiatory model of "overcoming": "He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall

he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God...." as well as the phenomenon of God's throne speaking in 19:5, 21:3 (compare line 7 of 4Q405 19, and cf. Rev 4:6 where the living creatures are said to be in God's throne).

That there is not merely a conceptual affinity but a specific set of poetic techniques and linguistic functions shared by these texts is made clear by Stanislav Segert's study of the poetic structures of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice[84] when its results are compared with Philip Alexander's independent but analogous research on the poetic structures and liturgical functions of the Hekhalot literature (1987). Distinctive features common to both include: 1) a "relaxation" of the principle of *parallelismus membrorum*, now supplemented by "features based on repetition of words or their radical bases"[85] and 2) "amplification" (Carmignac's "ampleur,")[86] "the accumulation of phonologically and semantically similar or even equivalent words."[87] At a higher structural level, both corpora present a drift between more and less repetitive and elevated forms of language. In both, a conflict is induced between the native designation of a passage and the scholarly analysis of the text's poetics, according to which is it not possible to cleanly demarcate sections of "poetry" and "prose" within a "song" (שיר, thus designated in the rubrics of the Shirot) or "prayer" (the liturgical

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[84] Segert 1988, and cf. the earlier study by Maier 1973.

[85] Segert 1988:217.

[86] Segert's rough translation of a term configured by Carmignac 1960:528.

[87] Compare Alexander's statement that "The basic structural principle is repetition. Within the stock elements this involves the repetition of words, morphemes, grammatical forms, or consonants."(52). "The style is also marked by alliteration...grandiloquent epithets, circumlocution...and generally elevated language." (49). Lexically, what distinguishes the Hekhalot liturgies is "their frequent use of synonym-clusters. These clusters relate, for the most part, to a small number of concepts: glory...light, power, greatness, praise, song, joy, fear and majesty. When these ideas are touched upon, as happens frequently, then the style becomes massively redundant. The *Yordei Merkavah* ransacked the Hebrew and Aramaic languages from end to end to find synonyms for these concepts: the result is the introduction of rare and recherché words, some of which are neologisms, similar to the neologisms of *piyyut.* " (49). Note here the lexical difficulties presented by even a short passage of the Shirot.

portions in the Hekhalot literature, often designated הליפת).[88] Indeed, as Alexander notes, this oscillation in fact seems to be a basic feature of liturgical texts, giving them a shared irregular, organic rhythm: "The recurrence of stock elements gives rhythm and shape to the ensemble. It generates a sort of pulse which prevents the ensemble from appearing totally amorphous. But the placing of these repetitions seems to be governed by subjective, intuitive factors rather than by any objective rules."(46) It only remains to be added that the conflict between "subjective" and "objective" in Alexander's statement is itself a significant datum, pointing to a consistent and meaningful disagreement between modern analytical techniques and the ancient designation, and perhaps use, of the passages.[89]

Segert states that, within the New Testament, "the closest analogies to [the Songs'] function and style are liturgical passages in the book of Revelation." A fundamental shared feature is the accumulation of synonymous expressions. "This amplification appears in Qumran songs in parallelistic or chiastic structures with elements attached as attributes or appositions, while in the Revelation these words are presented in coordinated sequences." (223) Especially worthy of note is the accumulation of synonyms for "power," "glory," and "praise" in both texts. While the subject requires a full study in itself, the basic structural point is clear: the Shirot and the Hekhalot literature share

[88] Thus Segert, "[The] structure, based on strong representation of certain leading words, does not continue throughout the entire song..." (220); he observes in the Songs of the seventh and twelfth Sabbath a kind of drift within the song away from structural coherence.
[89] This touches on a larger problem in the study of ancient poetics, which is that it is often carried out without sufficient regard for native genre designations and framing devices: "poetry" is taken to consist of those structural features that can be discerned in written documents by modern techniques, usually influenced by the Prague School of structural poetics. This leaves out a world of issues, including content, history, and reception; for a critique see Alan Cooper 1990. In addition, a more ethnographic approach would suggest that native designations of texts demand consideration and explanation in and of themselves. The problem is raised by Dan Ben-Amos in his study of "Analytical Categories and Ethnic Genres" (1976); recent bibliography in Flueckiger 1996.

essential linguistic and conceptual patterns with the liturgical portions of the book of Revelation.[90]

This must be seen in the larger context of the New Testament, which unlike the Tanakh, is generally considered to include little information about liturgy.[91] The recent trend has been to assume that we cannot make inferences from the prayers in Revelation to earthly liturgy, "Ganz sicher sind alle diese Stücke *nicht die gottesdienstlichen Liturgie entnommen*, sondern *literarische Bildungen* des Verfassers bzw. seiner Quellen."[92] Indeed, there is no Christian liturgical compilation known until the Odes of Solomon, c.200 C.E. Yet, as Hengel notes, the *literary portrayal* of inspired hymnic praise is considered to be the most obvious continuity between the Old and New Testaments (364), a continuity shared by the Qumran view of David as the prophetically inspired (בנבואה "via inspiration" — 11QPs 27:4-11) composer of songs, hymns and exorcisms. What do we make of this conflict between the *representation* of inspired hymnic praise in the texts and the contemporary understanding of the material actually preserved in the texts?

The perspective of genre is helpful here: the Songs contain no narrative portions and therefore appear not to provide any model of their own use. Thus Baumgarten's apparent perplexity:

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[90] Compare the discussion of the "hymnic tradition" in Halperin 1988b:52.

[91] Thus the image of the 24 elders singing in heaven (Rev 5:8-10; cf. 14:3) is considered to be an exegetical development from I Chronicles 25:9-31; 24:7-18, and the two psalmlike songs in Luke 1 are dismissed as Jewish (thus begging the question of how "Christian" liturgy was defined). It is conceded that Paul incorporates limited hymnic material such as Philippians 2:6-11. On this point see Hengel 1987:360 and the following general statement: "[The NT] enthält kein Corpus von Liedern oder Gebeten wie das Alte Testament für Israel (bzw. die LXX mit den 'Psalmen' und 'Oden' für die Kirche). Über die Liturgie und den Gesang im frühesten Gottesdienst lassen uns die 27 Schriften des Neuen Testaments fast völlig im Dunkeln." (358). Hengel goes on to note the interesting exception of Revelation.

[92] Hengel 1987:359n7, citing R. Deichgräber, *Gotteshymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit* (StUNT 5) 1967:44f.

"[the syntax of] *The Songs of the Sabbath*...supports the editor's impression that they were designed to evoke the feeling of being in the heavenly sanctuary and in the presence of the angels. Yet there is no reference to any individual's ecstatic trance or ascent to heaven, nor to the perils which esoteric tradition associated with such experiences." (200-01).

In other words, the Shirot do not provide explicit *literary* representations of how participants would be involved or of the dangers accompanying the attempt of the individual ritualist to enter heaven. The Hekhalot texts contain a number of references to both phenomena.

The issue of portrayal of individual ascent will be dealt with first. In the Hekhalot literature, the narratives and framing devices—representations of individuals entering trance and discussions of individuals undertaking rituals such as those for ascent to heaven—are contained in prose. It is the visions themselves that contain poetic and liturgical features. Indeed, comparison of the one narrative representation within the Hekhalot literature of a person being *watched by others while ascending to heaven* reveals the fundamental difference at work here.

In the episode of the recall of R. Nehunia b. Ha-Qana from trance, R. Nehunia, seated in the Jerusalem Temple, performs an ascent to heaven in an ecstatic state in the presence of his disciples.[93] He narrates his experiences to his students, who are eagerly taking notes. When Nehunia, describing the stages of his ascent, makes a statement that his students do not understand, he is recalled from ecstasy in order to explain it to them. From the modern point of view, this corroborates the famous later statement of R. Hai Gaon that the ascent is performed entirely privately, within the participant's head. For more than one

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[93] The events appear in Hekhalot Rabbati (Schäfer, *Synopse* §§202-27). For discussion see Gershom Scholem, "The Halakhic Character of Hekhalot Mysticism" (1965:9-13) and Lawrence Schiffman, "The Recall of Rabbi Nehuniah Ben Ha-Qanah from Ecstasy in the Hekhalot Rabbati" AJS Rev I (1976)269-81 (*non vidi*).

person to have access to the experience, the ascent must be publicly *performed* for a passive audience who gain access to the events by proxy. The didactic purpose is so prominent that the ascent is temporarily aborted when a student asks a question. From the point of view of linguistic anthropology, the passage represents a metapragmatic narrative; that is to say, a story containing a programmatic message about how to understand and do the type of things done in the story.[94] The question of whether it contains even a kernel of historical authenticity, let alone an authentic report of an event (cf. the claim of Paul in II Corinthians 12) is less important than the theory of mystical experience it transmits. This theory is one of totally private experience that cannot be shared, only transmitted by being narrated and performed for didactic purposes.

Evidence of ritual behavior at Qumran suggests a different model, where an apposite note of Baumgarten helps answer his own question: unlike the predominantly first-person singular apocalypses and Hekhalot texts, narrated in the past tense, the Shirot are "phrased from the perspective of a *plurality* [my italics-S.L.S.] of human observers" (201) and describe ongoing present-tense activity. The explanation of this crucial difference seems to come in the generic form and ritual role of the Shirot as public texts, used in group worship. At this stage there is no sign of the widely recognized later conflict between the

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[94] Greg Urban (1984) provides an elegant demonstration of the concept. The only previous application to an ancient text (which is moreover an important part of the Hekhalot corpus) is Naomi Janowitz's *The Poetics of Ascent: Theories of Language in a Rabbinic Ascent Text* (1989). To my knowledge, Janowitz's work has only been taken up by scholars of linguistics and anthropology (see e.g. her earlier contribution to Elizabeth Mertz and Richard J. Parmentier, eds. *Semiotic Mediation: Sociocultural and Psychological Perspectives* [Orlando, Academic Press:1985]). It is mentioned in Rebecca Lesses' equally important and original work, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1997) but Lesses chooses to use a model of ritual action derived from Austin's Speech-Act theory, which I find difficult to apply to such heavily redacted texts. In the main, this area of Jewish Studies has remained sealed off from anthropological and linguistic research.

publicly sanctioned and ritually safe "exoteric" prayer of everyday Jewish liturgy and the ritually dangerous private "esoteric" experience of heavenly prayer before God. The lack of danger reflected in the Shirot seems to correlate with the normative public quality of the Shirot as a liturgy. The opposition has been remarked on[95] but its phenomenology and politics not explained. Qumran may help solve the problem by historicizing it since it shows a stage where the essentials of later mystical material are present but the divide, linguistically marked in the texts by a shift from the plural of public liturgy to the singular of private experience, has not yet happened.[96] This may provide the key to understanding changes in the subject positions implied in our texts and explain the formal, linguistic and ritual basis of the potentially vacuous term "congregational mysticism," sometimes used to describe the Qumran attitude towards prayer.

The most plausible explanation of these texts' commonalities is that there was a set of poetic techniques transmitted among Jewish circles who were not only speculatively interested in but also ritually committed to the visualization and worship of the heavenly temple. The archaism of some of these texts' elements and their partial independence from biblical language and views suggests that they continue older Jewish liturgical traditions not represented in the Bible and not necessarily directed towards or performed in the Jerusalem Temple. The archaeology of worship in ancient Israel suggests that there had to be liturgies outside of Jerusalem, and our Hellenistic materials may represent

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[95] e.g. by Grözinger 1980.

[96] This may also have bearing on the question of the time and manner in which the substantial amounts of early mystical material known from the Medieval and modern Siddur entered the synagogue liturgy. The problem was recognized and defined by Bloch in his study of "Die *Yorde Merkavah*, die Mystiker der Gaonzeit und ihr Einfluss auf die Liturgie" (Bloch 1893) and its study advanced by Bar-Ilan 1987. The typological solution implied here would historicize the theory advanced by Lawrence Hoffman on "Censoring In and Censoring Out" as a function of liturgical language (Hoffman 1981).

their descendants.

This discussion also suggests, then, the danger of working from disconnected texts in "literary" contexts with the assumption that "literary" is something naturally and obviously in contrast with "practical" or "ritual." This has represented the overall drift in studies of apocalyptic and early mystical literature in the past few decades since Scholem. Such an assumption may be influenced by the modern academic textual situation in which materials are available in discrete books and connections between the texts are made by memory or copying; it has less heuristic value for the ancient world.

Conclusion

Baumgarten raises a fundamental methodological question regarding attempts to explain the Shirot (and the "new" elements in Hellenistic apocalyptic literature in general) from the Bible alone. He asks "whether it is feasible to attempt to limit a developed complex of visionary ideas exclusively to the medium of textual exegesis". He himself suggests a negative answer: "The interpretation of the *Sabbath Songs* is not likely to be reducible to a one-dimensional search for biblical antecedents." (201) The materials analyzed in this chapter support Baumgarten's conclusion.

A comparison of images of the heavenly temple in the biblical sources with earlier Mesopotamian and Ugaritic and later Hellenistic materials reveals pervasive elements that cannot be accounted for by biblical images of the Jerusalem Temple, nor by contemporary archaeological parallels. These include: 1) building materials of brick rather than stone, and the prominence of lapis lazuli for the biblical accounts (a material which, interestingly, does not appear in the Shirot, again suggesting independence), 2) the personification or

animacy of temples or their features, also known from Sumerian and Aramean sources, 3) the use of the number seven as way of structuring space and groups in otherworldly locations, 4) the dominating presence of song, related to the personified architectural features. These elements conclusively rule out purely "exegetical" explanations of the Hellenistic imagery. The first is an ancient feature of Near Eastern temple architecture preserved in myth and picked up in different ways by the biblical and Hellenistic pictures of the heavenly temple (if "brick" is derived by the Shirot's authors from Exodus, why is lapis lazuli not picked up, despite its prominence in Exodus and Ezekiel?) The second is an archaic and widespread ancient Near Eastern temple feature, restricted in the Bible to the patriarchal narratives where altars are named and thus not connected to exegesis of the Jerusalem Temple. The third is a feature of ancient Near Eastern ritual language not present in biblical accounts of either heavenly or earthly temples. The fourth can be traced to the formal features and mythic content of temple hymns.

Comparison of the ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic temple texts with the biblical ones also leads to certain fundamental questions about genre. Ancient Mesopotamian literature knows a poetic genre of Temple Hymn, consisting of descriptions and praise liturgically directed to both the temple and the god that resides there. Conclusive proof that the genre existed in developed form in West Semitic literature has been provided by Richard Steiner's edition of Papyrus Amherst 63, an Aramean liturgy of the fourth century B.C.E. or earlier which also provides proper names and extensive praise for individual temples.[97] Isolated elements of this genre appear in the Hebrew Bible in a

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[97] This exceedingly difficult text is still being edited but knowledge of the text, based on the pioneering work of Steiner, Nims, Vleeming and Wesselius, has advanced far enough for Steiner to produce an extended translation, published (with previous bibliography) in Hallo and Younger, eds., 1997.

recontextualized form, lacking any clear indication of how they were used in regular ritual; there are no real temple hymns in the Bible. Descriptive texts concerning the Temple appear instead in prose, as building accounts, theophanies, and architectural fantasies. In the Hellenistic period this lost genre emerges into the light in a vigorous form, conveying an autonomous form of mythic speculation concerning the heavenly temple.

Examining texts about the heavenly temple from the point of view of genre allows one to suggest a new explanation for the apparent explosion of interest in heavenly temples in Jewish apocalyptic: these apparently new materials build on an ancient and to some extent common Near Eastern hymnic tradition barely attested in the Bible. Temples outside of Jerusalem provide a possible physical and ritual context for the use of these hymns. We are thus able to document not only in the ancient Near East but within early Jewish tradition itself a stream of Israelite religion only dimly hinted at in the Hebrew Bible.

Chapter Five
Divine Personae in Mesopotamian Exorcism
and Qumran Prayer

In the course of the past four chapters, it has become increasingly apparent that changes in the generic form of religious texts bear a complex and active relationship with changes in religious practice. This was empirically shown, first, in the shifts in genre in ancient Mesopotamia, as pseudepigraphy and the rise of scribal genealogies at Uruk were correlated with the loss of native kingship and the rise of Adapa as a central religious hero. The scribes both formed new genres and, on the level of daily practice, also read their identities in them, as their pervasive use of apkallu-seals and genealogical insertion of themselves into these lists indicates. Second, the modification of texts in relationship to the development of religious identities is also apparent in the way that the account of the Jordan Crossing is contested in the variant literary editions preserved to us in the Versions of Joshua: ongoing processes of editing play out vital issues of history and ritual partly constitutive of Israel's identity. Third, the question of textual genres—their presence or absence, their preservation and use—opens up questions in the history of ritual practice, as with the Near Eastern temple hymns that seem to surface as mystical liturgies in the Hellenistic period, revealing a kind of communal sacred space generated through ritual activity. We have explored concrete examples of the ritual identification with a sage, the linkage between the textual mediation of revelation and textual representations of sacred space, and the liturgical generation of sacred space, generative forces behind the apocalyptic heavenly journey's history and form.

It is now time to ask a final question: how might an individual human

being interact with the ongoing life of a myth or a genre? To put this in terms of the dissertation's organizing question: to understand the history of the heavenly journey, we must ask how one becomes or becomes able to imagine the *kind of person* who can make the heavenly journey. Our goal would be to see how, at specific points in history, an interpreter might have changed a literary or ritual text in this direction, so that a participant might enact or enter into a new way of acting ritually or a new way of describing themselves. While this cannot detail the condition of the subject, it can examine key points in the history of important religious texts. To the extent that these texts document daily ritual practices and basic ways that the subject has of relating to the universe, it can provide the grounds for a history of the religious subject.

This chapter will first detail a change in the way a special kind of human subject is described in literary texts. In the Ethiopic and Slavonic books of Enoch, the character of Enoch is portrayed in a succession of related texts as possessing more and more of the type of knowledge which used to be a defining factor of the divine. We can identify these changes as literary techniques, including shifts in pronouns and the transfer of a formulaic set of attributes from one type of literary character (God or the angels) to another (Enoch). Then the chapter will explore how a comparable change plays itself out in a different, less "literary" genre, the Mesopotamian exorcistic texts introduced in chapter two. The speaker portrays himself, in the earlier Akkadian texts, as summoning a divine messenger, but in an important later Akkadian text as himself being a divine messenger with an exclusive type of divine knowledge. Since we observe these changes in a text, we can identify them as literary. But the fact that the text in question is designed for ritual practice reopens the questions raised in the introduction: when does a textual form

(such as a "performative", which can be defined grammatically and has a purely textual existence) become an action (a "speech act," a specific event that changes social reality)? When do texts enter into discourse and apply to human beings in more durable ways than simply being read or spoken? It would seem that religious ritual is one area where we might be able to find evidence of such changes through the traces they leave in texts.

The chapter will then analyze the history of a Canaanite myth as it is reinterpreted and as it switches genres from Ugaritic epic to Israelite prophecy to Qumran prayer. When compared, the Mesopotamian and Qumran texts suggest a model for the way human beings could insert themselves into an apocalyptic situation, not via some putative metaphysical transformation[1] but through adopting a type of ritual persona. The presence of this phenomenological change in the history of a set of ritual texts, paralleling such a phenomenological change in the history of a set of literary texts, suggests that we understand certain Qumran prayers as apocalyptic rituals, analogous to apocalyptic myth.

1. The Subject of Apocalyptic Knowledge

In an important article on the topic of "Lists of Revealed Things in

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[1] I have in mind here Elliot Wolfson's important comments regarding the definition of "mysticism" in his "Mysticism and the Poetic-Liturgical Compositions from Qumran" (1994a). Wolfson's proposal of an alternate model of mystical experience not derived from Neoplatonic sources is highly significant. But in attempting to identify "mystical" texts, he adopts the criterion of "practices designed to produce ontic transformation." This is problematic: we do not, to my knowledge, find an interest in describing the *experience* of ontic transformation at Qumran or anywhere in ancient Mesopotamia (Israelite prophetic literature may thus be significantly different here). To some extent this is a question of literary genre: the diary and confession are not well-established forms in the ancient Near East. While I am happy to abandon the term "mysticism" here, it is generally recognized that the Qumran material I will be discussing stands in an intimate, if complex and shifting, historical relationship to later Jewish mystical literature and practices. The sort of transformation I wish to track is no longer accessible to us on the level of experience, but it was demonstrably produced on the level of *discourse*, where it is still available to us to the extent that we can read the texts.

Apocalyptic Literature" (1976), Michael Stone noted that there was an ancient, widespread, and genre-spanning type of speculative list which served strikingly different purposes. In wisdom literature such as Job and apocalypses like IV Ezra,[2] the authors use lists of cosmic secrets to discriminate rhetorically between human and divine: the secrets, as things which only God can know, are definitive of divine knowledge and human limitation. But the same sort of list is used in texts such as the Enoch literature to violate this barrier: in a visionary account, the seer claims to have learned these very secrets, one by one. As Stone says, "That which is impossible for man, that which is proclaimed as a parade example of God's dominion over His creation, precisely that is revealed to the seer and recorded by him." (428)

One aspect of Stone's list form must be stressed: its function is not determined strictly by genre. It is used negatively, as a sign of human limits, in both Job and IV Ezra. The list itself is not inherently apocalyptic nor does it always have a function one usually associates with apocalyptic views. The form exists and must be analyzed independently of genre restrictions. On the other hand, it appears that the only positive uses of the list form are in apocalyptic literature. This positive use is related to the revelation concerning the nature of history and the universe which is a defining feature of the genre apocalypse. It appears that the thematic change which this list undergoes, from use as a negative to use as a positive example, is confined and specially related to apocalyptic.[3]

The change in the way lists of cosmic secrets are used is conveniently

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[2] The concept of knowledge of nature as a criterion for separating human from divine has a wider distribution than this list form, e.g. Psalm 147, Proverbs 30.

[3] Stone characterizes the reuse thus: "...an interrogative formulation can be moved from a pure Wisdom context to one in which, in both content and form, it refers to and is relevant to the secret tradition of apocalyptic speculation." (426).

exemplified by parallel evidence which Stone drew from the reuse of a single

secret: the number and names of the stars. First, Psalm 147:4-5:

מנה מספר לכוכבים לכלם שמות יקרא

גדול אדנינו ורב כח לתבונתו אין מספר

He reckoned the number of the stars; to each He gave its name
Great is our Lord and full of power; His wisdom is beyond reckoning

Here the Psalmist makes the well-known innumerability of the stars[4] testify to the

incomparability of God's wisdom—God's ability to give number, mispār, to the

stars shows that humans could not possibly produce a reckoning, mispār, of His

wisdom.[5] The Psalmist portrays God as the master of incomparable cognitive

power. It is this cognitive power which is in turn contested and assumed by

humans in our later texts. Thus, Enoch reporting on his visionary journey in the

Hellenistic *Book of Similitudes* (I Enoch 33:3-4):

"And I saw how the stars of heaven come out, and counted the gates out of
which they come, and wrote down all their outlets, for each one individually
according to their number and their names...as the angel Uriel, who was with
me, showed me. And he showed me everything and wrote it down, and also
their names he wrote down for me..."[6]

Here the visionary participates in what was, for the Psalmist, exclusive divine

knowledge. But the agency is mixed: Enoch does not do it alone, but is shown

everything by Uriel. Further, there seem to be two parallel versions of the same

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[4] A feature already stressed in God's promise of offspring to Abram in Genesis 15:5:
הבט נא השמימה וספר הכוכבים אם תוכל לספר אתם

[5] What is striking here is that it is not God's *creation* of the stars that testifies to his superiority but
his *counting and identifying* of them: the Psalmist portrays God's wisdom as *earned*. A very similar
situation obtains in Job 28:24-7, which narrates an account of God's discovering wisdom in the
course of creating the universe.

[6] Ed. and trans. M.A. Knibb in Sparks, ed. 1984:219-220.

event narrated here: first Enoch writes down the outlets of each star by number and name, and then Uriel performs the same task. The textual situation is probably disturbed,[7] but in the text as it stands the parallel versions serve to stress the point that Enoch is now participating in divine knowledge on the same level as the angels, and that he is depicted as performing the same act of numbering as the angel. With angelic assistance, the model sage reaches the same level of knowledge as heavenly beings.

Next we will turn to a similar passage from the apocalyptic text best preserved in Slavonic and known to scholarship as II Enoch:[8]

"I know everything, and I have written down in books the extremities of the heavens and their contents...I have fully counted the stars, a great multitude innumerable. What human being can conceive the circuit of their changes or their movements...? The angels themselves do not know even their numbers. But I, I have written down their names." [II Enoch 40:2-3 (short recension)][9]

Enoch claims to have recorded the number and names of the stars, but this time his acts are not only performed without angelic assistance but actually exceed the angels' abilities. In this display of cognitive power Enoch has surpassed the angels and stands second only to God.[10] In each of these texts, the issue is not

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[7] One could contrive an argument that the action of recording was deliberately duplicated, but this would have to go far beyond the present passage in order to become convincing.

[8] As Anderson states in his thorough and balanced introduction to the text, "All attempts to locate the intellectual background of II Enoch have failed." (in Charlesworth, ed. 1983:95-7). Its theology shows important analogies with the Qumran sectarian texts (speculative interest in creation, emphasis on fear of God, strict ethical restrictions, obsession with calendar and Halakha, emphasis on the figure of Melkizedeq) but cannot be directly connected to them (if the calendar is the same, the *Halakha* is different and there is no interest in Jewish history or figures like Moses or Abraham). In our current state of knowledge it is best to view II Enoch as an important but highly individual collection of apocalyptic Enoch traditions from Late Antiquity.

[9] I quote from the edition and translation of Anderson, noted above.

[10] One could go on to illustrate a further point in this trajectory in the Merkavah text known as III Enoch (text in P. Schäfer et al., eds.1981 §§1-80), where the former Enoch undergoes a transformation into an angelic viceregent of God, referred to as קטון יי or "the little Lord," dominant over all the angels (see. e.g. §15, §73).

merely one of knowing in an abstract sense but of performing an action of numbering. First God, then Enoch is depicted as having counted and therefore being able to recount, to produce a transmittable record and therefore an authoritative teaching. Enoch's wisdom has become exactly like God's with respect to the stars.

"What is of particular interest in the material described above," Stone points out, "is the shift in the subject of the action." (428). A form of cognitive power that had been distinctively divine is now attributed in increasing measure to a model human. Just as significantly, in this body of texts the knowledge is being related in the first person. Although it is not always true in apocalypses depicting humans with revealed knowledge (see e.g. II Baruch 59), in our texts the human is the one speaking. The phenomenon of direct discourse from a Godlike sage appears to be a significant and distinctive one in the Enoch literature.

It is possible, then, that an entrée to the question of the practical dimension of apocalyptic knowledge might be gained if we could find evidence of a change in the speaking subject of a ritual text, corresponding to this change in the literary portrayal of the subject of divine knowledge. The change would not need to be some sort of total transformation in the subject's consciousness, which is in any event not registered in any ancient Near Eastern ritual text of which I am aware, but merely a clear change in the *persona* of the speaker. We are not looking for mystical diaries but self-predications. If we could then find evidence of meaningful and concrete interrelationships between the ritual texts and the literary ones our case would be built. We would have evidence of a human *performance* of divine knowledge tied to this literary representation of it.

We can now examine two sets of ritual texts available which exemplify

the phenomenon of change in ritual persona. The texts are attractive examples for comparison because they are formally similar on two levels: rhetorical and exegetical. Rhetorically they are both cases of a speaker who asks rhetorical questions about himself.The rhetorical level is thereby intimately related to the phenomenological level, because the rhetorical purpose of the question is to emphasize the speaker's adoption of a divine persona. A rhetorical question has been defined as "A question to which no answer is expected, or to which only one answer may be made."[11] Rhetorical questions work by subverting the conventional function of a question: to ask for information. Rather than looking for information, a rhetorical question is an attempt to trigger a change in the hearer, a rhetorical effect. In the context of ritual performance, rhetorical questions can work to call the identity and actions of the speaker and hearer into play by pointing deictically to their own contexts, to the people saying and hearing them.

The second similarity is that the texts have similar exegetical functions, in that they invoke, recall and invert previous texts, invoking the dimension of historical change. The reuse that the texts make of earlier materials can be described as exegetical in that there is an explicit literary link, in the form of a reused formula, between two texts within a tradition—in this way analogous to the phenomenon of Aggadic exegesis: "...where the second text...uses a segment of the first...in a lexically reorganized and topically rethematized way."[12] Here, "exegesis" is a way of relating to authoritative tradition:

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[11] American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1980 ed. A competing definition, contradictory at first glance, allows us to sharpen our understanding: "a question asked merely for effect with no answer expected." (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary 1980 ed.). Now, is there one answer expected or none? Certainly there are rhetorical questions that can be answered, usually in a tone of confirmation or resignation to the asker's intentions; the point is that the question is asked with an answer already in mind: no new *information* is being requested.
[12] Fishbane 1984:285.

summoning it up and changing it. But our texts are not "literary" in any commonly recognized sense: the first tradition is one of incantation and the second is one of prayer. This means that here "exegesis" is a way of changing ritual and thus the basis for the experience of the ritual. It may thus help us understand how a religious experience can be invoked and changed by citation and re-citation.[13]

2. Divine Personae in Mesopotamian Exorcism: mannam lušpur "Whom shall I send?"

The context for our first major example is the tradition of Mesopotamian medicine. Like the practice of the Jews of late Antiquity which we know from the incantation bowls[14], Geniza fragments[15] and Talmud, the practice of Mesopotamian medicine cuts across modern boundaries of exorcism, prayer, and professional medical procedure. The āšipu "exorcist" was a normal part of both temple and community who performed all of these roles.[16] This tradition is embodied in a corpus of texts with a wide imaginative and practical range, including everything from helping babies to sleep to sending demonic illnesses back to the netherworld. Within this tradition, as discussed in chapter two, an important formula is the the question mannam lušpur-"whom shall I send?" [17]

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[13] For analogous arguments about contemporary discourse, including law and "hate speech," see Butler 1997.

[14] The corpus of incantation bowls and amulets is large and continually growing. The four richest collections are Montgomery 1913 (to be read with the review of J. N. Epstein, REJ 1921, 1922), Isbell 1975, and Naveh and Shaked 1987 and 1993. The latter two works contain especially useful reflections. Valuable observations on the place of the bowls in the history of Aramaic and magical and literary tradition appear in scattered form in the reviews and essays of Jonas Greenfield ז״ל; see his Festschrift for bibliography.

[15] See now the groundbreaking collection by Schäfer and Shaked 1994-6 as well as Naveh and Shaked 1993:147ff. Recent surveys of Jewish magic are Schäfer JJS 1990 and P. S. Alexander in Schürer 1973-86 III/1:342-80.

[16] On Mesopotamian medicine see the note in chapter two on Maqlû, *ad loc.*

[17] Farber 1990a.

Mannam lušpur is a rhetorical question, a form of apostrophe in which the exorcist elicits the attention of a divine helper. The reciter wonders helplessly out loud how he will get the attention of those powerful but distant beings. The rhetorical question itself helps close the gap between victim and divine helper and is followed by a series of precative forms, addressed to the very beings who were so far away in the previous line. Part of the magic of the incantation is the very way that the expression of a lack resolves the lack. The pattern is expressed in this Old Babylonian example:[18]

[1]Whom shall I send with orders (manna lušpur u luwa??ir) [2]To the daughters of Heaven, seven and seven [3]whose pots are of gold, whose jugs [4]pure lapis lazuli. [5]May they take their pots of gold, [6]their jugs of pure lapis lazuli! [7]May they draw pure sea water [8]may they sprinkle, may they extinguish [the diseases...]

Typical of the first-millennium reworking of these older materials is Maqlû, the most extensive Babylonian exorcistic ritual preserved to us. In the introductory section, the speaker claims that he is besieged by an evil force, personified as a witch or witches of uncertain identity but of overwhelming knowledge and power. The Maqlû ritual therefore constructs a persona for the speaker which is powerful enough to locate, immobilize, and defeat the evil force in magical and legal battle before the courts of heaven and the underworld.[19] Here I present excerpts from Tablet I, incantations 4 and 5:

| 50 | šiptu akla nēbera aktali kāra the quay | Incantation: I block the crossing, I have blocked |
| 51 | akla ipšīšina ša kalīšina mātāti | I block the magic of all lands |

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18 Ed. Farber 1990a; for full citation see the previous presentation in chapter two.
19 For an extensive excerpt and commentary, see chapter two.

52 Anu u Antu išpurûinni   Anu and Antu sent me, (saying:)

53 manna lušpur ana Bēlet Şēri   "Whom shall I send to the Mistress of the

                                                      Steppe?"

...   ...

60 ina qibīt iqbû Anu Antu u Bēlet Şēri   By the decree that Anu, Antu and the Mistress

                                                      of the Steppe spoke!

tê šipti   End of incantation

Incantation 5

61 šiptu šaprāku allak u^{??}urāku adibbub   incantation: I am sent—I go! I am ordered—I

speak!

62 ana lēt//līt kaššapīya u kaššaptīya   To /pun: against the power of/ my warlock and

my   witch

Asalluḫi bēl āšipūti išpuranni   Asalluḫi, lord of exorcism, has sent me!

[incantation continues...]

The mannam lušpur theme is incorporated into Maqlû in a new form: most

other instances are brief incantations focused on a medical problem. In Maqlû,

by contrast, the mannam lušpur formula is integrated into a large complex and

dedicated to fighting a sort of cosmic evil represented by an unknown but

extremely powerful witch. The old themes of the incantation are present, but

have been integrated into separate contiguous incantations. Before the theme

is introduced, the speaker makes a claim to superior knowledge (incantation 2).

The speaker identifies the problem but inserts himself into the text via an

inversion of the old rhetorical question. The speaker sounds the old theme of

water-carrying, but this time it is the speaker who is carrying the purifying water

to the gods. While the claim to be a divine messenger is known already from

Sumerian incantations, the *mannam lušpur* formula never appears in Sumerian, and all other instances of the formula summon a divine being who is different from the speaker. Here the two previously distinct forms are worked together: the speaker himself claims to be the one sent, playing on the language of the Old Babylonian exemplars ("I am sent!...I am ordered!") in an act of authorization. Phenomenologically, the formula is also used in a new way: the speaker is not sent to *come down* from heaven to earth to solve a mundane problem but to go *out* from earth to indict the witch in the court of the gods. The changes worked in the speaker's identity are part of a drama of cosmic judgment which it is the business of this ritual to precipitate.

In the context of first-millenium Mesopotamian culture, Maqlû forms an incipient new phenomenological type which is of interest to the history of apocalyptic. The situation of Maqlû may be described thus: there is something deeply wrong with the world as the result of the actions of a demonic force. The ritual functions to advance the speaker to a level of divine knowledge and power such that he can elicit cosmic judgment against this evil force and set the universe back in order. It does this via a series of ritual actions (such as burning of incense and figurines of the witch) and verbal statements which cast the speaker in the role of a divine messenger with the cognitive power to recognize the witch and the magical authority to journey to the otherworld to accuse the witch. Just as significantly, the speaker places himself in this position by inverting a traditional formula.

Excursus: The Lucifer Persona in Canaanite Myth

Our second major example also stands in a line of formulaic rhetorical questions: מי כמכה באלם "Who is like you among the gods?" Remarkably, just

as the Akkadian mannam lušpur formula was merged with the Sumerian

Legitimationstyp, so we will witness in our Qumran text the merging of the

ancient Hebrew mî kāmōkā hymn with a Canaanite myth concerning a usurper of

the divine throne. In order to understand our Qumran text's radical break with its

Biblical antecedents, it is necessary to see its continuity with a sustained mythic

argument over who was capable of ascending (ʿlh) to the divine realm and

sitting (Ugaritic yṯb, Hebrew yšb) in the throne of a god. The earliest example

known to us in Canaanite myth is found in the Ugaritic epic of Baal, in the

dispute over who will be Baal's successor. Thus, KTU 1.6 I.56-65:

apnk.ʿṯtr.ʿrẓ/	Thereupon terrible ʿAṯtaru
yʿl.bṣrrt.ṣpn/	climbs the heights of Ṣapānu
yṯb.lkḥṯ.aliyn/bʿl	sits on Mighty Baʿlu's seat.
.pʿnh.ltmǵyn/hdm	(But) his feet do not reach the footstool
[.]rišh.lymǵy/apsh[20]	his head does not reach the top (of the seat).
.wyʿn.ʿṯtr.ʿrẓ/	(To this) terrible ʿAṯtaru responds:
lamlk.bṣrrt.ṣpn /	"I will not be king on the heights of Ṣapānu."

[20] This is the only *hapax legomenon* in the passage cited. Although the general sense of *aps* is clear from context (that part of the throne where the head would rest), its etymology is still uncertain. It may therefore be of interest to investigate one possibility a bit further here. The connection of this word's Hebrew cognate אֶפֶס "end, extremity" with Akkadian *apsû* in its mythic sense as "primordial underworld water" is plausible because of the shared notion of remoteness. This was already pointed out by Hermann Gunkel in his *Schöpfung und Chaos* (p. 46) (a correction to Pope's note in VTS 2.72 ascribing it to Gunkel's close collaborator Zimmern is in order). But this etymology presents us with a problem: the long final vowel of *apsû* (the result of a historical collapse of two originally separate vowels) would be expected to result in a final long vowel in a Hebrew loanword, as in Akk. kussû (<Sum. g uz a) > Heb. כֵּס /כֵּס (though the quality of the Hebrew final vowel is problematic, and derivatives of a variant form going back to an original *kursi are attested in Arabic and various Aramaic dialects). Now, it is well known that Akk. *apsû* is itself a derivative of Sumerian abzu. It may thus be simpler to derive Canaanite *ʾapsu from Sumerian via a non-Akkadian intermediary, as is done with Ug. g and Sum. g u, both "voice", and Can. הֵיכָל < Sum. é ga l (rather than Akk. ekallu, which should have resulted in an initial alef in the Hebrew; in both cases the Sumerian consonants undergo the typical devoicing -bz- > -ps- and -g- > -k-, respectively). cf. the discussion of Watson, "Non-Semitic Words in the Ugaritic Lexicon (2)" (UF 28).

yrd.ʿṯtr.ʿrẓ.   Terrible ʿAṯtaru (then) descends,

yrd/lkẖṯ.aliyn.bʿl/   he descends from the seat of Mighty Baʿlu,

wymlk.barṣ.il.klh/   And rules over the earth, god of it all...[21]

As Greenfield (1985) explains, the previous contestant, ydʿ ylḥn, was rejected because he was too weak: he could not "run (with Ba'al); with Ba'al cannot handle the lance...". Athtar's epithet ʿrẓ, cognate with Biblical ץרע "be terrifying, mighty", makes clear that he did indeed resemble Ba'al on this count. What he lacked was Ba'al's dizzying, gigantic physical size (like that ascribed to Marduk in Enuma Elish), a somatic sign of his rulership and superiority.[22] Ultimately, no one can gain Ba'al's exalted throne because they all remain *incomparable* to him.

The next example is a short passage, identified as a māšāl "similitude, parable", in the book of Isaiah, chapter 14. While the author says that the māšāl concerns "the king of Babylon" (14:4) it is not certain to what extent this is simply the evocation of an archetype. Thematic and verbal continuities with the Ugaritic

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[21] Translation by Dennis Pardee in Hallo and Younger, eds.1997:269. It is of interest to note that the first candidate for Baal's replacement, ydʿ ylḥn, is characterized in his epithet by *knowing* (whatever the real force of the debated second term of his name may be) but is dismissed as inadequate in martial prowess, which is what ʿṯtr ʿrẓ possesses in abundance, according to his name. Now, it is precisely by virtue of his military might that Isaiah's pretender to the divine throne, "who shook the earth, who made realms tremble, who made the world like a waste and wrecked its towns" (16b-17a) tried to equal God, while Ezekiel's false God attempts to rival God in wisdom.

[22] As in EE I.99-100 ullums ina ilāni lānšu mešrātušu šuttuḫā ilītam šūtur, "He was the loftiest of the gods, surpassing was his stature; his members were enormous, he was exceedingly tall" (translation of Greenfield, p. 196)

text make it likely that there is a common theme being drawn on:[23]

How are you fallen from heaven, O Shining One, son of Dawn!	אֵיךְ נָפַלְתָּ מִשָּׁמַיִם הֵילֵל בֶּן־שָׁחַר	12
How are you felled to earth, O vanquisher of nations!	נִגְדַּעְתָּ לָאָרֶץ חוֹלֵשׁ עַל־גּוֹיִם׃	
Once you thought in your heart, "I will climb to the sky;	וְאַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ בִלְבָבְךָ הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶעֱלֶה	13
Higher than the stars of God I will set my throne.	מִמַּעַל לְכוֹכְבֵי־אֵל אָרִים כִּסְאִי	
I will sit in the mount of assembly, On the summit of Zaphon:	וְאֵשֵׁב בְּהַר־מוֹעֵד בְּיַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן׃	
I will mount the back of a cloud—I will match the Most High."	אֶעֱלֶה עַל־בָּמֳתֵי עָב אֶדַּמֶּה לְעֶלְיוֹן׃	14

This passage of Isaiah is linked verbally and thematically to our Ugaritic "Lucifer" text by a cluster of motifs: a pretender to the divine throne attempts to *ascend* the heights of Mt. *Zaphon* and *sit* on a *throne* there. There are also other indications of a shared mythic background: the image of mounting a cloud refers to an epithet common to both Ba'al (who is rkb ʿrpt "the cloud-rider")[24]

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[23] It is appropriate to mention here the presence of a closely parallel Greek figure, Phaethon "the shining one" who is the son of Eos, the dawn (thus exactly the same name as our הֵילֵל בֶּן־שָׁחַר), in Hesiod, *Theogony* 986ff and suffers a heavenly fall as punishment for *hubris* in later myth. The figure is complicated by the fact that he is not always the son of Dawn (see simply OCD³, *q.v.*). Commentators have sometimes reacted by simply avoiding one parallel or the other (McKay in VT 1970 and Wyatt in *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 1973-4 represent the Hellenic and Ugaritic extremes respectively). A judicious solution was already achieved by Grelot RHR 1956, who places the complex in the context of the Mediterranean cultural sphere as a whole. Since both Athtar and Phaethon have an astral aspect as Venus (for Athtar see Mark. S. Smith in Fs. Greenfield with extensive bibliography; an earlier and broader discussion is Heimpel, "A Catalog of Near Eastern Venus Deities" *Syro-Mesopotamian Studies* 1982) it is impossible to separate the figures: we have to do here with an old and widespread myth of which the Ugaritic version is the earliest known attestation. The recent treatment of Spronk (1998) should be noted here, an attempt to separate the Ugaritic passage from the passage in Isaiah 14. While containing useful observations and bibliography, it simply avoids the thematic and lexical links noted above.
[24] For example, in KTU 1.2 iv 8, where the epithet is used in parallel with "Prince Baal." The Hebrew and Ugaritic epithets are of course cognate, the alternation between voiced and unvoiced labials shown in ʿrpt ~ עֲרָפֶל being well-known in the Semitic languages (Lipinski 1997 §10.8). The phenomenon is conveniently exemplified by Biblical Hebrew נֶבֶשׁ, versus נֶפֶשׁ in Arad ostracon 24:18; other North-West Semitic instances of נבשׁ include Ya'udic (KAI 214.17,21,22; 215.18) and Old Aramaic (Sfire, *passim*, but נפשׁ in later Aramaic dialects).

and YHWH (portrayed as רכב בערבות in Psalm 68:5).[25]

The theme appears again, this time with a link to the Canaanite culture of Phoenicia, in the pronouncement of Ezekiel against the prince of Tyre:

ואמרת אל אני מושב אלהים ישבתי בלב ימם_ותתן לבך כלב אלהים

....and [you] have said, "I am a god; I sit enthroned like a god in the heart of the seas...you deemed your mind equal to a god's..."

Although there is no reference to Zaphon or clouds here, the attempt to gain a place on a sacred mountain is present in the chapter, as is God's punishment by asserting against the would-be divinity the most basic taxonomic indicator of mortality: death.[26] The texts cited here make clear that there is a substantial and ancient mythic discourse about a figure who attempts to resemble the ruling god. He ascends, tries to take the throne, and fails miserably.[27]

3. Divine Personae in Qumran Prayer: מי כמך באלים/מי כמני באלים "Who is like you among the gods/Who is like me among the angels?"

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[25] It is possible to raise other objections to this sort of comparison, for example that Athtar is already a god while the figures in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are only trying to become gods. Such objections are both correct and trivial. Here I am guided by the methodological statement of Collins on the use of Canaanite literary parallels in the analysis of Biblical myth. In reference to the religio-historical background of Daniel 7, he writes, "The parallels are significant for the sense of the text rather than the reference...To say that the one like a son of man 'is' Marduk or the Canaanite Ba'al pertains to a different level of meaning than the claim that he should be identified as the archangel Michael...It is to say that he *functions* in a manner similar to the way Marduk or Ba'al functions in the pagan myths. This distinction is elementary but is sometimes missed by those who polemicize against religio-historical parallels" Furthermore, not only do the figures not need to be identical or fully analogous, but we can expect them *not* to be: "Literary influence ordinarily involves tearing motifs or patterns from one context and transferring them to another...What is required, then, is not holistic correspondence but *that the use of a particular image be rendered intelligible by analogy with the proposed prototype.*"[italics mine](1993:281).
[26] Barnett 1969 goes as far into the reconstruction of the text's underlying mythic imagery as the Phoenician iconographic and epigraphic evidence will allow.
[27] An excellent discussion of the mythological structure and psychological resonance of this theme, with a rich bibliography, is given by Halperin 1988a.

We now move to the Hellenistic period to investigate the second example of the ritual adoption of a divine persona. Like the mannam lušpur formula, our second example invokes and interacts with a venerable tradition. The mî kāmōkā formula finds its *locus classicus* is the Song at the Sea, Exodus 15:11.[28] This song's context in the Bible is that it was sung by Moses and the people of Israel after God drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea. The song describes God's use of wind to dominate and manipulate the sea, a muted version of the storm god's mythic combat with the sea. It diverges significantly from the language and plot details of its narrative frame, its orthography is strikingly archaic or archaizing, and after being quoted at the beginning of chapter 15 it is then cited again by incipit only a few lines later in the text. In other words, it has the appearance of an old and independent traditional song which has been incorporated into Exodus with the rough edges showing.[29] This is not of mere aesthetic or source-critical interest: what we have is a scene of a group participation in Israel's own orality, first by a group of authoritative men and then in apparent citation, taken over in the mouths of the women of the community. Because the verbal formula is keyed here to God's participation in the Exodus, an event constitutive of Israel's unity and identity[30], it is theologically central, but it is also represented as being assumed by other, theologically marginal people. The earliest use of the theme *already provides a model of its own reuse.*

[28] An important analysis of this text is Cross 1973:121-144, with previous bibliography cited there.
[29] While it is not clear that we can push its dating back into the late second millennium, Cross's statement that its language is "more consistently archaic than that of any other prose or poetic work of some length in the Bible" (121) stands. It is beyond dispute that the text is old, early first millennium or earlier. One might attribute it to some sort of later archaic poetic dialect except for the fact that we have datable evidence of first-millennium North-West Semitic poetic dialects outside the Bible and they are never this archaic. For external controls one may start by comparing the language and themes of the hymnic and prophetic literature from Kuntillet Ajrud and Deir Alla with those of Papyrus Amherst 63 and Qumran.
[30] At least for one dominant stream in the Bible's redaction.

The thematic connection of the Exodus hymn to Psalm 89, its closest Biblical parallel, was already recognized in the classical Midrashic compilation on Exodus, the *Mekhilta di Rabbi Ishmael,* tractate Šîrtāʾ.[31]

ד"א מי כמך באלים מי כמדבאלו שמשמשין לפניך במרום ש' כי מי בשחק יערוך לה'

Another interpretation: "Who is like you among the elim?" -[this means:] Who is like you among those who serve before you on high? as it says, "For who in the skies can equal the Lord...?"

Psalm 89 is harder to date; what is clear is that we have a completely different theological point, the establishment of an eternal Davidic dynasty, supported by the same sort of praise of God's incomparability (this time using a much more explicit version of the combat myth). Strikingly, the passage of *Mekhilta* which brings this text is a virtual catalog of heavenly ascents, uniting Exodus 15:11 with the themes of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. This fact is significant because it shows that Jewish exegetes independently connected the *rhetorical* question of resemblance to God, mî kāmōkā, with myths that call that question to account. What happens when ritual rhetoric is brought together with its opposite number (a myth that dares to *really* ask the question whether or not someone who is not God can resemble God)?

The phenomenological/exegetical change we have been looking for appears in a set of texts from Qumran, of which the best-preserved exemplar is designated 4Q471b, and described by its editor, Esti Eshel (1996) as a "self-glorification hymn." It seems to be a version of a type of text present in at least four manuscripts at Qumran. These texts are paleographically dated from the

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[31] Or Šîrātāʾ. The vocalization of שירה as singular, as the colophon שירה חוסון (Horovitz-Rabin 1960:152) implies and as Goldin (1971:3n1) insists, or plural (Lauterbach, followed by Strack and Stemberger 1991:276) hinges on the doubling of the song: are we to take it as *one* song or the song of Miriam *alongside* the song of Moses?

Late Hasmonean to the Herodian period, meaning the second half of the first century B.C.E. Crucially, in three of our manuscripts, this self-glorification hymn is integrated into public liturgical material. Specifically, two are part of *Hodayot* manuscripts.[32] This is significant because, although the function of the *Hodayot* in sectarian ritual is debated, there is increasing recognition of the liturgical nature of the texts.[33] As we shall see, the point of view adopted in our texts coheres with themes that are deep-seated in Qumran literature and ritual.

The manuscript which was first published, 4Q491 frg. 11, represents a significantly different text from the other three, and we will lay it aside for a moment in order to treat 4Q471b and its parallels, 4Q427 (=4QHa) frg. 7 and 1QHa col. XXVI, which seem to be manuscripts of the same text. Because the material of 4Q471b et al is present in three different manuscripts, whose conditions range from bad to miserable, it is imperative that the materials be presented in such a way that we can see exactly what is preserved and how the Mss. agree. The editor, Esti Eshel, has done a scrupulous job reconstructing the texts, but has not presented them simultaneously. Hence, the following score with minimal reconstructions:

The Qumran "Self-Glorification Hymn" (4Q471b // 4Q427 frg. 7 // 1QHa)[34]

קוֹד[ש כ]	4Q471b 1	"...holy...like..."
	4Q427	
	1QHa	
כמוֹני י[דד ל]ו	4Q471b 2	"...like me, together with..."
	4Q427	
	1QHa	

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[32] The most detailed treatment of the manuscript affinities is that of Abegg 1997.
[33] See Schuller 1994.
[34] In the following score each line of text has been given a new number for the purposes of presentation; readings of 4Q471b and 1QHa are based on the edition of Eshel; those of 4Q427 frg. 7 are based on the edition of Schuller.

תדמה בהדמה א[	4Q471b 3 4Q427 1QHa	"...could equal my teaching?..."
מי כמוני באלים[[באלים]	4Q471b 4 4Q427 1QHa	"Who is like me among the angels?..."[35]
שפתי מי יכיל מ[	4Q471b 5 4Q427 1QHa	"...of my speech who could measure? Who..."
ידיד המלך רע לק[?[רע לקדושים ולוא יבא[[ובי]	4Q471b 6 4Q427 1QHa	"Beloved of the King and a companion to the Holy Ones, and...shall not approach..."
[לי ידמה כיא[ובמ[ר לוא ידמה כ[י]א אני עם אלים מעמד]י	4Q471b 7 4Q427 1QHa	"...[and to] my [glor]y shall not compare; as for me [my] place is with angels..."[36]
[בכ מ דח[[ר לוא בפו אבני ??? לי והום או ביורים לוא[ ]וכבד[	4Q471b 8 4Q427 1QHa	"...and my glory [...] I shall not be [crowned] with gold, nor with fine gold of Ophir[38] ..."

The arrangement of the minute fragments given here agrees with that of Eshel

and is made possible by (1) the fact that 4Q427 frg. 7 and 1QHa both contain

more text, belonging to a second hymn, after the one presented here, which is

identical in both Mss. and permits fairly precise calibration (2) letter-space

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[35] The term אלים is still frequently translated "gods" in Qumran texts (see e.g. Garcia Martinez 1994:118, unchanged in the second edition) despite Yadin's clear demonstration that it always refers to angels in the Qumran literature (1962:230), citing such parade examples as 1QM 17.7. Davidson 1992:202 and Frank Moore Cross (TDOT s.v. אל, 254-5) fully support Yadin's conclusion.

[36] Although Eshel agrees that 4Q471b and 4Q427 frg. 7 are manuscripts of the same text, she does not utilize
the reading of the latter in her extensive reconstruction of 4Q471b (for which see RQ 1996:178 line 7).

[38] If the reading is paleographically accurate, it should probably be emended to אופירים on the basis of 4Q491 frg. 11 (see below) and the related Biblical phrase כתם אופיר (see Job 28:16, Isaiah 13:12, Psalm 45:10)

comparison of 4Q471b with 4Q427 frg. 7 (3) the presence of a closely related

and better-preserved text, 4Q491 frg. 11, which Eshel sees as a variant

recension of our text.[39]

On their own, the above fragments are tantalizing but practically

incomprehensible. Fortunately, there is a better-preserved variant (though

lacking the key phrase contained in our line 4). I present here a translation of

4Q491 frg. 11 based on Eshel's readings:

"...He established his truth of old, and the secrets of his devising in al[l...
hea]ven and the counsel of the humble as an eternal council [...] forever a
mighty throne in the divine council. None of the Kedemite kings[40] shall sit in it,
nor shall their nobles [...] shall not resemble my glory, and none shall be
exalted save me, nor approach me, for I have taken my seat in [the council] of
heaven and none [...] I shall be reckoned with angels, and my station in the
council of the Holy Ones. I do not desire like mortals; everything precious to me
is in the glory [...] in the Holy Dw[elling. Wh]o has been denigrated on my
account, yet who can resemble my glory? Who [...] who bear[s all s]ufferings
like me and who [end]ures evil—did it resemble mine? I have been taught, and
there is no teaching that is like [my teaching]. Who can stop me when I op[en my
mouth,] and the flow of my speech—who can measure it? Who can arraign me
or compare to my justice? [..Fo]r I am rec[koned] with angels, [and my g]lory with
the sons of the King. Not [with] gold or precious gold of Ophir..."[41]

The resonances (the language of sitting on thrones and entering

assemblies of divine beings) with Isaiah 14 are clear; the hymn evokes a text

that was studied with energy and commitment at Qumran.[42] The most striking

thing about this text is thus the question it provokes, perhaps deliberately, in a

reader's mind: is the speaker a human or a god? Scholarly consensus is solidly

[39] Though 4Q491 frg 11 is clearly related to 4Q471b et al, one may run the risk of circularity by using them for mutual reconstruction, filling out the phrases of one with the phrases of the other and thus turning texts that may merely share terms and ideas into full "recensions" of one another. The preserved fragments are probably too scanty to provide a good basis for this level of textual analysis.
[40] Figures of proverbial wisdom in Isaiah 19:11 and I Kings 5:10.
[41] Eshel 1996:184, beginning in the middle of line 3 according to her numbering.
[42] For a detailed case study of the reading and use of Isaiah at Qumran see Charlesworth 1997, esp. 209-212.

on the side of the former answer. As Morton Smith (1990) first recognized, it is implausible that anyone but a human speaker would portray the fact of sitting in the divine council (as opposed to *preeminence* in that council, often predicated of God) as an achievement, describe himself enduring persecution, brag that he is better than a king, or assert that his word will stand up in court. Most clearly, the speaker claims, twice, that he is "reckoned with angels," which an angel would not boast about. Yet the ambivalence, its proximity to hubris and blasphemy, is important. As we shall see, the speaker's persona, a phenomenological type in tension between human and divine, represents not just a literary trope but a kind of model for the self in certain varieties of Hellenistic Judaism.

The "self-glorification hymn" is blasphemous on the face of it, its outrageous self-predications most directly comparable to Isaiah's direct-discourse citation of the speech of the Shining One, son of Dawn, or Ezekiel's related quote from the megalomaniac prince of Tyre. But in the context of Hellenistic religion, especially as exemplified at Qumran, the concepts expressed here are not unexpected. The fact is that *resemblance to* and *fellowship with* angels is a constant concern of the Qumran sectarian texts.[43] Crucially for the current argument, the resemblance is expressed and generated in both literary works and liturgical texts, thus cutting across the stable and artificially inert genre boundaries we have established for "apocalyptic."[44]

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[43] For an overview, see Dimant 1996. It should be noted here that in later Jewish mystical and magical traditions, the motif of fellowship with angels is related to traditions of ascent to heaven, but there is no necessary or inherent connection between the two. As an example, the *sar ha-panim* incantation for bringing an angel down from heaven, Schäfer 1991 §§623-39, adjures the angel to reveal secrets to him ‏לחברו מספר איש כדם‎ "like a man who is talking to his friend." (thus Ms. Ox 1531). Needless to say, this text does not have to do with ascent.

[44] On the nature of genre boundaries in relation to history, see the introduction.

Resemblance to angels takes place in the Qumran texts along two main axes: ritual performance (including: 1. ritual purity practices, and 2. praise, especially the *quality* thereof) and cognitive power. Resemblance via cognitive power is modeled most clearly for the literary texts in the apocryphal episode of Lamech, Methushelah, and Enoch known to have existed in three retellings at Qumran: 1 En 106-7, Genesis Apocryphon Col. 2, and the Book of Noah.[45] The three texts each narrate the same events:

During the days when the angels descended to earth to mate with human women, Lamech's wife gives birth to an unusual child who fills the room with blinding light and blesses God as soon as he comes out of the womb. Lamech, struck by the child's resemblance to angels in terms of radiance and ability to praise God, suspects his wife of infidelity and rushes to his father Methuselah, who in turn runs to the ends of the earth to question his father, Enoch, who knows everything because 1) his "dwelling is with the Holy Ones" [I En 106, probably also in the Book of Noah but the text is damaged here] and/or 2) the angels habitually tell him everything as he is "beloved" (רחים in GnAp 2.20) of them. Enoch proceeds to reveal not only the legitimacy of Lamech's son but also his name (Noah) and the fate of the world (doom, except for Noah). Enoch thus mediates a revelation to his grandson which is normally in the apocalypses the business of an angel or God to reveal . Enoch's godlike knowledge comes from his fellowship with angels, figured locatively (he dwells with them) in I Enoch and affectively (they love him) in the Genesis Apocryphon.

It is apparent that the language of location (מעמ[ר] "[my] place" in 4Q471; כסא "seat, throne" עדה "council" מ[עו]ן "[dwell]ing" in 4Q491), as well as the language of affection and companionship (ידיד־המלך "beloved of the King," לקדושים רע "companion to the Holy Ones" in 4Q471; sharing glory and being reckoned

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[45] For a thorough and judicious discussion of the latter, see Garcia Martinez' discussion of 4QMessAr (1992). For the text of the (Hebrew) book of Noah, see DJD 1.84-86 and parallels in the Genesis Apocryphon (Fitzmeyer 1971) col. 20 and I En 106-107.

with the angels in 4Q491) find their place easily in our self-glorification texts.[46] In fact, the discourse of angelic friendship is broad-based in Hellenistic apocalypses and their descendants.[47]

How do these concepts relate to Qumran practice? An important example of sectarian rituals representing knowledge is found in a recently published Qumran text, 4Q298.[48] "The Words of the Maskil to All the Sons of Dawn" is described by its editors, S. J. Pfann and M. Kister, as a sectarian initiation ritual. The text reflects apocalyptic notions of expanded knowledge, referring to the "number of [the universe's] boundaries" (וגבלוהי מספר, frg. 3-4 ii 1) and God's weighing of cosmic measures (מדד תכני, frg. 3-4 i 6) in a way similar to that of the lists of secrets revealed in apocalyptic otherworldly journeys (cf. I En 43:2, where the stars are named, numbered and weighed in a balance) and other Qumran Wisdom texts.[49] The designation of the listeners/initiates as בני שחר "Sons of Dawn" is inseparable from the sectarians' self-designation as "sons of

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[46] It is important to note that this human intimacy with angels is strictly male. This may seem to go without saying, but an examination of the negative consequences of human *female* intimacy with angels is revealing: while the sectarians and their mythic exemplars like Enoch and the speaker of the self-glorification hymn may learn from and be close to angels, and thus become angelic themselves, texts like I En6-10 and the *Book of the Giants* narrate what happens when women do the same thing. The contact is sexual, and instead of being themselves transformed into semidivine beings, the women become pregnant with semidivine but evil giants. In the absence of that ritual purity which protects males who have truck with the divine, divinity rubs off and reproduces itself not positively through ontic transformation but negatively, through biology; rather than being exalted in heaven, the women's offspring destroy the earth. These reflections were provoked by a conversation with Rebecca Lesses (11/97).

[47] Examples range from the angel's address of Daniel as איש־חמודות "precious man", directly preceding a revelatory vision (Dan. 10:11) and the Apocalypse of Abraham's description of Abraham as "friend of God" (10:5), through Jewish Palestinian Aramaic uses of חסם to describe holy men, to the use of חסיד and ידיד, which flow together with mystical exegesis of the Song of Songs to provide the Hekhalot literature with its discourse of visionary friendship and love (alongside erotically fraught terror and danger).

[48] =4QCryptA, published in DJD 20 (Oxford, 1997).

[49] Such as 4Q418 127 6 (unpublished but cited in the discussion in DJD 20.25).

light," but it also contains a clear lexical link to the figure of hubris of Isaiah 14.[50] Here we find angelic knowledge and a radically new role for Isaiah's villain: an initiatory model.

If the evidence for resemblance to angels via cognitive power is suggestive, evidence for resemblance via ritual performance is pervasive, as Dimant has convincingly argued. The Qumran Rule of the Blessings (1QSb), appended to the Community Rule, and thus incorporated into a foundational sectarian document, blesses the initiate that God may "[judge] all the nobles by your works and what issues from your lips..." (III 27), raise him "above the heads of the Holy Ones" (IV 23) and make him "like an angel of the Presence" (מלאך פנים) (IV 25). In many ways, the self-glorification texts appear to be a realized version of these blessings.[51]

The themes of purity, cognitive power and performance are combined in a prominent ritual text, the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which we have previously discussed because of its relation to ancient Near Eastern temple hymns and its possible role in the generation of sacred space through liturgical practice. The Songs may be described both as speculative, since they give a detailed visual and auditory description of angelic praise in each of the seven layers of heaven, and liturgical, since they are keyed by rubrics to the first 13

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[50] As the only instance of the phrase בן שחר in the Bible, it is difficult to separate Isaiah 14 from 4Q298. It is interesting, as the editors note, how the phrase would be incorporated into the sectarian conceptual scheme of "light" versus "darkness:" as new members, they are the "people of dawn" who are becoming people of light by "dawning" into knowledge. If the בן שחר motif were restricted to an isolated text within Hellenistic Judaism, it might be possible to argue that the inevitable scriptural association would merely have been repressed in the minds of the participants. As the following discussion of the book of Revelation will show, positive re-use of the "dawn star" motif with initiatory connotations is not confined to this text.

[51] The connection between 1QSb, the self-glorification texts, and the type represented by Enoch is strengthened if we recall the fact that for the Merkavah mystics, the angelic intermediary par excellence is precisely the angel of the Presence, identified with Metatron, the angelified patriarch Enoch. For discussion of the different forms of this figure, with references to previous work, see Deutsch 1995:106-8.

Sabbaths of the calendrical year. The first few Sabbath songs allow us to see

how 4Q471 *et al* answer ritual questions posed in other Qumran texts.

In the Song for the first Sabbath, it is stated that the angelic company is of

incomparable ritual purity, that there is nothing unclean (טמא) in their midst

(4Q400 1 14). In the second Sabbath, the logical consequence of this

intolerance of impurity followed out: the speaker asks נחשב[נ]ו ונתהתנו מה מעונינו םהיג

מה "How shall we be reckoned among [the]m, and our priesthood, how (shall it

be considered) in their dwellings?" (4Q400 2 6). The question follows: במ]ה תעים

[מה] תרומת לשון עפרנו [What is the offering of our tongue of dust compared with

angelic knowledge?" (4Q400 2 7)The texts conjure the humble, inarticulate and

unknowing nature of the sectarians in comparison to the might and eloquence

of the angels. But like our Akkadian rhetorical question mannam lušpur, the very

asking initiates the bridging of the gap: through their ritual purity and enactment

of the very heavenly secret embodied in the Sabbath Songs—knowledge of

angelic praise—the sectarians engage in community with the divine beings.

But if the rhetoric of *resemblance* to angels via praise and fellowship in

the heavenly congregation is expected in the sectarian texts, the notion of

incomparability to angels, of superiority over them figured in the phrase "who is

like me among the angels?" is not.[52] Instead, as we have seen, these texts hark

back to myths of hubris attested in Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 14, and earlier in KTU 1.6,

in their description of a figure attempting to gain the unique throne of the

dominant god. The speaker of the self-glorification texts asserts his presence in

the עדת אלים "divine assembly", not as a prologue to dethroning the illegitimate

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[52] This is probably why the first editor of 4Q491 frg 11, M. Baillet in DJD VII, placed the fragment in the War Scroll, which is now universally recognized as an error on both paleographic and thematic grounds. Familiar with the full Ms. of the War Scroll, 1QM, Baillet recollected the eschatological promise in col. 17.7-8 that God would exalt the משרת מיכאל "dominion of Michael" over all the angels as he would elevate the ממשלת ישראל "authority of Israel" over all humans.

gods (as God does in Psalm 81) but merely to establish his presence in heaven. The sense of hubris in the earlier texts has been neutralized: Isaiah's villain or victim, dethroned and humiliated in earlier versions has become a hero, a model for the community embedded in its liturgy. All three instances of the self-glorification texts which exist in a larger manuscript context turn out to be part of communal liturgical-type texts which include verbs of praising (הללו. זמרו) in the plural imperative. The Son of Dawn is domesticated in prayer.

How is this change accomplished? From a literary point of view, the rhetoric of the "self-glorification hymn" assimilates the enthroned figure to the heavenly being Wisdom. The emphasis on teaching and self-predication, well known from Proverbs 8, is coupled with denial of the value of "gold or precious gold of Ophir" (פז...בכתם אופירם) compared to the value of secret heavenly wisdom. This harks back to Job's praise of Wisdom in Job 28:16-17 (תסולה בכתם אופיר וחכמה מאין כבלי_פז) and to the figure of wisdom *enthroned in heaven* known from ancient Near Eastern (Proverbs of Ahiqar #1 "Moreover, to the gods she is precious...she is placed in heaven for the lord of Holy Ones exalted her")[53] and Hellenistic (I En 42:2 "Wisdom...took her seat in the midst of the angels"; Ben Sira 24:4 "I dwelt in high places, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud") texts. The centrality of the figure's *teaching* in all these cases supports the likelihood that such an image is being evoked.

If the rhetoric is reasonably clear, its force is not. Is the speaker of the self-glorification texts *like* the angels or unlike them? The problem is clarified when the texts are seen in their wider literary and religious context, in this case, that of a change in status between human and angel. Already the enthronement of the human figure in the Similitudes of Enoch suggests that a righteous human

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[53] Col. 6.1. For these readings see Porten and Yardeni 1993:36-7.

could gain power above that of the angels; the eschatological Priest and royal Messiah of the War Scroll both command troops comprised of humans and angels. This newly exalted figure is like the angels, but as a human who has *changed state* he is more volatile, an image of potential and a boundary-crosser, and thus always also unlike them.

All of this is crystallized perfectly in the Apocalypse par excellence, the Revelation of John, probably written during the persecution of Christians under Domitian (reigned 81-96 C.E.). Revelation 3:21, counseling repentance and promising experience of Christ, promises that "To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne." Christ functions as an initiatory model for a change in status between human and divine. Significantly, this promise is directly followed by John's first vision of heaven (Revelation 4), full of images of angelic praise analogous with those of the Sabbath Songs. The formula for transformation is followed by a literary sample of the promised experience. At the conclusion of Revelation, Christ offers a self-legitimation which is both a striking evocation of Psalm 89's claim of divinely sanctioned kingship and a startling inversion of Isaiah 14's mythic usurper:

"It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the *bright morning star*." (22:16).

4. From the Subject of Apocalyptic Myth to the Speaker of Apocalyptic Ritual

Apocalyptic Discourse

The position of the Qumran self-glorification texts in communal prayer provides a key to their application: like the heavenly blessings recited

liturgically in the Sabbath Songs or depicted literarily in Revelation 4, assumption of the promised heavenly throne is cited as a model by the sectarians. The speaker quoted in direct discourse is of a type known from apocalyptic literature as Enoch, from the sectarian regulations as the eschatological Teacher, and perhaps from the book of Revelation as Jesus; here he is drawn on in rituals that can well be described as apocalyptic. We can thus harmonize the identifications of Eshel (the speaker is the eschatological priest), Collins (the speaker of the self-glorification texts is the eschatological teacher)[54] and Stegemann (the speaker is a communal "I" representing the hopes of the sect).[55] As a model human who assumes divine knowledge by assuming a divine voice, the figure's identity is temporarily adopted by sectarian speakers of the *Hodayot*. The hero of the books of Enoch and Revelation appears as a mask that can be adopted by one who participates in the liturgy, a possibility that makes the transformed eschatological state of the righteous available to participants.

It is now time to re-connect the Akkadian texts with the Hebrew ones. Phenomenologically, both cases of reworking exemplify a change in self-designation, the adopting in the first person of a divine persona that had previously been invoked in the second person. This means that the major change is not in the form of the text but grammatically and contextually, in the identity of the speaker. The change manifests itself through a shift in deixis and can be defined linguistically with some precision - thus Roman Jakobson:

[54] In Collins and Dimant 1994. The issue of why the words of a figure expected to appear in the future are presented in the midst of public liturgical material with no clearly marked break or indication that such a figure is expected to say such words remains a major problem for Eshel's and Collins' interpretations. The possibility that this is a type expected in the future but also existing in the present (for example, that "The title 'Teacher of Righteousness'...designates an office, not a particular person." (Gaster 1956.xii) would render such proposals more plausible.
[55] In a paper presented in Paris, 1992 entitled "Some Remarks to IQSa, IQSb and Qumran Messianism", cited in Schuller 1993:627n42.

"*I* means the person uttering *I*. Thus, on one hand, the sign *I* cannot represent its object without being associated with the latter 'by a conventional rule,' on the other hand, the sign *I* cannot represent its object without 'being in existential relation' with this object: the word *I* designating the utterer is existentially related to his utterance..." (1957)

Crucial for our texts is the tension between the first person as a matter of historical convention, which can be invoked and altered, and the first person as a linguistic gesture, pointing to the speaker and the context of utterance in the here-and-now. An interplay of tradition and reinterpretation occurs between our tradents' use of these two aspects of *I*. Because this is an enterprise of convention, it is an enterprise of authority and tradition. A speaker cannot say just anything; he is both empowered and constrained by the tradition that gives him a role: the key question is *how a speaker could invoke authority to predicate new things about himself*[56], *and thus how new kinds of subjects can come into being.* It is this process for which we have found evidence.

Indeed, Jacobson's "I" proves extremely volatile, a method by which the speaker does indeed "adopt all the powers of language on his own behalf"[57]. The composer(s) of the self-glorification texts derived rhetorical power not merely by citing authoritative texts but by authorizing a figure who had previously represented a failed attempt to achieve a throne in heaven (a strategy which Revelation's author adopts as well when he figures Jesus as the morning star).

The putative myth is present, but in the form of a *bricolage* which

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[56] I leave the pronoun in its male form because the kind of persona I wish to investigate is explicitly and significantly male. For a suggestion (which I intend to develop elsewhere) as to the cosmological consequences of this ritual maleness in its early Jewish setting, see the discussion of angelic pollution by women, above.

[57] The phrase is that of Emile Benveniste (1975).

combines and reworks older myths with different purposes. There is no continuously transmitted, single ancient myth but a series of reinventions which go back as far in time as we can trace them. Rather than any deep change in consciousness or ontic transformation, we have direct evidence for an intricate web of speech-acts and re-imaginings. We see the inversion and re-citation for new purposes of the traditional texts of Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, and Exodus 15 in a way that is similar to Maqlû's reuse of the old "whom shall I send?" formula. The question of "ontic transformation" is still open; what we can directly see is a more pedestrian but pervasive and (if the conviction evinced by the Qumran and early Christian sects is any indication) effective phenomenon: the speaking subject of ritual constitutes itself through the reapplication of liturgy and myth.

An Apocalyptic Body

But if we have discerned a pattern with respect to discourse, it remains confined to speech. While these ritual speeches invoke long-standing traditions and are repeated in liturgy such that they must have been both authoritative and durable, affecting and even partly constituting the subject speaking them, it is still not clear how such a discourse would extend to the body itself. It is therefore time to introduce the final layer of evidence: we will now see how divine-human contact becomes corporeal at Qumran.

Scholars have long remarked on the profound dualism of the Qumran world view: the sectarians are the people of light, and they oppose the people of darkness. Generally this dualism has been perceived in literary texts, and understood as a highly abstract and moralistic phenomenon, only words. But as Devorah Dimant showed in an important recent article, this approach completely misses "the concrete, material aspects of this dualism and fail[s] to

recognize its links to other facets of the Qumran community social world and literary product[ion]."(1998:59) As an "all-embracing principle divinely preordained," the dualistic configuration underlies the physical cosmic order, which is the real scene of the dualistic struggle. It has long been known that one of the main issues that separated the Qumran community from other Jewish groups was their unswerving adherence to the 364-day solar calendar, which is the subject of a number of polemics at Qumran and which separated them completely from the liturgical practice of the Jerusalem temple, which used a 360-day lunar year.

Let us now consider 4Q503, a record of daily evening and morning prayers. As its editor, Baillet (DJD VII) already recognized, the text conforms to the solar calendar of 364 days and arranges the morning prayers according to the position of the sun each day, marked by the number of gates of light through which the sun enters. The evening prayers refer to the proportion of darkness, apparently based on the visibility of the moon. This description of the solar course, synchronized to the lunar cycle, is strikingly similar to the lunisolar synchronism revealed to Enoch in the course of his heavenly journey in the Book of the Luminaries, the oldest apocalyptic heavenly ascent text, known in four copies at Qumran. A second set of calendrical documents[58] fills out this picture, linking the Qumran festivals to longer days and brighter nights, which were seen as auspicious; the moon, by contrast, was considered "a source of the dark days of evil." As Dimant notes, such a link is meaningful only if the light is perceived as "the material emanation of good." A further calendrical document[59] inserts historical events into a special chronology correlated with the 364-day year. These lists record the calculation of periods of "light" and

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[58] Calendrical Document A (4Q320) and Calendrical Document B (4Q321).
[59] Calendrical Document C[b] (4Q322).

"darkness" in history itself, in a manner similar to that of the apocalypses.

The dualism is extended to the body itself in 4Q186, an astrological physiognomy which describes the physical qualities of persons born under particular zodiac signs. Based on the features of their bodies, an individual's spiritual features are ranked on a nine-point scale, divided between portions in the "house of light" and the "pit of darkness." This ratio is apportioned to every person and decides their place in the community hierarchy according to the Damascus Document (CD 13.3). Qumran medical beliefs and practices operate on the principle of the concrete nature of the evil presence in the world. The Damascus Document connects the corporeality of the two spirits, of light and darkness, with the notion of sickness as a punishment for sin.[60] The book of Jubilees, present in no less than 15 copies at Qumran, provides a similar demonic etiology of sickness: people who sin are vulnerable to bodily attack by the descendants of fallen angels, who are located in cosmic darkness (Jubilees 10). It also describes the transmission of a book of heavenly antidotes at the hands of angels (Jubilees 10). Such healing practices are attested in the Songs of the Sage, based on the exorcism of demons by means of songs of praise invoking God.[61]

These texts order time, the body, and the cosmos on a single opposition: between light and darkness. For the sectarians, the discovery of the same organizing principle behind all three allows the possibility of putting them in synch. The presence of this principle in such practical documents as calendrical, physiognomic and medical texts allowed them to practice their dualism in a material way. This brings us back to our original questions and allows us to begin to see the sort of thinking that stands behind the ascent to

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[60] 4Q270 2 ii 12.
[61] See the analysis in the introduction.

heaven as a cause, maybe even more than a result, of a historical shift in religious practice that took place in the Hellenistic period. As we have seen, the sense of hubris in the earlier texts about Lucifer was neutralized at Qumran: Isaiah's villain or victim, dethroned and humiliated in earlier versions has been authorized as a hero; assumption of the promised heavenly throne is cited as a model by the sectarians in their liturgy. We are now able to see how this change may have been accomplished. We recall from chapter three that for Moses, the divine persona was a mask, external to his body and conferred in a single historical event by God, connected to the unique authority of the Torah. The sectarians treated the divine persona as something simultaneously less literal and more physical: it is the element of light already present in both the cosmos and each one of their bodies: it only needs to be realized through religious practice. We recall that the "Words of the Maskil," whose purpose is to initiate members by revealing wisdom about the cosmic order, addresses the initiates as "people of dawn:" the phrase seems to draw on an initiatory model that is ultimately both literary and somatic. It evokes a transformed ancient myth even as it helps initiate the new members, letting them "dawn" into beings of light who learn how that light is incorporated in their very bodies, placing them on a continuum with the angels who they are now allowed to approach. Each sectarian is able to resemble God because their bodies and rituals place them in systematic relation with Him based on their analysis of the cosmos into light and dark; unlike Moses' ascent up Sinai, this process is repeatable through initiation. We thus witness a kind of democratization of divine revelation typical of the Hellenistic period as a whole.

Conclusion

We started from a problem in the study of apocalyptic literature in general: In order to understand the Hellenistic literary phenomenon of apocalypses as a genre, it is necessary to create a static, formal definition. Such a definition gains its usefulness from the very fact that it is a retrospective and artificial scholarly construct, but at the same time this definition naturally does not help us understand apocalypses as the result of contextualized human activity. The other side of the question, then, is to investigate how specific apocalyptic elements could have arisen in the context of specific circumstances and techniques of writing and religious practice. The particular element we chose to explore was that of ascent to heaven.

The classic mode of explanation for apocalyptic themes was to narrate a history of development based on inter-cultural borrowing. The most fundamental assumption of this mode of explanation was that shared patterns were indicative of derivation. But the ability of scholars to derive apocalyptic themes from cultures in which they were interested led to the conundrum that "proof" of derivation could be found in a variety of patterns shared with a variety of ancient Mediterranean cultures. This does not mean the scholars are not right: it is likely that the apocalypse is in many ways *overdetermined* as a genre, but it does mean that linear narratives of development via borrowing are not sufficient to fully understand apocalyptic themes.

This dissertation arose in response to these problems. It was decided to approach the genre and its relationship to history and religious practice from a variety of complementary angles in an attempt to gain new perspectives. Theoretically, it was decided to focus on questions of how generic form relates to contexts of performance and changes in historical religious experience. The

tools of the philosophy of language and linguistic anthropology were chosen in order to sharpen this focus, exemplified by attention to the complex relations between performative utterances in texts and speech acts in history, and between discourse in life situations and its entextualization and transmission in written artifacts. This results in a philological program interested in the textual traces of a written artifact's insertion into performance and to the recombinant aspect of the history of genres.

Such a project requires rich textual resources: Mesopotamian scribal culture, with its textual variety and 2,000 year continuity, represents a suitable starting point. When applied to kings, the myth of ascent to heaven was used to enhance their authority: Etana was the first king and got a secret from heaven; Ishbi-Irra and Shulgi went to heaven after they died, confirming that they were gods. When applied to the primal sage Adapa, ascent to heaven had a magical-medical function, connected to his exorcistic power to mediate between worlds. Adapa's medical powers may have always had a political valence. The image of "breaking the wings of the wind," meaning to defeat a threatening foreign force (whether military-political or medical-demonic) connected Adapa with a prominent exorcistic demon and an image used in Mesopotamian prophecy to support the legitimacy of the current ruler. But the role of sage takes a definitive political turn in the Hellenistic period, after the death of native kingship. While Mesopotamian ritual experts had always identified with sages, the identification is politicized as the scribes begin to insert mythic sages into formerly exclusively royal textual genres. These sages are inserted into ancestral genealogies and become the protagonists of pseudepigraphic texts; the process reaches a peak at Seleucid Uruk where we have iconographic evidence of initiated scholars' identification with the sages through the use of seals depicting them.

The significance of the Mesopotamian materials for comparison with Second Temple Judaism should be stated explicitly: the textual and religious changes shown to be taking place in Mesopotamia are strikingly similar to those occurring in Judaism during this time. In both cultures, the rise to prominence of ancestral sages who ascended to heaven, as well as rituals involving invocation of and identification with such sages would suggest that there was indeed strong intercultural contact. But in both cases the real issue is the Hellenization of ancient Near Eastern religions, a change carried out in similar processes of correlated change in political structures and textual genres.

We then move to our second corpus, another richly attested scribal culture manifesting a spectrum of textual genres and historical strata: this is the tradition of ancient Israel as manifest at Qumran. The investigation is carried out in three comparisons of Qumran materials with earlier Biblical and Canaanite mythic and ritual texts. The first comparison shows how generative problems definitive of apocalyptic can be seen at work in the relationship between the Torah and the Bible. These include the textual mediation of revelation and sacred space through rewritings and translations, evoked here in its etymological sense of *translatio,* the transportation of a thing from one place to another. It refers to both the transfer of revelation between genres, from the legal portions of the Torah to the narratives of the rest of the Bible, and to the transfer of cosmological qualities from Mt. Sinai in Egypt to Mt. Gerezim in Israel, thus defining the sacred space and national identity of Israel. These translations are played out in variant literary editions of the book of Joshua known from the Septuagint and now from Qumran, which can also be understood as ritual variants of texts. They show that contests over the definition of Israel and the physical location of its contact with God were carried out in

subtle processes that pervaded textual editing as well as the formation of new genres such as the apocalypse.

The second comparison concerns the relationship between Biblical textual genres and the Hellenistic Jewish texts that are usually seen as their descendants. It is shown that the mystical liturgies found at Qumran, in the book of Revelation, and in the later Hekhalot literature cannot be plausibly derived from exegesis of Biblical texts. Instead, they share a vocabulary, a set of poetic techniques and a set of ritual concerns, and the Qumran texts, at least, are more plausibly derived from ancient Israelite Temple Hymns. That such hymns must have been in use in the sacred spaces of Israel itself is suggested by both the physical remains of non-Jerusalem sanctuaries and in the traces of ancient Near Eastern temple language in the description of God's throne in Exodus 24 and in Hellenistic Jewish mystical liturgies like the Qumran Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. The latter's poetic and ritual affinities with the book of Revelation and the later Hekhalot literature are evidence of a "hymnic tradition" prominent in the Hellenistic period which was connected to a praxis of heavenly visualization.

The third comparison concerns Canaanite myths of the ascent of a divine or ambivalently divine and human protagonist to the throne of the dominant god. This myth is moved across different genres, from epic to prophecy to prayer, by different writers in different historical contexts. It emerges in the Hellenistic period in the genre of prayer as part of a discourse of revealed knowledge and identification with divine beings. The technique of rhetorically invoking and inverting a traditional myth via invoking and inverting a traditional rhetorical question is explored in Mesopotamian and Israelite contexts. In both Mesopotamian exorcism and Qumran prayer, the technique is finally deployed

as part of the ritual generation of a sacred space that collapses cosmic boundaries. As Dimant has shown, this mode of discourse gains a practical correlate at Qumran. The Qumran ideology of light and darkness coordinated liturgical time, the cosmos and the body of the sectarian in a form of corporeal dualism that placed the participants on a continuum with the angels. This suggests a concrete model of how the divine personae of ancient myth could be invoked and inhabited in Qumran ritual practice.

The results of the investigation are complex. The apocalyptic heavenly journey cannot be explained by comparison with Babylonian sources, as the revival of archaic Canaanite myth, or as exegesis of Biblical texts, though each of these elements is involved. Like the genre apocalypse in general, the heavenly journey's sources appear to be overdetermined, that is, the result of a multitude of overlapping causes and convergent changes. The dissertation has tracked some of these causes and changes in discrete areas, showing ways that divine knowledge was conjured in writing and ritual performance. The most important question was seen to be not the origins of the heavenly journey but its conditions of possibility. The result is the foundation for a new sort of history: a history of the ritual subject and its traces in textual genres, how the two became apocalyptic together.

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Curriculum Vitae

Seth L. Sanders was born in Los Angeles, California in 1968 and raised in Chicago, Illinois. He attended Harvard College, where he was awarded a B.A. *cum Laude* in the Comparative Study of Religion in 1990. In 1991 he began the Ph.D. program in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the Johns Hopkins University, concentrating in Bible and Northwest Semitic Philology. From 1994-1995 he studied ancient Semitic languages at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is expected to graduate from Johns Hopkins in May, 1999.

IMAGE EVALUATION
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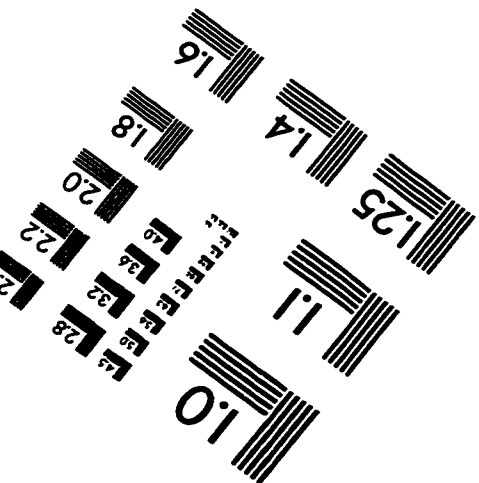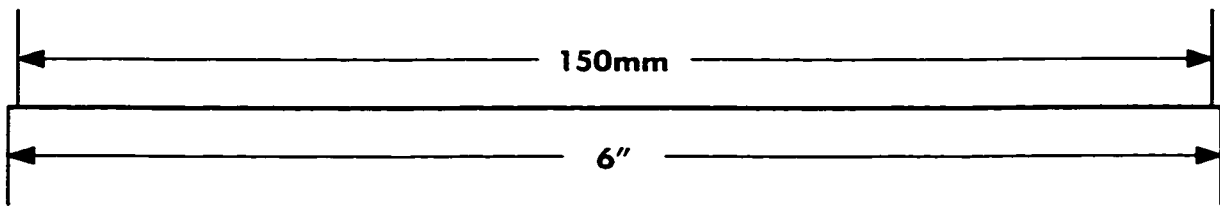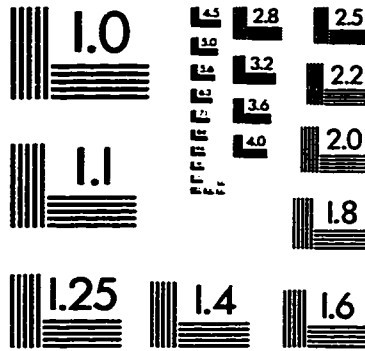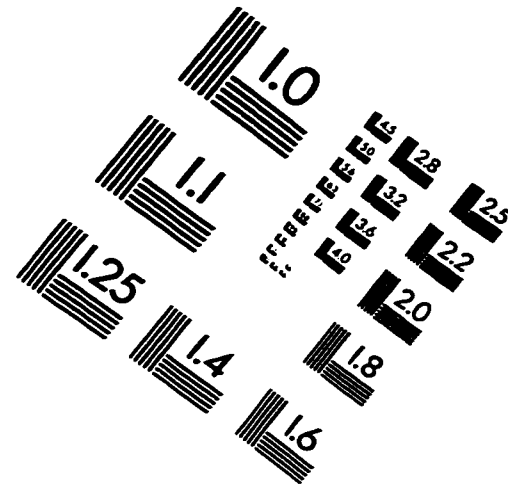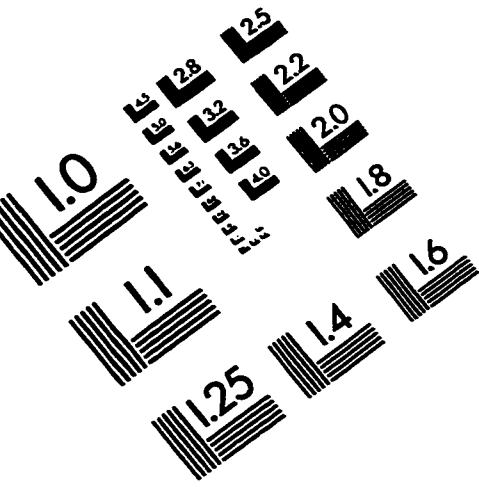
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