The Sacred History in Late Antiquity: Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and Its Relationship to the Book of Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures

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THÈSE DE DOCTORAT

de l’Université de recherche Paris Sciences et Lettres
PSL Research University

Préparée à l’École Pratique des Hautes Études

L’histoire sainte dans l’Antiquité tardive : les *Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer* et leur relation avec le *Livre des Jubilés* et la *Caverne des trésors*
(The Sacred History in Late Antiquity: *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* and Its Relationship to the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Cave of Treasures*)

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R. Akiva said to him, “Master, perhaps a heretical teaching came to you, and it pleased you, and because of it you were arrested.” R. Eliezer said: “Akiva, you have reminded me! I was once walking in the upper market of Sepphoris, and I encountered one of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth…” (b. Avodah Zarah 16b-17a).
Acknowledgments

The present work is a study of potential Christian and Muslim influences on PRE. It began life as an examination of the potential Second Temple Jewish sources, and in the end I was obliged to read nearly every primary source dealing with the history of the patriarchs and prophets—Jewish, Christian, and Muslim—from the Second Temple period to the end of the Middle Ages. Therefore, while the thesis nominally belongs to the field of Jewish studies and focuses on the Late Antique sources of an admittedly medieval work, the scope is really much broader. It is up to the reader to decide how far over my head I am. As in any academic endeavor, major or minor, I did not arrive here without considerable help from a number of parties. I would like to thank, in particular, the following people and institutions.

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A Note on Translations and Citations

All translations of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac material in the main body of the text are my own. They are always accompanied by the original text. In a few footnotes I cite existing translations of Hebrew and Aramaic material. Except where indicated, all citations of Arabic, Greek, and Latin texts are accompanied by existing recent translations. Citations from Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, and Slavonic literature are taken from recent translations, without the accompanying text. I have cited Jubilees from Cana Werman’s Hebrew “retroversion” rather than the Ethiopic text. This decision was both practical and aesthetic. Few specialists of ancient Judaism or Late Antiquity can read Ethiopic, so there is no practical value in reproducing the critical text. Aesthetically, citing Jubilees in Hebrew (which is, after all, the original language of the composition) facilitates easy comparison with the Hebrew of Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer. Hence, there are no Ethiopic citations in the study. In the footnotes, I have cited (in parentheses) translations in living languages where they exist. I have not cited Latin translations which accompanied early CSCO volumes.
Résumé

Introduction

Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer (PRE) marquent un changement majeur dans l’histoire de la littérature rabbinique. Ce livre, datant du IXe siècle, est principalement un récit de l’histoire d’Israël depuis la création jusqu’au temps d’Esther. Il s’agit de la première narration continue dans le corpus rabbinique. Ce livre est aussi, selon toute probabilité, le premier ouvrage rabbinique qui dérive de la main d’un seul auteur. L’aspect le plus remarquable est l’introduction de légendes autour des personnages bibliques qui ne se trouvent nulle part dans la littérature rabbinique classique. En revanche, on trouve ces légendes dans les littératures non-rabbiniques. Parmi elles figurent, par exemple, l’histoire des anges qui épousent des femmes mortelles (cf. Gen 6,1-4), un thème important dans la littérature juive du Second Temple, ou la chute de Satan à cause de sa jalousie envers Adam, largement représentée dans les traditions chrétienne et musulmane.

La recherche contemporaine considère la matière non-rabbinique des PRE comme un exemple de la survivance de la littérature du Second Temple dans la tradition rabbinique. La plupart des enquêtes à ce sujet lient les PRE avec le Livre des Jubilés (IIe siècle avant notre ère) en particulier. Le modèle dominant pour expliquer cette renaissance de la littérature du Second Temple est la transmission ésotérique de ces traditions dans des cercles juifs non-rabbiniques. Un second modèle consiste dans la redécouverte miraculeuse des livres anciens. En effet, des livres datant de l’époque du Second Temple ont été retrouvés dans la Guenizah du Caire, tels le Document de Damas et le Document araméen de Lévi, qui ont été découverts plus tard dans les grottes de Qumrân. Les chercheurs ont associé ces écrits avec l’émergence soudaine des


Karaïtes (juifs non-rabbiniques) au IXᵉ siècle. De plus, des citations des livres anciens (e.g., le Livre des Jubilés, les Testaments des douze patriarches) apparaissent dans les écrits médiévaux de R. Moshe ha-Darshan de Narbonne (XIᵉ siècle). En revanche, dans la plupart des cas, la littérature du Second Temple survit grâce à sa préservation par des chrétiens. À partir des manuscrits chrétiens, les juifs du Moyen Âge ont traduit en hébreu une version de Josèphe ainsi que les livres de Tobie, de Judith et même l’Évangile selon Matthieu.

D’ailleurs, il n’est pas nécessairement avéré que les sources non-rabbiniques des PRE soient d’origine juive. Des chercheurs ont noté depuis longtemps la présence des traditions islamiques dans les PRE. Autrefois, Israël Lévi a postulé la présence d’éléments chrétiens. À cet égard, Lévi a été suivi par Emmanouela Grypeou et Helen Spurling dans leur article « Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis ». Dans chacun de leurs exemples,


les auteurs nomment un livre particulier, la *Caverne des trésors* (VIᵉ siècle), qui partage une forme semblable avec le *Livre des Jubilés* et les *Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer*. Les traditions chrétienne et musulmane restent un chemin possible pour la transmission d’une matière non-rabbinique à l’auteur juif.


La méthode de la présente étude dépend de trois principes méthodologiques. Le premier principe est la supposition que les cultures majoritaires influencent les cultures minoritaires.

Israël Yuval, dans son livre *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, a formulé ce principe de la manière suivante :

*Whenever we find a similarity between Judaism and Christianity, and we do not have grounds to suggest a shared heritage, we may assume that it is indicative of the influence of the Christian milieu on the Jews, and not vice versa, unless it may be proved that the Jewish sources are more ancient.*

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Les récents travaux d’Annette Yoshiko Reed, de Shari Lowin, et Allegra Iafrate ont montré la valeur de cette méthode pour la transmission du christianisme et de l’islam vers le judaïsme. Dans le contexte de la présente étude, le Livre des Jubilés et la Caverne des trésors représentent les cultures majoritaires, le christianisme et l’islam. Celle-ci traite les Jubilés comme une source chrétienne, malgré son origine juive, étant donné que le livre a survécu grâce à la transmission chrétienne. D’ailleurs, ses traditions sont enracinées particulièrement dans celle de l’historiographie chrétienne. De la même manière, la Caverne des trésors, qui est d’origine chrétienne, était également importante dans l’historiographie musulmane.

Toutefois, Yuval formule une exception importante à ce principe : l’influence extérieure peut être exclue dans le cas où on peut expliquer une tradition à partir des sources juives. En effet, il faut préférer comme sources des PRE la littérature juive contemporaine aux littératures chrétienne et musulmane. Comme Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein l’a expliqué, la plupart des parallèles entre les PRE et la littérature du Second Temple sont déjà présents dans la tradition rabbinique. Dans ce cas, il faut établir une hiérarchie des sources possibles des PRE. La source primaire est sans doute la Bible hébraïque. La source la plus importante après la Bible est la littérature rabbinique classique. On présume que cette littérature est plus ancienne que les PRE. Enfin, on prend en compte les autres genres de la littérature juive contemporaine, comme les piyyoutim, les targoumim, les apocalypses hébraïques, et la littérature des hekhalot. En revanche, la littérature rabbinique postclassique, comme le Midrash Tanhuma, est considérée comme plus tardive que les PRE.


Au lieu de l’approche traditionnelle, qui considère les Pseudépigraphes comme une branche de la littérature du Seconde Temple, la présente étude suit la méthode décrite par Richard Bauckham, James Davila, et Alexander Panayotov, dans l’introduction de l’*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* :

> The determination of the provenance of a text, specifically whether it is Jewish, Christian, or other… is often a far from straightforward process. Texts surviving only in manuscripts of clearly Jewish origin can uncontroversially be assigned a Jewish provenance. The position of the editors is that texts found only in Christian manuscripts that circulated in Christian circles should be thought of as Christian compositions unless a convincing positive case can be made for a different origin. In other words, we should understand the texts first in the social context of their earliest surviving manuscripts and move backwards from there only on the basis of positive evidence.


Pourtant, appréhendait également aussi une tradition à propos de la chute de Satan, inconnue dans la littérature juive antérieure, mais présente dans la littérature chrétienne.

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et dans le Coran (2,30-36)\textsuperscript{24}. Les traditions des Jubilés sont plus proches du deuxième exemple que du premier : les citations des Jubilés dans les écrits de R. Moshé reflètent les traditions des Jubilés dans les sources byzantines\textsuperscript{25}. Les preuves positives suggèrent que la connaissance juive des Jubilés de la part de R. Moshé dépend de la version grecque qui circulait parmi les chrétiens.

Dans le deuxième cas, les preuves positives pour les livres d’Adam, dont la Caverne des trésors, sont exclusivement chrétiennes. Il n’existe aucune trace écrite de la Vie d’Adam et Ève à Qumrân, et le livre n’est pas cité dans les littératures rabbinique, targoumique, ou judéo-chrétienne (e.g., le Roman du Pseudo-Clément). Une Pénitence d’Adam (Pænitentia Adae) apparaît dans le Décret de Gélase, un document du VI\textsuperscript{e} siècle au plus tôt\textsuperscript{26}. Les plus anciens manuscrits de la Vie d’Adam et Ève proviennent du VI\textsuperscript{e} ou VII\textsuperscript{e} siècle\textsuperscript{27}. Pourtant, les livres d’Adam étaient extrêmement populaires jusqu’à la fin du Moyen Âge\textsuperscript{28}. À la lumière de ces preuves, l’hypothèse que la Vie d’Adam et Ève a été écrite au premier siècle de notre ère par des juifs palestiniens est peu vraisemblable\textsuperscript{29}. Cette hypothèse postule qu’une œuvre populaire a existé pendant un demi-millénaire sans laisser une seule trace. Les livres d’Adam étaient probablement chrétiens \textit{ab origine}. C’est certainement le cas de la Caverne des trésors, qui inclut la vie du Christ et rejette le judaïsme comme une religion illégitime.

Le troisième principe méthodologique est le refus de traiter les PRE, les Jubilés, et la Caverne comme des livres exégétiques. Ils ne sont ni des commentaires ni des paraphrases. Une vraie paraphrase, comme les épopées bibliques latines, n’ajoute rien à la source\textsuperscript{30}. Les trois sujets de la présente étude et des livres semblables, comme l’Apocryphe de la Genèse, le Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum ou la Palœa Historica, sont intéressants à cause de la liberté qu’ils prennent avec l’histoire biblique. Pour cette raison, on les appelle des « Rewritten Bibles »\textsuperscript{31}.

\textsuperscript{25} Voir M. Himmelfarb, « Some Echoes of Jubilees in Medieval Hebrew Literature », \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{29} Pour cette hypothèse, voir J. Dochhorn, \textit{Die Apokalypse des Mose : Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar}, Tübingen, 2005, p. 149-172.
\textsuperscript{30} Voir M. Roberts, \textit{Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity}, Liverpool, 1985.

Dans la présente étude, on utilise les termes d’« histoire sainte » au lieu de « Rewritten Bible » pour désassocier les PRE, les Jubilés et la Caverne de l’exégèse biblique. Ceci ne nie pas la place de l’exégèse dans la formation des traditions sur le passé israélite. Néanmoins, l’idée que l’exégèse est la seule source de la tradition est plutôt une présomption méthodologique qu’une conclusion basée sur les textes eux-mêmes. D’ailleurs, la dénomination d’« histoire sainte » facilite la comparaison de ces trois textes avec la tradition islamique, qui ne connaît pas l’exégèse « biblique ». La plupart des personnages reconnus comme des prophètes dans l’islam apparaissent déjà dans la Bible, à la différence que le statut du texte biblique dans l’islam est négatif. Au Xᵉ siècle, la Bible est devenue un livre anti-canonical chez les musulmans, une source qui n’est pas fiable par nature. Ce n’est pas un texte saint que l’islam partage avec le judaïsme et le christianisme mais une histoire sainte.

Enfin, la dénomination d’« histoire sainte » attire l’attention sur les œuvres qui sont responsables de la diffusion des traditions extrabibliques – les chroniques plutôt que les commentaires. La réception des Jubilés et de la Caverne est marquée par leur utilisation dans...
les chroniques chrétienne et musulmane. Par exemple, un scribe géorgien a ajouté la Caverne des trésors au début du cycle des livres qui constitue les Chroniques géorgiennes. Ciala Kourcikidzé, l’éditeur de la Caverne géorgienne, considère cet exemple comme un mélange d’« histoire » et d’« apocryphe », mais c’est une application anachronique des catégories modernes aux livres anciens. Si un scribe ajoute des œuvres « apocryphes » à une chronique, c’est parce que le contenu apocryphe est considéré comme de l’histoire. Les Juifs, en général, n’ont pas eu de tradition historiographique. Malgré cela, des extraits des PRE sont incorpóre dans des œuvres quasi-historiques comme le Sefer ha-Zikhronot et le Sefer ha-Yashar. De plus, une traduction latine des PRE apparaît dans un livre intitulé Chronologia Sacra-Profana. Malgré le statut « apocryphe » appliqué aujourd’hui aux PRE, aux Jubilés, et à la Caverne, des chroniqueurs anciens les ont considérés comme des sources historiques valables, probablement grâce à l’information qu’ils fournissent en dehors des livres canoniques.

L’évaluation des sources non-rabbiniques des PRE est donc basée sur trois principes. Tout d’abord, les cultures majoritaires influencent les cultures minoritaires. Ce qui signifie que les littératures chrétienne et musulmane peuvent être acceptées comme des sources des PRE s’il n’y a pas de parallèles dans la littérature juive. Deuxièmement, la date et la provenance des Pseudépigraphes, dont les Jubilés et la Caverne des trésors, sont évaluées à partir des preuves positives. Selon cette méthode, un grand nombre de Pseudépigraphes n’a aucune association avec la littérature du Second Temple. Même des livres anciens comme les Jubilés ont survécu

36 Voir chapitres 4 et 7.
38 Ibid., p. xiii-xiv.
grâce à la transmission chrétienne. Enfin, les trois livres sont classés comme des « histoires saintes » plutôt que des « Rewritten Bibles ». Ils développent les traditions autour de l’histoire d’Israël plutôt que le texte biblique. Les *Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer*, par exemple, sont le produit d’une interaction entre les traditions juive, chrétienne, et musulmane plutôt que du texte biblique seul. Ces traditions, à leur tour, ont été héritées par les livres médiévaux comme *Sefer ha-Zikhronot* et *Sefer ha-Yashar*. L’ensemble des trois principes est très efficace pour l’établissement d’une histoire de la transmission. En revanche, ils ne respectent pas les orthodoxies académiques déjà établies.

La présente étude est divisée en trois parties qui correspondent aux trois livres. La première introduit le texte des *PRE*, y compris sa date, sa provenance, et son genre (Chapitre 1). Cette partie inclut aussi un examen de la relation entre les *PRE* et une œuvre particulière, le *Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan*, qui ont en commun beaucoup de traditions. Ce chapitre démontre que le Targoum est plus tardif que les *PRE*. Par conséquent, il n’est pas la source des *PRE* (Chapitre 2). La deuxième partie, sur les *Jubilés*, établit que le texte hébraïque des *Jubilés* n’existant plus à l’époque des *PRE*, mais que le texte grec du livre était toujours connu (Chapitre 3). Le *Livre des Jubilés*, loin d’être perdu, était seulement connu dans les territoires byzantins (Chapitre 4). En fait, il n’existe pas de vrais parallèles entre les *PRE* et les *Jubilés* (Chapitre 5). La troisième partie, sur la *Caverne des trésors*, souligne la portée de ce texte à l’époque des *PRE*, principalement dans les versions arabes. (Chapitre 6). De plus, le livre a été utilisé par des chrétiens et des musulmans à travers les siècles (Chapitre 7). Enfin, les parallèles entre les *PRE* et la *Caverne*, parfois très précis, démontrent que les *PRE* dépendent de la littérature arabe – chrétienne et musulmane (Chapitre 8). D’après ces faits, on observe que les sources des *PRE* sont explicables par la région plutôt que par la religion.

Une faiblesse de la recherche précédente consiste dans le refus de rendre compte des chemins de la transmission des sources des *PRE*. Afin de combler cette lacune, on consacre plusieurs chapitres à l’étude de la transmission des *Jubilés* et de la *Caverne* de l’Antiquité tardive.

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44 G. Friedlander, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. lli : « It is by no means definitely established that our author actually copied any of the afore-mentioned books. What is maintained, however, is the existence of some sort of literary connection between P. R. E. and these books. This may be explained by the existence of compositions based on the Pseudepigrapha or used by the authors of this class of literature. The link is missing and it would be extremely hazardous to do more than point out the existence of similar ideas and occasionally actual parallel phrases. » ; M. Kister, « Ancient material in Pirque de-Rabbi Eli’ezer », *op. cit.*, p. 71: « The nature of the relationship between PRE and the ancient traditions varies in the cases discussed below, and in many of the cases the exact relationship cannot be decided. » ; K.E. Keim, *Pirqei deRabbi Eliezer: Structure, Coherence, Intertextuality*, Leyde : Boston, 2017, p. 196: « PRE was aware of and used aspects of Christian and Islamic tradition, but how they were mediated to it, whether by oral or written texts, and what form those texts took, we cannot now say. »
jusqu’à la fin du Moyen Âge. Les chapitres 3 et 6, par exemple, se focalisent sur les versions différentes des Jubilés et de la Caverne à l’époque de la rédaction des PRE. Les chapitres 4 et 7 documentent l’influence des Jubilés et de la Caverne sur la littérature secondaire, notamment les chroniques. Ces deux chapitres, en particulier, ciblent les traditions les plus répandues, celles qu’on s’attend à trouver dans les PRE en raison de leur popularité dans la littérature contemporaine. Ces chapitres ne concernent pas directement les PRE, mais ils sont cependant importants. Ils démontrent la disponibilité – ou, dans le cas des Jubilés, un manque de disponibilité – de ces œuvres et de leur contenu pour l’auteur des PRE.

Enfin, la difficulté de toute étude comparative consiste dans le problème des « parallelomania ». Ce terme, popularisé par Samuel Sandmel, se réfère à l’accumulation des parallèles afin d’affirmer une conclusion sans tenir compte de la force ou de la pertinence de ces parallèles. Pour éviter ce problème, la discussion dans les chapitres pertinents (chapitres 5 et 8) est limitée à dix parallèles. Ce choix de dix parallèles représente les points de contact majeurs entre les PRE et les deux œuvres sans pour autant énumérer l’ensemble des parallèles possibles.

La présente étude n’est pas limitée à la question de l’utilisation de deux livres spécifiques par un auteur juif. En premier lieu, l’étude de trois livres révèle une différence majeure dans la conception de l’histoire sainte entre les mondes byzantin et islamique. La différence dépend d’une division régionale et non d’une division religieuse : les chrétiens byzantins n’ont pas compris l’histoire d’Israël de la même manière que leurs coreligionnaires sous le Califat. L’absence de parallèles entre les PRE et les Jubilés est un indice de cette différence, car les juifs de Byzance connaissaient le Livre des Jubilés. En deuxième lieu, on trouve les traditions partagées par les PRE et la Caverne ailleurs dans la littérature syriaque et arabe, y compris le Coran. Les parallèles avec la Caverne indiquent un contact extensif avec la culture extérieure plutôt que la connaissance d’un livre particulier.

Première Partie : Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer

Chapitre 1: Le texte des Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer

Depuis leur rédaction au IXᵉ siècle, les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer ont bénéficié d’une forte popularité. Il existe au moins 44 éditions imprimées du livre et plus de 100 manuscrits provenant de chaque partie de la Diaspora juive. Le livre a été cité par plusieurs lumières du Moyen Âge, comme Rachi, Judah ha-Lévi, Moïse Maïmonide et Moïse Nachmanide. Des extraits ont été incorporés dans des anthologies médiévales, telles que Midrash Tanhuma, Bereshit Rabbati, Yalqut Shim‘oni, Midrash ha-Gadol, Sefer ha-Zikhronot, et Sefer ha-Yashar. Les PRE ont aussi influencé le Zohar. Les chrétiens n’ont montré de l’intérêt pour le livre qu’après le Moyen Âge. Deux traductions latines sont apparues au début de l’époque moderne, celle de Konrad Pellikan et celle de Willem Henricus Vorstius (1644). Golda Werman a même postulé que John Milton a utilisé une traduction latine des PRE comme une source de son épopée le Paradis perdu.

46 Voir ses commentaires bibliques sur Genèse 27,9 (citant les PRE 32), sur Deutéronome 12,17 (citant les PRE 36), et sur Jonas 1,7 (citant les PRE 10).
47 Kicari III.65 et IV.29, se réfère aux PRE 6-8 (les chapitres astronomiques).
48 Le Guide des égarés 1.70 (citant PRE 18) et II.26 (citant PRE 3).
49 Commentaire sur Lévitique 16,8 (citant PRE 46).
54 E. Yassif, Book of Memory, op. cit., p. 75-86, commence avec une adaptation des PRE 3-12 (l’Héxaéméron).
55 Sefer ha-Yashar, 1625, la Genèse Va-Yera, 41a-42a, adapte l’histoire d’Abraham et des femmes d’Ismaël des PRE 30. Un parallèle plus précis apparaît dans la Genèse Wa-Yeze 58b, la description des Téraphim, qui est directement tirée des PRE 36. Le même passage se trouve dans le Midrash Tanhuma, la Genèse Wa-Yeze 12, et le Yalqut Shim‘oni, la Genèse §130 et Zacharie §578.
56 G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, New York, 1995, p. 170: « The names of the most important members of the group around Simeon ben Yohai are largely taken from a pseudoepigrapical Midrash and given a spurious appearance of authenticity by the addition of the name of the father or other cognomens. This particular Midrash, the Pirke Rabbi Eliyezer, dating from the eighth century, is one of the most important sources for the Aggadah of the Zohar in general. »
57 K. Pellikan, R. Eliezer filius Hircani: Liber Sententiarum Judaicarum, Zürich, 1546.

Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer sont attribués à R. Eliézer b. Hyrcanus, un rabin du premier et du deuxième siècle de notre ère et l’une des autorités les plus citées dans la Mishna\textsuperscript{67}. Il était renommé pour ses jugements conservateurs, dont son interprétation littérale de la lex talionis (b. Baba Qamma 84a), ainsi que pour ses pouvoirs magiques (b. Sanhedrin 68a). La combinaison de ces traits a mené à son expulsion du cercle des rabbins : afin de démontrer la pureté d’un four, il avait engagé un autre rabbin dans un combat magique. (b. Baba Metzia 59b-60a)\textsuperscript{68}. Une autre histoire raconte l’arrestation de R. Eliézer par le gouvernement romain pour « hérésie » (t. Hullin 2,24 ; b. Avoda Zara 16b-17a). Autrement dit, il était soupçonné d’être chrétien\textsuperscript{69}. La tradition rabbinnique présente R. Eliézer comme une grande autorité, encline toutefois à l’hétérodoxie. Cette caractérisation peut expliquer l’attribution des PRE, un livre peu orthodoxe, à son nom. En tout cas, il n’est pas le véritable auteur de notre livre. Leopold Zunz, l’auteur de la première étude critique des PRE, a démontré la date tardive de

\textsuperscript{60} G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{61} M.-A. Ouaknin et E. Smilévitch, Pirqué de Rabbi Eliézer, Lagrasse, 1983.
\textsuperscript{66} G. Friedlander, Pirké de Rabbi Eliézer, op. cit., p. xiii.
leur composition, grâce à leurs références claires à l’islam (e.g., les noms Fatima et Aïcha, une référence au Dôme du Rocher). Ce chapitre introduit les données clés des PRE. Il débute avec le sujet fondamental, le contenu et l’organisation du livre. Ensuite vient l’examen des textes, manuscrits et éditions, ainsi que la date, la provenance, le genre, et la langue. Les PRE ont été probablement composés par un seul auteur. Le livre est inachevé, mais la partie existante est bien organisée. Eliezer Treitl a décrit trois familles de manuscrits, mais le texte du livre est relativement stable. Sa datation dépend d’une référence à la quatrième Fitna (809-813), la guerre civile entre le calife al-Amin et son frère, al-Ma’mun, dans les PRE 30. Cette date est soutenue par la première citation des PRE dans une lettre du juif babylonien Pirqoi ben Baboi (c. 812). Malgré la citation babylonienne, la provenance des PRE est palestinienne ; les PRE 8 constituent une polémique contre les babyloniens autour du droit de déterminer le calendrier juif. Les PRE ne ressemblent pas aux midrashim classiques, qui prennent tous la forme d’un commentaire lemmatique de la Bible. La forme des PRE est plutôt celle des Histoires des prophètes islamiques, et le livre inclut même quelques histoires tirées de ce corpus. Enfin, la langue de la composition est l’hébreu, mais il existe quelques emprunts à l’arabe. On présume, grâce à la date et à la provenance du livre, que l’auteur connaissait l’arabe. En fait, une connaissance de l’arabe faciliterait l’accès aux traditions non-rabbiniques.

71 E. Treitl, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer: Text, Redaction and a Sample Synopsis, Jérusalem, 2012 [hébreu].
75 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 175, utilise les mots מלחמה והר in leur sens arabe, c’est-à-dire « guerre » et « guerre eschatologique ».
Chapitre 2: Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer et le Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan

La relation entre les PRE et le Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan (TPJ) du Pentateuque est une question débattue. Le Targoum partage un grand nombre de traditions avec les PRE qui ne se trouvent pas dans la littérature rabbinique classique. La direction de l’influence est toujours controversée : soit le Targoum est la source des PRE, soit les PRE sont la source du Targoum, ou encore les deux dépendent d’une source commune. Leopold Zunz a déjà reconnu l’importance du Targum pour l’étude des PRE au XIXᵉ siècle⁷⁶, mais la question n’a pas été sérieusement abordée jusqu’au XXᵉ siècle, après plusieurs développements dans le domaine de l’étude des Targoumim. L’article le plus cité sur ce sujet, « Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan » de Robert Hayward, nie qu’il existe une relation particulière entre les PRE et le Targoum⁷⁷. En raison de nombreux parallèles entre les deux œuvres (environ cinquante), la question mérite une nouvelle considération⁷⁸. Les implications de cette question pour les sources des PRE sont importantes. Si le Targoum précède les PRE, on peut dire que le Targoum est la source de pratiquement toute la matière non-rabbinique dans le livre. Ce chapitre rassemble des preuves en faveur de la position opposée : démontrer que le Targoum a utilisé les PRE comme une source principale.

La question de la relation entre les PRE et le TPJ ne peut pas être traitée indépendamment de l’histoire générale des études targoumiques. Le mot « targoum » signifie « traduction » et dans la littérature juive, il réfère aux traductions araméennes de la Bible hébraïque. Ces traductions sont souvent caractérisées comme des « paraphrases ». Pourtant, Paul Flesher et Bruce Chilton ont montré que les Targoumim sont des traductions littérales qui ont été augmentées par des ajouts⁷⁹. La Peshitta et les autres traductions syriques de la Bible ne sont pas classées comme des Targoumim. Les textes araméens de Qumrân, dont quelques traductions araméennes de la Bible, sont aussi distincts. Le judaïsme rabbinique accepte les Targoumim, mais le Targum ne figure pas dans la littérature rabbinique classique. Si le Talmud et le Midrash représentent l’enseignement de la maison d’étude (« Beth Midrash »), le Targoum est l’instruction de la synagogue. Cependant, la différence entre les deux n’est pas précise : les rabbins eux-mêmes se trouvent à l’intérieur de la synagogue.

⁷⁸ Voir l’annexe.
⁷⁹ P.V.M. Flesher et B. Chilton, The Targums: A Critical Introduction, Waco, 2011, p. 3-68. L’ouvrage inclut une bonne discussion de la définition du Targoum ainsi que la distinction entre le Targoum et les autres traductions araméennes de la Bible.
Les Targoumim du Pentateuque, dont le Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan, peuvent être divisés en deux branches : 1) le Targoum babylonien, représenté par le Targoum Onqelos, et 2) les Targoumim palestiniens. Le Targoum Onqelos est le Targoum « officiel » du Pentateuque, qui se trouve dans toutes les Bibles rabbiniques. Ce Targoum est défini par l’absence d’ajouts au texte biblique relative aux autres Targoumim. Les Targoumim palestiniens sont représentés par plusieurs textes, dont le Targoum fragmentaire et le Targoum Neofiti. En plus des Targoumim du Pentateuque, il existe un Targoum des Prophètes, nommé Targoum Jonathan, qui est aussi « officiel ». Enfin, il existe des Targoumim des Hagiographes, qui sont proscrits par le Talmud (b. Megillah 3a). Les Targoumim « autorisés », c’est-à-dire le Targoum Onqelos et le Targoum Jonathan, suivent assez fidèlement le texte biblique, mais les Targoumim des Hagiographes, comme le Targoum du Cantique80 et le second Targoum d’Esther81, cachent le texte originel sous des expansions prolixes. Quelques livres bibliques, tels qu’Esdras et Daniel, n’ont pas de Targoumim. Ces livres ont déjà des sections araméennes (Esdras 4,8-6,18 ; 7,12-26 ; Dan 2,4b-7,28).


80 P.S. Alexander, The Targum of Canticles: Translated with Apparatus and Notes, Collegeville, Minn, 2003
82 L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 35-41.


Le hasard a voulu que la première contribution au débat de la relation entre les PRE et le TPJ au XXᵉ siècle soit apparue en même temps que la critique par York de l’École Kahle : l’article « La polémique judéo islamique et l’image d’Ismaël dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer » de Moïse Ohana. Comme l’indique le titre, le sujet principal n’est pas la relation entre les deux livres mais la nature d’une légende particulière, l’histoire d’Ismaël et de ses deux femmes, Aïcha et Fatima. Ohana pense que le TPJ doit dépendre des PRE, car le Targoum fait allusion à l’histoire intégrale qu’on trouve dans les PRE. L’histoire

85 Voir M. Klein, The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch according to their Extant Sources, Rome, 1980, et M.L. Klein, Genizah Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch, Cincinnati, 1986.
d’Ismaël, Aïcha et Fatima n’est pas seulement le cœur du débat sur la relation entre les PRE et le TPJ mais concerne également la datation du Targoum. Si le TPJ se réfère à la femme et la fille de Mahomet, le Targoum ne peut pas être plus ancien que le VIIe siècle. Dans ce cas, on peut s’interroger sur l’antiquité supposée d’autres traditions qu’on trouve dans le Targoum.

L’étude d’Ohana a été bientôt suivie par d’autres, concernant surtout la datation du Targoum. Avigdor Shinan a traité le sujet du TPJ dans deux livres et plusieurs articles. Il soutient une datation du VIIe ou VIIIe siècle, après l’avènement de l’islam et la rédaction des PRE. Miguel Perez Fernandez, dans l’introduction de sa traduction des PRE, énumère 39 parallèles entre les PRE et le TPJ. Il pense que les livres dépendent d’une source commune. L’article de Perez Fernandez est la base de la critique de Hayward sur la relation entre les deux livres.

Hayward affirme que le TPJ, comme les autres Targoumim, s’est développé au cours des siècles. La forme finale du Targoum, malgré sa date tardive, représente le judaïsme ancien, même celui de l’époque du Second Temple. La position de Hayward n’est pas que les PRE dépendent du Targoum, mais que les deux dépendent des sources anciennes. Plus récemment, Paul Flesher et son étudiante Beverly Mortensen ont soutenu une date ancienne pour le Targoum. Flesher croit que le Talmud de Jérusalem (VVe siècle) cite le TPJ, bien que Mortensen pense que l’insistance sur le sacerdoce dans le Targoum empêche une datation postérieure à l’avènement de l’islam.

Le status quaestionis sur la relation entre les PRE et le TPJ est une impasse. Personne, à notre connaissance, n’a répondu à la réfutation de Perez Fernandez et de Hayward par Shinan, et les conclusions de Hayward sont largement acceptées. Paul Flesher et Bruce Chilton vont plus

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loin que Hayward en affirmant que les PRE sont dépendants du Targoum96. Katharina Keim, dans sa monographie sur les PRE, cède à la position de Hayward : « There can be no question that Hayward has proved his point; there is no clear evidence that PRE was a source for Tg. Ps.-J. or vice versa »97.

En revanche, il existe un surcroît de preuves que le Targoum dépende des PRE. Le Targoum est donc postérieur. En fait, le Targoum n’a pas été écrit avant le XIe siècle mais, plus probablement, au XIIe. Cette conclusion se fonde sur trois arguments : 1) le Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan est une unité littéraire basée sur des sources targoumiques antérieures, qui sont néanmoins inconnues aux PRE ; 2) le dernier événement mentionné dans le Targoum est la première croisade (1095-1099), ce qui place la rédaction du Targoum à la fin du XIe siècle au plus tôt, bien après les PRE ; 3) le Targoum utilise des sources qui dépendent déjà des PRE.

En fait, la plupart des sources du Targoum sont inconnues de l’auteur des PRE, ce qui indique que le Targoum dépend des PRE et non l’inverse.


Si le TPJ est une unité, le Targoum doit être plus tardif que les PRE. Tout d’abord, la plupart des parallèles entre les deux n’apparaissent ni dans la littérature rabbinique classique ni dans les autres Targoumim. Il n’existe donc pas de « source commune » pour les PRE et le

97 K.E. Keim, Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 166.

Pour le deuxième point, la plupart des chercheurs citent Genèse 21,21, qui nomme Aïcha et Fatima, comme la référence historique la plus récente dans le Targoum. Tout d’abord, cette référence est l’un des parallèles entre les *PRE* et le *TPJ* qui n’apparaît pas dans les littératures rabbinique et targoumique. Selon la conclusion du paragraphe précédent, on peut affirmer que le Targoum a tiré cette référence des *PRE*. Cependant, ce n’est pas la référence la plus récente dans le Targoum. Le *Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan* sur Nombres 24,24 mentionne des Italiens venant de Lombardie qui rejoignent les forces romaines à Constantinople pour mener une guerre contre les « Assyriens ». En route, ils accablent les « enfants d’Héber », mais, à la fin, le Messie apparaîtra pour mettre fin aux empires romain et « assyrien ». Ce passage, propre au *Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan*, se réfère aux circonstances de la première croisade, notamment l’alliance entre les croisés et Byzance100, et les persécutions contre les juifs (les « enfants d’Héber ») sur la route vers Jérusalem101. Si le Targoum possède une unité, il n’est pas plus ancien que la fin du XIe siècle.

Paul Flesher a fourni une citation supposée du *TPJ* dans le Talmud de Jérusalem, qui constitue la preuve la plus sérieuse contre une datation tardive du Targoum102. Le Talmud interdit une traduction du Lévitique 22,28 qui est, en effet, très proche du texte du *TPJ*. Pourtant, une partie de cette traduction est attestée dans les Targoumim palestiniens, comme le *Targoum fragmentaire* et le *Targoum Neofiti*. La partie du verset proscrite par le Talmud manque dans ces Targoumim : on peut supposer que les scribes ont effacé le passage, en conformité avec les dictats des rabbins. Selon cette hypothèse, le *Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan* conserve l’intégralité d’un verset du Targoum palestinien qui a été censuré. En tout cas, il est plus logique de supposer que le Talmud palestinien cite un Targoum palestinien et non un Targoum basé sur le texte babylonien.


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Deuxième Partie : Le Livre des Jubilés

Chapitre 3: Le texte du Livre des Jubilés

Le Livre des Jubilés est une histoire sainte qui raconte les événements depuis la création jusqu’à l’entrée du peuple israélite au pays de Canaan. Le livre se présente comme une révélation à Moïse sur le mont Sinaï. Le narrateur est un ange qui dicte le contenu des « tablettes célestes ». Toute l’histoire est divisée en une série de « jubilés » (49 ans), qui sont sous-divisés en « semaines » (7 ans) et « jours » (ans). Le livre couvre les cinquante premiers jubilés jusqu’à l’année 2450 anno mundi. L’histoire suit largement la Genèse, la source primaire du livre. La plupart des épisodes « extrabibliques » se concentrent sur les temps antérieurs à la naissance d’Abraham. Il s’ajoute à ces épisodes récits développés sur Jacob et ses fils, majoritairement Lévi et Juda. Dans l’Antiquité tardive, les Jubilés étaient un complément du livre de la Genèse. Le livre a fourni des données qui ne se trouvent pas dans le livre canonique, comme les noms des femmes des patriarches. Pour cette raison, les auteurs grecs l’ont appelé la Petite Genèse ou les Détails de la Genèse.105

Le Livre des Jubilés a été écrit en hébreu avant la fin du IIᵉ siècle avant notre ère. Tous les manuscrits hébraïques proviennent des grottes de Qumrân106. Le Document de Damas (Iᵉʳ siècle avant notre ère) contient la première citation du livre sous son titre originel (CD A xvi


Ce chapitre démontre que les versions multiples des Jubilés dans l’Antiquité tardive peuvent être rapportées à la version grecque. C’est même le cas pour les traces hébraïque du livre. Sa version « originale » est perdue. Dans ce cas, les PRE auraient pu connaître les Jubilés grâce à la version grecque. Suivant l’exemple de James VanderKam, ce chapitre présente, dans l’ordre, les preuves textuelles hébraïque, syriaque, grecque, latine et éthiopienne. Après cela, nous traitons la preuve d’une version copte des Jubilés. Le chapitre se termine avec une

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112 Ibid.
note sur la liste des femmes des patriarches qu’on trouve dans les littératures arménienne et arabe. Cette liste constitue le seul « texte » des Jubilés dans ces langues.

Dans la littérature hébraïque, on trouve des traditions des Jubilés dans les œuvres suivantes :

1) Le Sefer Asaph ha-Rofé (c. IXe ou Xe siècle), un livre de médecine, raconte une histoire de l’origine démoniaque des maladies semblable à l’histoire des Jubilés 113. Selon Martha Himmelfarb, la version de l’histoire dans le Sefer Asaph est, en fait, plus primitive que la version dans les Jubilés 114. Le Sefer Asaph conserve donc une source des Jubilés.

2) Un commentaire sur le livre biblique des Chroniques (Xe siècle) date un événement selon le système de jubilés et de semaines qu’on trouve dans le Livre des Jubilés 115. Pourtant, le même système se trouve au sein du Seder Olam Rabba, la source rabbínique primaire de la chronologie biblique 116.

3) Un commentaire sur l’Exode par le karaïte Yefet b. Ali (Xe siècle) mentionne le démon Mastema, la figure satanique dans les Jubilés 117. En revanche, ce démon est connu d’autres sources en dehors des Jubilés, comme le Sefer Asaph.

4) Un commentaire sur le décalogue par le karaïte Nissi b. Noah (XIe siècle) se réfère aux vingt-deux œuvres de création pendant l’Héxaeméron, qui sont énumérées dans les Jubilés 118. Cette tradition est particulièrement répandue ; il n’est pas certain qu’elle provienne des Jubilés.

5) Le Midrash Vayissa’u (première attestation : XIe siècle), un « midrash mineur », raconte les guerres des fils de Jacob contre les Amorites et les Edomites 119. Ce petit ouvrage reflète des traditions communes aux Jubilés et aux Testaments des douze patriarches. De nouveau,

115 R. Kirchheim, Commentar zur Chronik, Frankfurt am Main, 1874 [hébreu], p. 36.
117 Y. Erder, The Karaite Mourners of Zion and the Qumran Scrolls, op. cit., p. 145.
Martha Himmelfarb soutient que le texte médiéval conserve la source de deux livres anciens.  


8) Enfin, les *Toledot Adam* (c. 1585), une petite chronique du juif vénitien Samuel Algazi, donnent les noms des femmes des patriarches. Cette liste est identique aux noms des femmes dans le *Livre des Jubilés*. Cependant, la liste des femmes est une tradition.

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120. M. Himmelfarb, « Midrash Vayissa’u », *op. cit.*
123. Pour le texte grec, voir *PG* 43,276b-277c.
indépendante qui circulait dans les littératures grecque, syriaque et arménienne. Elle est également présente dans la littérature arabe. La présence des femmes n’est donc pas suffisante pour montrer la dépendance du texte des Jubilés.

Dans la littérature syriaque, les œuvres suivantes attestent des traditions des Jubilés :

1) Une lettre de Jaques d’Édesse (mort en 708) à Jean de Litarbe (mort en 737) raconte une histoire concernant Abraham qui est parallèle aux Jubilés 8-12. Sa source est une « narration juive », sans être nécessairement issue du Livre des Jubilés. Sebastian Brock a postulé que le récit de Jacques est plus ancien que les Jubilés. En effet, un épisode du récit de Jacques fait état d’une famine que Dieu envoie pour punir l’idolâtrie. Dans les Jubilés, c’est le démon Mastema qui est responsable de la famine. On trouve l’échange du diable pour Dieu dans la Bible (cf. 2 Sam 24,1 et 1 Chr 21,1) et même dans les Jubilés (cf. Exod 4,24 et Jub 48,2-4). Dans ces cas, la source plus tardive met le diable à la place de Dieu afin de protéger la réputation de Dieu. Le récit de Jacques, probablement plus ancien, est peut-être une source des Jubilés.

2) Une liste des noms des femmes des patriarches est conservée dans un manuscrit syriaque du VIIIe siècle (British Museum Add. 12154, f. 180). Le manuscrit nomme les Jubilés comme sa source, mais celle-ci provient d’un exemplaire grec.

3) Parfois, on trouve des citations « apocryphes » des Jubilés dans la littérature syriaque qui ne correspondent pas au texte actuel du livre. Ceslas Van den Eynde a rassemblé des citations de Théodore bar Koni (VIIIe siècle), d’Isho’dad de Merv (IXe siècle), de Hasan bar Bahlul (Xe siècle), et de l’anonyme Exposé des offices ecclésiastiques (XIe siècle). Pour résoudre ce mystère, il faut noter que le mot « jubilé » n’a pas le même sens dans le syriaque que dans l’hébreu. Le mot yubal signifie la « génération », et il peut désigner des chroniques, comme le

mot hébraïque *toledor*\(^{38}\). Les citations « apocryphes » ne sont pas des citations des *Jubilés* mais sont issues d’autres livres historiques, incluant ceux de la Bible.

4) La *Chronique jusqu’en 1234* est le témoin le plus important pour le texte syriaque des *Jubilés*\(^{39}\). La première section de cette chronique contient de longues citations du livre qui correspondent avec le texte existant\(^{40}\). Eugène Tisserant, qui a publié une étude des citations, a postulé qu’elles étaient directement traduites de l’hébreu\(^{41}\). Cependant, Andy Hilkens a montré que la plupart des sources de la chronique sont syriaques et grecs\(^{42}\). Il est plus probable que l’auteur a utilisé un texte grec des *Jubilés* plutôt qu’un texte hébraïque. Le chroniqueur a vraisemblablement traduit les extraits des *Jubilés* lui-même. D’une part, il n’existe aucun autre manuscrit des *Jubilés* dans la littérature syriaque. D’autre part, le chroniqueur a utilisé des sources qui n’ont jamais été traduites en syriaque, comme les *Antiquités* de Josèphe\(^{43}\).

Dans la littérature grecque, les citations directes des *Jubilés* sont bien attestées, malgré la perte du texte grec. La première référence provient du papyrus Oxyrhyncus 4365, une lettre brève du IV\(^{e}\) siècle\(^{44}\). La dernière référence aux *Jubilés* provient d’une chronique de Théodore Méthochitès (mort en 1332)\(^{45}\), mais il a tiré sa citation de Michel Glycas (c. 1200)\(^{46}\). Dans le même passage cité, il traite le livre comme un objet de dérision. Son rejet du texte coïncide avec la disparition des *Jubilés* dans les chroniques chrétiennes. On peut affirmer que le livre grec existait jusqu’au XIII\(^{e}\) siècle. Après cette date, qui est aussi l’époque de la *Chronique jusqu’en 1234*, le texte a été perdu en Occident jusqu’à l’époque moderne.

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\(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 229-232.


Dans la littérature latine, un palimpseste du Ve ou du VIe siècle contient le Livre des Jubilés. Un tiers du livre est toujours lisible. Le texte a été traduit du grec, et il s’accorde largement avec le texte éthiopien.

Le texte éthiopien des Jubilés est la seule version complète. Traduit du grec, il reste le témoin principal du texte grec perdu. Il s’accorde avec les versions syriaque et latine des Jubilés. La date de la traduction est inconnue. Cependant, on présume une traduction entre le IVe et le VIe siècle. En revanche, la canonisation des Jubilés par l’église éthiopienne n’est pas évidente avant le XIVe siècle, la date du manuscrit le plus ancien.

Dans la littérature copte, quelques citations des Jubilés apparaissent dans un fragment d’un florilège datant du IVe ou du Ve siècle. Les citations ne sont pas nécessairement la preuve d’une version copte du livre. Il est possible que l’auteur ait traduit les versets ad hoc.

Enfin, on trouve la liste des femmes des patriarches dans les littératures arménienne et arabe. Ce sont les seules traces du texte des Jubilés dans ces littératures.

L’ensemble de cette étude met en évidence que le texte grec est la version dominante des Jubilés au cours de l’Antiquité tardive, qui survit dans des traductions latine, éthiopienne et syriaque. La version hébraïque du texte n’est pas attestée après l’époque du Second Temple. Tous les parallèles dans la littérature médiévale hébraïque dérivent des sources des Jubilés, comme le Sefer Asaph et le Midrash Vayissa’u, et également des sources grecques, comme le Midrash Tadshé et le Midrash Aggadah. Quelques sources juives, comme les commentaires sur l’Exode et sur les Chroniques, ne connaissent pas notre Livres des Jubilés.

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Chapitre 4: La transmission du Livre des Jubilés


La première partie du chapitre comporte une liste chronologique de tous les livres qui nomment le Livre des Jubilés sous son titre grec, la Petite Genèse. Ce critère est à la fois objectif et restrictif. Afin d’éviter la répétition, le critère exclut la plupart des sources sous discussion dans le chapitre précédent. Il exclut également plusieurs livres liés aux Jubilés qui ne sont pas nécessairement dépendants du livre, tels que les Testaments des douze patriarches, le Roman du Pseudo-Clément ou la tradition du Diamerismos. Enfin, il exclut quelques chroniques, comme celles de Jean Malalas ou Georges le Moine, qui ne nomment pas explicitement les Jubilés. Leurs œuvres ne sont pas oubliées, car les chroniqueurs plus tardifs qui citent les Jubilés, comme Syméon le Logothète, utilisent Jean Malalas et Georges le Moine comme sources. La deuxième partie énumère les traditions les plus populaires des Jubilés. En principe, cette liste constitue les traditions qu’on trouverait dans les PRE. Leur absence dans les PRE est un indice important de la différence entre les PRE et les Jubilés.

Les œuvres suivantes font référence à la Petite Genèse :

1) Les commentaires bibliques de Didyme l’Aveugle (mort en 398)\textsuperscript{157}

2) Le *Panarion* d’Épiphane de Salamine (mort en 403)\textsuperscript{158}

3) La lettre de Jérôme (mort en 420) à Fabiola (Lettre 78)\textsuperscript{159}

4) La *Chaîne sur la Genèse* (après le V\textsuperscript{e} siècle)\textsuperscript{160}

5) Le *Décret de Gélase* (VI\textsuperscript{e} siècle)\textsuperscript{161}

6) Les scholies bibliques des étudiants de Théodore de Tarse (mort en 690)\textsuperscript{162}

7) La chronique de Georges le Syncelle (mort en 810)\textsuperscript{163}

8) La chronique de Syméon le Logothète (mort en 990)\textsuperscript{164}

9) La chronique du Pseudo-Syméon (X\textsuperscript{e} siècle), reproduit dans la chronique de Georges Cédrène (mort en 1115)\textsuperscript{165}

10) La chronique de Jean Zonaras (mort en 1145)\textsuperscript{166}

11) La chronique de Michel Glycas (mort en 1200)\textsuperscript{167}

12) La chronique de Théodore Métochites (mort en 1332)\textsuperscript{168}


\textsuperscript{161} E. von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum, op. cit.*, p. 52


\textsuperscript{163} Georges le Syncelle, *Ecgloga Chronographica, op. cit.* (Traduction anglaise: Georges le Syncelle, *Chronography, op. cit.*). Les citations sont nombreuses.

\textsuperscript{164} Syméon le Logothète, *Chronicon, op. cit.*, p. 6 et 10.


Les traditions les plus populaires des Jubilés sont :

1) Les vingt-deux œuvres de la création (Jub. 2).

2) La purification d’Adam et Ève avant leur entrée dans le jardin d'Éden (Jub. 3,8-14)

3) Les femmes des patriarches (Jub. 4)

4) La mort de Caïn sous les pierres de sa maison (Jub. 4,31)

5) La redécouverte de l’astrologie par Caïnan (Jub. 8,1-4)

6) La construction de la Tour de Babel durant quarante-trois ans (Jub. 10,21)

7) Canaan occupe le territoire de Sem (Jub. 10,28-34)

8) L’invention de l’idolâtrie à l’époque de Seroug (Jub. 11,1-6)

9) Abraham brûle le temple des idoles (Jub. 12,12-14)

10) L’élection de Lévi (Jub. 32,1-3). Cette tradition apparaît dans les PRE 37.

11) La guerre contre Esaü et les Edomites (Jub. 37-38)

On conclut que le Livre des Jubilés était une source primaire de l’histoire sainte à Byzance. Les preuves les plus impressionnantes proviennent du IXe siècle et des siècles postérieurs. Ces sources tardives démontrent une connaissance étendue des Jubilés au temps de la rédaction des PRE. Cependant, la transmission des Jubilés est limitée aux livres qui circulaient en milieu chrétien. La mémoire historiographique grecque a notamment conservé un grand nombre de traditions des Jubilés qui constituent presque tous les épisodes « extrabibliques » du livre, mais une seule de ces traditions, l’élection de Lévi, apparaît dans les PRE. Cette analyse suppose que les PRE n’exploitaient pas les Jubilés. Le chapitre suivant démontre cette hypothèse.
Chapitre 5: Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer et le Livre des Jubilés


1) Selon Gerald Friedlander, le récit de l’Héxaeméron dans les PRE (chapitres 3-9), principalement le premier jour (PRE 3), dépend de la tradition des vingt-deux œuvres de la création dans les Jubilés 2. Il dépendent plutôt d’une source commune, la Genèse 1.

2) Hanoch Albeck et Menahem Kister soutiennent que le portrait d’Hénoch dans les PRE est basé sur la figure d’Hénoch dans la littérature du Second Temple. Dans les Jubilés, par exemple, Hénoch apprend les secrets du calendrier et les transcrit (Jub. 4,17-19). Dans les PRE, Hénoch transmet le calendrier (PRE 8 et 40), mais il n’est pas le premier. C’est plutôt Adam qui apprend le calendrier de Dieu. Adam transmet le calendrier à Hénoch, qui n’est qu’un lien dans la chaîne. D’autres sources de l’Antiquité tardive attribuent la connaissance du calendrier à Adam, comme Éphrem le Syrien.

3) Hanoch Albeck a remarqué l’importance de la fête de Pâques dans les Jubilés et dans les PRE. Il existe pourtant une différence clé entre les deux livres. Dans les Jubilés, les Pâques

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sont la seule fête qui n’est pas instituée par un patriarche avant le temps de Moïse. Dans les PRE, les Pâques sont la seule fête « mosaïque » observée par les patriarches (PRE 21 et 32).


5) Menahem Kister a trouvé une référence à Emzara, la femme de Noé selon les Jubilés (4,33), dans l’editio princeps des PRE (Constantinople, 1514)173. La lecture, qui est incertaine, n’apparaît pas dans les manuscrits du livre. Néanmoins, la liste des femmes des patriarches a été très répandue comme une tradition indépendante, essentiellement dans la littérature arabe174.

6) Gerald Friedlander a comparé la division de la terre parmi les fils de Noé (PRE 23 dans son manuscrit ; PRE 24 dans l’édition imprimée) aux Jubilés 8-10175. Cette tradition, le Diamerismos, est fréquente dans les chroniques grecques, syriques et arabes176. De plus, la version des PRE est extrêmement basique. On ne trouve pas les éléments spécifiques des Jubilés, comme le serment entre les fils de respecter les limites de leurs territoires.

7) Les PRE 36 disent que Bilha et Zilpa (les servantes de Léa et Rachel) sont les filles de Laban. Selon Gerald Friedlander, cette tradition dérive des Jubilés 29, affirmant que les deux servantes sont des sœurs177. Cependant, la tradition des PRE provient de la tradition

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175 G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. xxiv-xxv.


177 G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 271, n. 10.
rabbinique (Genèse Rabba 74,13). De plus, les servantes ne sont pas les filles de Laban dans les Jubilés.

8) Menahem Kister écrit que l’élection de Lévi au sacerdoce dans les PRE 37 ressemble à la même tradition dans les Jubilés 32. En effet, les détails sont très différents, mais les deux récits appartiennent à la même tradition. Pourtant, cette tradition est aussi rabbinique. Elle se trouve dans la Genèse Rabba 70,7 et dans la Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana 10,8.


10) Enfin, Menahem Kister associe la prophétie de la naissance de Moïse dans les PRE 48 avec les Jubilés 47,1-3, où la connaissance prophétique de la naissance de Moïse est implicite. Cette tradition est aussi talmudique (b. Sotah 13a). Les PRE diffèrent du récit talmudique, mais les différences entre les PRE et les Jubilés sont encore plus grandes.


Troisième Partie : La Caverne des trésors

Chapitre 6: Le texte de la Caverne des trésors

Ce chapitre traite des différentes versions de la Caverne des trésors à l’époque de la rédaction des PRE. La Caverne a été écrite en syriaque, mais la forme de la Caverne la plus populaire est la version arabe. On n’en dénombre pas moins de trois : 1) une traduction directe de la version syriaque ; 2) une adaptation intitulée le Livre des Rouleaux, la première partie d’une compilation tardive de littérature pseudo-clémentine ; 3) une paraphrase appelée Le Conflit d’Adam et Ève avec Satan. Il existe aussi des versions géorgienne, éthiopienne et copte. Ces trois versions dérivent des textes arabes.


La Caverne n’a jamais été perdue ; des scribes ont recopié le texte jusqu’au XIXe siècle. En revanche, son influence est absente de l’histoire littéraire du christianisme occidental. Dans la recherche moderne, Giuseppe Simoni Assemani (mort en 1768) nomme le texte pour la première fois dans sa Bibliotheca Orientalis (1719-1728)181. Carl Bezold a publié la première traduction allemande (1883) et la première édition (1888) du livre182. Son édition contient le texte syriaque et arabe ; l’arabe est tiré du Livre des Rouleaux. E. A. Wallis Budge a publié une traduction anglaise du manuscrit British Museum Add. 25875, généralement considéré comme le textus optimus du livre183. La même année, Zurab Avalichvili a publié une étude de

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183 E.A.W. Budge, The Book of the Cave of Treasures, A History of the Patriarchs and the Kings their Successors from the Creation to the Crucifixion of Christ, Londres, 1927.
la version géorgienne\textsuperscript{184}. Paul Riessler a imprimé de nouveau le texte de Bezold avec une modification importante, la division du livre en chapitres et versets\textsuperscript{185}. Ce fractionnement a été adopté par les éditions critiques du texte syriaque\textsuperscript{186} et du texte géorgien\textsuperscript{187} ainsi que la traduction anglaise la plus récente\textsuperscript{188}.

L’histoire de la recherche sur la \textit{Caverne} est brève. Les premières études ont traité des éléments « juifs » supposés du livre. L’étude de Jacob Bamberger (1901) a énuméré quelques parallèles entre la \textit{Caverne} et la littérature rabbinique\textsuperscript{189}. Il présumait que la \textit{Caverne} était une adaptation chrétienne d’un « livre d’Adam » juif. En 1921, Albrecht Götze a postulé que la \textit{Caverne} était une révision d’un livre judéo-chrétien\textsuperscript{190}. Son étude a exercé une influence notable. En 1979, Sebastian Brock a cité la \textit{Caverne} comme la source la plus riche des traditions juives dans la littérature syriaque\textsuperscript{191}. La même année, Antonio Battista et Bellarmino Bagatti ont publié une traduction italienne de plusieurs textes liés à la \textit{Caverne}\textsuperscript{192}. Ils ont affirmé que la \textit{Caverne} a représenté un fond des traditions judéo-chrétiennes sur le tombeau d’Adam. Leur hypothèse a été réfutée par Joan E. Taylor, qui a sévèrement critiqué ce « mythe des origines judéo-chrétiennes »\textsuperscript{193}. Dans les années 1980 et 1990, jusqu’à la publication de son commentaire en 2000, Su-Min Ri a publié plusieurs courtes études de la \textit{Caverne}\textsuperscript{194}. Comme Götze, il a soutenu une origine judéo-chrétienne du livre.

\textsuperscript{185} P. Riessler, \textit{Altjüdisches Schriftum ausserhalb der Bibel}, Augsburg, 1928, p. 942-1013.
\textsuperscript{189} J. Bamberger, \textit{Die Literatur der Adambücher und die haggadischen Elemente in der syrischen Schatzhöhle}, Aschaffenburg, 1901.

Ce chapitre, comme le chapitre parallèle sur les Jubilés, examine chaque version de la Caverne afin de démontrer la popularité de ce livre, surtout la version arabe. On peut diviser les versions de la Caverne en deux branches, les versions « primaires » et « secondaires ». Les versions primaires incluent les textes indépendants ; les versions secondaires se trouvent au sein d’ouvrages plus vastes. Les versions primaires sont : 1) le texte originel syriaque200 ; 2) une traduction arabe, existant dans des manuscrits en garshouni (l’arabe écrit en lettres syriaques)201 ; 3) la version géorgienne, traduite de l’arabe202. Les versions secondaires

200 S.-M. Ri, La Caverne des trésors, op. cit.
201 Nous connaissons trois manuscrits garshounis : Mingana Syr 32, f. 89b-145b et Mingana Syr 258, f. 87b-146a, tous les deux à l’Université de Birmingham, et Borgia Arab 135, f. 228a-274b, dans la Bibliothèque du Vatican.
apparaissent dans 1) le *Livre des Rouleaux*, un apocryphe pseudo-clémentin\textsuperscript{203} ; 2) un *encomion* copte sur Marie Madeleine\textsuperscript{204} ; 3) le *Conflit d’Adam et Ève avec Satan*\textsuperscript{205}. Le *Livre des Rouleaux* et le *Conflit* ont été écrits en arabe et traduits en éthiopien\textsuperscript{206}. L’*encomion* existe seulement en copte ; cependant, le texte de la *Caverne* qui y est évoqué a probablement été traduit de l’arabe. En effet, le texte arabe de la *Caverne*, essentiellement la version dans le *Livre des Rouleaux*, a connu une large diffusion en Égypte\textsuperscript{207}. On constate que l’ensemble des versions de la *Caverne*, excepté le texte syriaque, provient de la littérature arabe.


Chapitre 7: La transmission de la Caverne des trésors

La Caverne des trésors était aussi populaire que le Livre des Jubilés. Au même titre que les Jubilés, l’influence de la Caverne a été limitée à une région géographique et à une langue principale. Suivant la méthode du chapitre 4, ce chapitre examine la transmission de la Caverne des points de vue diachronique et synchronique. Dans la perspective diachronique, on considère les œuvres principales qui ont utilisé la Caverne comme une source. Dans la perspective synchronique, on examine les motifs du livre les plus populaires dans ces sources secondaires. La «carte» de la transmission de la Caverne est l’inverse de la transmission des Jubilés: les Jubilés sont essentiellement un livre byzantin, mais la Caverne appartient exclusivement au califat. Par conséquent, les PRE étaient, a priori, plus ouverts à l’influence de la Caverne.

Pour établir la liste des sources secondaires, nous avons appliqué un seul critère : le livre doit se référer à une caverne des trésors comme le tombeau d’Adam. La «caverne des trésors» est un topos de la littérature syriaque qui a originellement désigné le dépôt des trésors des Mages. C’est aussi la fonction de la caverne dans la Caverne (45,12), mais elle est principalement le tombeau d’Adam, un usage propre à la Caverne et aux livres dépendants. Cependant, ce critère exclut quelques livres qui sont certainement tributaire de la Caverne, comme l’Apocalypse du Pseudo-Méthode, qui ne mentionne jamais la caverne²⁰⁸. Le critère rejette également plusieurs œuvres islamiques, y compris le Coran, qui partagent des traditions avec la Caverne²⁰⁹. Le sujet de la Caverne dans l’islam, un sujet vaste, mérite sa propre étude.

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Les œuvres qui utilisent la Caverne comme une source incluent :

1) La Chronique de Zuqnin (c. 775)\textsuperscript{210}

2) Le Livre des Idoles de Hicham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi (mort en 819)\textsuperscript{211}

3) Le Tabaqat de Muhammad ibn Sa’d (mort en 845)\textsuperscript{212}

4) La chronique d’Ahmad al-Yaqubi (mort en 898)\textsuperscript{213}

5) La chronique de Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (mort en 923)\textsuperscript{214}

6) La chronique d'Eutychius d'Alexandrie (mort en 940)\textsuperscript{215}

7) La chronique d'Agapius de Manbij (mort en 942)\textsuperscript{216}

8) Le Livre de l’abeille de Salomon de Basra (c. 1222)\textsuperscript{217}

9) La Chronique jusqu’en 1234\textsuperscript{218}

10) La chronique de Georges ibn al-Makin (mort en 1273)\textsuperscript{219}

11) Le Pseudo-Hippolyte dans la Chaîne arabe sur le Pentateuque (XIII\textsuperscript{e} siècle)\textsuperscript{220}

12) Le Synaxaire éthiopien (XIV\textsuperscript{e} siècle)\textsuperscript{221}

\textsuperscript{210} J.-B. Chabot, Incerti auctoris Chronicon anonymum Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum 1, Louvain, 1927, p. 4-13. Voir aussi A. Götte, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (2) », op. cit., p. 53-60.


\textsuperscript{218} J.-B. Chabot, Anonymi auctoris Chronicum ad annum Christi 1234 pertinentis 1, Paris, 1920, p. 28-55

\textsuperscript{219} Chronique de George Ibn al-Makin (BNF Arab 4729), f. 1a-6b.

Les motifs les plus populaires de la *Caverne* sont :

1) La « sainte montagne » située entre le Paradis et le monde terrestre (*i.e.*, la montagne de la caverne des trésors) comme la demeure d’Adam et sa famille après l’expulsion du Paradis (*Cav.* 5,14-17)

2) L’histoire des jumelles de Caïn et d’Abel (*Cav.* 5,21-32)

3) Le meurtre de Caïn par Lamech, son descendant (*Cav.* 8,2-10)

4) L’histoire des fils de Seth et des fils de Caïn (*Cav.* 11-12)

5) La translation du corps d’Adam sur l’Arche de Noé (*Cav.* 18,3-6)

6) L’enterrement d’Adam à Jérusalem (*Cav.* 23)

À la fin de cet examen, on conclut que la *Caverne des trésors* correspond à l’histoire sainte du christianisme oriental et de l’islam tout comme le *Livre des Jubilés* est attribué à l’histoire sainte byzantine. La *Caverne* était une source primaire pour l’histoire d’Israël pour les chrétiens ainsi que les musulmans : le livre fournissait des informations supplémentaires qui n’étaient disponibles ni dans la Bible ni dans le Coran. En raison de sa diffusion de ce livre dans le califat, il est hautement probable que l’auteur des *PRE* connaissait la *Caverne*.

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Chapitre 8: Les Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer et la Caverne des trésors

Les chapitres 6 et 7 ont établi la popularité de la Caverne en arabe et sa diffusion parmi les chrétiens et les musulmans du Moyen Orient. Ce chapitre est une comparaison de dix traditions communes présentes dans les PRE et la Caverne. Le but n’est pas de démontrer que les PRE dépendent de la Caverne, mais plutôt que les PRE connaissaient des traditions qui apparaissent aussi dans la Caverne. Par conséquent, les parallèles représentent parfois des traditions populaires dans les littératures syriaque et arabe et pas nécessairement des traditions exclusives à la Caverne. Les dix traditions apparaissent dans toutes les versions primaires de la Caverne, les versions syriaque, garshouni, et géorgienne. Les versions secondaires omettent seulement la dixième tradition. Le choix des parallèles est donc représentatif de toutes les versions de la Caverne. Les dix parallèles sont les suivants :

1) À chaque endroit où les PRE abordent le sujet du Mont Moriah – le Mont du Temple – il y a une référence parallèle au Golgotha, le site de la crucifixion, dans la Caverne. Cette correspondance est significative, car la Caverne identifie le Golgotha comme le Mont du Temple (Cav. 29,3-8).

2) Les PRE 13 et la Caverne 4 nomment le serpent du jardin d’Éden comme un agent du diable. Les PRE constituent la première attestation de ce motif dans la littérature rabbinique. L’idée, absente de la Bible (où le diable est absent) et du Coran (le serpent n’y est pas représenté), est néanmoins très répandue dans les littératures chrétienne et musulmane.

3) Les PRE 14 et la Caverne 3-4 se réfèrent aux vêtements de gloire portés par Adam et Ève au jardin d’Éden. Ils sont dépourvus de leurs vêtements au moment du péché. La littérature rabbinique ne connaît la réception des vêtements spéciaux qu’après le péché (Gen. Rab. 20,12). Les vêtements précédant la chute sont toutefois cités dans les littératures syriaque et arabe.

4) La « géographie sainte » des PRE 20 est un reflet de la géographie qu’on trouve dans la Caverne 5-6. La Caverne des trésors revendique trois niveaux de l’univers. Au sommet, on trouve le Paradis, situé directement au-dessus du centre de la terre, au Golgotha. La première habitation d’Adam, la « montagne sainte », occupe un niveau entre les deux. La caverne des

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trésors, au sommet de la « montagne sainte » n’est pas seulement le tombeau d’Adam mais le premier lieu de culte (Cav. 5,17). Le deuxième et dernier tombeau d’Adam est le Golgotha. On trouve donc trois lieux saints dans la Caverne des trésors : 1) Le Paradis ; 2) La montagne sainte, le site du premier culte ; 3) le Golgotha, le tombeau final d’Adam. Dans les PRE 20, on trouve une division semblable : 1) le jardin d’Éden ; 2) le mont Moriah, le site futur du Temple, à l’extérieur du jardin ; 3) la caverne de Machpélah, le premier et seul tombeau d’Adam, à l’extérieur du mont Moriah.

5) Les PRE 21 et la Caverne 6 mentionnent l’établissement d’un culte autour du 14 Nisan, qui est la veille des Pâques ainsi que la date de la mort du Christ. Le 14 Nisan est le jour de la mort d’Adam dans la Caverne. Ce-jour-là, Adam instruit son fils Seth concernant l’enterrement de son corps, qui devient un objet d’adoration pour les fils de Seth. L’auteur souligne que la mort d’Adam anticipe la mort du Christ. Dans les PRE 21, Adam instruit ses fils Caïn et Abel le 14 Nisan concernant les offrandes des Pâques, une anticipation de la célébration des Pâques avant l’Exode (PRE 48) mais aussi les Pâques dans l’histoire d’Esther (PRE 49-50). Dans les deux livres, Adam institue un culte qui anticipe la rédemption.


224 Voir les notes dans al-Ṭaraffī, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 28-29 (§46-47).
8) Les **PRE** 23 et la **Caverne** 14 décrivent les trois niveaux de l’arche de Noé d’une manière identique : 1) les bêtes en bas ; 2) les oiseaux au milieu ; 3) les hommes en haut\(^{226}\). La seule différence entre les **PRE** et la **Caverne** est la présence des « abominations » au troisième niveau. Ce terme est peut-être une référence au corps d’Adam, qui est aussi présent au troisième niveau selon la **Caverne** 18. Dans ce cas, la référence aux « abominations » est une polémique contre le culte des reliques.

9) La **Caverne** 28 dit qu’Abraham a été initié aux « mystères saints », c’est-à-dire l’eucharistie, par le prêtre-roi Melchisédech. Dans les **PRE** 29, Melchisédech circoncit Abraham lors de Yom Kippour au mont du Temple. Dans les deux cas, Melchisédech donne à Abraham une sorte de « sacrement d’initiation ». La tradition de la **Caverne** est basée sur une typologie chrétienne qui dérive du texte biblique (Gen 14,18-20). En comparaison, la tradition des **PRE** est singulièr e, car la circoncision n’exige pas la présence d’un prêtre, et Melchisédech n’est pas associé avec l’alliance de la circoncision dans la Bible (Gen 17). La tradition des **PRE**, entièrement absente de la littérature rabbínique classique, est explicable comme un « décalque » de la tradition chrétienne, où la circoncision remplace l’eucharistie.

10) La **Caverne** 50 raconte la curieuse tradition selon laquelle Jésus a été crucifié sur le bois de l’Arche d’Alliance, qui est toujours présent dans le Temple de Jérusalem. Dans les **PRE** 50, Haman, l’antagoniste de l’histoire d’Esther, est suspendu sur une poutre provenant du Saint des Saints. La tradition juive a déjà associé Haman et Jésus, surtout à cause de la manière de leurs morts : tous les deux ont été « suspendus », voire « crucifiés »\(^{227}\). La tradition des **PRE**, inconnue dans la tradition rabbínique, semble répondre à la tradition chrétienne dans la **Caverne**, qui deviendra plus tard une légende très répandue au Moyen Âge\(^{228}\).

Ces dix exemples démontrent une connaissance étendue des traditions de la **Caverne** de la part des **PRE**. Parfois, ces traditions sont courantes, comme l’association entre Satan et le serpent au jardin d’Éden (numéro 2). En revanche, plusieurs traditions sont limitées à la **Caverne** et aux œuvres qui en dépendent, comme la description des trois niveaux de l’Arche de Noé (numéro 8). Souvent, on peut trouver des parallèles dans la littérature arabe. Ceci signifie que les traditions ont traversé les frontières religieuses et, de plus, que les peuples d’une même région pouvaient comprendre l’histoire d’Israël d’une manière semblable malgré


leurs différences religieuses. On a observé le même phénomène dans le cas des *Jubilés*, où les juifs des pays chrétiens ont adopté les mêmes traditions de ce livre que leurs voisins chrétiens.

Même si les traditions de la *Caverne* sont présentes dans la littérature musulmane, l’adaptation de ces traditions dans les *PRE* confère fréquemment une polémique spécifiquement antichrétienne. Par exemple, les parallèles concernant les Pâques (nombre 5), Melchisédech (nombre 9) et le bois de la croix (nombre 10) dérivent des traditions chrétiennes qui n’ont pas de parallèle dans la tradition islamique. On peut trouver des polémiques antichrétiennes dans les autres traditions. Par exemple, Adam est créé sur le Golgotha dans la *Caverne* 2 ; les *PRE* 20 disent qu’Adam a été créé sur le mont Moriah, tous les deux étant le « centre de la terre » (nombre 1). Selon la *Caverne* 51,22, les vêtements de la gloire sont restaurés à Adam après la mort de Jésus ; dans les *PRE* 20, Adam reçoit de nouveaux vêtements même avant sa pénitence (nombre 3). Dans la *Caverne* 6-7, l’enterrement d’Adam précède l’établissement d’un culte proto-chrétien basé sur l’adoration de son corps ; dans les *PRE* 20, Adam planifie son enterrement avant sa mort pour éviter un tel culte (nombre 4).

Dans la *Caverne* 15, le narrateur nie catégoriquement que les « fils de Dieu » de la Genèse soient des anges ; les *PRE* 22 affirment le contraire (nombre 7). Dans la *Caverne* 18, le corps d’Adam est placé au centre de l’Arche de Noé ; dans les *PRE* 23, l’Arche ne contient pas le corps d’Adam mais plutôt des « abominations » (nombre 8). Pour chaque thèse, il existe une antithèse. Seules l’association entre Satan et le serpent (nombre 2) et l’histoire des jumelles (nombre 6) sont exemptes d’un aspect polémique.

Cet examen révèle que les *PRE* connaissaient des traditions de la *Caverne* ainsi que la raison pour laquelle les *PRE* les ont adoptés. Ils ont servi un objectif polémique. Les traditions reformulées affirment la religion juive de l’auteur bien qu’elles dénigrent la religion de ses adversaires. Les traditions des *PRE* sont fréquemment différentes des traditions de la littérature rabbînique classique. Les traditions des *PRE* soutiennent quand même l’identité juive contre le christianisme et l’islam. D’ailleurs, ces traditions sont devenues courantes dans la littérature rabbinique du Moyen Âge. Les *PRE* ne constituent pas une invasion des traditions étrangères dans le corpus rabbinique. Ils représentent plutôt l’invention de la tradition rabbinique.
Conclusion

Les *PRE* connaissent quelques traditions de l’époque du Second Temple, mais la plupart de ces traditions proviennent de la littérature rabbinique classique et même de la Bible hébraïque. Les exceptions sont si répandues dans les littératures chrétienne et musulmane que l’hypothèse qu’ils viennent directement des sources anciennes est superflue. Par exemple, la tradition du *Diamerismos* qu’on trouve dans les *PRE* 23/24 est attestée dans les *Jubilés*, mais elle est aussi caractéristique des chroniques chrétiennes et musulmanes229. De la même manière, la prophétie de la naissance de Moïse qu’on trouve dans les *Antiquités* de Josèphe est connue dans la littérature musulmane. Le motif a même inspiré une tradition parallèle dans la vie d’Abraham. Tous les deux se trouvent dans les *PRE* (chapitres 26 et 48)230.


La division des trois niveaux de l’Arche de Noé parmi les bêtes, les oiseaux, et les êtres humains apparaît dans la littérature syriaque à partir des poèmes d’Éphrem le Syrien²³⁴.

L’influence chrétienne sur les PRE permet une réévaluation des suppositions traditionnelles à propos de la relation entre le judaïsme ancien d’un côté et le christianisme et l’islam de l’autre. Par exemple, on entend souvent que la littérature syriaque dépend de la tradition juive ancienne. Dans la littérature syriaque, Sebastian Brock a même ciblé la Caverne des trésors comme la source la plus riche des traditions juives dans la littérature syriaque²³⁵. Cependant, les PRE sont souvent la source juive la plus ancienne pour les traditions de la Caverne. Au lieu d’affirmer que les PRE contiennent des « traditions juives anciennes » qui ne sont pas documentées ailleurs dans la littérature juive, on suppose que le christianisme syriaque a influencé le judaïsme.

Pourtant, l’influence de la tradition syriaque n’est pas identique à l’influence de la langue syriaque. L’arabe est vraisemblablement le moyen pour transmettre la matière non-rabbinique. Il est probable que l’auteur des PRE connaissait l’arabe, et la Caverne était particulièrement répandue dans la littérature arabe. La littérature arabe peut même expliquer les traditions non-rabbiniques des PRE qui n’ont pas été traitées dans la présente étude. Par exemple, les PRE 21 constituent la première source juive qui raconte comment un corbeau a assisté à l’enterrement d’Abel. Selon notre méthodologie, le plus ancien témoin de cette tradition est le Coran (5,27-32)²³⁶. Le même chapitre des PRE mentionne que Cain est le fils d’un ange déchu, une tradition gnostique qu’on trouve dans les écrits de Nag Hammadi²³⁷. Cependant, l’auteur arabe Ibn al-Nadim (Xᵉ siècle) connaît la tradition, et l’a attribuée aux manichéens, toujours actifs dans le califat abbasid²³⁸. Enfin, les PRE 20 décrivent la pénitence d’Adam, un épisode de la Vie d’Adam et Ève qui ne se trouve pas dans la Caverne des trésors. La Vie d’Adam et Ève n’a pas été traduite en arabe, mais les chrétiens

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²³⁸ Cité dans J.C. Reeves, Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism, Sheffield, 2013, p. 194-197.
arabophones\textsuperscript{239} et même les musulmans\textsuperscript{240} ont rapporté des traditions de ce petit ouvrage. L’arabe est le dénominateur commun derrière ces traditions diverses.

L’idée qu’un écrivain est inspiré par son environnement immédiat n’est pas une conclusion radicale. Néanmoins, penser que l’islam et surtout le christianisme ont exercé une influence sur le judaïsme demeure une hypothèse controversée. Normalement, on considère le judaïsme comme l’influence principale sur le christianisme et l’islam. C’était le cas pendant les périodes de formation des deux religions dérivatives, lorsque les juifs étaient plus nombreux que les chrétiens et les musulmans. Finalement, les circonstances ont été renversées. Dans ce cas, il n’est pas étrange que les cultures majoritaires, c’est-à-dire le christianisme et l’islam, aient exercé une influence sur la culture minoritaire, le judaïsme. Par conséquent, les \textit{PRE} représentent une infusion des traditions chrétiennes et musulmanes dans la littérature rabbinique. Néanmoins, l’auteur juif adapte ces traditions à ses propres fins.

On peut trouver d’autres exemples de ce phénomène dans la littérature juive du Moyen Âge. Par exemple, le \textit{Sefer Yosippon} (X\textsuperscript{e} siècle) est une adaptation hébraïque de la \textit{Guerre des Juifs} de Josèphe. Cependant, sa source primaire n’est ni la version originelle araméenne perdue ni la version grecque conservée par des chrétiens. Il s’agit d’une adaptation latine chrétienne du Moyen Âge, le \textit{De excidio Hierosolymitano}\textsuperscript{241}. Le \textit{Sefer Yosippon} a toutefois changé l’orientation du livre latin, qui postule que la destruction du Temple est une punition pour la crucifixion de Jésus. Le \textit{Sefer Yosippon} est plutôt une célébration de l’héroïsme juif. La polémique anti-juive est complètement détournée par le « Josèphe juif ».


\textsuperscript{239} S.C. Malan, \textit{The Book of Adam and Eve: Also Called the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan}, Londres; Edinburgh, 1882, p. 34-36.
\textsuperscript{240} T. Gluck, \textit{The Arabic Legend of Seth, the Father of Mankind}, Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, 1968, p. 70-77.
\textsuperscript{241} Voir S. Dönitz, \textit{Überlieferung und Rezeption des « Sefer Yosippon »}, Tübingen, 2013.
Introduction

The Problem to be Discussed

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer (PRE) is a watershed in the history of rabbinic literature. This ninth-century work, an account of biblical history from creation until the time of Esther, is the first extended, continuous narrative of any sort in rabbinic literature. It is also, in all probability, the first major rabbinic work to derive from the hand of a single author. The most remarkable aspect of PRE, however, is its introduction into rabbinic tradition of several legends about biblical figures which are not found in the classical corpus of Talmud and Midrash. This includes legends which are well-known from other religious traditions, such as the myth of the fallen angels and their children, the giants, a prominent theme in Second Temple Judaism, and the story of the fall of Satan through his jealousy of Adam, well-represented in both Christianitly and Islam.

Modern scholarship considers the non-rabbinic legends in PRE an example of the survival of Second Temple literature within Jewish tradition. Most research on the topic connects the work to the Book of Jubilees (2nd c. BCE) in particular. The dominant model for the re-emergence of Second Temple motifs in rabbinic literature is intra-Jewish transmission by non-rabbinic Jews. Support for this hypothesis is found in the Second Temple works recovered from the Cairo Genizah (e.g., the Damascus Document, the Aramaic Levi Document), which were later found at Qumran. The preservation (or rediscovery) of these works has been linked to the emergence of numerous Karaite (non-rabbinic) groups beginning in the ninth century. Additionally, citations of ancient literature (e.g., the Testaments of the

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1 “Classical rabbinic literature” or the “classical rabbinic corpus” refers to the major works of rabbinic Judaism until the closing of the Babylonian Talmud (c. 8th century CE). The corpus includes: the Mishnah, the Tosefta, the Palestinian Talmud, the Babylonian Talmud, and the following Midrashim: the Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, Mekhilta de-Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai, Sifra to Leviticus, Sifre to Numbers and Deuteronomy, Sifre Zata to Numbers and Deuteronomy, the Mekhilta to Deuteronomy, Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah, Lamentations Rabbah, and Pesikta de-Rav Kahana. Guides to this literature can be found in G. Stemberger, Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch, 9th ed., Munich, 2011 and E. Ben-Eliyahu, Y.B. Cohn and F. Millar, Handbook of Jewish Literature from Late Antiquity, 135-700 CE, Oxford, 2012, p. 23-95.


Twelve Patriarchs and Jubilees) appear in the medieval works attributed to the eleventh-century R. Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne. However, Second Temple Jewish literature principally survives because Christians chose to preserve it. Therefore, the more probable channel for the transmission of Second Temple material to rabbinic Jews is through interaction with Christianity. This was certainly the case for the Hebrew adaptation of Josephus as well as the medieval Hebrew versions of Tobit, Judith, and even the Gospel of Matthew. These Hebrew works were all based on Second Temple literature that had been preserved by Christians. Likewise, the complete Book of Jubilees survives exclusively in manuscripts copied and transmitted by Christians. A Jewish author could have just as plausibly known Jubilees from a “Christian” version as from the Hebrew original.

Moreover, it is not necessarily the case that the non-rabbinic sources of PRE are even of Jewish origin. Scholars have long noted the presence of Islamic elements in PRE. Israel Lévi, in one of the earliest studies of the work, even posited the presence of Christian elements. In this regard, Lévi was only succeeded by Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, who
addressed this subject in their article “Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis”\textsuperscript{11}. They repeatedly refer to one particular work, the Syriac \textit{Cave of Treasures} (6\textsuperscript{th} c.), which also has many formal similarities to both \textit{Jubilees} and \textit{PRE}. The \textit{Cave of Treasures} is not an isolated apocryphon but a work of extraordinary importance which was foundational in constructing the Syriac Christian and Islamic conception of ancient Israelite history. The height of its popularity coincided with the redaction of \textit{PRE}. Therefore, potential Christian and Muslim influence on a rabbinic work such as \textit{PRE} has two dimensions: Such channels could have reacquainted the rabbinic author with ancient Jewish traditions, but they also could have introduced contemporary non-Jewish traditions about biblical figures.

The present study will attempt to explain the non-rabbinic material found in \textit{PRE} as the result of the author’s adoption (and adaptation) of elements from the surrounding Christian and Muslim culture rather than through the direct transmission of Second Temple works among Jews. This hypothesis will be tested through the examination of two works close to \textit{PRE} in form and content, the aforementioned \textit{Jubilees} and the \textit{Cave of Treasures}. The \textit{Book of Jubilees}, in this case, is not the ancient Hebrew text found at Qumran—which was not transmitted beyond the Second Temple period—but the Late Antique Greek text used by Christian chroniclers. The \textit{Cave of Treasures} is a Christian work which was, however, quite popular among Muslims. It too was widely used as an historical source. All three works—\textit{PRE}, \textit{Jubilees}, and the \textit{Cave of Treasures}—are examples of \textit{historia sacra}, “Sacred History”, that is, works that recount the history of Israel for a religious purpose\textsuperscript{12}. It is not a study of biblical exegesis. Rather, it is an inquiry into comparative mythology, the evolution of tradition, and the construction of communal identities through the transformation of a shared history, the history of the ancient prophets and patriarchs.

The study is also a foray into a larger investigation of the historical and social circumstances of the “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.” Both \textit{Jubilees} and the \textit{Cave of Treasures} are classed

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\textsuperscript{12} S. Ditchfield, « What was Sacred History? (Mostly Roman) Catholic Uses of the Christian Past after Trent », in \textit{Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance world}, K.E. Van Liere, S. Ditchfield, H. Louthan (ed.), Oxford, 2012, p. 74, succinctly defines Sacred History as follows: “The term \textit{historia sacra} was usually employed to refer specifically to biblical history in contrast to profane history.” He adds (p. 75): “Sacred History’ could also mean the history of the Church since biblical times.” This study adheres to the first definition. Ditchfield’s article (and the volume in which it appears) deals principally with the second definition. The first use of the term, to my knowledge, is the \textit{Historia Sacra} of Sulpicius Severus (d. 425), which begins with creation and ends in the author’s own days. His work is a model for both conceptions of sacred history. For this work, see Sulpicius Severus, \textit{Chroniques}, G. de Senneville-Grave (ed.), Paris, 1999.
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as Pseudepigrapha\(^\text{13}\), and the special interest of \textit{PRE} is its alleged dependence on this literature\(^\text{14}\). However, the Pseudepigrapha, which are usually treated as a subset Second Temple literature, are not a homogenous corpus. Whereas some important examples are certainly ancient Jewish works—confirmed, if by nothing else, by their discovery at Qumran—a greater number were preserved by Christians but have no clear link with Second Temple literature. The Christian preservation of the Pseudepigrapha is usually treated as little more than a methodological hurdle to the use of Pseudepigrapha as sources for the study of Second Temple Judaism. The reception of the Pseudepigrapha in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, that is, the time periods which furnish most of the manuscript evidence, receives little attention. The present study is intended as a corrective to this oversight. In other words, the study could be framed as a comparison between \textit{PRE} and the Pseudepigrapha\(^\text{15}\), but it is not necessarily a study of the relationship of \textit{PRE} to Second Temple literature, notwithstanding the presence of \textit{Jubilees}, a Second Temple work which, however, survived into Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

At the heart of this study are the Adam books, a corpus which has attracted a great deal of interest within Pseudepigrapha studies, despite its contested link to Second Temple literature. The primary Adam book, the \textit{Life of Adam and Eve}, which exists in a number of different versions, is mentioned only in passing, yet the three works examined in this study are all connected in some way to this work. The \textit{Book of Jubilees} has probably influenced the \textit{Life of Adam and Eve}, especially its Greek version\(^\text{16}\), while the \textit{Cave of Treasures} and \textit{PRE} feature different episodes from the work\(^\text{17}\). In fact, the cultural DNA of this work was quite widely

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\(^15\) Although, it should be noted, the term “Pseudepigrapha” is generally avoided beyond this introduction.

\(^16\) The opening of the Greek version resembles the opening of \textit{Jubilees}, in which Moses receives a revelation about the past from an angel. On account of this opening narrative, both works have the alternative title \textit{Apocalypse of Moses} (see R.H. Charles, \textit{The Book of Jubilees}, or \textit{The Little Genesis}, London, 1902, p. xvii). For a critical edition of the Greek text, see J. Tromp, \textit{The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek: A Critical Edition}, Leiden ; Boston, 2005. See infra Section 3.1.6 for a possible influence of \textit{Jubilees} on the Latin \textit{Life of Adam and Eve}.

diffused in canonical works both sacred (the Qur’an)\textsuperscript{18} and secular (Paradise Lost)\textsuperscript{19}. The Adam literature is therefore quite significant for the history of religions across a wide cultural spectrum. The question of origins is absolutely crucial for understanding the development of the Abrahamic religions, and a false positive gives a skewed perspective of all three religions.

The Adam literature is a perfect example of Pseudepigrapha which is not Second Temple literature. Unlike Jubilees or the Book of the Watchers, the Life of Adam and Eve was not found at Qumran. It is not cited in Second Temple literature or even the Church Fathers, and the positive evidence of its existence is quite late—around the sixth or seventh century at the earliest\textsuperscript{20}. After this date, however, the work explodes in popularity, and its influence is manifest until the end of the Middle Ages\textsuperscript{21}. Although the background of the work is still highly contested, a growing number of scholars recognize the Life of Adam and Eve as a Christian work\textsuperscript{22}. The implications for the study of PRE are enormous since, as the present study will show, the Adam literature is much better reflected in PRE than authentic Second Temple compositions such as Jubilees or the Enoch books. Far from segregating Judaism from Christianity, the present study endeavors to show a different way in which the two religions are related: Judaism sometimes borrowed from Christianity.

**The History of Research**

The history of research of the non-rabbinic material in PRE can be divided into three broad categories. Most researchers posit that PRE derived its special material directly from Hebrew and Aramaic Second Temple literature. They point to parallel survivals of Second Temple material, especially the handful of works found in the Cairo Genizah and the citations of ancient literature by R. Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne (11\textsuperscript{th} c.). This position presumes that there is a strong connection between PRE and Second Temple literature, which is not necessarily the case. Many parallels are quite general and can be found in the classical rabbinic corpus or even the Hebrew Bible.


Other researchers attempt to explain PRE as a result of internal developments within contemporary Jewish literature. That is, the non-rabbinic material of PRE is rabbinic after all. A related idea, included in this section, is that PRE depends on Jewish literature which is not part of the classical rabbinic corpus, such as the corpora of Hekhalot, Targum, Piyyut, and Apocalyptic. This approach has much to commend it. In the first place, contemporary Jewish works constitute the majority of PRE’s sources. Furthermore, even classical rabbinic literature occasionally alludes to non-rabbinic sources, such as the Book of Ben Sira or the Book of Giants, both from the Second Temple period. Hence, the rabbis were not ignorant of “outside literature,” although this observation is not particularly helpful in the case of PRE. In fact, the special material in Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer has no precedent in any earlier Jewish source. Internal transmission cannot account for it.

A third approach views the non-rabbinic material as the result of Christian and Muslim influence on Judaism. This is the position of the present study. The benefit of this approach, beyond its novelty, is its consideration of the greater social and historical context in which PRE was written: The work appeared at the height of the popularity of the Adam literature, including the Cave of Treasures, within both Christianity and Islam. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer, though unusual within Jewish literature, is representative of the religious literature of the period in which it was written. This broader perspective helps resolve many of the mysteries surrounding the work.

PRE and Second Temple Literature
The surprising discovery of Second Temple material in both the Cairo Genizah and the works attributed to R. Moshe ha-Darshan showed that, in some instances, Second Temple material survived into the medieval period in Hebrew and Aramaic. Such works remained a part of Jewish tradition without the mediation of Christian or Islamic influence. It is therefore a reasonable hypothesis that PRE is another example of this phenomenon. However, the interest of the Genizah documents and the works of R. Moshe is their connection to the Dead Sea Scrolls, but PRE, while often compared to the Pseudepigrapha, has no special connection to the Qumran literature. Although Hebrew copies of Jubilees were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jubilees also survived in Christian transmission. Hence, any connection between PRE and Jubilees does not immediately prove knowledge of the Hebrew original.

It is uncertain who first proposed the relationship between PRE and Second Temple literature. Leopold Zunz, who wrote the first critical study of PRE, does not deal with the subject\textsuperscript{24}. Israel Lévi, in his 1889 article “Éléments chrétiens dans le Pirké Rabbi Eliézer”, refers to the opinion of Chaim Meier Horowitz, who believed that PRE was the source of the Enoch books. Lévi criticizes this position: “Il veut à toute force que le Pirké soit composé d’éléments anciens, plus anciens même que le livre d’Enoch, il est clair qu’il attribue la priorité au Pirké, sans se préoccuper de l’invraisemblance de cette hypothèse”\textsuperscript{25}. Indeed, Horowitz’ point of view contradicts the most important contribution of Zunz to the study of PRE, the incontrovertible demonstration of the redaction of PRE in the early Islamic period.

The author who is most frequently associated with the idea that PRE used Second Temple sources is Gerald Friedlander, the English translator of PRE\textsuperscript{26}. He dedicates a lengthy section of his introduction to a comparison of PRE to the “Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha,” which he presumes are Second Temple sources\textsuperscript{27}. The Book of Jubilees is at the head of this list, but he also mentions several other works (including the Cave of Treasures). He does not, however, believe that these works are the direct sources of PRE:

It is by no means definitely established that our author actually copied any of the afore-mentioned books. What is maintained, however, is the existence of some sort of literary connection between P. R. E. and these books. This may be explained by the existence of compositions based on the Pseudepigrapha or used by the authors of this class of literature. The link is missing and it would be extremely hazardous to do more than point out the existence of similar ideas and occasionally actual parallel phrases. It must not be forgotten that many of the ideas common to the Midrashim and the Pseudepigrapha were, so to say, common property, floating traditions which were recorded not only in Enoch and Jubilees, but also in the Books of Adam and Eve, and later in our book, and later still in such compositions as the Book of the Bee\textsuperscript{28}.

In this respect, Friedlander is closer to the second position (PRE as the product of internal developments within Jewish literature) rather than the first (direct dependence on Second Temple literature). Friedlander’s critics restate his position in their own words.

\textsuperscript{24} L. Zunz, Die gottesdientslichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 134-136.
\textsuperscript{26} G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p. xxi-liii.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. lii.
Hanoch Albeck, in more than one publication, proposed that the “Pseudepigrapha” (again, meaning Second Temple sources) directly influenced PRE. The more important of these publications is his revision of the work of Leopold Zunz. Albeck focuses on shared ideas between PRE and the Book of Jubilees, especially the idea that the patriarchs (Adam, Abraham) observed the Passover and the Sabbath (see infra Section 5.3). He also refers to Enoch and the calendar (Section 5.2), the Watchers (Section 5.4), and the story of Satan found in the Adam books (cf. Section 8.2).

Steven Ballaban, in his unpublished doctoral thesis “The Enigma of the Lost Second Temple Literature: Routes of Recovery” (1994) examines all examples of Second Temple literature in medieval Jewish sources, including the few books found in the Cairo Genizah (e.g., the Damascus Document, the Aramaic Levi Document, and Hebrew texts of Ben Sira) and the citations in the works of R. Moshe ha-Darshan. He credits PRE as the earliest rabbinic work to draw on sources from Second Temple sources, but he believes that the work grew gradually over time. In his view, it is an example of continuous Jewish usage of Second Temple literature. He cites several parallels (drawn from Lévi, Friedlander, and Albeck), but only one example comes from Jubilees: the conflict between the sons of Jacob and Esau in PRE 39 and Jubilees 37-38 (see infra Section 5.9).

In 2012, Menahem Kister published a rich article entitled “Ancient Material in Pirqé de-Rabbi Eli’ezer: Basilides, Qumran, the Book of Jubilees.” He examined six examples of “ancient material” in PRE, of which four are directly related to the Book of Jubilees. The six traditions are: 1) God and his angels casting lots for possession of the different nations in PRE 24, an idea attested in the Qumran literature and in the work of the gnostic Basilides (cf. Deut 32:8-9); 2) A reference to the wife of Noah (Emzara) in PRE 23 and Jubilees 4:33 (see infra Section 5.5); 3) The election of Levi in PRE 37 and Jubilees 32:3 (Section 5.8); 4) A “covert exegesis” of Leviticus 5:1 in PRE 14 and Jubilees 4:5-6; 5) A reference to the Hebrew name of Moses (מַלְאכִי) in both PRE 48 and the Vision of Amram from Qumran; and

29 H Albeck in L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 136-140. See also H. Albeck, « Agadot im Lichte der Pseudepigraphen », Monatschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums (1939), p. 162-169, where he analyzes PRE 5 in light of traditions from 4 Ezra and 3 Baruch, but the parallels are thin.
31 Ibid. p. 90-104.
32 Ibid., p. 110-112.
34 The passage from PRE is quoted in the Appendix (§ 23), with a brief discussion. The tradition is indeed ancient, but PRE adds a twist: The casting of lots occurs when God disrupts the building of the Tower of Babel.
35 See chapter five, note 1.
6) The prophecy of Moses’ birth, also from PRE 48 and implicit in Jubilees 47:1-3 (Section 5.10). Kister, however, makes no claims as to how the author of PRE obtained this material.

The most recent treatment of PRE and Second Temple literature is Katharina Keim’s Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer: Structure, Coherence, Intertextuality (2017)\textsuperscript{36}. Her chapter on “Intertextuality” includes a section on the Pseudepigrapha, which she identifies with Second Temple literature (it also treats the Hebrew Bible, rabbinic literature, Targum, Piyyut, and the Christian and Islamic tradition)\textsuperscript{37}. She focuses exclusively on material related to the fallen angels (PRE 13 and 22; see infra Sections 5.4 and 8.2)\textsuperscript{38}. Following a hypothesis of Philip Alexander\textsuperscript{39}, she suggests that an esoteric Jewish priestly tradition may have influenced the material in PRE, although she does not deny the influence of contemporary sources. She only mentions R. Moshe and the Cairo Genizah in passing\textsuperscript{40}.

The recurring theme in this secondary literature is a willingness to identify Hebrew and Aramaic Second Temple literature as sources of PRE but difficulties in establishing how PRE could have known this literature. It is unquestionably the case that medieval Jews knew some Second Temple literature in their Hebrew and Aramaic originals. However, the limited evidence—mainly the Qumran literature which resurfaced in the Cairo Genizah and in the works of R. Moshe ha-Darshan—is only suggestive of a broader knowledge of Second Temple literature among medieval Jews. Furthermore, the Qumran literature has little overlap with PRE. The present study questions the extent to which Second Temple literature has influenced PRE in the first place. Although the secondary literature frequently cites Jubilees as a source of PRE, the proposed parallels are weak. In the absence of strong parallels, there is no need to establish a mode of transmission.

**PRE and Rabbinic Literature**

In contrast (and, frequently, in direct opposition) to the first approach, other authors attempt to explain PRE exclusively as an internal development within rabbinic literature. The target of this secondary literature is usually Gerald Friedlander. Ironically, Gerald Friedlander was himself a proponent of this hypothesis, who pointed to the “floating traditions” that were found in both the “Pseudepigrapha” and Midrash.


\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 141-196.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 171-176.


\textsuperscript{40} K.E. Keim, Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 161 and 172.
 Appropriately, the first criticism of Friedlander appears in B. Halper’s review of Friedlander’s translation[41]. Halper was not impressed by the list of parallels, which could have been accidental. In his judgment:

> It is quite conceivable that a man imbued with the midrashic spirit could have written these Chapters without having seen any part of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic literature (...) Even the more striking resemblances do not warrant the conclusions drawn by Mr. Friedlander, as the doctrines of the Book of Jubilees and similar works may have been known by the author of the Chapters from other sources[42].

Halper also thought that Friedlander overrated the influence of Jubilees. He represents an opposing approach to PRE that appears in a few other authors: that no outside influences are necessary to explain the unique character of PRE. The “midrashic spirit” is sufficient.

Several decades later, Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein accused Friedlander of “parallelomania” in her 1994 article “Pseudepigraphic Support of Pseudepigraphical Sources: The Case of Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer”[43]. Focusing on Friedlander’s parallels with Jubilees and 1 Enoch, she showed that most of these traditions actually come from the Bible and classical rabbinic literature. She does not explain the origin of stories which have no precedent in rabbinic literature, but defers to unnamed intermediary sources: “Certainly, there are a small number of examples that do not fit as neatly into this scheme. However, even these ideas were available to the redactor of PRE in forms other than the actual books of Jubilees and 1 Enoch”[44]. Again, this is Friedlander’s own position.

In 1996, Jeffrey Rubenstein studied both PRE and the printed Midrash Tanhuma from the perspective of myth[45]. His basic hypothesis is that “Tanhuma and Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer revise rabbinic sources to create their myths; they contain few ideas not documented in classical rabbinic texts”[46]. The section on PRE focuses on the account of the separation of the waters on the third day of creation (PRE 5) and the parallel account in various rabbinic sources, notably Genesis Rabbah. He states that the major difference between PRE and the

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[42] Ibid., p. 481.
[46] Ibid., p. 133.
earlier rabbinic sources is the use of narrative. His hypothesis that few ideas in PRE are unattested in rabbinic sources is true of the passage he cites; it is not true of the composition as a whole.

In 2009, Rachel Adelman, in her study of the poetics of PRE, considered the work as an example of the Freudian “return of the repressed”\(^{47}\). In her view, the author of PRE used the same exegetical techniques as Second Temple writers in order to reproduce the same stories. Her principle examples are the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 1-36) and the Life of Adam and Eve, which she considers a Second Temple source, and their relationship to PRE 13 and PRE 22. In the last paragraph, however, she accepts that the author may have directly used Second Temple literature, either in their original form or in Christian translations\(^{48}\).

In the same year, Steven Daniel Sacks published a short book on PRE entitled Midrash and Multiplicity: Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Renewal of Rabbinic Interpretive Culture\(^{49}\). He objects to the tendency to compare PRE with works outside the classic rabbinic corpus. His primary thesis is that the work is an authentic expression of rabbinic culture which is best understood in relation to other rabbinic works rather than outside literature. To this end he is suspicious of attempts to classify PRE as anything but Midrash or to label its traditions as non-rabbinic, although he does not deny points of contact with outside literature.

Along similar lines, Ryan Dulkin recently attempted to explain the stories about Sammael (i.e., the devil) in PRE entirely from the perspective of rabbinic tradition\(^{50}\). He concedes that the story of Sammael’s role in the sin of Adam and Eve probably comes from “either pseudepigraphic, Christian and/or Islamic traditions (whether oral or textual or both)”\(^{51}\), but he also wants to highlight the role of rabbinic tradition in PRE’s rendition of the story.

The key observation in this group of secondary literature is that PRE is a rabbinic document which relies primarily on rabbinic sources. This observation is correct. One can even add that the rabbis themselves refer to “outside books” (_prefs חיצוניים), most famously the Hebrew

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\(^{47}\) R. Adelman, *The Return of the Repressed: Pirqeq de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha*, Leiden, 2009. Despite the title, the work is a study of the poetics of PRE. The Pseudepigrapha occupy only one of the book’s four parts.

\(^{48}\) Ibid., p. 264.


\(^{51}\) Ibid., p. 157.
Book of Ben Sira (e.g., *b. Sanhedrin* 100b), which was also found in the Cairo Genizah. The rabbis might also allude to the *Book of Giants* (*b. Niddah* 61a; cf. *b. Yoma* 67b)\(^52\). Significantly, both works date from the Second Temple period and were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Again, while the connection between *PRE* and the Pseudepigrapha is strong, the connection between *PRE* and Qumran is not. The rabbis could have indeed transmitted Second Temple material to the author of *PRE*, but the “outside books” cited in the classical rabbinic sources are not closely related to *PRE*.

A similar approach is to view *PRE* as dependent on other contemporary Jewish sources—Hekhalot, Targum, Piyut, and Apocalyptic. All of these genres were eventually absorbed into rabbinic literature. They are not, however, part of the classical rabbinic canon. Annette Yoshiko Reed has compared *PRE* to the Hekhalot literature\(^53\), while Michael Swartz and Joseph Yahalom have compared *PRE* to the piyyut *Az be-Ein Kol*\(^54\). A great many scholars have compared *PRE* to *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*\(^55\). This Targum, however, is unique. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* has little in common with the other Targumim (see Chapter Two). Eliezer Treitl, in a monograph on the textual history of *PRE*, includes a chapter on Piyyut\(^56\). Katharina Keim gives a broad overview of all the potential sources of *PRE*, including Targum\(^57\) and Piyyut\(^58\). Finally, the Hebrew apocalypses from Late Antiquity (e.g., *Sefer Zerubbabel, Secrets of Simeon bar Yohai*) have material in common with *PRE*. John Reeves has published *PRE* 30 together with these texts\(^59\).

The consideration of contemporary Jewish literature outside the classical rabbinic corpus can help explain some of the peculiar traditions found in *PRE*. They might even explain traditions which otherwise would be ascribed to the Pseudepigrapha. For example, *PRE* 4 mentions the


\(^{54}\) See M. D. Swartz and J. Yahalom, *Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur*, University Park, Pa, 2005, p. 95-219, for the text and translation. The parallels are primarily thematic. There is no concrete evidence of *PRE*’s dependence on the piyyut.

\(^{55}\) See chapter two for the extensive bibliography on this question.

\(^{56}\) E. Treitl, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer: Text, Redaction and a Sample Synopsis*, Jerusalem, 2012 [Hebrew], p. 256-266. Many of his examples come from Yannai (7th c.). It is remarkable that the one English monograph on Yannai, which includes all of his poetry on Genesis, does not mention *PRE*: L.S. Lieber, *Yannai on Genesis: An Invitation to Piyyut*, Cincinnati, 2010.


four angels who surround the throne of God—Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel. These four angels are first named together in the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 9:1). However, the passage in PRE is identical with two passages from Massekhet Hekhalot. Similarly, PRE 38 mentions that Joseph’s brothers bought shoes with the money they acquired from his sale (cf. Amos 2:6). The idea is found in the Testament of Zebulun 3:2, which has no known Hebrew or Aramaic counterpart, but the same motif is implied by Midrash Elleh Ezkerah (“The Story of the Ten Martyrs”) as well as the piyyut of the same name. In fact, contemporary Jewish sources should be preferred as the immediate sources of PRE. These sources, however, do not explain all of the non-rabbinic material in PRE.

**PRE and Christian and Islamic Literature**
The third approach explains the non-rabbinic material in PRE as a result of contact with the dominant Christian and Muslim cultures. In the history of research on PRE, Islam has usually been privileged, since the work comes from the early Islamic period. In this period, however, Christianity was still the predominant religion of the Middle East. Furthermore, the Jewish polemics of the early Islamic period show a pronounced engagement with Christianity—to the exclusion of Islam. This is not an either-or proposition: Both religions, which were culturally dominant, could have influenced PRE. Frankly, it would be more surprising if that were not the case.

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62 A. Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch: Sammlung kleiner Midraschim und vermischter Abhandlungen aus der ältern jüdischen Literatur*, Leipzig, 1853 [Hebrew], vol. 2, p. 64-72. See also G. Reeg, *Die Geschichte von den Zehn Märtyrern: synoptische Edition mit Übersetzung und Einleitung*, Tübingen, 1985. The story opens when the Roman Emperor reads the Torah and is outraged by the sale of Joseph. He invites ten rabbis to his palace to interrogate and (finally) execute them in retribution for the ten brothers who betrayed Joseph. When the rabbis enter the imperial palace, they find that their room is filled with shoes.


The first study to compare PRE to Islamic tradition, Abraham Geiger’s *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* (1833)\(^{65}\) published in English as *Judaism and Islam* (1898)\(^{66}\), proposed that PRE was a source of the Qur’an. His contemporary, Leopold Zunz, proved that this position is impossible: PRE comes from the early Islamic period and so postdates the Qur’an. No one, however, has fully explored the contrary position, that the Qur’an is a source of PRE. Instead, most studies on PRE and Islam focus on PRE 30 and whether the traditions there constitute a “polemic” against Islam\(^{67}\). The chapter contains a story about Abraham visiting Ishmael in the Hijaz. The same story is widely reported in Arabic literature\(^{68}\). Since majority cultures tends to influence minority cultures (and the story is the prelude to Abraham building the Ka‘ba), the story is probably of Islamic origin. Joseph Heinemann has commented on additional Islamic influences in PRE—but, again, only in the context of polemic\(^{69}\).

Louis Ginzberg made a slightly different observation about the relationship between PRE and Islam, stating that PRE is “modeled upon the Arabic collections of Biblical legends in which narrative is emphasized”\(^{70}\). He is referring to a genre of Islamic literature called the *Qisas al-‘Anbiyā*’ (*Stories of the Prophets*), the narratives of the (mostly biblical) prophets who lived before Muhammad\(^{71}\). Steven Daniel Sacks attacked this particular claim\(^{72}\), yet the rise of this genre in Islamic literature is contemporaneous with the redaction of PRE, and PRE contains

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\(^{65}\) A. Geiger, *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?*, Bonn, 1833.

\(^{66}\) A. Geiger, *Judaism and Islam: A Prize Essay by Abraham GeigerTranslated from the German by a Member of the Ladies’ League in Aid of the Delhi Mission*, translated by F. M. Young, Madras, 1898.


several stories common to this literature—such as Abraham’s visit to Ishmael. The full potential of Ginzberg’s statement has yet to be fully explored, although Aviva Schussman has compared PRE to the Stories of the Prophets of al-Kisa’i (13th c.)4. Al-Kisa’i’s collection, however, is much later than PRE, and the parallels (all, incidentally, related to the story of Adam) are very general.

The other possibility, Christian influence on PRE, has also not yet received the attention it deserves. In 1889, Israel Lévi became the first—and, for a long time, the last—to suggest Christianity as the source of non-rabbinic traditions in PRE. His article, “Éléments chrétiens dans le Pirké Rabbi Eliézer,” identifies two Christian sources for PRE, the story of Barlaam and Josaphat (the “Christian Buddha”) and the Adam books, including the Life of Adam and Eve, the Cave of Treasures, and a third work, the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan (see infra Section 6.2.3)5. At the date of the redaction of PRE, the parallel from Barlaam and Josaphat could not have come from a Christian version. The tale had only just been translated into Arabic by a Muslim author and would not enter Christian literature for another few centuries.6. The parallel could be another example of PRE’s dependence on Arabic literature.

Regarding the Adam literature, Lévi noticed the story of the penitence of Adam in PRE was radically discontinuous with established rabbinic tradition—where Adam refuses to repent (Gen. Rab. 21.6; 22.13)—but similar to the penitence of Adam in the Adam books.7 His last sentence is a concise summary of the method of this study: “Je mets en fait que toutes les aggadot du Pirké R. Eliézer qui ne sont pas tirées des Talmud et des recueils qui lui sont antérieurs lui sont venues par l’intermédiaire des sectes chrétiennes et des

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musulmans". Lévi’s article did not attract the attention it deserved, in part, one suspects, because the Adam books were considered Jewish for most of the last century.

In 2007, one-hundred and eighteen years after the publication of Lévi’s article, Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling demonstrated a close connection between PRE and Eastern Christian exegesis. In every one of their examples, they cite the Cave of Treasures, although they do not draw attention to their repeated use of this particular source. The Cave of Treasures is of particular interest not only because it closely resembles PRE but because it was particularly widespread in Christian and Muslim sources at the time of the redaction of PRE. Their later work, The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity, also indirectly draws attention to the relationship between PRE and Christian literature. Each chapter in this work considers the same biblical topics from both Jewish and Christian literature in search of “exegetical encounters” between the two traditions. Pirqê de-Rabbi Eliezer is frequently the bridge between the two religions.

Many authors who accept Second Temple influence on PRE also accept the possible influence of later Christian and Muslim literature. This is the case with Friedlander, Adelman, Kister, and Keim. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive. Furthermore, a lot of Second Temple material was present in contemporary Christian and Muslim literature. The

78 I. Lévi, « Eléments Chrétiens dans le Pirké Rabbi Eliézer », op. cit., p. 89.
79 Directly opposed to the approach of Israël Lévi is Louis Ginzberg, « Adam, Book of », in The Jewish Encyclopedia, 12 vol., I. Singer (ed.), New York, 1901, vol. 1, p. 179-180, who speculates that an Adam book existed in the Second Temple period and that PRE preserves elements of the Hebrew original. This view, rather than Lévi’s, is representative of most research on the Adam books until relatively recently.
80 E. Grypeou and H. Spurling, « Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis », op. cit. All of their parallels reappear in chapter eight of the present study: 1) Sammael uses the Serpent (infra Section 8.2); 2) The Descendants of Seth and Cain (8.7); The Cave of Machpelah and the Temple Mount (8.4); and 4) The Construction of the Ark (8.8)
82 G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. lii : “We have by no means exhausted the material in the foregoing paragraphs. Such books as Schatzhöhle [the Cave of Treasures], Kebra Nagast, and the Book of the Bee, not to mention the Koran and its famous commentaries, contain much material in common with our ‘Chapters’.”
83 R. Adelman, The Return of the Repressed, op. cit., p. 264: “…perhaps the author had access, through translations into Greek, Latin, or Syriac, of works such as the Vitae [the Life of Adam and Eve] or Jubilees, which were preserved by different branches of the Christian Church. Alternatively, many of these sources may have been filed through Islamic oral tradition, the Hadith.”
84 M. Kister, « Ancient Material in Pirqê de-Rabbi Eliêzer », op. cit., p. 71: “The nature of the relationship between PRE and the ancient traditions varies in the cases discussed below, and in many of the cases the exact relationship cannot be decided. Some of them may reflect the transmission of books or excerpts of the literature of the Second Temple period (such as the Book of Jubilees); others are perhaps reflections of early rabbinic traditions which are otherwise unknown to us, and attested only in non-rabbinic sources; some can in theory even be suspected of having been influenced by mediaeval non-Jewish material.”
85 K.E. Keim, Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 196: “PRE was aware of and used aspects of Christian and Islamic tradition, but how they were mediated to it, whether by oral or written texts, and what form those texts took, we cannot now say.”
hypothesis of an undocumented transmission among unspecified non-rabbinic Jews from the Second Temple period onward is superfluous if the same material can be found within the culturally dominant traditions. This study maintains, however, that the non-rabbinic material which is not reflected in older Jewish sources is of greater interest for the study of PRE.

Methodology
The goal of the present study is to demonstrate Christian and Muslim influence as the best model for understanding the non-rabbinic material in PRE. The method entails dismantling a few dubious assumptions which have impeded the consideration of this hypothesis. The first assumption is that Judaism is the fount of Christian and Muslim tradition, especially traditions involving biblical figures. While Judaism has exerted an extensive and undeniable influence on the other two religions throughout their histories, it is untenable to assume that a Christian or Muslim work depends on a Jewish source simply because such a work concerns a character from the Hebrew Bible. The assumption implicitly denies that Christians and Muslims are incapable of developing original traditions about the Hebrew patriarchs and prophets, and it promotes the stereotype that Judaism is culturally isolated, capable of influencing others but impervious to outside influence.

The second assumption concerns the relationship between the Pseudepigrapha and Second Temple Jewish literature. The Pseudepigrapha are usually considered a subset of Second Temple literature, in part because of the first assumption: The Pseudepigrapha are Jewish because they treat figures from the Jewish scriptures. The Pseudepigrapha, however, are not a unified corpus, and the individual works must be treated separately. Pseudepigrapha such as the Book of Jubilees and the Book of the Watchers are indeed ancient Jewish works, but the sixth-century Cave of Treasures is neither Jewish nor (comparatively) ancient. Furthermore, there are a number of ambiguous cases, works that are not clearly Jewish or of Second Temple provenance. The Pseudepigrapha cannot be automatically subsumed under the banner of Second Temple literature.

The third assumption is that a work dealing with a biblical figure must be an example of biblical exegesis. Exegesis, however, directly engages the biblical text, while the Pseudepigrapha, including Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures, add a great deal of material which has no obvious connection to the canonical literature. The problem is compounded when one considers Islamic material on the biblical prophets which are, functionally, not much different from the Pseudepigrapha. Even though Islamic Stories of the Prophets follow
the sequence of the biblical history, they are not commentaries on the Bible, which is rarely
cited or even mentioned in such works. In fact, the interest of PRE, Jubilees, the Cave of
Treasures, and the Stories of the Prophets is their disengagement from the biblical text.

The present study follows three methodological principles which are intended to correct these
three problematic assumptions. The first and most important of these principles is that
majority cultures influence minority culture. For most of its history, Judaism has been a
minority culture, which makes it particularly susceptible to outside influence, including
Christianity and Islam. The second principle is that the date and provenance of the
Pseudepigrapha must be assessed on available evidence, namely the earliest extant
manuscripts and citations. The third principle is that permutations in the the biblical
history, rather than the biblical text, is the distinguishing characteristic of PRE, Jubilees, and the Cave
of Treasures. For this reason, the study jettisons terms like “Rewritten Bible,” which implies a
form of exegesis, in favor of “Sacred History.”

Majority Cultures and Minority Cultures
The basic methodological principle is that the majority culture influences the minority culture.
Israel Yuval, in his book Two Nations in Your Womb, an examination of the influence of
medieval (Western) Christianity on Judaism, formulated this principle as follows:

Whenever we find a similarity between Judaism and Christianity, and we do not have
grounds to suggest a shared heritage, we may assume that it is indicative of the
influence of the Christian milieu on the Jews, and not vice versa, unless it may be
proved that the Jewish sources are more ancient.

This method has been profitably applied in other recent research, such as Annette Yoshiko
Reed’s study of the transmission of the Book of the Watchers from Judaism to Christianity
and back to Judaism, Shari Lowin’s study of Islamic influence on medieval Jewish legends

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86 I. J. Yuval, Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle
87 A.Y. Reed, « From Asael and Šemihazah to Uzzah, Azzah, and Azael: 3 Enoch 5 (§7-8) and Jewish
argument in A.Y. Reed, Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic
Literature, Cambridge, 2005, p. 232-272, but I find her example there (the Midrash Shemhazai and Azael) less
convincing. I suspect that this “midrash” remained within Jewish tradition, and the rabbis built directly upon a
Second Temple source (in this case, the Book of Giants). See also infra Section 5.4, n. 37.
about Abraham (including PRE)\(^{88}\), and Allegra Iafrate’s study of Byzantine art on the Jewish conception of the throne of Solomon\(^{89}\).

In the context of this study, the Book of Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures are representatives of the majority cultures, Christianity and Islam. The study considers the state in which these two works existed at the time of the redaction of PRE rather than their original form. For this reason, the study emphasizes the Greek rather than the Hebrew version of Jubilees. Christians were primarily responsible for transmitting the Greek version of Jubilees, although it was not unknown to Jews, as chapter three demonstrates\(^{90}\). Nevertheless, as chapter four will show, traditions from Jubilees were subsumed into the Byzantine Christian tradition but did not have a comparable impact on Late Antique Judaism. Thus one can speak of the Greek Jubilees as a “Christian” source. Similarly, the Cave of Treasures is a Christian work, but it is also an important source of Muslim tradition on the pre-Islamic prophets. Therefore, Jubilees represents Greek Christian tradition, while the Cave of Treasures represents both Syriac Christian and early Islamic tradition.

Yuval introduces one important caveat into his programmatic statement: The claim of outside influence is invalid if older Jewish sources can explain a tradition. Therefore, other Jewish literature should be preferred over Christian and Muslim works as the sources of PRE. As Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein demonstrated, many of the proposed parallels between PRE and non-rabbinic literature are already part of rabbinic tradition\(^{91}\). Under these circumstances, it is necessary to establish a hierarchy of the possible sources of PRE. The primary source, naturally, is the Hebrew Bible. Next in rank is the classical rabbinic corpus. It is taken for granted that this corpus is older than PRE. Finally, contemporary Jewish literature, such as the classical Piyut, the Palestinian Targumim, Hebrew Apocalyptic, and even the Hekhalot literature should be privileged over Christian and Muslim literature as sources of PRE. Post-classical rabbinic literature, such as the printed Midrash Tanhumah, is considered later than


\(^{89}\) A. Iafrate, The Wandering Throne of Solomon: Objects and Tales of Kingship in the Medieval Mediterranean, Leiden; Boston, 2015, p. 106-159.

\(^{90}\) In this respect, Greek Jubilees is similar to another Greek translation of an ancient Hebrew document—the Septuagint. Nicholas de Lange, Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Greek Bible Translations in Byzantine Judaism, Tübingen, 2015, has shown continuous Jewish use of Greek versions of the Bible, including the Septuagint, from the Second Temple period until the end of the Middle Ages. This also implies continuous Jewish knowledge of the Greek language, a fact which is often neglected.

\(^{91}\) A. Urowitz-Freudenstein, « Pseudepigraphic Support of Pseudepigraphical Sources: The Case of Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer », op. cit.
In general, the post-classical literature has little overlap with PRE that is not already reflected by the classical sources. The *Handbook of Jewish Literature from Late Antiquity* is a reliable guide to the most important Jewish literature which predates PRE.

**Second Temple Literature and the Pseudepigrapha**

The second methodological principle concerns the approach to Second Temple literature and the Pseudepigrapha—two different categories. A persistent problem in the study of ancient Judaism is the treatment of the Old Testament (not Jewish) Pseudepigrapha as a subset of Second Temple Jewish literature. To the extent that the Pseudepigrapha are a corpus at all, they are a Christian corpus. In the first place, they were preserved by Christians, although this is typical of Second Temple literature: Philo, Josephus, the Septuagint (including the Apocrypha), and, of course, the New Testament are all examples of Second Temple literature preserved by Christians. Many of the Pseudepigrapha, however, have no evident connection to authentic Second Temple literature. While parts of *I Enoch*, *Jubilees*, and some sources of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (e.g., the Aramaic Levi Document) were found at Qumran, there are no Second Temple manuscripts or citations of the *Life of Adam and Eve*.

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93 E. Ben-Eliyahu et al., *Handbook of Jewish Literature from Late Antiquity*, 135-700 CE, op. cit. However, they include *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, which this study considers much later than PRE (see infra chapter two).

94 The oldest collections of Pseudepigrapha, such as the two volumes of Johann Albert Fabricius (*Codex pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*, Leipzig and Hamburg, 1713, and *Codices pseudepigraphi Veteris Testamenti*, Volumen alterum accedit Josephi veteris Christiani auctoria Hypomnesticon*, Hamburg, 1723) and J.-P. Migne (*Dictionnaire des apocryphes: ou Collection de tous les livres apocryphes relatifs à l’Ancien Testament et au Nouveau Testament*, 2 vol., Paris, 1856-1858), ignored religious provenance and included any writing pertaining to figures from the “Old Testament” (as opposed to “New Testament”; Fabricius and Migne collected examples of both). The very first entry in Migne (p. 1-290), for example, is the Mandaean holy book, the Ginza (printed as the “Livre d’Adam”). To call the Pseudepigrapha “Jewish” begs the question of their religious provenance. A persistent problem in the study of the Pseudepigrapha, see A.Y. Reed, « The Modern Invention of the “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” », *Journal of Theological Studies*, n° 60 (2009), p. 403-436.


2 Enoch, the Apocalypse of Abraham, the Testament of Abraham, Joseph and Aseneth, the Testament of Job, the Testament of Solomon, the Ascension of Isaiah, 3 Baruch, 4 Baruch (Paraleipomena of Jeremiah), and the Apocalypses of Elijah, Zephaniah, Esdras, and Sedrach. These works are first attested in later Christian sources—patristic citations and medieval manuscripts. Instead of the conventional approach, which considers the Pseudepigrapha as a branch of Second Temple literature, the present study follows the method outlined by Richard Bauckham, James Davila, and Alexander Panayotov in their introduction to Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures:

The determination of the provenance of a text, specifically whether it is Jewish, Christian, or other… is often a far from straightforward process. Texts surviving only in manuscripts of clearly Jewish origin can uncontroversially be assigned a Jewish provenance. The position of the editors is that texts found only in Christian manuscripts that circulated in Christian circles should be thought of as Christian compositions unless a convincing positive case can be made for a different origin. In other words, we should understand the texts first in the social context of their earliest surviving manuscripts and move backwards from there only on the basis of positive evidence.

Fortunately, the religious provenance of both Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures is uncontroversial. Manuscripts from Qumran confirm that the Book of Jubilees is a Hebrew work of the Second Temple period. The Cave of Treasures opens with an invocation of the Trinity and closes with an account of the Nativity and Passion of Christ. All scholars agree that the work is Christian, and the positive evidence confirms this: The extant manuscripts are only found in “Christian” languages such as Syriac and Georgian, and the earliest citations come from Syriac works of the seventh and eighth centuries.

This methodological principle concerns, most of all, other Pseudepigrapha related to Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures, especially the Life of Adam and Eve. The positive evidence for this work is quite late: A “Penitence of Adam” (Paenitentia Adae), which is also the title of an Armenian version of the Life of Adam and Eve, is first mentioned in the Gelasian Decree.

97 For these works, see H. F. D. Sparks, The Apocryphal Old Testament, Oxford, 1984. This collection was privileged over the better-known anthology of Charlesworth (J.H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 2 vol., London, 1983-1985) because its selection better represents the Pseudepigrapha as a corpus. Charlesworth included works that belong to other corpora, such as the Hekhalot literature (3 Enoch), the Nag Hammadi library (the Apocalypse of Adam), the Apocrypha (3-4 Maccabees) as well as the Hellenistic Jewish fragments from Alexander Polyhistor.

(6th c.)

99 E. von Dobschütz, Das Decretum Gelasianum De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis in kritischem Text, Leipzig, 1912, p. 53. For the Armenian book of this name, see M.E. Stone, The Penitence of Adam, op. cit.

100 S.J. Gathercole, « The Life of Adam and Eve (Coptic Fragments) », op. cit.


102 The earliest evidence of 2 Enoch is a Coptic fragment dated tentatively between the eighth and the tenth centuries (J.L. Hagen, « No Longer “Slavonic” Only: 2 Enoch Attested in Coptic from Nubia », in New Perspectives on 2 Enoch: No Longer Slavonic Only, A. Orlov, G. Boccaccini, J. Zurawski (ed.), Leiden ; Boston, 2012, p. 7-34). Its apparent knowledge of 1 Enoch is not proof of Jewish authorship; the Codex Panopolitanus (5th-6th c., according to the earliest estimates), which contains almost the entire Book of the Watchers, demonstrates that Late Antique Christians were still reading ancient Enochic literature. Joseph and Aseneth is first attested in a sixth century Syriac chronicle. Unlike 2 Enoch, it has little contact with earlier Jewish tradition. See R.S. Kraemer, When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and his Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered, 2nd ed., Oxford, 2015, p. 220-319, especially the Appendix (p. 305-319).

103 For the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs as Christian literature, see M. de Jonge, Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as part of Christian literature, op. cit.

104 The religious provenance of 2 Baruch might be a good test case against an early “Parting of the Ways” between Judaism and Christianity. It reflects traditional Jewish concerns about the Law and the Temple yet shows evidence of an emerging anthropology centered on Adam (J.R. Levison, Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch, Sheffield, 1988, p. 129-144), a more typically Christian theme. In this respect, it is appropriate that the first possible citation appears in the Epistle of Barnabas, a Christian work that is obsessed with Jewish themes, such as Yom Kippur (D. Stökl Ben Ezra, The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity, Tübingen, 2003, p. 147-165).


The application of this method to the other Pseudepigrapha does not always produce the same results. While applying this method to controversial works such as 2 Enoch or Joseph and Aseneth would suggest Late Antique Christian origins, this is not the case for all the Pseudepigrapha. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, for instance, is known from Christian manuscripts but depends on ancient Jewish sources, some of which have survived (notably, the Aramaic Levi Document). The apocalypse known as 2 Baruch exists complete in a solitary Syriac manuscript, yet the first possible citation of the work is much earlier, from the second-century Epistle of Barnabas 11:9 (cf. 2 Baruch 61:7). This possible citation is consistent with the general scholarly view that the composition was written soon after the destruction of the Second Temple. Finally, Liber Antiquitatum Bibliarum has no great claim to antiquity—it is not cited prior to the ninth century—although it contains a number...
of rabbinic traditions\textsuperscript{106}. This work represents another alternative within the corpus of Pseudepigrapha, a Jewish work that is late rather than early. To reiterate: The Pseudepigrapha are not a homogenous body of literature. In a Late Antique context, however, they represent a repository of Christian tradition about biblical figures, collected from diverse sources.

\textit{Rewritten Bible and Sacred History}

The third and final methodological principle is that \textit{PRE, Jubilees}, or the \textit{Cave of Treasures} are not treated as exegetical works. They are neither commentaries nor paraphrases. A true paraphrase—such as the Latin biblical epics or the Greek \textit{Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae} attributed to Athanasius (\textit{PG} 28:281-438) and John Chrysostom (\textit{PG} 56:313-386)—does not add or subtract from the source material but restates it in different words\textsuperscript{107}. The three subjects of this study and works like them (e.g., the \textit{Genesis Apocryphon}, \textit{Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum}, \textit{Palaea Historica}, \textit{Asfar Asatir}) are noteworthy precisely because they freely add and subtract from the biblical narrative\textsuperscript{108}. For this reason, these works are often labeled “Rewritten Bible”\textsuperscript{109}. Geza Vermes, who coined the term, considered the rewriting of the biblical history as a form of exegesis\textsuperscript{110}. However, the purpose of exegesis is to clarify the meaning of the biblical text, while “Rewritten Bibles” replace, alter, or even ignore the text. Far from aiding the process of interpretation, the proliferation of “Rewritten Bibles” makes exegesis more difficult by creating competing accounts of the same events\textsuperscript{111}.

\textsuperscript{106} For example, \textit{LAB} 19:7 associates 17 Tammuz with Moses’ breaking the tablets and the destruction of the Second Temple (cf. \textit{m. Ta’anit} 4:6). There are about fifty other rabbinic traditions in this work.


\textsuperscript{108} Josephus also adapts the biblical text for his \textit{Antiquities}, but his stated goal (\textit{Ant.} I.17) is to summarize the biblical narrative without addition or omission. In other words, he is engaging in the rhetoric of paraphrase, and his work, for all its divergences, is much closer to the biblical text than other “Rewritten Bibles.”


\textsuperscript{110} G. Vermes, \textit{Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies}, Leiden, 1961, p. 95: “In order to anticipate questions, and to solve problems in advance, the midrashist inserts haggadic development into the biblical narrative—an exegetical process which is probably as ancient as scriptural interpretation itself.”

\textsuperscript{111} For example, D.A. Machiela, \textit{The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon: A New Text and Translation with Introduction and Special Treatment of Columns 13-17}, Leiden, 2009, p. 131 first writes: “Noah’s dream and the earth’s division among his children are best understood as interpretive reworkings, intended to alleviate
The term “Sacred History” is intended to replace “Rewritten Bible” in order to disassociate PRE, Jubilees, and the Cave of Treasures from biblical exegesis. This is not to deny the role of exegesis in the formation of traditions about the history of Israel. However, to presume that all such tradition must derive from exegesis is a methodological assumption, not a conclusion deriving from the texts. Furthermore, the term was also chosen in order to facilitate comparison between the three works and Islamic tradition, where one can no longer speak of biblical exegesis. The pre-Islamic prophets are, for the most part, biblical prophets, yet the status of the biblical text within Islam is negative. By the tenth century, the Bible had become anti-canonical, a reliable source of false information. Thus, Islam does not share a sacred text with Judaism and Christianity but a sacred history.

The term “Sacred History” also draws attention to the fact that the works most responsible for disseminating extrabiblical traditions are chronicles rather than commentaries. The afterlives of Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures are defined by their use and reuse in Christian and Muslim chronography. For example, one Georgian scribe affixed the Cave of Treasures to the beginning of the cycle of works that constitute the Georgian Chronicles. CIAA KOURCIKIDZÉ, the editor of the Georgian Cave of Treasures, considers this example a mixture of “history” and “apocrypha”, but this is an anachronistic application of modern categories to ancient works. If a scribe adds “apocrypha” to a chronicle, it is because the “apocryphal” material is considered history. This is true even of PRE. Although Jews, in general, did not have a strong chronographic tradition, parts of PRE are incorporated into quasi-historical works such as Sefer ha-Zikhronot (the Chronicles of Jerahmeel) and Sefer ha-Yashar, and difficulties in Genesis. That is, the Genesis Apocryphon is scriptural interpretation.” Then, on the same page, he writes: “The Noah section is supplemented with an astounding amount of extra-biblical material, to the point that the narrative as we know it from Genesis nearly disappears.” The Genesis Apocryphon cannot be interpreting Genesis if it is obscuring the text.

112 J.L. Kugel, Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it Was at the Start of the Common Era, Cambridge, Mass., 1998 is representative of this trend. For a critique of Kugel’s methodology, see J.C. Reeves, « Problematising the Bible: Then and Now », Jewish Quarterly Review, vol. 100 (2010), p. 139-152.


114 See infra chapters four and seven.


116 Ibid., p. xiii-xiv.

117 The classic study is Y.H. Yerushalmi, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory, Seattle, 1982.


an early Latin translation of PRE appears in a work entitled Chronologia Sacra-Profana\textsuperscript{120}. Despite the “apocryphal” status of PRE, Jubilees, and the Cave of Treasures today, ancient chroniclers considered them valuable historical sources—probably because they contained more information than could be found in the canonical scriptures, both Bible and Qur’an\textsuperscript{121}.

The evaluation of the sources of PRE is therefore based on three principles. First, majority cultures influence minority cultures. This signifies that Christian and Muslim literature can be accepted as sources for PRE if there is no ready explanation within Jewish literature. Second, the date and provenance of the Pseudepigrapha—including Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures—are evaluated according to the positive evidence. By this method, many Pseudepigrapha have no connection to existing Second Temple literature and are quite possibly of Christian origin. Finally, the three works are classed as “Sacred Histories” rather than “Rewritten Bibles.” They are not reworking the biblical text so much as they are reworking earlier traditions about the history of Israel. Pirge de-Rabbi Eliezer, for example, is a product of the author’s engagement with earlier Jewish, Christian, and Muslim tradition, rather than an unmediated exposition on the meaning of the text of Genesis. The three principles together are efficacious for clarifying the transmission history of a given text. However, they tend to controvert established academic orthodoxies.

**The Plan of the Present Study**
The study will be divided into three parts, corresponding to each of the three works. The first part introduces the text of PRE, including its date, provenance, genre, and questions of language (Chapter One), followed by an examination of the relationship of PRE to Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, a closely-related work (Chapter Two). The chapter shows that the Targum is a much later work than PRE and therefore not the source of its non-rabbinic material. Although this chapter seems detached from the rest of the study, it is important for the overall

\textsuperscript{120} W.H. Vorstius, *Chronologia sacra-profana a mundi conditu ad annum M. 5352 vel Christi 1592, dicta \textsuperscript{77}7\textsuperscript{77}7*, Germen Davidis, auctore R. David Ganz. Cui addita sunt Pirke vel Capitula R. Elieser; utraque ex Hebraeo in Latinum versa, & observationibus illustrate, Leiden, 1664.

argument. If the Targum is older than PRE, then it becomes the most likely source for the special material of PRE.

The second part, on the Book of Jubilees, establishes that there is no evidence of the Hebrew text of Jubilees in Late Antiquity (Chapter Three), that knowledge of Jubilees was widespread in Late Antiquity but geographically limited to Christian territories (Chapter Four), and that there are, in fact, no strong parallels between Jubilees and PRE (Chapter Five). The third part, on the Cave of Treasures, demonstrates that this text, especially the Arabic version, was popular at the time of the redaction of PRE (Chapter Six), that the work was used and adapted by diverse religious groups (Chapter Seven), and that substantial similarities between the Cave of Treasures and PRE demonstrate that much non-rabbinic material comes from contemporary Syriac and Arabic sources (Chapter Eight). The general conclusion is that region, rather than religion, best explains the sources of PRE.

One gap in the previous research on the non-rabbinic sources of PRE is the failure to account for the routes of transmission for the potential sources of PRE. In order to fill this gap, I have dedicated chapters to the study of the transmission of Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Chapters three and six, for example, focus on the different versions of Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures which were available at the time of the redaction of PRE. Chapters four and seven document the influence of the two works on later literature. These two chapters, in particular, are intended to isolate traditions which one would expect to find in PRE based on their popularity in contemporary literature. These four chapters do not deal directly with PRE, but they are just as important for the overall thesis: They demonstrate the availability (or, in the case of Jubilees, lack of availability) of these works to the author of PRE.

Finally, the key difficulty in any comparative study is the problem of “parallelomania.” This term, popularized by Samuel Sandmel, refers to the accumulation of parallels to prove a point without regard for their strength or relevance\(^\text{122}\). Gerald Friedlander’s list of parallels between PRE and the Pseudepigrapha is a textbook example\(^\text{123}\). I have therefore limited the discussion in the pertinent chapters (chapters five and eight) to ten parallels each. The parallels are intended to represent the most important points of contact between PRE and the two works rather than an exhaustive list of all possible parallels.

\(^{122}\) S. Sandmel, « Parallelomania », op. cit.
There is more at stake than the question of whether an individual Jewish author did or did not use two specific non-rabbinic works. In the first place, the study of the transmission of the individual works reveals a stark divide between the conception of sacred history in the Christian and Islamic worlds. The divide falls along regional, rather than religious, boundaries: Christians living in the Byzantine Empire understood the history of Israel in a different manner than their co-religionists in the Abbasid Caliphate. The absence of parallels between *PRE* and *Jubilees* is indicative of this difference; Jews in Byzantine territories *did* know traditions from *Jubilees*. In the second place, many of the traditions shared between *PRE* and the *Cave of Treasures* are also found elsewhere in Syriac and Arabic literature, including the Qur’an. The parallels with the *Cave of Treasures* are indicative of the author’s broader contact with the surrounding culture instead of one particular work.
Part One: Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer

Chapter One: The Text of Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer

1.0 Introduction

Since its redaction in ninth century, Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer has enjoyed enormous popularity. The work exists in at least forty-four printed editions and over a hundred manuscripts from every part of the Jewish diaspora. The work was cited by several luminaries of the Middle Ages, including Rashi¹, Judah ha-Levi², Moses Maimonides³, and Moses Nachmanides⁴. Sections of the work were incorporated into important medieval anthologies, such as the printed Midrash Tanhuma⁵, Bereshit Rabbati⁶, Yalqut Shim‘onî⁷, Midrash ha-Gadol⁸, Sefer

¹ See his biblical commentary to Genesis 27:9 (citing PRE 32, on Isaac’s celebration of Passover), Deuteronomy 12:17 (citing PRE 36, on the Jebusites), and Jonah 1:7 (citing PRE 10, on the story of Jonah). Rashi’s biblical commentaries can be found in any “Rabbinic Bible,” e.g. M. Cohen, Mikrō’ot Gedolot ha-Keter, 17 vol., Ramat-Gan, 1992-2013.
⁴ Commentary to Leviticus 16:8 (citing PRE 46, identifying “Azazel” with the fallen angel Sammael). His commentary is also in M. Cohen, Mikrō’ot Gedolot ha-Keter, op. cit.
⁷ Yalqut Shim‘onî: Midrash al Torah, Nevi‘im u-Ketuvim, 2 vol., Jerusalem, 1975, vol. 2 §550 cites the end of PRE 9 and all of PRE 10 (the story of Jonah), attributing this material to R. Eliezer.
⁸ M. Margulies, Midrash Haggadot on the Pentateuch: Edited from Various Manuscripts, 5 vol. Jerusalem, 1975 [Hebrew], vol. 1, p. 57 to Gen 1:26, citing PRE 11 on the creation of Adam (D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 54; see infra Section 8.1 of the present study). As with the Yalqut, the redactor attributes the tradition to R. Eliezer.
ha-Zikhronot⁹, and Sefer ha-Yashar⁰. The work also influenced the Zohar¹¹. Christian interest in PRE begins only after the Middle Ages. Two Latin translations were produced in the early modern period, by Konrad Pellikan (1546)¹² and Willem Henricus Vorstius (1644)¹³. As with every pre-modern work about Adam and Eve, someone has posited that John Milton used it as a source for Paradise Lost¹⁴.

The first translation of the work into a modern language was Gerald Friedlander’s English translation of 1916¹⁵. This was followed much later by French (1983)¹⁶, Spanish (1984)¹⁷, and German (2004) translations¹⁸. The translation of the work coincides with two important phases in the study of the Pseudepigrapha, the collections of Charles (1913)¹⁹ and Charlesworth (1983-1985)²⁰. Indeed, Friedlander invokes Charles on the opening page²¹. The

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⁰ Sefer ha-Yashar, 1625, Genesis Va-Yera, 41a-42a (Translation: M.M. Noah, The Book of Jasher Referred to in Joshua and Second Samuel Faithfully Translated from the Original Hebrew into English, New York, 1840, p. 58-60) adapts the story of Abraham and the wives of Ishmael from PRE 30. The episode is greatly expanded. A more precise parallel appears in Genesis Wa-Yeze 58b (Translation, p. 88-89). The text is nearly identical to a passage about the Teraphim from PRE 36 (D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 226-227). The same passage is found in Midrash Tanhuma Genesis Wa-Yeze 12 (cited above) and Yalqut Shim’oni (Genesis §130 and Zechariah §578).

¹¹ G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, New York, 1995, p. 170: “The names of the most important members of the group around Simeon ben Yohai [the alleged author of the Zohar] are largely taken from a pseudepigraphical Midrash and given a spurious appearance of authenticity by the addition of the father or other cognomens. This particular Midrash, the Pirke Rabbi Eliezer, dating from the eighth century, is one of the most important sources for the Aggadah of the Zohar in general.”

¹² K. Pellikan, R. Eliezer filius Hircani: Liber Sententiarum Judaicarum, Zürich, 1546.


¹⁸ D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit.


²¹ G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. xiii : “The book usually designated פֵּרֵק דִּי אַלְיוֹן Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer (Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer) is not the least important of the Rabbinic Pseudepigrapha. The attention recently given to the study of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha has, to a certain extent, been limited by the neglect of the Rabbinic side of the subject. The only Hebrew works translated in the magnificent Oxford edition of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha [of R. H. Charles] are the Pirke Aboth and the Fragments of a Zadokite Word [the Damascus Document]. The selection of these two books is singularly unfortunate, since neither belongs to the Pseudepigrapha proper. More appropriate would have been the inclusion in the aforementioned corpus of such works as the Othiyyoth de Rabbi ‘Akiba or the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, now presented, for the first, time, in an English translation.”
resurgence of interest in the work in the 1980s, during the modern revival of interest in the Pseudepigrapha is probably not a coincidence. As noted in the introduction, the fame of the work rests on its rapport with the “Pseudepigrapha,” including Jubilees and the Adam books.

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is attributed to R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, a second-generation Tanna of the late first and early second century and one of the most frequently cited authorities in the Mishnah\(^\text{22}\). He was known for his conservative opinions, such as a literal interpretation of the *lex talionis* (*b. Baba Qamma* 84a)\(^\text{23}\). Paradoxically, he also had a reputation as a magician and thaumaturge (*b. Sanhedrin* 68a). A combination of these two traits led to his eventual expulsion from the inner circle of rabbis: In order to demonstrate the purity of a certain kind of oven, he engaged in magical combat with another rabbi (*b. Baba Metzia* 59b-60a)\(^\text{24}\). Another story involves R. Eliezer’s arrest by the Roman government on the suspicion that he was a crypto-Christian (*t. Hullin* 2:24; *b. Avodah Zarah* 16b-17a)\(^\text{25}\). Rabbinic tradition, therefore, presents R. Eliezer as a great authority with “heterodox” inclinations. Perhaps this is why *PRE*, a popular work which is not entirely orthodox, is attributed to him\(^\text{26}\). He is not, however, the author of *PRE*. Leopold Zunz, the first person to critically examine the work, definitively showed that the work is a composition of the early Islamic period\(^\text{27}\).

The following chapter is intended to introduce the critical issues related to the study of *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*. It begins with the most basic topic—the contents and organization of the work—but is also discusses the textual sources of the work as well as the date, provenance, and genre. In addition to the internal evidence of *PRE*, a handful of outside documents, especially the letter of Pirqoi ben Baboi and a homily for the second day of Rosh ha-Shanah, help determine the nature and origins of *PRE* with greater precision than is usually possible with anonymous rabbinic documents.

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\(^{23}\) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 213 cautions that it might not be the same R. Eliezer (which does not prevent him from including this passage).


\(^{26}\) A.Y. Reed, «“Who can Recount the Mighty Acts of the Lord?”: Cosmology and Authority in Pirqei deRabbi Eliezer 1-3», *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. 80 (2009), p. 116, indicates that *PRE* discusses every esoteric topic which is forbidden in the Mishnah (*m. Hagigah* 2:1), including heaven, hell, creation, and eschaton.

1.1 Content and Organization

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is a summary of the history of Israel from creation until the days of Esther. The history, however, is not straightforward. For the most part, the author follows the chronological order. However, he disturbs this order at several points in the narrative in order give homiletical discourses on the main action. Sometimes, these discourses take the form of narratives about other biblical characters. The result can be described as organized chaos. It is, however, organized, and there is a logic to the author’s editorial decisions. This section is not merely a description of the contents of the book but also an attempt to explain its organization and, specifically, the numerous digressions that punctuate the work.

All complete manuscripts of the work begin with a two-chapter prologue explaining how R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus became a master of Torah. As Günter Stemberg noted, the Genizah fragments, including the earliest manuscripts, already have the current chapter numbers, indicating that the first two chapters were part of the manuscript. Furthermore, the earliest citations of the work (Pirqi b. Baboi, Nathan b. Yehiel) already attribute the work to R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus28. The implication, then, is that the entire work is the discourse of R. Eliezer, even if parts of the work are attributed to other sages29.

The first section of *PRE* is a detailed description of the Hexameron, the six days of creation (PRE 3-11). Each day is the subject of at least one chapter. The description of the fourth day—the creation of the sun and moon—contains a detailed exposition on the rabbinic calendar (PRE 6-8)30. The reference to Leviathan on the fifth day (PRE 9) prompts a


digression on Jonah’s adventures in the belly of the fish, during which he meets Leviathan (PRE 10). The section ends with the creation of Adam in the sixth day (PRE 11).

The second section is the story of the fall of Adam and his redemption on the day of the first Sabbath (PRE 12-20). The author has divided this part into prelapsarian (PRE 12-14) and postlapsarian (PRE 18-20) sections, which are separated by a series of homilies on the doctrine of the two ways (PRE 15) and the need to show loving-kindness to the those who rejoice (PRE 16) and to those who mourn (PRE 17). The themes of the homilies are linked to God’s gracious treatment of the first humans both before and after their fall.

Chapter 14 introduces the first of the Ten Descents of God, which is the most important of the many lists appearing in the work. The Ten Descents are crucial to the work’s organization. Clusters of chapters on this theme appear in key places in order to bridge large gaps in the chronology, for example, the time between Noah and Abraham (PRE 24-25) and the time between Jacob and Moses (PRE 39-41). However, the insertion of these clusters disturbs the chronological order: the destruction of Sodom (PRE 25; cf. Gen 19) appears before the birth of Abraham (PRE 26; cf. Gen 11), and the revelation at Sinai (PRE 41, cf. Exod 19) appears before the crossing of the Red Sea (PRE 42; cf. Exod 14). The last two Descents are mentioned in PRE 14 but do not reappear in the narrative. This is the primary evidence that the work is unfinished.

The next section of PRE covers the generations between Adam and Abraham (PRE 21-23), including the stories of Cain and Abel (PRE 21), the fallen angels (PRE 22), and Noah (PRE 23). One remarkable feature of this section—which is true of the composition as a whole—is the complete disinterest in genealogy and chronology, which distinguishes this work from both Jubilees and the Cave of Treasures. There is no equivalent to the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 10, and there is no description of the division of the earth or the dispersal of nations after the Flood. Most striking of all, there is no mention of Enoch.

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32 God descends : 1) In the Garden of Eden (PRE 14; cf. Gen 3); 2) At the Tower of Babel (PRE 24; cf. Gen 11); 3) At the Destruction of Sodom (PRE 25; cf. Gen 19); 4) At Jacob’s descent into Egypt (PRE 39; cf. Gen 46); 5) At the Burning Bush (PRE 40; cf. Exod 3); 6) At Sinai (PRE 41; cf. Exod 19); 7) At the cleft of rock (PRE 46; cf. Exod 33); 8) In the Tent of Meeting (PRE 53; cf. Num 12); 9) A second time in the Tent of Meeting; 10) In the Messianic Era. The idea of the ten descents is not original to PRE. They are mentioned, for example, in Genesis Rabbah 38:9 (Babel) and 49:6 (Sodom).
The author then inserts two chapters on the second and third descents of God—at the Tower of Babel (PRE 24) and during the destruction of Sodom (PRE 25). These chapters bridge the gap between the story of Noah and the cycle of Abraham, who appears briefly in both chapters. The cycle of Abraham (PRE 26-31) consists of a series of discourses on the ten trials, a recurring theme in rabbinic literature (e.g., m. Avot 5:3). The section includes Abraham’s visit to Ishmael as well as a short eschatological passage (PRE 30).

The Abraham cycle is succeeded by the Jacob cycle, which covers the life of the patriarch from birth until death (PRE 32-39). Isaac is given little attention, although a two-chapter homily on the resurrection (PRE 33-34) is related to Isaac, the symbol of the resurrection par excellence. The story of Joseph is also told incidentally in two chapters (PRE 38-39), but the focus of this section is always Jacob—particularly the perennial conflict with his brother Esau, a rabbinic symbol for Christianity.

Once again, PRE includes a cluster of chapters on the Descents of God to bridge the time between Jacob and Moses (PRE 39-41). The three chapters recount Jacob’s migration to Egypt (PRE 39), the call of Moses (PRE 40), and the revelation at Sinai (PRE 41). The narrative then moves back in time to the crossing of the Red Sea (PRE 42-43) and resumes...


chronological order, including the war with Amalek (PRE 44), the sin of the Golden Calf (PRE 45), Moses’ intercession and the renewal of the covenant (PRE 46), and the sin at Baal-Peor, a much later episode from the wanderings in the desert (PRE 47; cf. Num 25). This episode is linked with the elevation of Phinehas (alias Elijah) to the high priesthood37.

The author breaks with the chronological sequence once again in order to narrate the birth of Moses and the story of the first Passover (PRE 48). This unusual choice is best understood as an introduction to the next section of the work, the story of Esther (PRE 49-50), which, the author underlines, takes place during Passover (cf. Esth 3:7)38. The author therefore places two major redemptions of the Jewish people at the climactic position in the work.

The remaining chapters are a miscellany: a discourse on the new heavens and the new earth (PRE 51), a list of the seven wonders of old (PRE 52), and a homily against calumny (PRE 53-54), which includes different tales of the wanderings in the wilderness, such as Miriam’s criticism of Moses (cf. Num 12) and the episode of the brazen serpent (cf. Num 21). The work ends abruptly with a cryptic passage:

R. José said: If a man hires a diligent worker, discharges him, and gives him his full salary, what praise will they accord him? But if he hires a lazy man, discharges him, and gives him his full salary, to this one they will accord praise. Thus Solomon said before the Holy One, Blessed Be He, “Master of all the worlds! Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were diligent workers. You gave them their full salary, from their own merit you gave it to them. But us? We are lazy workers. When you will heal us, give us our full salary. Indeed, the whole world will praise you and bless you, saying, ‘Blessed are you, Lord, who heals the sick of his people Israel!’” (PRE 54)39.

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Did the author, a “lazy worker,” abandon his work? In any case, the work ends without any further mention of the remaining two descents of God. 

Despite the reservations of earlier scholars such as Gerald Friedlander, most recent scholars accept the unity of the composition, including Joseph Heinemann, Jacob Elbaum, Rachel Adelman, and Eliezer Treitl. Surprisingly, Steven Daniel Sacks and Katharina Keim, whose books are arguments for the literary integrity of the composition, are non-committal on the question of authorship. All of these authors point to the repetition of key ideas and phrases, as well as the use of organizing principles such as lists (e.g., the Ten Descents). According to this consensus, the ending of the work is not missing. Rather, the author left his composition unfinished. One can theorize that the work would have ended with the death of Moses, completing the story of the Torah.

One feature which has been hitherto unnoticed is the author’s consistency with regard to his aggadic material. For example, the author tells the story of Jonah in two parts. The first part in PRE 10 focuses only on the sojourn in the belly of the big fish (cf. Jonah 1-2), as this chapter comments on the creation of sea monsters on the fifth day in PRE 9. The rest of the story—Jonah in Nineveh (Jonah 3-4)—appears in PRE 43, a homily on the repentance of terrible sinners. Chapter 8, on the secret of intercalation, identifies Shem, the son of Noah with

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40 The work also incorporates several benedictions of the Amidah into the text (the cited passage includes one), but only about half of the eighteen benedictions appear in the work. For a list of passages, see G. Friedlander, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. xvii-xviii.
45 E. Treitl, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer: Text, Redaction and a Sample Synopsis*, Jerusalem, 2012 [Hebrew], p. 19, states that he believes in one author—but not one editor. He emphasizes the repetition of certain key phrases typical of the author (p. 176-200).
47 K.E. Keim, *Pirqei deRabbi Eliezer*, op. cit..
48 M. Friedmann, *Pseudo-Seder Eliyahu Zuta (Derech Ereç und Pirkê Rabbi Eliezer)*, Vienna, 1904 [Hebrew], p. 26-49 (Translation: W.G. Braude and I.J. Kapstein, *Tanna dèche Eliyyahu: The Lore of the School of Elijah*, Philadelphia, 1981, p. 453-488), printed a number of homilies attributed to R. Eliezer under the title *Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer*, but these are not missing chapters. They do not correspond at all to the style or content of the extant work. However, the manuscript with these homilies (Parma MS 1240) also has three chapters of the authentic *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* (*PRE* 39-41), which M. Friedmann, *Pseudo-Seder Eliahu Zuta*, op. cit., p. 50-56 (Translation: W.G. Braude and I.J. Kapstein, *Tanna dèche Eliyyahu*, op. cit., p. 489-500), printed as “Chapters of the Descents” (*פרקי הירדות*). All three chapters deal with the descents of God.
Melchizedek. In *PRE* 27, the War of the Kings (cf. Gen 14), the narrator says that Abraham meets Shem rather than Melchizedek. The author has already identified Melchizedek with Shem—he does not repeat himself. Different aspects of the story from Gen 18, about Abraham’s three visitors, appear in *PRE* 25 (the bargain with God, cf. Gen 18:16-33), *PRE* 29 (the heat of the day, cf. Gen 18:1), and *PRE* 36 (the meal, cf. Gen 18:2-15), without overlap. The genealogy of Amalek is left incomplete in *PRE* 44, on the war with Amalek, but resumed in *PRE* 49, at the beginning of the story of Esther. Isaac’s marriage to Rebekah is narrated in *PRE* 16 but not repeated in *PRE* 32, the beginning of the Jacob cycle. Examples can be multiplied. The high density of cross-references suggests that *PRE* is the work of one hand.

1.2 Manuscripts and Editions

There is no shortage of textual evidence for *PRE*. According to Katharina Keim, there are 122 manuscripts of *PRE*, of which forty-four come from the Cairo Genizah. There are eighteen complete manuscripts and about thirty partial manuscripts. The rest are fragments. The overwhelming majority of the complete manuscripts (12) come from Yemen. Most of the rest come from Italy (4). The earliest manuscripts of *PRE* appear in the Cairo Genizah and date from the eleventh century to the fourteenth century. The manuscripts outside of the Genizah date from the thirteenth to the twentieth century. Eliezer Treitl has provided the most detailed overview of the manuscripts of *PRE*.

In addition, there are about forty-four printed editions of *PRE*, but only three which have any particular significance. The *editio princeps* was printed in Constantinople in 1514. This was immediately superseded by the Venice edition of 1544. This is the vulgate text—the one

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49 The work, however, is not entirely consistent. For example, Adam and Eve conceive twins in the Garden of Eden—one of whom is certainly Cain—in *PRE* 11, but in *PRE* 21 Cain is the offspring of Eve and Sammael. The first tradition is rabbinic (*Gen. Rab.* 22:2). The second is gnostic. See G.G. Stroumsa, *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology*, Leiden, 1984, p. 35-70.
51 See the list at the end of L.M. Barth, « Is Every Medieval Hebrew Manuscript a New Composition? The Case of Pirqë Rabbi Eliezer », in *Agendas for the Study of Midrash in the Twenty-First Century*, M.L. Raphael (ed.), Williamsburg, VA, 1999, p. 43-62. The article is also available at: [http://pre-project.usc.edu/agendas.html](http://pre-project.usc.edu/agendas.html).
which is the basis for most subsequent printed editions, including the Warsaw edition of 1852
with the commentary of R. David Luria. This popular edition is heavily censored. Dagmar
Börner-Klein issued a new edition of the Venice text in 2004. This text, while not a critical
edition, corrects many errors of the Venice text and restores the censored passages from
Luria’s edition. It is the best printed text of PRE currently available.

A critical edition of PRE remains a desideratum. Lewis Barth has summarized the attempts at
a critical text. First, Chaim Meier Horowitz (d. 1905) annotated the Venice edition in
preparation for a revision of the text, unfinished at his death. The annotated text was
published in facsimile as a “critical edition” in 1972. It contains much valuable textual
information, but it is not a critical edition. Michael Higger published an edition of PRE in
several volumes of the journal Horev during the 1940s. His work is based on a manuscript of
Horowitz, who copied a manuscript from the Biblioteca Casanatense of Rome. Horowitz
added variant readings from two other manuscripts in the same library. Barth has criticized
this edition as three times removed from the manuscript: Higger’s edition is a revision of a
copy of a manuscript. It is therefore of minimal importance. Barth speaks highly of an edition
by Zev Gottlieb (d. 1983), which, however, remains unfinished, unprinted, and unavailable.
Finally, Rachel Adelman published a few chapters of the work in a “diplomatic edition” in the
appendices of Return of the Repressed.

Eliezer Treitl is currently preparing a synopsis of all the manuscripts of PRE. As preparatory
work, he published an analysis of the different manuscript families of PRE. His research can
be briefly summarized as follows: the printed edition (ט), Yemenite manuscripts (י), and a
third, mainly European recension (ן). All three families go back to a common source. In
general, Treitl found that the Yemenite family was superior to others, even though there are
still numerous lacunae. Examples from all three manuscript families are now readily
available: Dagmar Börner-Klein’s edition represents ט, while the translation of Friedlander,

55 D. Luria, Sefer Pirqi deRabbi Eli’ezar mehathanna Rabbi Eli’ezar ben Hyrcanos im Bi’ur haRaDaL, Warsaw,
1852.
56 For example, it does not include the eschatological section from the end of PRE 30.
57 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit.
58 L.M. Barth, « Is Every Medieval Hebrew Manuscript a New Composition? », op. cit.
60 M. Higger, « Pirqé Rabbi Eliezer (1) », Horev, vol. 7 (1943), p. 82-119; M. Higger, « Pirqé Rabbi Eliezer
order)
62 E. Treitl, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 43-129.
from a lost manuscript of Abraham Epstein, represents א. Higger’s edition is also based on three א manuscripts. Even though Friedlander’s work is a translation, it is still closer to the source manuscript than Higger’s text. A Yemenite manuscript, JTS Enelow 866, is now available online through at the website for the Academy of the Hebrew Language’s Historical Dictionary Project (Maagarim)⁶³. This is the manuscript that Barth identified as the textus optimus⁶⁴. Other manuscripts (HUCA Ms 75; HUCA Ms 2043) are available at the “Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer Electronic Text Editing Project” website, maintained by Lewis Barth⁶⁵.

In truth, there are not many substantial differences among the different manuscripts. There are a number of variant readings and some minor differences in the number and order of chapters. Namely, PRE 18 (the consecration of the Sabbath) and 19 (Adam composes Psalm 92 in honor of the Sabbath) are sometimes reversed. The division of the world among the sons of Noah is sometimes found at the beginning of PRE 24 (the Tower of Babel) and sometimes at the end of PRE 23 (the Flood). Finally PRE 53-54 are sometimes combined. All of these differences can be observed between the Venice edition of Börner-Klein and the English translation of Friedlander. The content of the work, however, is remarkably consistent. In this study, I quote from the printed edition of Dagmar Börner-Klein, but I have also referred to all the available textual sources.

1.3 Date

Leopold Zunz first proposed that PRE was a product of the Genoic period (c. 600-1000 CE), citing, in particular, the unambiguous references to Islam⁶⁶. Modern scholars have universally accepted this proposition. The only controversy over the date is whether the work was written in the eighth or the ninth century⁶⁷. Zunz supported an early eighth century dated based on a

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⁶³ http://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il/Pages/PMain.aspx
⁶⁵ http://pre-project.usc.edu/ HUCA Ms 75 is a complete Iraqi manuscript of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. HUCA Ms 2043 is a nearly-complete Yemenite manuscript, containing chapters 1-47 from the fifteenth or sixteenth century.
⁶⁶ L. Zunz, Die gottesdientslichen Vorträge, op. cit.
tendentious reading of PRE 28. Both external and internal evidence, however, point to a late eighth or early ninth century date.

The terminus ante quem for PRE is the citation of the work in the letter of Pirqoi ben Baboi to the Jews of Kairouan (in modern-day Tunisia) around the year 812. Pirqoi, a Babylonian, was writing to the Jews of North Africa to warn them about the corrupt traditions of Palestinian Jews. His citation of PRE (a Palestinian work) appears at the beginning of the fragments published by Louis Ginzberg:

רabi אליעזר בן הורקנוס פתח מי ימלל גבורות ה' (Ps. 106:2) Who is able to recount all his praise? Even the ministering angels are not able to tell but a small portion of his mighty works.

Rabbi Eliezer said: As it is written, Who is able to recount the mighty acts [of the Lord?] (Ps 106:2) Who is able to proclaim all his praise? Even the ministering angels are not able to proclaim all his praise.

The citation corresponds closely to the opening lines of PRE 3, that is, the beginning of R. Eliezer’s discourse:

רבי אליעזר בן הורקנוס פתח מי ימלל גבורות ה' (Ps. 106:2) Who is able to recount all his praise? Even the ministering angels are not able to tell but a small portion of his mighty works.

Rabbi Eliezer ben Hycranus began: “Who can recount the mighty acts of the Lord? (Ps. 106:2). Is there anyone in the world who is able to recount the mighty acts of the Holy One, Blessed Be He? Or to proclaim all his praise? Even the ministering angels are not able to tell but a small portion of his mighty works.

Steven Daniel Sacks is skeptical that Pirqoi’s reference constitutes a quotation of PRE. Instead, he sees it as a reference to a common tradition, although this tradition is not found

68 L. Zunz. Die gottesdientslichen Vorträge. op. cit., p. 420, n. 27. In PRE 28, the author states that the domination of the four kingdoms (of which Ishmael—Islam—is the last) would last a little less than a millennium. The author does not state when this domination begins. Zunz arbitrarily picked a date and arrived at 729 anno mundi as the year of redemption.


71 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 6.
elsewhere in rabbinic literature in this precise form. It is further significant that Pirqoi cites the opening lines of the first chapter of the main body of the book. In all likelihood, Pirqoi’s citation is the first reference to PRE. The early years of the ninth century are therefore the latest possible date for the work.

In addition to this valuable external reference, there are a few internal references to contemporary events. In all cases, these passages refer to Islam. The first reference appears in PRE 28, where the kingdom of Ishmael has replaced the kingdom of Edom—Christian Rome—as the fourth kingdom in the scheme from the book of Daniel (cf. Dan 2 and 7). The most important data, however, come from PRE 30. The chapter recounts a story from Arabic literature, where Abraham visits his son in Arabia and encounters his two wives. The first wife treats Abraham with disdain, but the second wife is hospitable. In PRE, the names of the wives are Aisha and Fatima, the wife and daughter of Muhammad. The chapter ends with a prophecy of the fifteen signs the Ishmaelites will perform in Palestine at the end of time.

While the references to Aisha and Fatima demonstrate a general date in the Islamic period, the fifteen signs refer to specific events. The last of the fifteen signs states the Ishmaelites will construct a building on the site of the Temple, a likely reference to the construction of the Dome of the Rock (c. 691-2). The next sign—the sixteenth of the “fifteen signs”—provides another significant datum. The passage refers to a conflict between two princes—brothers—during which the Messiah will appear. There have been many propositions for their identities. The best hypothesis is also the earliest: Heinrich Graetz suggested they were the Caliphs al-Amin (d. 813) and al-Ma’mun (d. 833), the sons of Harun al-Rashid (d. 809). The brothers were engaged in a violent war of succession known as the Fourth Fitna (809-813).

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72 S.D. Sacks, *Midrash and Multiplicity*, op. cit., p. 2, n. 3, cites b. Megillah 18a, but this is not an exact parallel—there is no mention of the angels.
75 J.C. Reeves, *Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic: A Postrabbinic Jewish Apocalypse Reader*, Atlanta, 2005, p. 72, n. 32, has listed all of the candidates from earlier research.
77 For the historical context of the Fourth Fitna, see H. Yücesoy, *Messianic Beliefs and Imperial Politics in Medieval Islam: The ʻAbbāsid Caliphate in the Early Ninth Century*, Columbia, S.C, 2009 and, more generally, D. Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, Princeton, N.J, 2002. The first three Fitnas (civil wars) are: 1) The conflict between Ali, the first Imam and the last Rashidun Caliph, and Muawiyya, the first Umayyad Caliph (656-661 CE); 2) the anti-Umayyad revolts between 680-692 CE (including the Battle of Karbala in 681); and 3) the Abbasid Revolution of 750 CE.
This war was the source of eschatological speculation, especially since the Fitna occurred on the eve of the second Islamic century (816 CE/200 AH). The eschatological import of the conflict provides an appropriate background to the passage from PRE. Furthermore, the Fitna coincides with the earliest reference to PRE in the epistle of Pirqoi b. Baboi.

The references to Aisha and Fatima may also provide an important clue to the date of the work. Aisha and Fatima are not merely historical women but political symbols. Aisha was the daughter of Abu Bakr, the first caliph in Sunni Islam. Fatima was the wife of Ali, the first Imam in Shi’ism. The women are, respectively, symbols of Sunni and Shi’a Islam. Gordon Newby already observed PRE’s benevolence towards Fatima, and he proposed that PRE was written in the wake of early extremist Shi’ite (ghulat) revolts against the Umayyads in the first half of the eighth century. Prior to the Abbasid Revolution (750 CE), however, Fatima was not a common symbol of Shi’ism. Furthermore, the Abbasids continued to have Alid sympathies after their embrace of Sunni Islam. The caliph who was most distinguished in this regard was al-Ma’mun, the victor of the Fourth Fitna. He initially designated Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (d. 818), the eighth Imam in the Twelver succession, to be his heir. Al-Ma’mun also promoted the memory of Fatima and Ali at the expense of Abu Bakr, the father of Aisha. Al-Ma’mun is an example of a “Fatimid” who is not Shi’ite. The exchange of “Aisha” for “Fatima” could signify the succession of the Abbasid Caliphate after the fall of the Umayyads, especially since the Abbasids depended on the Alids in order to consolidate their power. It is a political allegory, like the common rabbinic associations of Ishmael with Islam and Edom with Christianity.

A last factor points to the redaction of PRE around the beginning of the ninth century. The list of fifteen signs from PRE 30 is an amplification of a similar list found in a Hebrew apocalypse called the Secrets of R. Simeon b. Yohai. This work is an “historical” apocalypse which contains thinly veiled allusions to Islamic history until the Abbasid Revolution.

81 H. Yücesoy, Messianic Beliefs and Imperial Politics, op. cit., p. 91-96. The controversial appointment was rendered void when Ali al-Reza died before al-Ma’mun under mysterious circumstances.
82 Ibid. p. 129.
83 Ibid., p. 59-60.
84 J.C. Reeves, Trajectories in Near Eastern apocalyptic, op. cit., p. 69. A translation of the apocalypse can be found on p. 76-89 of the same volume.
Therefore, the author of *PRE* must have composed his work after this event in order to have used the apocalypse as a source. In *PRE*, the reference to the Fitna, the sixteenth sign, is an addition to the original tradition. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* was therefore written after the Abbasid Revolution (750 CE) but before the end of the Fourth Fitna (813 CE). Again, this is corroborated by the earliest reference to the work in the epistle of Pirqi b. Baboi (c. 812 CE).

### 1.4 Provenance

All modern scholars accept that *PRE* was written in Palestine. Zunz himself suggested Palestine, Syria, or even Asia Minor, though he favored Palestine. No one, to my knowledge, has suggested a Babylonian provenance. Indeed, the work differs in both language and content from Babylonian sources, which are typically written in Aramaic and halakhic in nature. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is written in Hebrew, with very few foreign words, and it is almost entirely aggadic. Furthermore, several researchers have indicated the predominance of Palestinian customs in the work.

The strongest evidence for a Palestinian origin is the reference to the “secret of intercalation” in *PRE* 8, which emphasizes the importance of Palestine at the expense of the Babylonians. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* asserts the exclusive claim of Palestinian Jews to determine when to intercalate a month into the lunar calendar. This secret was given to Adam by God and passed through the generations of biblical worthies. Isaac maintained the secret while Jacob lived with Laban in Mesopotamia. God had to retransmit the secret anew to Moses after the Exodus. During the Babylonian Exile, the captives had to depend on the remnant in the Land of Israel for intercalation. The passage ends with God rebuking Ezekiel for attempting to intercalate the year in Babylon after Ezra and others had already returned from the Exile. The author underlines that the residents of Palestine, however simple, have priority over Babylonian sages in determining the calendar (see infra Section 5.2).

The tradition in *PRE* 8 is part of an anti-Babylonian polemical tradition which predates *PRE* and continued for centuries after. The idea of the “secret of intercalation” and the closely related 19-year lunar cycle are both mentioned for the first time in a piyyut of the

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(Palestinian) paytan Pinhas ha-Kohen, who lived in the mid-eighth century. According to Sacha Stern, the calendar first attested by Pinhas ha-Kohen and PRE is of Byzantine origin. Hence, it was used by Palestinian Jews but not their Babylonian counterparts. Palestinian Jews continued using this calendar despite the superior scientific knowledge of the Babylonians, thanks in part to the Arabic translation of Greek scientific works such the *Almagest* under the patronage of Caliph al-Ma’mun. Palestinians had the right to establish the calendar by precedent, even though Babylonians were better equipped to accurately determine the dates of festivals.

The issue came to a head in 921-922, when Saadia Gaon (d. 942), newly arrived in Babylon, engaged in an acrimonious exchange with Ben Meir, the son of the Palestinian Gaon, over the right to determine the calendar. Ben Meir refers to the “secret” (סוד) in one of his letters. Saadia prevailed, but the calendar controversy did not end with him. Centuries after the alleged establishment of a fixed calendar, Evyatar ha-Kohen, the head of the Palestinian yeshiva at the end of the eleventh century, once more cited the “secret of intercalation” to justify Palestinian authority over against his political rivals in Babylon and Egypt. Ironically, he was living in exile in Tyre when he wrote his polemic. His text is similar, though not identical, to PRE. Pinhas (8th c.), PRE (9th c.), Ben Meir (10th c.), and Evyatar (11th c.) demonstrate a continuous tradition which confirms the Palestinian provenance of PRE—a matter, in any case, which was not in serious doubt.

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90 For example, E. Treitl, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, *op. cit.*, p. 261.


93 S. Stern, *Calendar and community*, *op. cit.*, p. 190, n. 145.


1.5 Genre

The genre of PRE has long been a problem for scholars. Recent monographs on the literary features of PRE, such as the work of Steven Daniel Sacks and Katharina Keim, avoid assigning one genre to PRE and explicitly reject older proposals. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer is sui generis within rabbinic literature—but not religious literature as a whole. The present study classifies PRE as sacred history, that is, a work that recounts the history of ancient Israel for a religious purpose. Although this term is ancient, it is not the one that the author of PRE would have used to describe his own work. Some further comments about the genre of PRE are necessary, especially with regard to the position of PRE within the rabbinic corpus and its relationship to other contemporary literature.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer is often labeled Midrash. This label is inappropriate in terms of both form and content. Midrashim are anthologies of rabbinic exposition on selected books of the Bible, especially the Torah and the Megillot (Song of Songs, Ruth, Qohelet, Lamentations, and Esther), that is, the books which, by the Middle Ages, were read liturgically. Midrashim take the form of lemmatic commentaries on scripture, in which a biblical verse is followed by the exposition of one or more rabbis. In form, Midrash is quite similar to the Christian Catena. The content, however, is different. Whereas a Catena is a collection of Christian exegesis, scriptural interpretation is not always the primary objective of Midrash. Midrash often focus on the words of a biblical text rather than the meaning of the words in context. In practice, a midrash can be about literally anything, provided that there is some link to the biblical text. Entire midrashim—Leviticus Rabbah comes to mind—can say very little about the book which the midrash is allegedly interpreting.

The differences between PRE and authentic midrashim are instructive. First, PRE is not a lemmatic commentary. Few sections of the work open with a scriptural verse. Rather, sections

\[96\] S.D. Sacks, *Midrash and Multiplicity*, op. cit., p. 42-81 rejects the idea that the PRE is an example of “Pseudepigrapha”. He is also skeptical of simplistic attempts to associate PRE with Islamic literature (p. 157-167). K.E. Keim, *Pirqei deRabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. 64-67 rejects PRE as Midrash.

\[97\] S.D. Sacks, *Midrash and Multiplicity*, op. cit., for example, presumes that PRE is Midrash.

\[98\] The definition of midrash is contentious. For a history of research and criticism, see L. Teugels, « Midrash in the Bible or Midrash on the Bible? Critical Remarks about the Uncritical Use of a Term », in *Bibel und Midrasch: zur Bedeutung der rabbinischen Exegese für die Bibelwissenschaft*, G. Bodendorfer, M. Millard (ed.), Tübingen, 1998, p. 43-63 and L. Teugels, « Two Centuries of Midrash Study: A Survey of Some Standard Works on Rabbinic Midrash and Its Methods », *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift*, vol. 54 (2000), p. 125-144. While the definition here should not be controversial, it is intended to exclude certain works, such as the *Avot de-Rabbi Nathan* (a “commentary” on Pirqe Avot, not the Bible) and *Seder Eliyahu* (a series of homilies on general themes, not based on a specific biblical book).

of PRE typically open with a statement of a particular rabbi and end with a biblical prooftext. Here is an example from PRE 22, which recounts the story of Genesis 6:1-4:

רבי ישמעאל אמר מעשה עליה חוסֵס עלה דורו והצדיק מתקים עליה וחוסֵס עלה דורו ו mesure והצדיק מתקים עליה וחוסֵס עלה דורו והצדיק מתקים עליה ו mesure והצדיק מתקים עליה (Job 21:14)

Rabbi Ishmael said: All humanity, and all the generations of the righteous, were descended from Seth, while all the generations of the wicked, the evil-doers, and the rebels who rebelled against God (הمكان) were descended from Cain. They said: “We have no need of the drops of your rain or to know your ways,” as it is written, “They said to God, ‘Depart from us!’” (Job 21:14)100.

Both the rabbinic authority and the prooftext are inessential. First, some manuscripts cite Rabbi Simeon rather than Rabbi Ishmael, which shows the artificiality of the attribution101. Any rabbi could be cited here. The use of the prooftext seems typical of Midrash, in that a citation from the Prophets or (in this case) the Writings comments on the action of the Torah. However, the citation from Job is not tied to any particular text from Genesis; there is no citation of Genesis in the above passage. In fact, the printed edition places the exact same tradition at the beginning of PRE 21, which tells the story of Cain and Abel from Genesis 4102. The passage is not even (as in Christian tradition) a euhemeristic exegesis of Genesis 6, where the “sons of God” are the children of Seth rather than angels, since PRE later states that the sons of God are angels103. Therefore, the passage is not exegesis of either Genesis 4 or Genesis 6 but rather an outside tradition that is inserted into the sacred history and justified by a prooftext. In other words, PRE is not subordinate to the scriptural text. Rather, scripture is subordinate to the sacred history104.

The second difference pertains to content. Authentic midrashim are interested in the biblical text, often to the exclusion of the context. A typical midrash treats numerous diverse topics, including stories about the lives of the rabbis and the world they inhabit. Traditions about biblical figures are sometimes sparse (e.g., in Lamentations Rabbah). In PRE, the opposite is

100 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 118.
101 G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 158. According to Friedlander (n. 7), Rabbi Simeon is also the tradent in Midrash ha-Gadol.
102 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 112.
103 See infra Sections 5.4 and 8.7 of the present study.
true: The biblical context, that is, the sacred history, is the primary topic of discussion. There are only two stories about the rabbis in the entire composition, one of which is the prologue (PRE 1-2). The other is the story of Resh Laqish (3rd c.) in PRE 43. The story, however, is attributed to Simeon b. Azzai (2nd c.), an anachronism. The passage, therefore, might be a gloss. In any case, it is the only intrusion of a rabbinic story into the sacred history. One of the key features of Midrash is its interest in the contemporary world (the “actualization” of Scripture), but PRE is mainly interested in the past. In light of the differences in both form and content, PRE cannot be called Midrash.

However, PRE closely resembles another contemporary genre of religious literature, although it belongs to a different religious tradition—the Islamic Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyāʾ or Stories of the Prophets. These collections, like the works labeled “Rewritten Bible”, fall under the greater rubric of sacred history. The Qiṣṣa are typically arranged in chronological order, so that they tell a history of the world from Adam to Jesus, the earliest and latest of the pre-Islamic prophets. They fill in the details of the figures which are only sparsely recorded in the Qur’an—or not recorded at all. They are not commentaries on the Qur’an, which is a separate genre (Tafsīr). Many Muslim authors have written both a Tafsīr and a Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyāʾ, a prominent example being al-Tha’labi (d. 1035). The differences between Tafsīr and Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyāʾ is a bit like the differences between Midrash and PRE. One is a lemmatic commentary on the sacred text; the other is an account of the sacred history. Both present similar material in different ways.

Unlike the earlier Rewritten Bibles—but like PRE—the Stories of the Prophets have frequent recourse to named authorities and citations of sacred scripture. The basic textual unit is identical to the one found in PRE. Here is an example from the work of al-Tha’labi:

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105 S.D. Sacks, Midrash and Multiplicity, op. cit., p. 75-79, however, argues for the passage’s authenticity based on its appropriateness within the thematic context (a homily on repentance).
Ibn Abbas said that there were two clans of the sons of Adam, one of which lived in the plain while the other inhabited the mountain. While the men of the mountain were handsome and their wives ugly, the women of the plain were beautiful but their husbands were ugly. So Iblis came to one of the men of the plain in the form of a young lad, and hired himself out to him and served him. Iblis took something like the pipe that shepherds play, and made it play a sound unlike anything that had ever been heard. This (sound) reached those about them, and they came to hear him. They made this into a festival on which they would gather (each) year, when the women would display their charms to the men and the men to the women. One of the men from the mountain came upon them while they were celebrating their festival, and saw the beauty of the women. He returned to his companions, telling them of this, whereupon they moved down to dwell with them. They began to engage in immoral deeds, as He has said: “Display not your finery, as did the pagans of old” (Q 33:33).

Like PRE, al-Tha‘labi opens with an authority—Ibn Abbas (d. 687), an expert on the history of Israel—and closes the tradition with a prooftext from the Qur’an. Neither of these elements is strictly necessary for the narrative, but they reinforce the authority of the various traditions. As in PRE, the prooftexts are very loosely connected to the narrative, and the authorities cited are probably inauthentic. There are also other formal similarities between PRE and this body of literature. The Qiṣṣa are not always strictly chronological, and they also have digressive and homiletic elements.

The Qiṣṣa al-’Anbiyāʾ served primarily as guides for preachers. So, too, PRE seems to have been an aid for preaching based on its close relationship to a homily for the second day of Rosh Hashanah. Lewis Barth has provided a synoptic edition of this homily based on two late medieval manuscripts. The subject of the homily is the ten trials of Abraham. It is directly parallel to PRE 26-31 and, in fact, the contents are nearly identical. Both works contain the same unusual aggadic traditions in mostly the same order. Their list of the ten

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110 R.G. Khoury, Les légendes prophétiques dans l’Islam, op. cit., p. 81, writes of attributions to Ibn Abbas: « L’exemple d’Ibn ’Abbas auquel on se reporte sans cesse, et non seulement dans le hadīt, suffirait à donner de lui une image multicolore, reproduisant à la fois presque toutes les tendances idéologiques, théologiques et littéraires dans l’Islam. »


113 G. Friedlander, Pirḳē de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. xix-xxi, already indicated liturgical formulations in the book and understood certain chapters as homilies for different parts of the liturgical year (for example, he believes PRE 10, on Jonah, is a homily for Yom Kippur, when the book is read). He also mentions the relationship of PRE to piyyut, the study of which, unfortunately, remains a desideratum in PRE research.

114 L.M. Barth, « Lection for the Second Day of Rosh Hashanah », op. cit.
trials, which varies considerably in different rabbinic sources, is identical\textsuperscript{115}. This similarity is especially significant since the first trial—Nimrod’s attempt to kill the infant Abraham and his subsequent seclusion—comes from Islamic tradition and is widespread in the \textit{Qiṣṣa} literature\textsuperscript{116}. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer} and the homily are the earliest witnesses to this tradition in Hebrew literature\textsuperscript{117}.

The homily and \textit{PRE} are roughly contemporaneous. Both works include the unusual the story of Ishmael’s wives (with the same names—Aisha and Fatima) and the fifteen signs the Ishmaelites will perform in the land of Israel, including the reference to the Fourth Fitna. Barth believed that the homily was a source for \textit{PRE}, but a few factors might suggest the opposite. First, Pirqi ben Baboi already attests the existence of \textit{PRE} at the beginning of the ninth century. Second, the homily focuses more heavily on the apocalyptic expectations in the wake of the Fitna, placing these sections at the end of the work. It is easy to envision an earlier version of \textit{PRE} written before the Fitna, but it is harder to imagine a version of the homily without this historical reference. Finally, the homily is more expansive than \textit{PRE}\textsuperscript{118}. Either way, the homily demonstrates a strong connection between \textit{PRE} and the preaching of the synagogue, parallel to the relationship between \textit{Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyā’} and Islamic preaching.

The great irony is that \textit{PRE} predates the earliest extant collections of the \textit{Stories of the Prophets}. The creation of the genre is credited to Wahb ibn Munabbih (d. 728), a scholar of Jewish and Christian traditions\textsuperscript{119}, but the earliest surviving work is the \textit{Mubtada’ al-Dunya wa-Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyā’} of Ishaq ibn Bishr (d. 819), an exact contemporary of the author of \textit{PRE}\textsuperscript{120}. Even his work is partially lost and limited to one manuscript (Oxford Bodleian Huntington 388). The earliest complete collection—the work of al-Tha‘labi (d. 1035)—is several centuries later. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer} is, in fact, the first \textit{Qiṣṣa al-‘Anbiyā’}.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p. 47, lists different variations.
\textsuperscript{116} E.g., al-Tha‘labī, \textit{Lives of the Prophets}, op. cit., p. 124-127.
\textsuperscript{118} For example, the first trial of Abraham is \textit{considerably} longer in the homily. There is no reason why the author of \textit{PRE} should have condensed this story to the point of omission. The question of priority might be immaterial; I suspect both works come from the hand of the same author, who excerpted and revised an earlier composition. He may have even worked on the two compositions concurrently.
\textsuperscript{120} For a description of this work and some of its contents, see M.J. Kister, « Ādam: A Study of Some Legends in Tafsīr and Ḥadīth Literature », \textit{Israel Oriental Studies}, vol. 13 (1993), p. 113-174. Ibn Bishr is also one of the major sources of Ṭarafī, \textit{The Stories of the Prophets by Ibn Muṭarrif al-Ṭarafī}, op. cit.
1.6 Language

Finally, a word should be said about the language of the composition and the linguistic capacities of the author. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is written in an uncomplicated rabbinic Hebrew. There is a minimum of foreign words, which distinguishes *PRE* from rabbinic compositions of the classical period. Classical rabbinic literature mixes Aramaic and Hebrew (Aramaic dominates in the Talmud; Hebrew in the Midrash) and attests numerous Latin and Greek loanwords. The vocabulary of *PRE* is almost exclusively Hebrew, but it does mention a handful of Greek works, such as "אוקיינוס" (Ὠκεανός) in *PRE* 3\(^{121}\), "מכיר" (μάχαιρα) in *PRE* 38\(^{122}\), and "פרהסייא" (παρρησία) in *PRE* 47\(^{123}\). The Greek, though limited, is perhaps a further clue of a Palestinian (as opposed to Babylonian) provenance.

The author also has a limited Aramaic vocabulary. Steven Daniel Sacks even doubted that the author knew Aramaic at all\(^ {124}\). Nevertheless, the limited use of Aramaic suggests some knowledge of the language. In one noteworthy example, *PRE* 28 claims that the fourth animal that Abraham sacrifices for the covenant between the pieces (cf. Gen 15) is not a turtle dove but a bull. In fact, the Hebrew word for "turtle dove" (חורת) is identical to the Aramaic word for "bull" (חור). In another example, *PRE* 32 states that the Solomon received his name (שלמה) because he would be the king of peace (שלום), citing the Aramaic word instead of the Hebrew cognate (שלום), presumably because of the Aramaic word’s graphic similarity to Solomon’s name\(^ {126}\). Sacks believed that such a facile use of Aramaic demonstrated ignorance, but the use of wordplay suggests familiarity, not ignorance.

As a resident of Abbasid Palestine, one presumes that the author of *PRE* knew *some* Arabic, at least for day-to-day interactions. The evidence of the author’s knowledge of Arabic is slight but significant. At the end of *PRE* 30, the author mentions three wars that the “Ishmaelites” will carry out at the end of time\(^ {127}\). He cites Isaiah 21:15, “For they have fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the gravity of war” (כֵּי מָפְנֵי הָרְחוֹת).
as a prooftext, claiming that “swords” (חרבות) means “wars”, but the word herev (חרב) does not mean “war” in Hebrew; rather, this is the meaning of the Arabic cognate harb (حرب). It is a play on words: The author derives a meaning from the Hebrew text based on an Arabic cognate, just as in the Aramaic examples above. Similarly, the author connects the word milhamah (מלחמה) from the same verse to the messianic war at the end of time. This is the common word for “war” in Hebrew, but its Arabic cognate malḥama (ملحمه) designates specifically eschatological conflicts, especially the war with Constantinople, which is the exact context of the passage in PRE. The evidence presented here is suggestive rather than decisive. In any case, Arabic remains one channel through which the author could have known non-rabbinic traditions.

1.7 Conclusion
Unlike many works of rabbinic literature, we have firm evidence for the authorship, provenance, and time of composition for PRE. The work was composed by a single author in Abbasid Palestine and completed around the time of the Fourth Fitna (809-813). The form of the work is essentially that of the Qiṣṣa al-ʿAnbiyāʾ, and it adopts at least two stories from this literary tradition—the infancy of Abraham and the wives of Ishmael. Like the collections of Qiṣṣa, PRE provided material for preachers, and it has strong links with a homily for the second day of Rosh ha-Shanah. Although it is a Jewish composition, the work is open to outside traditions and incorporates them into a rabbinic framework. Certainly, the author’s knowledge of Arabic could have facilitated his access to non-rabbinic traditions.

128 For the eschatological war against Constantinople, see D. Cook, Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic, op. cit., p. 22-23 and H. Yücesoy, Messianic Beliefs and Imperial Politics, op. cit., p. 47.
Chapter Two: *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*

2.0 Introduction

One outstanding critical problem in the study of *PRE* is its relationship to *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (TPJ)* to the Pentateuch. This work shares a great deal of material with *PRE*—material which is not found in the classical rabbinic literature. It has long been a point of contention whether the Targum is a source of *PRE*, whether *PRE* is a source of the Targum, or whether the two depend on a common source. Leopold Zunz already recognized the importance of this Targum for the study of *PRE* in the nineteenth century\(^1\). The question was not seriously considered again until well into the twentieth century, after a number of crucial developments in the field of Targum studies. The most widely cited article on this subject, Robert Hayward’s “*Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan,*” denies any particular relationship between these two works\(^2\). Given that there are at least fifty parallel traditions found in *PRE* and *TPJ* but absent from the classical rabbinic literature and other Targumim, this position needs to be carefully reconsidered\(^3\). If the Targum precedes *PRE*, then the question of the special material is already decided: The Targum becomes the most likely source of the non-rabbinic material in *PRE*. Furthermore, some of the parallels shared between *PRE* and *Jubilees* and *PRE* and the *Cave of Treasures* also appear in the Targum. It is imperative to resolve the question of the relationship between *PRE* and *TPJ*, its closest Jewish analogue, before considering other non-rabbinic sources of *PRE*.

The question of the relationship between *PRE* and *TPJ* cannot be treated apart from the general history of Targum studies. The word *targum* (תָּרָגוֹמָה) means translation and, within Jewish literature, refers to Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible. These translations are usually characterized as “paraphrases,” although, as Paul Flesher and Bruce Chilton have shown, the Targumim are literal translations which, however, feature numerous expansions to the biblical text\(^4\). The Peshitta and other Syriac translations of the Bible are not usually classed with the Targumim. The Aramaic texts from Qumran, which includes some Aramaic translations of biblical texts, are also distinct. Although rabbinic Judaism accepts the

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\(^3\) See the appendix, which lists fifty-five examples.

\(^4\) P.V.M. Flesher and B. Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction*, Waco, 2011, p. 3-68, has a good overview of the different Targumim as well as a clear discussion of how the Targumim differ from the Aramaic texts from Qumran and the Syriac Peshitta.
Targumim, they are not considered part of the classical rabbinic corpus. The Targum represents the teaching of the synagogue (בֵּית הָנֵסָת; בית הכנסת), whereas the Talmud and Midrash reflect the rabbinic house of study (בֵּית הַמְדַרְשׁ; בית המדרש). The difference between the two, however, should not be overemphasized. While Late Antique Judaism is broader than the rabbinic movement, the rabbis themselves constituted a faction within “Synagogal Judaism,” which is demonstrated by their adoption of liturgical genres such as Piyyut and Targum.

The Targumim to the Pentateuch, of which TPJ is an example, can be divided into two branches, the Babylonian Targum, represented by Targum Onqelos, and the Palestinian Targumim. Targum Onqelos is the authoritative, “canonical” Targum to the Pentateuch, which can be found in any Rabbinic Bible. It is characterized by a general absence of additions to the biblical text relative to the other Targumim. The Palestinian Targumim are represented by several texts, including the Fragment Targum and Targum Neofiti. In addition to the Targumim to the Pentateuch, there is an authorized Targum to the Prophets, known as Targum Jonathan. There are also Targumim to the Writings, although the translation of the Writings is proscribed in the Talmud (b. Megillah 3a). The official Targumim (Onqelos and Jonathan) hew closely to the Hebrew text; some Targumim to the Writings, such as the Targum to Song of Songs and the Second Targum to Esther have added so much to their biblical model that they have completely transformed the original book. Some books of the Bible, such as Ezra and Daniel, have no Targumim at all, possibly because these books already have lengthy Aramaic sections (Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Dan 2:4b-7:28).

Before the discovery of Targum Neofiti, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan was considered the primary representative of the Palestinian Targum tradition. The only other witness to this tradition was the Fragment Targum, a collection of expanded verses from the Pentateuch. The two were printed together in Rabbinic Bibles, leading Leopold Zunz to conclude that the Fragment Targum consisted of variants to TPJ. Beginning in the eleventh century, rabbinic authors such as Hai Gaon and Nathan b. Yehiel would occasionally cite a Targum.

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5 Also, as the last chapter indicated, Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer is a rabbinic work (note the title!) which has meaningful ties to the liturgy of the synagogue (supra Section 1.5). I am deeply suspicious of attempts to construct an entire system of “Synagogal Judaism” over against rabbinic Judaism. See, for example, J. Costa, « Qu’est-ce que le “judaïsme synagogal”? », Judaïsme ancien, vol. 3 (2015), p. 63-218. He is distilling the arguments of S.C. Mimouni, Le judaïsme ancien du VIe siècle avant notre ère au IIIe siècle de notre ère: des prêtres aux rabbins, Paris, 2012.

6 P.S. Alexander, The Targum of Canticles: Translated with Apparatus and Notes, Collegeville, Minn, 2003


8 Despite its name, the Fragment Targum is complete. It is an anthology rather than a full translation.

9 L. Zunz, Die gottesdientslichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 35-41.
This was initially believed to be *TPJ*. The first reference to a *Targum Jonathan* to the Pentateuch, however, occurs in the writings of the fourteenth century Italian kabbalist Menahem Recanati. The Jonathan in question is Jonathan b. Uzziel (1st c.), who, according to rabbinic tradition, translated the Targum to the Prophets (*b. Megillah* 3a). Although this attribution has no historical value, *Targum Jonathan* to the Prophets is of an entirely different character than *TPJ*, hence the name *Pseudo-Jonathan*.

Over the course of the twentieth century, new discoveries greatly complicated this understanding of the Targumim. First, the Cairo Genizah yielded a number of Palestinian Targum fragments (including fragments of the *Fragment Targum*) which show the great diversity of the Palestinian Targum tradition. Second, Alejandro Diez Macho discovered Codex Neofiti 1 in 1949, which contains a complete, previously unknown Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch. *Targum Neofiti* revolutionized the field of Targum study and played a key role in the “Kahle School” of Targum research. The Kahle School, following a thesis outlined by Paul Kahle, postulated that the Palestinian Targumim were contemporaneous with, or older than, the writings of the New Testament and provided a valuable witness to Second Temple Judaism, including the development of pre-rabbinic *ag gadah* and *halakhah* as well as insights into the “language of Jesus”.

The assumptions of the Kahle School put a moratorium on the question of the relationship between *PRE* and *TPJ*. If *TPJ* is treated as a relic from the Second Temple period, then the question is already decided: *PRE* must derive its peculiar traditions from *TPJ*. In a short but decisive article, Anthony D. York showed that the Kahle School assumed, rather than demonstrated, the antiquity of the extant Palestinian Targumim. There is no reason to treat *Targum Neofiti*, much less *TPJ*, as a Second Temple text, although York concedes the

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presence of “ancient traditions” in the Palestinian Targumim. In the years following York’s article, the dating of the Targumim became the subject of more critical examination.

By chance, the first significant twentieth-century contribution to the debate on the relationship of PRE to TPJ, Moïse Ohana’s “La polémique judéo islamique et l’image d’Ismaël dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer,” appeared almost simultaneously with York’s critique of the Kahle School. As the title indicates, the principal subject of the article is not the relationship between the two works but the nature of a particular legend found in both, that is, the story of the two wives of Ishmael, Aisha and Fatima (see supra Section 1.3). Ohana reasons that TPJ must depend on PRE in this instance, since the Targum only alludes to a story that PRE reports in full. The story of Ishmael, Aisha, and Fatima is not only a crux for the debate about the relationship of PRE to TPJ but also for the date of TPJ as a whole: If TPJ refers in passing to the wife and daughter of Muhammad, then the Targum cannot be earlier than the seventh century CE. It also calls into question the antiquity of some of the other traditions found in TPJ.

Other studies swiftly followed which reconsidered the relationship between TPJ and PRE, often in the context of the problem of the date of TPJ. Avigdor Shinan has treated the subject of TPJ extensively in two books and several articles. He supports an early Islamic origin for the Targum and dated it to the seventh or eighth century, making it roughly contemporaneous with PRE. Miguel Perez Fernandez, in the introduction to his Spanish translation of PRE, listed thirty-nine parallels between PRE and TPJ. He did not believe that one work depended on the other, but that both depended on a common source. The work of Perez Fernandez is the

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18 I have argued for a ninth century date for PRE; however, it is clear that Shinan considers the Targum to be later than PRE.
basis of Hayward’s critique of the relationship between the two works. Hayward believes that TPJ developed over several centuries and that the final form of TPJ, while late, is representative of Jewish traditions dating as far back as the Second Temple period. His article, “Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan,” is part of a series of exchanges with Shinan concerning the date of TPJ. Although Hayward claims ancient origins for TPJ, he does not claim that PRE depends on TPJ but that both works drew from a variety of older sources. More recently, Paul Flesher and his student Beverly Mortensen have supported an earlier date for TPJ. Flesher believes that the Palestinian Talmud (5th c.) quotes TPJ, while Mortensen thinks that TPJ’s emphasis on the Temple and priesthood excludes a date after the rise of Islam (she claims it was written during the reign of Emperor Julian, 361-363 CE).

The status questionis on the relationship of PRE to TPJ can best be described as a stalemate. Although no one, to my knowledge, has responded to Shinan’s refutation of Hayward and Perez Fernandez, the conclusions of Hayward are still generally accepted. Paul Flesher and Bruce Chilton go even farther than Hayward and argue that PRE depends on the Targum, whereas Hayward denied a link between the two documents. Katharina Keim, in her recent book on PRE, also concedes to Hayward: “There can be no question that Hayward has proved his point; there is no clear evidence that PRE was a source for Tg. Ps.-J. or vice versa.

There is, however, a surfeit of evidence that the Targum has used PRE as a source. The Targum postdates PRE, and not by a little. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan could not have been written before the eleventh century; a twelfth-century date seems more likely. This conclusion depends on three arguments: 1) Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is a literary unity based on earlier Targumic sources which are, however, unknown to PRE; 2) The latest dateable event referred to in the Targum is the First Crusade (1095-1099), placing the earliest possible date at the end

of the eleventh century, if not later; 3) The Targum uses sources that use PRE. In fact, TPJ knows many sources which postdate PRE or are otherwise unknown to the redactor of PRE.

### 2.1 The Unity of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is a Targum unlike any other. The casual reader will notice immediately that it contains many more expansions than the other Targumim. As a result, the work has received more scrutiny than other Targum. This scrutiny exceeds the historical importance of the work: the only material witnesses to Targum Pseudo-Jonathan are a single manuscript (dated to 1598) and the printed edition of 1591, which differs only slightly from the manuscript\(^{27}\). Furthermore, direct quotations of the work all derive from the late medieval period, which would be highly unusual for a work emanating from the Second Temple period or even Late Antiquity. This contrasts strongly with the large number of manuscripts, printed editions, and citations of PRE.

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan was previously understood as the culmination of the development of the Palestinian Targum. However, it is not a Palestinian Targum at all. It freely mixes linguistic elements from Targum Onqelos and the Palestinian Targumim to form a new Aramaic dialect: Late Jewish Literary Aramaic\(^{28}\). In fact, the Babylonian Targum Onqelos is the base text of TPJ, which has been substantially modified with expansions from the Palestinian Targumim and various other Jewish works\(^{29}\). The Targum is therefore neither Palestinian nor Babylonian but a tertium quid, which Edward Cook has deemed the “conflate Targum”\(^{30}\). This redactional method, which explains the “literary” dialect, suggests a work that was carefully composed at one time rather than a communal document which was reworked over the course of several generations. This means that the Targum is not an “oral

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Unlike the earlier Targumim, which were intended for recitation in the synagogue, TPJ was written to be read\textsuperscript{31}.

Incidentally, these data already hint at the provenance of the work. Targum Onqelos is considered normative (hence not Palestinian), yet the author did not know Aramaic as a living language (hence not Babylonian). Palestinian Jews, who had their own Targumim, would not have used the Babylonian Targum Onqelos as a base text, while Babylonian Jews would have known Aramaic, even in the Islamic period\textsuperscript{32}. However, European Jews—both Ashkenazi and Sephardi—accepted the Babylonian tradition but did not know Aramaic as a mother-tongue. Their attempts to write in Aramaic are artificial and literary. For example, the primary author of the Zohar, Moses de Leon, a Spaniard, recognized the authority of the Babylonian Talmud and attempted to imitate its Aramaic style. As a result, the Zohar is written in its own idiosyncratic dialect of Aramaic\textsuperscript{33}. These data suggest Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, like the Zohar, is a European composition.

If the Targum is a unity, then it must postdate PRE, especially since PRE has no concrete parallels with other Targumic sources. That is, while TPJ is familiar with earlier Targumic tradition, PRE is not. The expansions typical of the Palestinian Targumim, which are reproduced in TPJ, have no counterpart in PRE. Furthermore, most of the material shared between PRE and TPJ appears nowhere else in either classical rabbinic literature or the other Targumic literature. Therefore, there is no common source that the two works could have used. In this case, it is unlikely that PRE used the Targum, but the Targum probably used PRE, adding material from that work all at once rather than accumulating material from diverse sources over the course of centuries.

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 4:1-16 (Cain and Abel) provides a particularly clear example of the relationship between PRE and the Targumim\textsuperscript{34}. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan contains a number of traditions which can be found in PRE 21 but not in the Palestinian

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\textsuperscript{31} See M. Maher, *TPJ Genesis*, op. cit., p. 8, summarizing previous scholarship: “…from the beginning Ps.-J. was not intended for the ordinary uneducated Jew who attended the synagogue, but was rather conceived as a literary work that was addressed to a more sophisticated audience.” In addition to the language, he is referring to the specific content, including non-rabbinic halakhah and esoteric (or even obscene) aggadah.


Targumim. Conversely, *TPJ* also has additions drawn from the Palestinian Targumim which cannot be found in *PRE*. The two distinct streams of tradition, from *PRE* and from the Palestinian Targumim, are mingled in *TPJ*. It is unlikely that the author of *PRE* adopted traditions unique to *TPJ* while avoiding traditions drawn from the Palestinian Targumim. Therefore, *PRE* does not know either the Palestinian Targumim or *TPJ*, while *TPJ* knows both *PRE* and the Palestinian Targumim. A systematic overview of the parallels between *PRE 21* and *TPJ* to Gen 4:1-16 will help illustrate this point.\(^{35}\)

First, the opening explains that Eve conceived Cain from Sammael, an evil angel.\(^{36}\)

The rider of the serpent approached her, and she conceived Cain. After this, Adam came to her, and she conceived Abel, as it is written, “Adam knew Eve, his wife” (Gen 4:1). What did he know? That she was pregnant. She saw that his likeness was not of those below but of those above. She glanced and said, “I have acquired a man with the LORD” (Gen 4:1) (*PRE 21*).\(^{37}\)

Adam knew Eve, his wife, that she was pregnant from Sammael, the angel of the LORD (TPJ to Gen 4:1).\(^{38}\)

The “rider of the serpent” in *PRE 21* is a reference to Sammael in *PRE 13*, where he mounts the serpent—which has the form of a camel—before the temptation of Eve (והיה דמותו כמין גמל ועלה ורכב עליו). The idea that Eve conceived Cain from angelic beings is of Sethian

\(^{35}\) The citations of *TPJ* come from E.G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch*, op. cit.


\(^{38}\) E.G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, op. cit., p. 5. The *editio princeps* (B. Walton, « Triplex Targum », op. cit., p. 7) has a different reading with the same sense: “Adam knew Eve, his wife, that she desired the angel, and that she conceived and bore Cain. She said, “I have acquired a man from the angel of the LORD” (ואבד אדם ידע את חוה איתיה הוא חמידת למלאכא ואעדיאת וילידת ית קין ואמרת קיניתי לגברא ית למלאכא דיי) (��יה א IDirect את חוה איתיה הוא חמידת למלאכא ואעדיאת וילידת ית קין ואמרת קיניתי לגברא ית למלאכא דיי.

\(^{39}\) D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit., p. 67. The use of the epithet, rather than the name Sammael, is intended to harmonize the demonic parentage of Cain with the rabbinic idea that the serpent slept with Eve (*b. Shab*. 145b-146a). It was not the serpent, *PRE* explains, but rather the rider of the serpent.
gnostic origin. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* are the earliest Jewish sources to mention this tradition\(^{40}\).

Second, both works also mention a twin sister that was born at the same time as Cain:

Rabbi Miasha said: Cain was born, and **his twin sister with him** (*PRE* 21)\(^{41}\).

רבי Миיאשא אומר נולדה כל קן ותאומתה עמו

And again, she gave birth from her husband Adam **his [Cain’s] twin** and Abel. (*TPJ* to Gen 4:2)\(^{42}\).

ואוסיפה למולדת מן בעלה אדם ית תומים ביניהם וית הבדל

The idea of the twin sisters of Cain and Abel appears in classical rabbinic literature (*Gen. Rab. 22:7*) but not in the Palestinian Targumim. Against the earlier rabbinic tradition, which mentions the twin sisters of Abel, *PRE* specifies the twin sister of Cain as a source of the conflict between the two brothers (see *infra* Section 8.6). *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* also mentions the twin sister of Cain but does not implicate her in the death of Abel. Her presence in the Targum is extraneous—a possible indication that *TPJ* depends on an outside source.

Third, both *PRE* and *TPJ* mention that Cain and Abel celebrated the Passover. This is another tradition unique to these two sources. The idea that the brothers celebrated Passover appears nowhere else in classical rabbinic or Targumic sources\(^{43}\):

הגיע ליל יום טוב של פסח אмар אדם לבניו בליל זה עתידין ישר אלי להקריב קרבנות פסחים

הקריבו גם אתם לפני בוראכם הביא קין מותר מאכלו קליות זרע פשתן

והביא Abel מבכורות צאנו

ומחלביהן כבשים שלא נגזזו לצמר ונתעב מנחת קין ונרצית מנחת הבל שנאמר ד": אל בל

לא מנחתו (*Gen 4:4*)


\(^{41}\) D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit., p. 112.


\(^{43}\) P.A. Bengtsson, *Passover in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan Genesis: The Connection of Early Biblical Events with Passover in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan in a Synagogue Setting*, Stockholm, 2001, p. 42, names *PRE* and *TPJ* as the only sources to date the offering to Passover, but it also appears in *Midrash Aggadah* (see *infra* Section 2.3), a work that postdates *PRE*. See also Sections 5.3 and 8.5 of the present study.
The night of the festival of Passover arrived. Adam said to his sons: “On this night, Israel will offer Passover sacrifices. You shall also offer sacrifices before your Creator.” Cain brought the leftovers of his food, a mixture of the seed of flax. Abel brought the firstlings of his flock and their fatty portions, sheep which had not yet been shorn for their wool. The offering of Cain was rejected, but the offering of Abel was accepted, as it is written, “And the Lord turned to Abel and his offering” (Gen. 4:4) (PRE 21).

At the end of the season, on the fourteenth of Nisan, Cain brought from the produce of the earth the seed of flax, an offering of firstfruits before the Lord. Abel also brought the firstborn of his flock and their fatty portions. It was pleasing to the Lord, who turned his countenance toward Abel and his sacrifice (TPJ to Gen 4:3-4).

Both passages not only mention that the offering took place on the night of Passover (14 Nisan) but also that Cain brought an offering of flax or linen, which was rejected in favor of Abel’s offering of wool. In PRE, the offerings of Cain and Abel are not only the basis of Passover but the prohibition of mixing wool and linen (Lev 19:19; Deut 22:11), called shatnez (שטען). The association is explicit in the section following the quoted passage. The Targum hints at this tradition but does not produce it in its entirety, another sign of dependence.

Finally, both PRE and TPJ mention that the sign (אות) of Cain (Gen 4:15) is a letter, as opposed to a physical change, such as horns:

What did the Holy One, Blessed Be He, do? He took a letter, one of the twenty-two letters that is in the Torah, and he inscribed it on the arm of Cain, in order that no one would kill him, as it is said, “The LORD placed a sign on Cain” (Gen 4:15) (PRE 21).

44 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 113.
The LORD said to him, “Behold, anyone who kills Cain shall pay the penalty for seven generations.” The LORD inscribed on Cain’s face a letter from his great and glorious name, so that anyone who found him and looked upon him would not kill him (TPJ to Gen 4:15).  

The parallel here is looser, but it is worth noting that of all the propositions concerning the mark of Cain in earlier rabbinic literature (e.g., Gen. Rab. 22:12), none involves a letter inscribed on Cain’s body. The tradition is likewise missing from the Palestinian Targumim.

These four examples—traditions found in PRE and TPJ but not classical rabbinic literature or the other Targumim—can be contrasted with the lengthy addition found in Genesis 4:8, which has close parallels in both Targum Neofiti and the Fragment Targum. Here is the passage as it appears in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan:

Cain said to Abel, his brother: “Come, let’s both go to the field.” When they had gone to the field, Cain spoke and said to Abel: “I observe that the world was created through mercy, but it is not guided by the fruit of good deeds, and there is partiality in judgment, since your sacrifice was received with favor, but my sacrifice was not received with favor.” Abel replied to Cain: “The world was created through mercy, and it is guided according to the fruit of good deeds, and there is no partiality in judgment. The fruit of my good deeds was better than yours and anterior to yours. Therefore, my sacrifice was accepted with favor.” Cain replied to Abel: “There is no justice and no judge and no hereafter and neither reward for the righteous nor punishment for the wicked.” Abel responded to Cain: “There is justice and a judge and a hereafter and there is both reward for the righteous and punishment for the wicked.” There were quarrelling about these matters in the open filed. Then Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and implanted a stone into his forehead and killed him (TPJ to Gen 4:8).  

Except for the bold text, this lengthy passage can be found in both Targum Neofiti and the Fragment Targum to Genesis 4:8. The only trace of this tradition which appears in PRE is the bold text, the precise portion which is missing in the Palestinian Targumim. Although the idea

that Cain killed Abel with a stone is ancient (Jub. 4:31), the Targum matches PRE nearly word-for-word, including the key detail that Cain struck Abel in the forehead:

(\textit{Gen 4:8})

\begin{quote}
לקח האבן וטבע במצחו של הבל והרגו שנאמר \textit{ויקם קין אל הבל אחיו ויהרגהו} (Gen 4:8).
\end{quote}

He took a stone and implanted it into the forehead of Abel, and he killed him, as it is written, “And Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and killed him” (Gen 4:8)\textsuperscript{48}.

וקם קין על הבל אחוהי וטבע אבנאו במיצחיה והרגו

And Cain rose up against Abel, and he implanted a stone in his forehead and killed him (\textit{TPJ to Gen 4:8})\textsuperscript{49}.

Those who wish to claim that \textit{PRE} uses \textit{TPJ} must first explain why the author of \textit{PRE} thought that only this one phrase from \textit{TPJ} to Gen 4:8 was worth including in his own composition, while the entire conversation between Cain and Abel, the longest and most notable expansion in the entire chapter, was of no interest. \textit{Targum Pseudo-Jonathan} to Genesis 4:7, 10, 13, 15, and 16 also have parallels in the Palestinian Targumim which, however, cannot be found in \textit{PRE}. There is a neat division between 1) material \textit{TPJ} adopts from the Palestinian Targumim and 2) material \textit{TPJ} adopts from \textit{PRE}. The Targum is using both works as sources.

The conclusion derived from the study of \textit{TPJ} to Gen 4:1-16 holds firm for the Targum as a whole. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer} does not know any of the long expansions common to the Palestinian Targumim and \textit{TPJ}, including the messianic prophecy in Eden (Gen 3:15), Abraham’s speech before the covenant of the pieces (Gen 15:1-2), Abraham’s prayer before the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:14), the five miracles of Jacob (Gen 28:10), the four keys of the Lord (Gen 30:22), Simeon and Levi’s response to Jacob about Dinah (Gen 34:31); Tamar’s prophecy about the fiery furnace (Gen 38:25), Judah’s speech to Joseph (Gen 44:18), and the Poem of the Four Nights (Exod 12:42)\textsuperscript{50}. Some Targumic traditions do appear in \textit{PRE}, but they are also found in classical rabbinic sources. For example, the identification of Shem with Melchizedek is found in \textit{PRE} 8 and the Palestinian Targumim to Genesis 14:18, but also in \textit{Leviticus Rabbah} 25:6, the Babylonian Talmud (\textit{b. Nedarim} 32a), and even Syriac Christian literature\textsuperscript{51}. This tradition is too widespread to be distinguished.

\textsuperscript{48} D. Börner-Klein, \textit{Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser}, op. cit., p. 115.
\textsuperscript{49} E.G. Clarke, \textit{Targum Pseudo-Jonathan}, op. cit., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{50} For the poem see: R. Le Déaut, \textit{La Nuit pascale: essai sur la signification de la Pâque juive à partir du targum d’Exode, XII, 42}, Rome, 1963. This work is representative of the positions of the Kahle School.
Even if TPJ was written over an extended period of time by several hands, it is hardly possible that an editor of the Targum could have added these parallels prior to the redaction of PRE. Apart from TPJ, PRE is the earliest source for most of the parallel traditions. An argument for PRE’s dependence on TPJ requires one to either invent common sources which do not exist, or else posit that PRE, for some reason, carefully avoided including any material from the Palestinian Targumim. This is, to say the least, extremely unlikely. Rather, the redactor of the Targum used PRE as a source. This conclusion is consonant with the other evidence concerning the date and the sources of the Targum.

2.2 The Date and Provenance of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

If Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is a unity, then the work can be dated from the latest historical reference within the work. Most scholars will point to the reference to Aisha and Fatima in TPJ to Genesis 21:21\(^{52}\). The use of these names—the wife and daughter of Muhammad—indicates a seventh-century date at the earliest for the redaction of the work. However, this tradition is also one of the parallels shared between PRE and TPJ. Based on the conclusions of the above section, the Targum adopted this tradition from PRE, automatically dating the Targum later than PRE\(^{53}\). Furthermore, this verse is not the latest internal historical reference in the work. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Numbers 24:24 refers to the First Crusade (1095-1099), which pushes the earliest possible date for the redaction of the work to the eleventh century\(^{54}\). Since the Crusade occurred at the very end of the century, a more likely date for the redaction of the Targum is the twelfth century.

The passage from Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is best read in conjunction with the parallel passages in the Hebrew Bible and the Palestinian Targumim. The original passage, which comes from one of the prophecies of Balaam, simply reads:

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\(^{52}\) E.g., L. Zunz, Die gottesdientslichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 39; M. Ohana, « La polémique judéo islamique », op. cit., and A. Shinan, « Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Midrash Pirqe De-Rabbi Eliezer », op. cit., p. 240. See also R. Hayward, « Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan », op. cit., p. 243. B.P. Mortensen, The Priesthood in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 12, and P.V.M. Flesher and B. Chilton, The Targums: A Critical Introduction, op. cit., p. 162, who suggest that this reference is a gloss, although they cite no evidence in support of this convenient claim. Mortensen also writes: “The names could refer to other women, now lost to us, who lived in earlier times.” For her, it is just a coincidence that the wives share the names of the two most important women in the history of early Islam. Is this really easier to believe than that TPJ is a late document?\(^{53}\) The tradition is also found in L.M. Barth, « Lection for the Second Day of Rosh Hashanah: A Homily Containing the Legend of the Ten Trials of Abraham », Hebrew Union College Annual, vol. 58 (1987), p. 29-30 [Hebrew]. I concede that the homily, which appears to be contemporaneous with PRE, is a potential common source, although the homily does not account for all of the parallels between PRE and TPJ.

But ships shall come from Kittim and afflict Ashur and Eber, and it shall be everlasting destruction (Num 24:24).

The Palestinian Targumim considerably amplify the passage with references to the contemporary geopolitical situation. The text changes slightly among the different versions. One manuscript of the Fragment Targum (V) is representative of the tradition in general:

**וַעֲלֵיהֶם יִכְפּוּ אֶתְכֶנֶם בַּלְבָנִיָּה מִן מָדִינָה יִאֶסְתְּלֹא אֶתְכֶרֶס עִמְתָּם לִצְנֵהֶם סְגִין מִן דְּרוֹמָה
וּשְׁעַבְדוּ אֶתְכֶרֶס עִמְתָּם עֹלֶם עֹלֶם מִן דְּרוֹמָה לָדוּכְנָה דָּאֵלִי לָדוּכְנָה דָּאֵלִי דָּאֵלִי
לְעָלָם**

**And ships: And numerous multitudes of ships (לַבְנִיא) will come from the province of Italy, and many legions from the Romans will join them, and they will subdue the Assyrians and afflict all the people of Mesopotamia, but their end, of both these and the others, is destruction, and their destruction will be eternal (Frag. Targ. to Num 24:24)**

This passage introduces numerous changes to the Hebrew original. The Kittim, an ancient seafaring people, have become the Romans, which is an old tradition that can already be observed in the Septuagint (e.g., Dan 11:30, where have become Ρωμαίοι). Eber (עבר) has become “the people from across the river” (ב╝ עֵבֶר נְהָרָא), that is, Mesopotamians.

Whereas the original biblical verse refers to the incursion of foreigners into the Hebrew and Assyrian territories, the Palestinian Targum prophesizes the mutually assured destruction of two superpowers, one in Rome and the other in Mesopotamia. Given the Byzantine provenance of the Palestinian Targumim, this likely refers to the incessant war between the “Two Eyes of the Earth,” the Roman Empire and the Sassanid Empire, whose capital was in the heart of Mesopotamia at Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

**Targum Pseudo-Jonathan** builds on this tradition yet gives a very different reading:

**וַעֲלֵיהֶם יצָרְחוּ בָּמְנֵי זַיֵּין וִיפַקֵּם בְּאֶתְכֶנֶם סְגִין מִן לֶבֶן עַרְמָנִי וְיִאֶסְתְּלֹא אֶתְכֶרֶס עִמְתָּם לִצְנֵהֶם סְגִין מִן דְּרוֹמָה וּשְׁעַבְדוּ אֶתְכֶרֶס עִמְתָּם עֹלֶם עֹלֶם מִן דְּרוֹמָה לָדוּכְנָה דָּאֵלִי לָדוּכְנָה דָּאֵלִי דָּאֵלִי לְעָלָם**

55 *Targum Neofiti* is heavily censored and omits references to Italy and the Romans. See M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Numbers. Translated, with Apparatus and Notes*, Collegeville, Minn, 1991, p. 142.

56 M. Klein, *The Fragment-Targums, op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 204.

57 For this expression, see M.P. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran*, Berkeley, 2009. It comes from a letter of Khosrow II to the Byzantine Emperor Maurice.
And armies shall come forth with instruments of war, and they will go out in great crowds from Lombardy (למרייה) and from the land of Italy. They will be joined by legions coming from Rome and Constantinople. They will afflict the Assyrians and subjugate all the children of Eber. Yet the end of both of these is to fall by the hand of King Messiah, and they will be brought to an everlasting destruction (TPJ to Num 24:24)."58

First, the redactor has transformed the obscure word for “ship” in the Palestinian Targum (לברנייא) into a geographic location, “Lombarnia” (למרניא) in Italy—probably Lombardy. In addition to Rome, TPJ adds a reference to Constantinople. The combined might of Italy and Constantinople afflicted the “Assyrians” but not Mesopotamia; rather, they persecute the “children of Eber,” that is, the Hebrews, the author’s co-religionists. The persecution is avenged by the Messiah, an idea that is unique to TPJ.

K. Bernhardt believed the verse, with its apparent reference to Lombardy, refers to the route taken by the Crusaders on their way to the Jerusalem.59 Edward Cook was critical of this argument: None of the Palestinian Targumim mention Lombardy, and TPJ does not read “Lombardy” (למרניה) but rather “Lombarnia” (למרניא). The first criticism is irrelevant: TPJ is not a Palestinian Targum (as Cook himself proved), and the Targumist has evidently changed the text for his own purposes. As for the second criticism, the Targumist probably attempted to render the obscure word *liburnia* (לברנייה) intelligible by transforming it into the province of Lombardy through a minimal change, the addition of a single mem (מ). It is further significant that TPJ understands “Lombarnia” as a place name, which is not true of *liburnia* in the Palestinian Targumim.

In any case, the most remarkable aspect of TPJ to Numbers 24:24 is not the reference to Lombardy but its division of the invaders into two separate groups, with Italy and Lombardy on one side and Rome and Constantinople on the other. The Palestinian Targumim mentions Italy and legions of Romans, who are not necessarily two separate groups. In Late Antiquity, “Rome” referred, above all, to the Eastern Roman Empire, which included, from the time of Justinian, Southern Italy. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, however, feels obliged to gloss “Rome”

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59 K. Bernhardt, « Targum Jeruschalmi I », op. cit. An important part of his argument is that the region of Lombardy did not receive this name until the tenth century.
60 E.M. Cook, Rewriting the Bible, op. cit., p. 33-34.
as “Rome and Constantinople,” as if his readers would not associate Rome with Byzantium. Furthermore, “Italy and Lombardy” evokes two other geopolitical entities with holdings in Italy: the Holy Roman Empire (which included Lombardy) and the papacy. The Byzantine loss of Italy is concurrent with the rise of these two institutions in the eleventh century.\(^{61}\)

The verse describes “Italy and Lombardy” joining with “Rome and Constantinople” in order to fight against a common enemy, the “Assyrians.” In the Palestinian Targumim, the Assyrians apparently refer to the Persians. By the time the province of Lombardy was established, the Persians had been replaced by the Arabs and Turks. The Crusades, particularly the First Crusade, is the most prominent event in which Western Europe cooperated with the Byzantine Empire against a common foe.\(^{62}\) It began as a Byzantine initiative: Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade at the behest of the Emperor Alexius I. The Crusaders, once they assembled at Constantinople, even took oaths of obedience to the Byzantine Emperor.\(^{63}\)

A final change to the Palestinian Targumim is also coherent with a redaction during the time of the Crusades. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan has omitted the reference to Mesopotamia (עבר הנהרא), which was not the object of the Crusade, and replaced it with the persecution of the “Hebrews” (בנוי דעבר). The preaching of the Crusades incited violence against Jewish communities, resulting in a series of massacres in the spring of 1096.\(^{64}\) These episodes increased Jewish fervor for the messianic redemption and revenge against their persecutors.\(^{65}\)

This is the precise sentiment reflected at the end of TPJ to Numbers 24:24. Again, it is not found in the other Targumim.

This internal evidence, although speculative, accords with the external evidence. Both internal and external evidence point to an Italian provenance. The earliest citation of TPJ comes from

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\(^{61}\) For the rise of the papacy and the Holy Roman Empire in the eleventh century, see P.H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire: A Thousand Years of Europe’s History*, London, 2017, particularly the first chapter.

\(^{62}\) N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, rev. and expanded ed, New York, 1970, p. 43, writes: “The main object of Urban’s famous appeal at Clermont, in 1095, was to provide Byzantium with the reinforcements it needed in order to drive the Seljuk Turks from Asia Minor.”


\(^{64}\) N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium, op. cit.,* p. 50-51, summarizes the main incidents.

Menahem Recanati, a fourteenth-century Italian kabbalist. The work was first printed in Venice, and the unique manuscript is in an Italian hand. Codex Neofiti 1, which contains glosses from TPJ, is also an Italian manuscript. The Italian polymath Azariah de Rossi (d. 1549), though a German by birth, lived in Italy and knew of the work (though he had never seen it). The manuscript evidence of a work is not proof of its provenance, but an Italian provenance could explain many of the mysteries of the Targum, such as its wide knowledge of both Babylonian and Palestinian rabbinic literature, its peculiar literary Aramaic, and its absence of Arabic vocabulary and anti-Karaite polemic (common arguments against a late date). An Italian provenance would also suit the apparent reference to Lombardy.

The most serious objection to the late date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan comes from Paul Flesher, who claims that the Palestinian Talmud preserves a unique reading of the Targum. The Talmudic passage concerns the proper Aramaic translation of Leviticus 22:28:

אֲוָלִין דָּמַרְבָּנָה עַמּוֹ בִּין יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי דָאָמַר דָּמַרְבָּנָה בָּשְׁמֶיהָ כֵּן יְרוּשָׁלָיִם בָּשְׁמֶיהָ יִרְאוּ

הָיִיתֵי הַתָּכֹן לַא יִהְיוּ הָרָאוֹת בְּיוֹם בָּרָעָא תּוֹרָה אֲוָלִין בִּין יִשְׂרָאֵל

Those who translate: “My people, children of Israel, just as I am merciful in heaven, so you shall be merciful on earth: you shall not slaughter a heifer or a ewe and its young, the two of them, on the same day” (Lev 22:28) do not act well because they make mercy the measure of the Holy One, Blessed be He (y. Berakhot V.3 [9c]).

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67 Ibid., p. 12.
68 M. McNamara, Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis, op. cit., p. 7-9.
69 Ibid., p. 2.
70 Ibid.
72 P.V.M. Flesher and B. Chilton, The Targums: A Critical Introduction, op. cit., p. 136-138. Flesher’s student, B.P. Mortensen, The Priesthood in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, op. cit., p. 445-449, claims that the density of allusions to priesthood and the Temple indicates that the Targum was written during the brief reign of Emperor Julian “the Apostate” (r. 361-363), who initiated a program to rebuild the Temple. However, one is hard-pressed to find a time in Jewish history when the Temple was not important to Jews. Furthermore, according to the seventh-century Armenian historian Sebeos, the Islamic Conquest aroused Jewish hopes that the Temple would be rebuilt: “Having located the spot called the Holy of Holies, they constructed there a place of prayer for themselves with the foundations and superstructure. But the Ishmaelites, envious of them, expelled them from that spot and called the same building their own place of prayer. They (the Jews) erected elsewhere another place for their worship” (R.G. Hoyland, Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam, Princeton, N.J, 1997, p. 127). If one objects that Sebeos is an outside observer, consider that the earliest Jewish reference to Julian’s project comes from the sixteenth century: D.B. Levenson, «The Ancient and Medieval Sources for the Emperor Julian’s Attempt to Rebuild the Jerusalem Temple», Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 35 (2004), p. 409-460.
Flesher correctly notes that only TPJ contains this rendition of Leviticus 22:28 with only slight differences. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* reads:

עמי בני ישראל היכמא דאנא רחמן בשמיא כן תהוון רחמנין בארעא
ברח לא תיכסון ביומא חד

My people, children of Israel, just as I am merciful in heaven, so you will be merciful on earth: you shall not slaughter a heifer or a ewe with its young on the same day (*TPJ* to Lev 22:28)\(^{73}\).

However, the reading is not unique to *TPJ*. Both *Targum Neofiti* and the *Fragment Targum* preserve the first part of the verse (עמי בני ישראל), which has no parallel in the Hebrew text. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* has either 1) preserved an original reading of the Palestinian Targum which was censored in *Targum Neofiti* and the *Fragment Targum* (conforming to rabbinic dictates) or 2) restored the original reading with the help of the Palestinian Talmud. The first is more likely, and it indicates one way in which study of *TPJ* is still useful for understanding the Palestinian Targumim: *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* has preserved a large quantity of non-rabbinic halakhah from the older Targumim\(^{74}\). In any case, it is more logical to presume that the Palestinian Talmud is quoting the Palestinian Targum and not a conflate Targum whose base text is Babylonian.

**2.3 The Sources of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan**

An examination of other sources of *TPJ* (apart from the Palestinian Targumim) further confirms the late date of the work as well as the work’s dependence on *PRE*. Donald Splansky has drawn attention to the number of late midrashim among the sources of *TPJ*:

Only [*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*] among the extant targumim makes use of material found in such late works as Lekach Tov, Sechel Tov, Midrash Aggadah, Exodus Rabbah I, and Midrash Mishle, which were all compiled in the 11\(^{\text{th}}\) and 12\(^{\text{th}}\) centuries. Ps-J itself in all probability could not date to such a late time because if it did, we would expect to find in it more anti-Karaite material and, certainly, some reference to the First and Second Crusades\(^{75}\).

The previous section already responds to Splansky’s objections: The work *does* refer to the Crusades, and an Italian provenance would mitigate any need for anti-Karaite polemic. His other observations are important, not only because all of these midrashim are quite late (but

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\(^{74}\) See M. Maher, *TPJ Genesis*, op. cit., p. 2-4 and the bibliography there.

not later than my proposed date for the Targum) and of European provenance⁷⁶, but because at least one of them (Midrash Aggadah) uses PRE as a source⁷⁷, meaning that TPJ uses a source which depends on PRE. In this case, the Targum must postdate PRE.

One late source of TPJ that Splansky does not mention is a “minor midrash” known as the Chronicles of Moses⁷⁸. This work adopts a number of unusual traditions from PRE. In turn, TPJ adopted a number of traditions from the Chronicles. This composition is a short narrative work written in pseudo-biblical Hebrew. It gives an elaborate history of Moses from his birth to the crossing of the Red Sea. It was exceptionally popular in the Middle Ages. Recensions of the work are found in both Sefer ha-Zikhronot (the Chronicles of Jerahmeel)⁷⁹ and Sefer ha-Yashar⁸₀. Sometime after the fifteenth century, the work was even translated into Slavic languages and became a hagiographical work of the Russian Orthodox Church⁸¹. It is first attested in the Arukh of Nathan b. Yehiel (11th c.)⁸₂. David Flusser has proposed that the Chronicles are dependent on the Yosippon (10th c.), which was probably written in Italy⁸³. If Flusser is correct, then the Chronicles were likely composed in Italy in the late tenth or early eleventh century. It is unknown to PRE, which depends principally on the Babylonian Talmud (b. Sotah 11a-14a) for the early life of Moses (PRE 48).

⁷⁶ Leqah Tov was written by Eliezer b. Tobiah (11th c.) of Kastoria. Sekhel Tov, which depends on Leqah Tov, was written by the Italian Menahem b. Solomon (12th c.). B.L. Visotzky, The Midrash on Proverbs, New Haven, 1992, p. 10-11 notes that the first works to quote the Midrash are the Arukh, Mahzor Vitry, and Bereshit Rabbati—all European sources of the eleventh century. Midrash Aggadah is associated with R. Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne (11th c.; see infra Section 3.1.7). Only the anonymous Exodus Rabbah I is not obviously European. G. Stemberger, Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch, op. cit. discusses the date and provenance of all these works except Midrash Aggadah. For this work, see H. Mack, The Mystery of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan, Jerusalem, 2010 [Hebrew], p. 195-197.

⁷⁷ S. Buber, Agadischer Commentar zum Pentateuch nach einer Handschrift aus Aleppo [Midrash Aggadah], 2 vol., Vienna, 1894 [Hebrew], vol. 1, p. 10-11 reports that Cain and Abel sacrificed on Passover, but Cain unlawfully added an offering of linen to Abel’s offering of wool, as in PRE. The tradition is truncated in TPJ.


The influence of the *Chronicles of Moses* on *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* is evident in several verses of the Targum’s rendition of Exodus and Numbers\(^84\). Among these are Pharaoh’s dream portending doom for his kingdom (*TPJ* to Exod 1:15)\(^85\), Moses’ adventures in Ethiopia (Num 12:1)\(^86\); and the naming of Balaam, Jannes, and Jambres as the principal adversaries of Moses (Exod 1:15; Num 22:5.22; Num 31:8), which was once considered proof of the Second Temple origin of the Targum\(^87\). Distinctively, the three magicians are all related: Jannes and Jambres are the sons of Balaam, and Balaam is either the son of Laban (the *Chronicles*) or Laban himself (*TPJ* to Num 22:5; Num 31:8)\(^88\). These traditions, which can be found separately in other works, are only found together in *TPJ* and the *Chronicles*\(^89\). In addition, the forms of these traditions are particular to these two works (e.g., Pharaoh sees a scale in his dream). None of these traditions is found in *PRE*.

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* and the *Chronicles*, however, share other material for which *PRE* is the earliest extant source. For example, in the *Chronicles*, the Egyptian servitude follows the failed attempt to kill the infant Moses, a strange reversal of the biblical story found for the first time in *PRE* 48 (see *infra* Section 5.10)\(^90\). The *Chronicles* also have an elaborate history of the rod of Moses, which appears in a simpler form in *PRE* 40\(^91\). Finally, both works report the unusual idea that Pharaoh survived the crossing of the Red Sea. Chastened, he takes up residence in Nineveh, where he becomes king and leads the people in penitence during the days of Jonah (*PRE* 43)\(^92\). Of these three traditions, only the story of Moses’ rod also appears in the Targum (see *TPJ* to Exod 2:21; 4:20; 14:21)\(^93\). The attestation of traditions from *PRE*

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\(^{84}\) It is theoretically possible that the *Chronicles* used the Targum, but the attestations of the *Chronicles* are older, the *Chronicles* were more popular, and the Targum only alludes to stories recounted in full in the *Chronicles*. Finally, the Targum shows a clear tendency of excerpting its traditions from other works.


\(^{93}\) In this case, the Targumist preferred the version in the *Chronicles of Moses*. For example, Jethro imprisons Moses for several years in the *Chronicles of Moses*. This idea appears in *TPJ* to Exod 2:21 but not *PRE* 40.
that are not found in the Targum indicates that the *Chronicles* depend on *PRE*. Hence, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* uses a source that uses *PRE*.

In fact, *TPJ* has a broad knowledge of medieval Jewish traditions from works that are unknown to *PRE*. For example, the Targum mentions that Enoch is Metatron, a tradition best known from the Hekhalot text *3 Enoch* (*TPJ* to Gen 5:24). The Targum also names the angels Shemhazai and Azael, whose story is told in *Midrash Shemhazai and Azael* (*TPJ* to Gen 6:4). Finally, the Targum valorizes the military exploits of John Hyrcanus (*יְוָנָן חָהָנָא רַבָּא*), best known to medieval Jewish audiences through *Sefer Yosippon* (*TPJ* to Deut 33:11). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not show the slightest acquaintance with any of these works. If *PRE* knew the Targum, the author excised all those traditions which were not already included in another Hebrew composition. Again, this is unlikely. Rather, the Targumist had an encyclopedic knowledge of Jewish tradition and anthologized it in the form of *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*. The most important Jewish text not reflected in *TPJ* is the *Zohar* (13th c.), probably because it did not yet exist at the time of *TPJ*’s composition. The absence of kabbalah in *TPJ* could be a clue to the work’s *terminus ante quem*.

### 2.4 Conclusion

*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* is much later than is generally presumed. The Targum postdates *PRE* by several centuries and uses *PRE* as a source. The work was probably written in twelfth century Italy. The mixed Aramaic dialect and the provenance of its latest sources suggest a European origin. Furthermore, the work only appears to have been known in Italy prior to its publication in the late sixteenth century. The implications of this conclusion are greater than the scope of this study: *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* is not useful for the analysis of Second Temple literature, although it is still a necessary resource for reconstructing the Palestinian Targumim, especially their non-rabbinic halakhah. It could also be very valuable for the study of medieval Jewish literature. However, it cannot be used for the source criticism of *PRE*, a much older work.

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96 D. Flusser, *The Josippon (Josephus Gorionides): Edited with an Introduction, Commentary, and Notes*, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 115-119. Like the references to Jannes and Jambres, this passage was once considered proof that *TPJ* dated to the Second Temple period: A. Diez Macho, « The Recently Discovered Palestinian Targum: Its Antiquity and Relationship with the Other Targums », *op. cit.*, p. 226.

97 *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*, however, has a better knowledge of non-Jewish tradition.
Part Two: The Book of Jubilees

Chapter Three: The Text of the Book of Jubilees

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is an examination of the text of Jubilees as it existed in the time of Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer. It is not concerned with the Second Temple Hebrew text, which is the basis of most modern scholarship on Jubilees, but rather the Book of Jubilees from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. There are no Hebrew manuscripts of Jubilees from this late period. However, there are echoes of Jubilees in Hebrew literature (including close paraphrases) which demand explanation. This chapter will also take into account the other versions of Jubilees, especially the Syriac text, which some scholars believe was translated directly from Hebrew. The primary text of Jubilees during Late Antiquity is the Greek version. Ironically, this version, the most widely known and cited, is now lost. The chapter will also treat the Latin and Ethiopic translations, both based on the Greek, which are the primary witnesses to the extant text. I have also included a brief notices on the Coptic fragments of Jubilees and the traces of Jubilees in Armenian and Arabic.

The Book of Jubilees is a sacred history which covers the period from creation to the entry of the Israelites into Canaan. The work presents itself as a revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai. The narrator is an angel who dictates the records of the heavenly tablets. All of history is divided into a series of “jubilees” (forty-nine years), which are further subdivided into “weeks” (seven years) and “days” (single years). The book covers the first fifty jubilees until the year 2450 anno mundi. The history largely follows Genesis, its primary source. Most “extrabiblical” episodes are concentrated in the period leading up to the time of Abraham. There is also a substantial amount of material on Jacob and his sons, especially Levi and Judah. In Late Antiquity, Jubilees was viewed as a supplement to Genesis. It supplied information that was missing from the canonical book, such as the names of the wives of the patriarchs. For this reason, Greek authors called it the Little Genesis (ἡ Λεπτὴ Γένεσις) or the Details of Genesis (τὰ λεπτὰ Γενεσεως)\(^1\).

The Book of Jubilees was written in Hebrew by the end of the second century BCE. All known Hebrew manuscripts of Jubilees come from Qumran\(^2\). The Damascus Document (1\(^{st}\) c.\(^{3}\)

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\(^1\) For a list of examples, see R.H. Charles, The Book of Jubilees, or The Little Genesis, London, 1902, p. xv-xvi.

\(^2\) The most recent collection of all the Qumran fragments appears in C. Werman, The Book of Jubilees: Introduction, Translation, and Interpretation, Jerusalem, 2015 [Hebrew], p. 78-94. See also D. Hamidovic, Les
BCE) contains the earliest direct reference to the work under its original title (CD A xvi 3-4), “The Book of the Divisions of the Times according to their Jubilees and their Weeks” (ספר חלקות העתים לבליהם ובשבועותיהם). This early citation suggests the importance of this work for the sectarian movement. The eventual translation of Jubilees into Greek indicates the popularity of the work beyond the confines of the Jewish sectarians. Among Christians, Jubilees enjoyed a status comparable to the Antiquities of Josephus, with which it was often confused. Christian writers, especially chroniclers, made extensive use of the work from the fourth to the fourteenth century. The Ethiopian Church eventually canonized Jubilees, and it was only in Ethiopia that a complete Book of Jubilees was found in the modern period.

The rediscovery of Jubilees can be credited to the German missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf (1810-1886). He sent a transcribed copy of an Ethiopic manuscript to Tübingen, where it came to the attention of Heinrich Ewald. Ewald announced the rediscovery of the Book of Jubilees in an article describing Krapf’s finds in 1844. Ewald’s student, August Dillmann, published a German translation of the text in 1850-1851. This publication inaugurated the modern study of the Book of Jubilees. A second “rediscovery” of Jubilees occurred at Qumran after 1947. The caves there yielded numerous manuscripts of Jubilees (the conventional number is 14 or 15). The findings at Qumran resolved many important questions regarding the original language (Hebrew) and the probable date (second century BCE) of the Book of Jubilees. Since its rediscovery, almost all work on Jubilees has focused on the origins rather than the transmission of the book.

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5 See the next chapter (Section 4.1).


The primary goal of this chapter is to show that the numerous versions of *Jubilees* which existed in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages can all be traced back to the Greek version, despite the fact that the Greek version is now lost. This is even true of the Hebrew evidence. The original Hebrew version of *Jubilees*, in whatever form it existed, has been lost.

The author of *PRE*, therefore, could have only known *PRE* through the Greek version. Following the model of James VanderKam, I will begin with the Hebrew evidence, followed by Syriac, Greek, Latin, and Ethiopic. After these, I have added evidence for a Coptic version of *Jubilees*. Finally, I end with a note on the list of the wives of the patriarchs in Armenian and Arabic literature, the only “text” of *Jubilees* which exists in those languages.

### 3.1 The Hebrew Version

The *Book of Jubilees* was written in Hebrew. The question here is whether a Hebrew version survived into Late Antiquity. There is no compelling evidence that this is the case, although different scholars have made numerous claims to the contrary. This section examines all the purported references to a Hebrew version of *Jubilees* in post-Talmudic literature.

#### 3.1.1 Sefer Asaph (9th-10th c.)

*Sefer Asaph ha-Rofe* is a ninth or tenth-century medical work whose prologue contains an interesting parallel to *Jubilees* 10. The book is attributed to Asaph b. Berakhiah, a biblical figure (1 Chr 6:24) who, in medieval (chiefly Islamic) lore, became the court magician of Solomon. In fact, the prologue to the work suggests that the work is, functionally, a book of magic. According to the prologue, the children of Noah are physically tormented by demons. Noah prays for respite, and the angel Raphael binds most of the demons, but he allows others to remain to punish sinners. Raphael then sends demons to teach Noah the medicinal practices found in the book. The instruction from demons is a familiar *topos* from occult literature, such as the *Testament of Solomon*.

The same story appears in *Jubilees* 10, but details from the prologue of *Sefer Asaph* suggest that its version is more archaic. Martha Himmelfarb gives several arguments in favor of the

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priority of this version, among them a reference to the “spirits of the bastards” (רוחות הממזרים) a term for the demons that appears in the older Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 15) but not the Book of Jubilees, and the fact that Noah acquires his medicinal knowledge from the bound demons rather than the angels (cf. Jub. 10:12), a problematic scenario that the author of Jubilees avoids. According to Himmelfarb, Sefer Asaph preserves one of the sources of the Book of Jubilees. It is not a witness to the lost Hebrew text.

3.1.2 A Commentary on Chronicles attributed to a Student of Saadia Gaon (d. 942)
Abraham Epstein believed that the extant text of Jubilees was incomplete, based off of Jubilees 1:27-29, which implies that the work will end with the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem. He found evidence of a longer version of Jubilees in a passage from an obscure commentary on Chronicles written by a student of Saadia Gaon. The anonymous author cites a “Book of Jubilees” (ספר יובלות) in the name of the Gaon:

ובספר יובלות שהביא אלפמימי רבṢעדיה גאון מספריו הירשבי בניית ארבעים למלכות דוד בחצי
היובל ובשבוע התקין משמרות כהונה ולויה כמו שמסר לו שמואל בntity מסופר של שמואל בrief
וישפטו ישראל אemetery (1 Chr 9:22)

In the Book of Jubilees, which al-Fayyumi Rav Saadia Gaon quoted from the books of the Yeshiva: “In in the fortieth year of the reign of David, in the middle of the jubilee, on the fourth day of the week, he established the priestly and Levitical courses,” just as Samuel transmitted the plans to him in Ramah, as it is written, “David and Samuel the seer established them in their permanent function” (1 Chr 9:22). This passage does not come from the extant text of Jubilees, which ends long before the time of David, yet the language, especially the eccentric system of dating, is reminiscent of the Second Temple work. However, the concept of the “jubilee” is not exclusive to the Book of Jubilees. It is a biblical concept (Lev 25) which was used in other Jewish works. Seder Olam Rabbah, the standard work of rabbinic chronology, also uses the jubilee to indicate dates.

Similarly, the Tulida, a Samaritan chronicle (c. 12th c.), also dates events by jubilees and by

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13 M. Himmelfarb, « Book of Noah », op. cit., p. 43.
15 R. Kirchheim, Commentar zur Chronik, Frankfurt am Main, 1874 [Hebrew], p. 36.
16 For example, see C. Milikowsky, Seder Olam: Critical Edition, Commentary, and Introduction, 2 vol., Jerusalem, 2013 [Hebrew], vol. 1, p. 297 (chapter 23): In the eleventh year of the jubilee cycle, in the fourth year of the sabbatical week, Sennacherib attacked. (באותה שנה עשר פלשת טהר ממון וראש השנה רביעית עמדו)
weeks (סנדפות, sabbatical years). The system could have been used in any Jewish or Samaritan chronicle. There is nothing to suggest that the “Book of Jubilees” here should be identified with the Second Temple work of that name.

3.1.3 The Commentary on Exodus of Yefet b. Ali (c. 980)
Yoram Erder, following J. T. Milik, suggested that the Karaite exegete Yefet b. Ali (10th c.) knew the Book of Jubilees based on a reference to the demonic figure Mastema in his commentary on Exodus. The context is the episode of the Golden Calf:

אמרו אלהי ישראל אשר העלוך מארץ מצרים (Exod 32:4) ואשר מתקבל לעדה בענים שבני ישראל האמינו שהבורא אחד אלא שברא מלאך ומסר לידיו את העולמים כל שרחוכי וקנין

They said: “This is thy God, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt” (Exod 32:4). In all likelihood, the Israelites believed that the Creator is One, but that he created an angel and gave him control over the world in order to guide it and to place wisdom and understanding in it. From this idea derives the Sadducean belief in Prince Mastema (Commentary on Exodus 32:1–4).

Mastema is a prominent character in the Book of Jubilees (10:8; 11:5.11; 17:16; 18:9.12; 19:28; 48:2.9.12.15; 49:2) but he is not only found in this work. He also appears in the Damascus Document (CD A xvi 5), a work which certainly did survive until the Middle Ages. Knowledge of Mastema probably derives from this document or another contemporary source rather than Jubilees. Furthermore, the benevolent depiction of Mastema in this passage—which more closely resembles Metatron, the “lesser YHWH” (3 Enoch 12:5)—has nothing in common with the malevolent entity from Jubilees.

3.1.4 The Commentary on the Ten Commandments of Nissi b. Noah (10th or 11th c.)
Nissi b. Noah is an eleventh-century Karaite scholar about whom little is known. Abraham Epstein drew attention to the enumeration of the twenty-two works of creation (cf. Jub. 2) in his Commentary on the Ten Commandments as evidence of the survival of the Hebrew Book

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20 Y. Erder, The Karaite Mourners of Zion and the Qumran Scrolls, op. cit., p. 145. Yefet wrote in Arabic. I have translated Erder’s translation. (the Hebrew is slightly modified).
21 Sefer Asaph, discussed above, also mentions Prince Mastema (שר המסטמה).
of Jubilees. This particular tradition, however, is one of the most widespread from the book and could have come from multiple sources. The commentary has no other contact with Jubilees. As Martha Himmelfarb indicates, Noah b. Nissi does not mention the figure twenty-two or explain the greater significance of the tradition. In the Book of Jubilees, the number correlates with the twenty-two patriarchs from Adam to Jacob (Jub. 2:23).

3.1.5 Midrash Vayissa’u (before 11th c.)
Midrash Vayissa’u is a short aggadic work which recounts a series of wars between the sons of Jacob and their hostile neighbors, including the Amorites and the Edomites. The earliest attestation appears in Bereshit Rabbati, attributed to R. Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne (11th c.). The work has important parallels with both the Book of Jubilees and the Testament of Judah, one of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. The more detailed account of the war with the Amorites appears in the Testament of Judah (T. Judah 3-7; cf. Jub. 34:1-9), while the more detailed account of the war with the Edomites occurs in Jubilees (Jub. 37-38; T. Judah 9). Midrash Vayissa’u has full accounts of both wars. This creates a conundrum: Either the author drew upon Jubilees and the Testament separately, or the medieval work preserves the source of the two ancient texts. Martha Himmelfarb favors the second hypothesis, yet she acknowledges that the text shows evidence of translation from Greek. In neither scenario can Midrash Vayissa’u be a witness to the Hebrew text of Jubilees. It is either a reflection of an older Hebrew composition or a witness to the Greek text of Jubilees.

3.1.6 Midrash Tadshe (11th c.)
Midrash Tadshe is a short mystical work which compares the creation of the universe to the construction of the tabernacle. Abraham Epstein attributed the work (rightly or wrongly) to R. Moshe ha-Darshan of Narbonne (11th c.). Epstein found three parallels between Midrash

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24 See infra Section 3.1.6 and the next chapter, Section 4.2.1.
Tadshe and Jubilees, as well as two parallels with the De opificio mundi of Philo of Alexandria. Both Jubilees and Midrash Tadshe mention the twenty-two works of creation (Tadshe 6; cf. Jub. 2:1-23) and the purification of Adam and Eve before their entrance into Eden (Tadshe 15; cf. Jub. 3:8-14). Midrash Tadshe also lists the birthdates and death dates of the sons of Jacob; the birthdates appear in Jubilees (Tadshe 8; Jub. 28).

The three parallels correspond closely to the extant text of Jubilees. However, they do not necessarily come from a Hebrew version of Jubilees. Martha Himmelfarb suggests that they might derive from the Greek chronographic tradition. She did not mention the allusions to Philo, which further support her argument for a Greek source. The works of Philo were not known in Hebrew until the sixteenth century; a Jewish author living in Europe is more likely to have known Philo in Greek. Finally, Shulamith Ladermann has found parallels with another Greek text, the Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes (6th c.), in several works from the literary circle of R. Moshe, including Midrash Tadshe. Her article shows that the literary circle of R. Moshe had some knowledge of Greek texts.

One can go farther than Himmelfarb and identify the probable Greek sources of the parallels in Midrash Tadshe (none of which, however, comes from a chronicle). First, Midrash Tadshe correlates the twenty-two works of creation with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This idea is not found in the text of Jubilees. Rather, it appears in chapter 22 of the De mensuris et ponderibus of Epiphanius of Salamis, a short Greek treatise which was translated into numerous languages. The twenty-two works of creation is consequently one of the best-attested of all traditions from Jubilees (cf. supra Section 3.1.4 and infra Section 3.2.1).

Perhaps the work originates in Byzantine territory (such as Southern Italy) rather than Narbonne. This would help explain the work’s apparent use of Greek sources.

32 Ibid., p. 86.
33 Ibid., p. 87.
4.2.1). Epstein goes to great lengths to connect *Midrash Tadshe* to R. Phinehas b. Yair, the only Talmudic sage named in the work. The attribution might be explained differently: “Rabbi Phinehas” sounds suspiciously like “Epiphanius.”

The second tradition involves the purification of Adam and Eve (*Jub. 3:8-14*). In an anticipation of the law of Leviticus 12:1-5, Adam must wait forty days before he enters Eden, while Eve must wait eighty days. The tradition rarely appears in Greek chronicles. The Greek authors Anastasius of Sinai and George Syncellus attributed this tradition to an Adam book, variously known as the *Testament of the Protoplasts* or the *Life of Adam*. Syncellus’ description of this work matches the tradition found in *Midrash Tadshe*. Furthermore, the work described by Syncellus appears in a highly condensed form as the last chapter of the common Latin version of the *Life of Adam and Eve*:

Adam uero post quadraginta dies introiuit in paradisum et Eu a post octoginta. Et fuit Adam in paradiso annos septem. Et in ipso die quo peccauit Adam omnes bestiae mutauerunt se.

Truly, Adam entered Paradise after forty days, and Eve after eighty (cf. *Jub. 3:8-14*). And Adam was in Paradise seven years (cf. *Jub. 3:17*). And on the very day in which Adam sinned, all the beasts were changed (cf. *Jub. 3:28*).

This particular tradition, transmitted with the widespread Adam literature, was consequently well-known in both East and West. The author of *Midrash Tadshe* is more likely to have known this work than a Hebrew text of *Jubilees*.

The third case, the dates of the births and deaths of the sons of Jacob, is more difficult. The *Book of Jubilees* only mentions the birth dates (*Jub. 28*); the death dates could have come from the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Neither tradition is found in Greek chronography. As with *Midrash Vayissu‘u*, *Midrash Tadshe* either drew on both *Jubilees* and

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40 Anastasius Sinaiticus, *In Hexaemeron VII.895* (PG 89: 967d).
the *Testaments*, or it knows the dates as a separate tradition. The evidence favors the second option. Michael Segal has demonstrated that the birthdates of the patriarchs are additions to *Jubilees*\textsuperscript{45}. Furthermore, Epstein noted that the death dates appear in *Seder Olam Zuta*, a ninth-century chronographic work written to support the Davidic ancestry of the Babylonian Exilarch\textsuperscript{46}. It is very unlikely that *Seder Olam Zuta* knew the *Testaments*. The complete set of dates probably forms part of a tradition that is anterior to both *Jubilees* and the *Testaments*.

3.1.7 Midrash Aggadah (11th c.)

Midrash Aggadah, an aggadic midrash, is yet another work which Abraham Epstein attributed to R. Moshe ha-Darshan\textsuperscript{47}. Martha Himmelfarb found three parallels between this work and *Jubilees*\textsuperscript{48}. Two of these are paraphrases of *Jubilees* 4:15 and 4:21. The third is a summary of Canaan’s occupation of the territory of Shem (cf. *Jub*. 10:28-34). Again, there is no proof that the allusions come from a Hebrew version of *Jubilees*. The literary circle of R. Moshe already demonstrates an aptitude for Greek, and all three traditions appear in Greek chronography. Greek sources remain the most likely origin for the author’s knowledge of *Jubilees*.

The first two allusions are practically citations of *Jubilees*. The first concerns the descent of angels in the time of Jared:

\begin{quote}
והיה ירד (Gen 5:18) לולא נקרא שמו ירד השם של המלאכים משמים והיה מלאדים את האור אמירת מים
\end{quote}

\textit{And Jared lived (Gen 5:18) Why was his name called Jared (ירד)? Because in his days the angels came down (ירדו) from heaven and they were teaching mankind how they should serve the Holy One, Blessed Be He (Midrash Aggadah, Bereshit 5)}\textsuperscript{49}.

\begin{quote}
יקרא שמו ירד כי בימים ירדו המלאכים אל הארץ אחר נקראו עירבם על הארץ לעשות
\end{quote}

\textit{And Jared lived (Gen 5:18) Why was his name called Jared (ירד)? Because in his days the angels came down (ירדו) from heaven and they were teaching mankind how they should serve the Holy One, Blessed Be He (Midrash Aggadah, Bereshit 5)}\textsuperscript{49}.


\textsuperscript{48} M. Himmelfarb, « *Some Echoes of Jubilees in Medieval Hebrew Literature* », *op. cit.*, p. 118-123.

He named him Jared because in his days the angels of God, who were called Watchers, came down to earth to teach the children of men to perform justice and righteousness on the earth (Jub. 4:15)50.

The second, related passage, concerns Enoch’s sojourn with the angels:

ויתהלך חנוך את האלהים (Gen 5:22) 
לーム מלאכי ולקורפת ומלכות החכמה רבתי

And Enoch walked with God (Gen 5:22). He walked with the angels three hundred years in the Garden of Eden. He was with them, and he learned from them intercalation and the seasons and the constellations and much wisdom (Midrash Aggadah, Bereshit 5)51.

ויתהלך חנוך את המלאכים שלש מאות שנה בגן עדן היה עמם וlearner משלו משלות והכמות רבה

Furthermore, he was with the angels of God for six jubilees of years, and they showed him everything which was on earth and in the heavens, the dominion of the sun, and he wrote down everything (Jub. 4:21)52.

Both passages have been “rabbinized.” In the first example, the Watchers from Jubilees 4:15 become ordinary angels in Midrash Aggadah. In fact, the only substantial difference between the text of Midrash Aggadah and Jubilees is the omission of the term “Watchers” in the midrash. In the second passage, the midrash translates the system of jubilees into common years and changes the “dominion of the sun” (ממשלת השמש) into “intercalation and seasons and constellations” (עיבור ותקופות ומוצלים), important elements of the rabbinic lunar calendar.

Both passages of the midrash are close paraphrases of Jubilees.

The third tradition is a summary rather than a paraphrase53. The midrash alludes the division of the earth among the sons of Noah, the Diamerismos, a prominent theme of Second Temple, Greek, and Arabic historiography, which does not appear in classical rabbinic literature (see infra Section 5.6). In the midrash, as in Jubilees, the sons of Noah take an oath to respect the boundaries of each other’s land (cf. Jub. 9:14-15). However, Canaan, the son of Ham, violates that oath (cf. Jub. 10:28-34). The midrash adds that not only Canaan, but all seven Canaanite

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50 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit., p. 195.
52 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit., p. 197.
53 S. Buber, Midrash Aggadah, op. cit., p. 27.
nations (cf. Deut 7:1) occupied the land. Hence, Joshua’s conquest of the seven nations was an act of repossession. These ideas do not appear in Jubilees.

All three traditions from Midrash Aggadah appear in Greek chronography. The life of Enoch (Jub. 4:15-26), for example, has a prominent place in the chronicle of Symeon the Logothete (10th c.)54, a popular work (thirty-three manuscripts) which used earlier chronicles and inspired numerous imitators55. The Chronography of George Syncellus mentions that Canaan, along with the seven nations, seized the territory of Shem by force. These nations were later conquered in the time of Joshua56. Again, neither the seven nations nor Joshua is mentioned in Jubilees. The cited chronicles are not the direct sources of Midrash Aggadah, but they attest to the circulation of these ideas in Greek literature. The source of the midrash is therefore likely to be a Greek work.

3.1.8 The Toledot Adam of Samuel Algazi (c. 1585)

W. Lowndes Lipscomb has proposed that Hebrew lists of the wives of the patriarchs, which appear in a few late sources, come directly from the Hebrew version of Jubilees57. The most complete list is found in Toledot Adam, a short chronicle by the Venetian Jew Samuel Algazi58. The list of the wives of the patriarchs also appears in several Greek sources59. Nevertheless, Lipscomb argues that the Hebrew list is separate from the Greek tradition. He offers two arguments: 1) the orthographic corruptions can only be explained from Hebrew, and 2) none of the lists show any sign of transliteration.

Neither argument is sufficient to prove that the source of the lists was the Hebrew Jubilees. The list of Samuel Algazi does not contain any orthographic corruptions; these are only present in two independent lists, which share a common Hebrew Vorlage60. This Vorlage is more apt to be another list of the wives rather than a Hebrew copy of Jubilees. Regarding

54 Symeon the Logothete, Syneois Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon, S. Wuhlgren (ed.), Berlin, 2006., p. 27.
58 S. Algazi, Toledot Adam, Jerusalem, 1944.
Algazi, his Hebrew list is remarkable for conserving the ayin (א) where the other Semitic lists of the wives (Ethiopic, Syriac, Arabic) have an aleph (א). However, proper retroversion would not have been difficult (e.g., deriving עדנה from Greek Ἐδνα or Syriac إدنه). Furthermore, the list of the wives of the patriarchs was a “floating tradition” that circulated independently from the text of Jubilees. The Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Armenian evidence cited by Lipscomb amply attests to this tradition’s independence: The list exists as isolated documents or else appears in works which have no other knowledge of Jubilees. Perhaps this tradition, like the birth and death dates of the patriarchs, survived independently in Hebrew.

3.2 The Syriac Version
Strictly speaking, there is no Syriac version of Jubilees. The most compelling evidence comes from the anonymous Chronicle up to 1234. There are traces of Jubilees before this late chronicle, notably a list of the wives of the patriarchs. In addition, there are other interesting cases where an author appears to be drawing on Jubilees. In one instance, Jacob of Edessa quotes a tradition which is older than the Book of Jubilees. In other instances, Syriac authors cite a “Book of Jubilees” which is different than the extant text. Both of these phenomena also appear in Hebrew literature.

3.2.1 A Letter of Jacob of Edessa to John of Litarba (7th c.)
The beginning of the thirteenth letter of Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) to John of Litarba (d. 737) contains an extensive narrative about Abraham which is parallel to Jubilees 8-12. The narrative is part of a response to a question about Gen 15. Jacob only cites “Jewish narratives” (דָּתָה דָּתָה) as his source. The story, however, represents a tradition distinct from Jubilees. The most significant difference involves the story of Abraham and the ravens (cf. Jub. 11:18-24). In Jubilees, the demon Mastema sends the ravens to eat the crops and instigate a famine. In the narrative of Jacob of Edessa, God himself sends the ravens to punish idolaters. The denouement is also different: In Jubilees, Abraham invents a plough to preserve the seed of the crops from the ravens. In Jacob’s narrative, Abraham prays to God, averting disaster and discovering monotheism in the process.

61 Ibid., p. 152. The Syriac and Arabic lists are discussed below (Sections 3.2.2 and 3.7).
Sebastian Brock believed that Jacob’s story represented a more primitive version than the story in *Jubilees*. William Adler has challenged this interpretation in several articles. He believes Jacob’s tale is adapted from a Greek chronicle and represents an “exegesis” of the stories in *Jubilees*. Adler’s prudence is admirable. Nevertheless, Brock is correct, although not for the reasons he states. To address Adler’s points: First, the Greek chroniclers are very conservative when they report traditions from *Jubilees*. They do not alter their source. Second, it is bad exegesis to ascribe the actions of the devil to God. Rather, the questionable actions of God become the actions of the devil. In *Jubilees*, Mastema fulfills this precise function. Thus, Mastema, rather than God, demands the sacrifice of Isaac (*Jub. 17:15-18*; cf. Gen 22:1). Mastema, rather than God, attempts to kill Moses when he returns to Egypt (*Jub. 48:2-4*; cf. Exod 4:24). Mastema, rather than God, slays the first-born of the Egyptians (*Jub. 49:2*; cf. Exod 12:29). In continuity with this practice, the author of *Jubilees* ascribes the famine to Mastema rather than God. Therefore, the author of *Jubilees* is the exegete rather than Jacob of Edessa. The Syriac tradition, like a handful of Hebrew sources (*Sefer Asaph, Midrash Vayissa’u*) has managed to preserve one of the sources of *Jubilees*. It is not a witness to the text of *Jubilees*.

3.2.2 The Names of the Wives of the Patriarchs (8th c.)
The wives of the patriarchs appear in an independent list from an eighth century Syriac manuscript (British Museum Add. 12154, f. 180). The list includes the wives of the antediluvian patriarchs (*Jub. 4*), the postdiluvian patriarchs until the time of Abraham (*Jub. 7:14-17; 8:5-9; 10:18; 11:1.7-10.14*), and the wives of the sons of Jacob (*Jub. 34:20*). It also names the daughter of Pharaoh (*Jub. 47:5*). For the generation of Peleg, the author includes a notice on the tower of Babel, including its height in cubits (cf. *Jub. 10:21*).

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65 S.P. Brock, « Abraham and the Ravens », *op. cit.* discusses at length the famous difficulty regarding Abraham’s departure from home vis-à-vis the death of Terah. This issue is frankly irrelevant.
66 See the examples listed at the end of the next chapter (Section 4.2).
The title of this brief work identifies its ultimate origin as the “Hebrew book called Jubilees” (ܟܬܒܐ ܕܠܘܬ ܥܒܪܝܐ ܗ ܕܡܬܩܪܐ ܝܘܒܝܠܝܐ). Nevertheless, the list comes from a Greek source. First, the wives appear in numerous Greek sources. More significantly, the corrupt form of the name of Awan, Cain’s wife (ܐܣܘܐ) is comparable to the corrupt Greek forms (Epiphanius: Σαυή; John Malalas: Ασουάμ; Catena: Ασαούλ). Finally, James VanderKam has noted other Grecisms in the text, such as the word στάδιον (ܣܛܐܕܘܢ).

3.2.3 Apocryphal Citations (8th-11th c.)

There is a strange phenomenon in Syriac literature where authors cite a Book of Jubilees (ܠܝܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܝܘܒ) that does not correspond to the extant text. Ceslas Van den Eynde has collected the pertinent data. Unknown citations from a “Book of Jubilees” appear in the Scholia of Theodore bar Koni (late 8th c.), the biblical commentaries of Isho’dad of Merv (9th c.), the Syriac-Arabic dictionary of the lexicographer Hassan bar Bahlul (10th c.), and an anonymous Exposition of the Liturgical Offices (11th c.). For example, Isho’dad claims that a “Book of Jubilees” specifies the time between the Exodus and the building of Solomon’s Temple (637 years) as well as the length of time of Job’s trials (twelve years).

The solution to this mystery depends on the meaning of the word “jubilee” in Syriac: The word yubal (ܝܘܒܠ) has the general meaning of “generation” or “succession.” It is not the word used in the Peshitta to designate the forty-nine year period from Leviticus 25 (ܦܘܢܝܐ). Rather, yubal is closer in meaning to the Hebrew word toledot (תולדות). The Syriac term

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69 See above, Section 3.1.8.
79 Isho’dad of Merv, Livre des sessions, op. cit. p. 103 (Translation: p. 121).
80 Ibid., Text, p. 267 (Translation: p. 319).
“succession of years” (ܒܫܢܐ ܕܒܠܐ) is used in the same sense as “chronicle”\textsuperscript{82}. One title of the *Cave of Treasures*, for example, is the “Book of the Succession of Generations” (ܚܝܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܒܠܐ), but the work is not directly related to *Jubilees*\textsuperscript{83}.

The “Book of Jubilees,” therefore, could refer to any historical work. This includes historical books of the Bible. In the places where Theodore bar Koni cites “Jubilees,” he contrasts the chronology of the Septuagint with the chronology of the Peshitta\textsuperscript{84}. Here, “Jubilees” (ܐܝܘܒܠܐ) simply means the Syriac Bible. The *Exposition of the Liturgical Offices* cites a “Book of Jubilees” as a source of information on the history of Israel. In all three instances, the book is mentioned as a counterpart to ecclesiastical histories\textsuperscript{85}. Even the verifiable references in the works of Isho’dad of Merv do not necessarily come from the *Book of Jubilees*. In his *Commentary on Genesis*, he cites a Book of Jubilees (ܐܝܘܒܠܐ) for the opinion that Hebrew was the original language (cf. *Jub.* 12:25-27) and that idolatry began in the days of Serug (cf. *Jub.* 11:1-6)\textsuperscript{86}, but both of these traditions are widespread. They are found, for instance, in the *Cave of Treasures* (*COT* 24:11; 25:8), a native Syriac work. The nature of the “Book of Jubilees” cited by Bar Bahlul awaits further study\textsuperscript{87}.

### 3.2.4 The Chronicle up to 1234

The most substantial citation of *Jubilees* in Syriac—or in any language—is found in the anonymous *Chronicle up to 1234*\textsuperscript{88}. The first section of this chronicle is primarily dependent on the *Cave of Treasures* rather than *Jubilees*. The chronicler uses material from *Jubilees* to supplement material that does not appear in the *Cave of Treasures*, such as the stories of young Abraham (cf. *Jub.* 11-12)\textsuperscript{89} or the wars between Jacob and Esau (cf. *Jub.* 37-38)\textsuperscript{90}. The citations are lengthy and accurate. They correspond to what is known of the text from the Latin and Ethiopic versions. Furthermore, they are not dependent on the Greek chronographic

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\textsuperscript{82} M. Debié, *L’Écriture de l’histoire en syriaque*, op. cit., p. 43.

\textsuperscript{83} P. de Lagarde, « Die Schatzhöhle », in *Mittheilungen* III, Göttingen, 1889, p. 55, mocked those who suggested *COT* and *Jubilees* were related based on this title.


\textsuperscript{85} R.H. Connolly (ed.), *Expositio officiorum ecclesiae*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 38, 47, and 63.

\textsuperscript{86} Isho’dad of Merv, *Genèse*, op. cit., p. 134 and 139 (Translation, p. 146 and 151).

\textsuperscript{87} Hassan bar Bahlul, *Lexicon Syriacum*, op. cit., vol. 3, p. xvi, thought it referred to a book of etymologies, but Van Den Eynde in Isho’dad of Merv, *Livre des sessions*, op. cit., p. xxii called this into question. Several of the words which appear in this “Book of Jubilees” are of Greek origin, such as ἀυτοκράτωρ (αὐτοκράτωρ), ἐκλειψις (ἐκλειψις), and ἐκλεισθαν (ἐκλεισθαν). For these words, see Hassan bar Bahlul, *Lexicon Syriacum*, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 58, 196, and 655.


\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., p. 51-52.

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., p. 56-58.
tradition: His selection of material differs from the stereotyped repetition of traditions found in later Byzantine chronicles. Consequently, he avoids their errors, such as attributing the wars with Esau to Josephus.\footnote{W. Adler, \textit{Time Imemorial, op. cit.}, p. 188-193.}

The author appears to have directly consulted a copy of \textit{Jubilees}, but there is some controversy over the language of the author’s \textit{Vorlage}. Eugène Tisserant, who first edited the extracts from \textit{Jubilees}, believed the Syriac version was translated from Hebrew without a Greek intermediary, since he found no Greek words in the fragments.\footnote{E. Tisserant, « Fragments syriaques du Livre des Jubilés », \textit{Revue Biblique}, vol. 30 (1921), p. 55-86, 206-232 (p. 229-232).} Nevertheless, the chronicler demonstrates no other knowledge of Hebrew sources, and his chronicle, though written in Syriac, builds upon the Greek chronographic tradition and uses numerous Greek sources, including Flavius Josephus, Hippolytus of Rome, Eusebius of Caesarea, Annianus of Alexandria, Socrates Scholasticus, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, John Malalas, and John of Ephesus.\footnote{A. Hilkens, \textit{The Anonymous Syriac Chronicle up to the Year 1234 and its Sources}, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ghent University, 2014.} In light of these sources, the chronicler’s source is likely a Greek text of \textit{Jubilees} which has been translated into Syriac.

However, the chronicle is not sufficient proof of the existence of an independent, Syriac version of \textit{Jubilees}. There are few traces of \textit{Jubilees} in Syriac apart from this chronicle. Sebastian Brock suggested that the \textit{Chronicle up to 1234} drew on an earlier, lost Greek chronicle.\footnote{S.P. Brock, « Some Syriac Legends concerning Moses », \textit{Journal of Jewish Studies}, vol. 33 (1982), p. 249.} The problem with this hypothesis is that the chronicler has integrated material from \textit{Jubilees} into the text of the \textit{Cave of Treasures}—a work which was never translated into Greek.\footnote{See infra Section 6.2.2.} Furthermore, no extant Greek work cites \textit{Jubilees} as extensively or as accurately as this chronicle. The simplest explanation is that the chronicler himself translated portions of \textit{Jubilees} from a Greek copy of the book. The hypothesis is not as incredible as it might first seem: The chronicler uses other Greek sources which were never translated into Syriac, such as the \textit{Antiquities} of Josephus.\footnote{S.P. Brock, « Some Syriac Legends Concerning Moses », \textit{op. cit.}, p. 249, notes that the \textit{Chronicle} knows the episode of the young Moses trampling the crown of Pharaoh, which is found in the \textit{Antiquities} of Josephus but not in any other extant Syriac source.} The \textit{Chronicle up to 1234} is potentially the most important indication of the late survival of the Greek text of \textit{Jubilees}. 

\footnotetext[91]{W. Adler, \textit{Time Imemorial, op. cit.}, p. 188-193.} 
\footnotetext[93]{A. Hilkens, \textit{The Anonymous Syriac Chronicle up to the Year 1234 and its Sources}, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ghent University, 2014.} 
\footnotetext[95]{See infra Section 6.2.2.} 
\footnotetext[96]{S.P. Brock, « Some Syriac Legends Concerning Moses », \textit{op. cit.}, p. 249, notes that the \textit{Chronicle} knows the episode of the young Moses trampling the crown of Pharaoh, which is found in the \textit{Antiquities} of Josephus but not in any other extant Syriac source.}
3.3 The Greek Version
The Greek version of Jubilees is lost. Nevertheless, it is, historically, the most important version of the book. When Christian writers mention Jubilees, they are invariably referring to this version, almost always as the Little Genesis. The first reference to the Greek translation of Jubilees appears in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4365, from no later than the fourth century. The papyrus, a brief letter, first names the Book of Jubilees under its most common Greek title:

Τῇ κυρίᾳ μοι φιλάτῃ ἀδελφῇ ἐν κυρίῳ χαίρειν. χρήσον τὸν Ἑσδραν. ἐπεὶ ἔχρησά σοι τὴν λεπτὴν Γένεσιν. ἔρρωσο ἐν θεῷ.

To my beloved sister in the Lord, greetings. Lend Ezra, since I lent you the Little Genesis. Farewell in God.97

The letter provides the earliest concrete evidence of the Greek translation of Jubilees. It also demonstrates that the work was freely circulating among Christians at that date.

The point when the Greek text was lost is a point of contention. William Adler believes that the text was already lost by the time of George Syncellus (c. 810), whose chronicle represents the most extensive use of Jubilees in an extant Greek source. Adler proposes that later Byzantine chroniclers relied on collections of excerpts that cited Jubilees, among other authorities.98 Warren Treadgold challenged Adler on this point, claiming that no material proof existed of such excerpts.99 In fact, such a work exists in the form of the Greek Catena (see infra Section 4.1.4).100 The Catena cites Jubilees numerous times, but it is inadequate for explaining all the material from Jubilees that appears in the Greek chronicles.

Frankly, there is no reason to believe that the Greek version of Jubilees was lost before the thirteenth century. George Syncellus often names the Little Genesis as his source rather than an older chronicle, such as the lost works of Julius Africanus (d. 240) and the Alexandrian historians Panodorus and Annianus (both c. 400).101 Granted, he sometimes attributes material

99 W.T. Treadgold, The Middle Byzantine Historians, op. cit., p. 75: “The most recent discussion of George’s sources have tentatively conjectured that George knew both Panodorus and Annianus not from their original texts but from a collection of excerpts… If so, this collection of excerpts from Panodorus and Annianus was compiled before the early ninth century, when George used it. Yet extensive dossiers of unadorned excerpts are unknown in our surviving medieval manuscripts. Except for fairly short anthologies made chiefly for theological purposes, medieval writers who went to the trouble of excerpting other authors generally did so to compose a literary work of their own, not an informal and anonymous dossier.”
100 La Chaîne sur la Genèse: édition intégrale, F. Petit (ed.), Louvain, Peeters, 1991-1995. The Coptic florilegium (infra Section 3.6) is also a “collection of excerpts”.
101 H. Gelzer, Sextus Julius Africanus und die Byzantinische Chronographie, 2 vol., Leipzig, 1885, vol. 2, p. 249-297 believed that the later chroniclers were entirely dependent on one of these three works. Since they are lost,
from *Jubilees* to Josephus\textsuperscript{102}. The confusion is understandable in light of the common material between *Jubilees* and Josephus’ *Antiquities*\textsuperscript{103}. It does not indicate that the text of *Jubilees* had been lost. In fact, his attributions to *Jubilees* are always accurate. He never misattributes material to the *Book of Jubilees* the way he routinely misattributes material to Josephus\textsuperscript{104}.

The latest original Greek witness to *Jubilees* is Michael Glycas (c. 1200)\textsuperscript{105}. Michael Glycas appears to be the last Byzantine historian to independently consult the text of *Jubilees*: He cites *Jubilees* 3:16, an obscure verse which does not appear in the Catena or elsewhere in Greek chronography\textsuperscript{106}. In the same passage, Michael Glycas derides the *Book of Jubilees* as a “joke” (γέλως). In this respect, he follows his contemporary John Zonaras (d. 1145), who cites *Jubilees* at the beginning of his very long chronicle only to reject its authority\textsuperscript{107}. Their comments do not make sense if the text of *Jubilees* no longer exists. Furthermore, their comments indicate why the work was finally lost: It no longer served its primary purpose as an historical source.

3.4 The Latin Version

The Latin version of *Jubilees* exists in a single fifth or sixth century palimpsest\textsuperscript{108}. It was translated from the Greek version. It conserves substantial portions of the text from chapters 13 to 49, although there are numerous lacunae in the manuscript. Between a fourth and a third of the original text survives. It largely agrees with the Ethiopic text.


\textsuperscript{104}To solve this problem, both Gelzer and W. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, op. cit., presume the existence of an interpolated “Pseudo-Josephus” that included passages from *Jubilees*. There is not a shred of evidence that such a work ever existed. Instead of inventing sources, it is better (though less charitable) to assume that George Syncellus did not verify his sources. His successors certainly did not.

\textsuperscript{105}Michael Glycas, *Michaelis Glycae Annales*, op. cit., p. 392. Theodore Metochites (d. 1332) also cites *Jubilees* by name, but his reference is lifted from the work of Michael Glycas.

\textsuperscript{106}Ibid., p. 206.


3.5 The Ethiopic Version

The Ethiopic translation is the only complete version of *Jubilees*. It was made from a Greek text. Therefore, it is the primary witness to this lost version. The agreement with the Latin and Syriac evidence suggests that it was an accurate translation of the Greek Vorlage. The date of the translation was presumably between the fourth and sixth centuries, before the Muslim Conquests severed Byzantine contact with the Christian kingdom of Aksum. However, *Jubilees* does not manifest itself in Ethiopian culture until much later, when it played a key role in the theological reforms of the Negus Zar’a Ya’qob (r. 1434-1468) following a century of controversy over Christian observance of the Sabbath. The controversy coincides with the date of the earliest Ethiopic manuscript of *Jubilees*. The evidence suggests a gap of almost a millennium between the translation of *Jubilees* and its canonization. It is also possible that the translation itself is very late.

3.6 A Coptic Version?

A few Coptic citations of *Jubilees* have survived in a florilegium of the fourth or fifth century (Yale University, P. CtYBR inv. 4995). The florilegium contains at least six different passages, four of which come from *Jubilees*: 1) *Jub.* 8:28-30; 2) *Jub.* 7:14-16; 3) an unidentified passage about Abraham; 4) a passage quoting *Jub.* 15:3; 5) a quotation of Gen 9:27a; and 6) an allusion to *Jub.* 4:33. Most of the citations concern the division of the earth among the sons of Noah. Andrew Crislip, who published the fragments, argued that the florilegium presented evidence of a Coptic version of *Jubilees*. While the citations provide important textual evidence, they are not substantial enough to prove the existence of a Coptic version of *Jubilees*. The verses could have been translated *ad hoc* from the Greek.

3.7 Other Versions?

Evidence of the text of *Jubilees* in Armenian and Arabic is restricted to the lists of the wives of the patriarchs. Such lists already appear in Hebrew, Greek, and Syriac, as discussed above (Sections 3.1.8 and 3.2.2). The Armenian lists, like the Syriac list, are independent

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documents. In Arabic, however, the names of the wives are found in chronicles, both Christian and Muslim. Armenian and Arabic literature scarcely know any other portion of the text of Jubilees. The lists probably derive from Greek or Syriac precedents.

3.8 Conclusion
The dominant version of Jubilees in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages was the Greek version, which survives in three daughter versions: Latin, Ethiopic, and (partial) Syriac translations. The Hebrew version of Jubilees is not attested beyond the Second Temple period. All the parallels to Jubilees in later Hebrew literature are either derived from the sources of Jubilees (Sefer Asaph, Midrash Vayissa’u, possibly Toledot Adam) or are based on Greek sources (Midrash Tadshe, Midrash Aggadah). Some sources, like the biblical commentaries of Yefet b. Ali and Saadia’s student, have no relation to Jubilees at all. The Greek version is the most likely channel through which a Jewish author could have known Jubilees in the Middle Ages. The transmission of this version, the Little Genesis, is the subject of the next chapter.

115 Some traditions of Jubilees, however, can be found in Armenian literature. M.E. Stone, Adam and Eve in the Armenian Traditions: Fifth through Seventeenth Centuries, Atlanta, 2013, p. 35-36, 247, 312, and 533, cites authors who know the twenty-two works of creation and the purification of Adam and Eve, two of the most common traditions associated with Jubilees (see infra Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). In Arabic literature, A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete, vol. 3 (1924), p. 161-164, claims to have found traditions from Jubilees in the work of Eutychius of Alexandria (infra Section 7.1.6) beyond the names of the wives of the patriarchs, such as traditions related to the Tower of Babel. The Syriac list of the wives, however, has similar traditions about Babel.
Chapter Four: The Transmission of the Book of Jubilees

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter established that the Greek version of Jubilees was the primary version in Late Antiquity. All other versions are dependent on the Greek version. The current chapter will trace the transmission of this version of Jubilees, both diachronically and synchronically. First, this chapter will document all references to Jubilees from the first allusions in the fourth century to the final citation in the fourteenth century, after which one can presume that the work was lost. As one would expect, knowledge of the Greek Jubilees is largely restricted to the Byzantine Empire and surrounding Christian territories. Second, this chapter will examine the traditions from the work which appear most often within this secondary literature. Of the major motifs that recur within Byzantine literature, only one appears in PRE—and then in a radically different form.

The first section is a chronological list of all the works which refer to the book under one of its Greek titles, including Jubilees, the Little Genesis, the Apocalypse of Moses and (speculatively) the Book of the Covenant. This criterion is intended to be restrictive while also being representative of the transmission of Jubilees in the Late Antique and Medieval world. I have excluded the Hebrew and Syriac works discussed in the previous chapter to avoid repetition. I have also excluded works which are related to Jubilees but not necessarily dependent on it, such as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Pseudo-Clementine literature, or the Diamerismos tradition. Finally, several popular chronicles that do not name the Little Genesis, including those of John Malalas and George the Monk, are omitted. Their

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1 See, for example, T. Reuben 3:11-15 and Jub. 33:1-9 (the rape of Bilhah); T. Simeon 8 and Jub. 46:9-11 (the war between Canaan and Egypt); the whole of T. Levi and Jub. 30-32 (the election of Levi; cf. Section 5.8); T. Judah 1-9 and Jub. 34 and 37-38 (the wars against the Amorites and the Edomites); T. Naphtali 1 and Jub. 28:9-10 (the genealogy of Bilhah); T. Benjamin 12 and Jub. 46:9-11 (the war between Canaan and Egypt).
3 J.M. Scott, Geography in Early Judaism and Christianity: The Book of Jubilees, Cambridge ; New York, 2002, provides an early history of this tradition. The Diamerismos refers to the division of earth among the sons of Noah and his descendants. Jubilees is an early witness to this tradition but not the only one. It also appears in the Genesis Apocryphon and the Antiquities of Josephus.
work is not totally ignored. Later chroniclers that name the work, such as Symeon the Logothete, use Malalas and George the Monk as sources and repeat their traditions. Many other works mention incidental details from the *Book of Jubilees*, but they do not name the *Little Genesis* as their source. The remaining sources show a continuous use of *Jubilees* for almost the entire duration of the Byzantine Empire.

The second section enumerates the most frequently-occurring traditions from *Jubilees* in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. The examples are primarily drawn from the first section, but I have also included the evidence of works discussed in the previous chapter, such as the works attributed to R. Moshe ha-Darshan and the *Chronicle up to 1234*, since these texts are also important witnesses to the transmission of the traditions of *Jubilees* during this time. In principle, these are the traditions that one would expect to appear in *PRE*. Their absence from *PRE* (with one exception) is an important indication of this work’s independence of *Jubilees*.

4.1 The Diachronic Perspective

The transmission of *Jubilees* spans the entire history of the Byzantine Empire. Beginning with the reference to the *Little Genesis* in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4365 (supra Section 3.3), there is continuous citation of *Jubilees*—particularly in chronography—from the fourth until the fourteenth century. All of the sources are “Byzantine” in one sense or another. In most cases, Byzantine authors write about *Jubilees* in Greek. The few Latin sources are also “Byzantine” in a sense. Jerome (Section 4.3), who wrote in Latin, resided in Byzantine Palestine, and the *Canterbury Scholia* (Section 4.6) were written by the students of a Byzantine teacher. Only the *Gelasian Decree* (Section 4.5) does not fit this paradigm. The Oxyrhynchus Papyrus, although it names the *Little Genesis*, does not say anything about the contents of the work. This section therefore begins with the second-earliest reference to the *Little Genesis*.

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6 See infra Section 4.1.8.

7 For some examples, see H. Rönsch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen: oder die Kleine Genesis unter Beifügung des revidirten Textes der in der Ambrosiana aufgefundenen lateinischen Fragmente sowie einer von August Dillmann aus zwei aethiopischen Handschriften gefertigten lateinischen Übertragung*, Leipzig, 1874, p. 322-382. Some examples are more convincing than others. R.H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees, or The Little Genesis*, London, 1902, more or less pilfers this list for his own introduction.
4.1.1 The Biblical Commentaries of Didymus the Blind (d. 398)

Didymus the Blind was an Alexandrian exegete in the tradition of Philo and Origen. Didymus refers several times to a *Book of the Covenant* (Βίβλος τῆς Διαθήκης), a work which contained at least some material from the *Book of Jubilees*. He became the primary transmitter of this otherwise unknown work, which could be a version of *Jubilees*. In fact, a Latin translator of Didymus called this book *Leptogenesis*. The references to the *Book of the Covenant* are few in number and vague. According to Didymus, the *Book of the Covenant* contains the following traditions: Cain and Abel were born several years apart (*Commentary on Genesis* 118,29-119,2; *Jub.* 4:1); fire consumed the sacrifice of Abel (*Genesis* 121,22-27); Cain killed Abel with either stone or wood (*Genesis* 126,24-26; cf. *Jub.* 4:31); Cain died when Lamech pushed a wall on him (*Genesis* 142,28-143,3; cf. *Jub.* 4:31); Enoch ascended bodily into Paradise (*Genesis* 149,5-8; *Jub.* 4:23); and Abraham was once tested by Satan (*Commentary on Job* 6,17-24; *Jub.* 17:15-18). Of these traditions, the only one that certainly does not come from *Jubilees* is the reference to the fire that consumed Abel’s sacrifice. His description of Cain’s death is an amalgamation of two different traditions. In *Jubilees*, a house collapses on Cain (*Jub.* 4:31). In later tradition, including the *Cave of Treasures*, Lamech kills Cain in a hunting accident (cf. *COT* 8:2-10). Didymus, who was blind from a very young age, could only have known his source orally. He presumably cites the work from memory. These circumstances explain the imprecise references to what could be the earliest patristic reference to *Jubilees*.

4.1.2 The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis (d. 403)

Epiphanius, the Palestinian-born bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, is most famous as the author of the *Panarion*, a catalogue of heresies. He is also the author of a short treatise, *De mensuris et ponderibus*, about the weights and measures found in the Bible. The *Panarion* mentions *Jubilees* by name, both as *Jubilees* (comparatively rare in early citations) and as the *Little Jubilees*. For an overview of his life and works, see R.A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria: Virtue and Narrative in Biblical Scholarship*, Urbana, 2004.

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8 For an overview of his life and works, see R.A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria: Virtue and Narrative in Biblical Scholarship*, Urbana, 2004.


Genesis. The widely-translated De mensuris, which quotes Jubilees 2 at length, is more important for the history of the transmission of Jubilees (see supra Sections 3.1.4 and 3.1.6 and infra Section 4.2.1), yet this short work does not cite the book by name.

Epiphanius mentions several traditions from Jubilees in the Panarion, but he only names the book once. Among the unattributed traditions, he claims that evil came into the world in the days of Jared (Panarion 1.3; cf. Jub. 4:15); that the Ark came to rest on Mount Lubar (Panarion 2.1; cf. Jub. 5:28); and that idolatry began in the days of Serug (Panarion 3.4; cf. Jub. 11:1-6). In his polemic against the Manichaeans, he mentions that Canaan, the son of Ham, occupied the territory of Shem in violation of an oath (Panarion 66.84.1; cf. Jub. 10:28-34), responding to the accusation that Joshua unjustly acquired the land of Canaan13. In all four instances, Epiphanius claims to have received the traditions orally.

The one explicit citation of Jubilees occurs in his discussion of the Sethian gnostics. In Panarion 39.6, he cites Jubilees as the authentic source of the genealogy of Seth against the “myths” of the Sethian writings:

Ὡς δὲ ἐν τοῖς Ἰοβηληλαῖοις εὑρίσκεται, τῇ καὶ λεπτῇ Γενέσει καλουμένῃ καὶ τὰ ὑμῶν τῶν γυναικῶν τοῦ τέκνον Σῆθ ἡ βιβλίος περιέχει, ἵνα κατὰ πάντα τρόπον οὕτωι κατασχυνθῶσιν οἱ τοὺς μύθους τῷ βιῳ βαψάνσαντες.

But as we find in Jubilees, which is also called the Little Genesis, the book even contains the names of both Cain’s and Seth’s wives, so that the persons who recite myths to the world may be put to shame in every way (Panarion 39.6.1)14.

He goes on to name only two of the wives, the sisters Saue (Σαυὴ) and Azura (Ἀζουρα) from Jubilees 4:1-8. In a separate passage (Panarion 26.1.6), Epiphanius alludes to Barthenos, the wife of Noah. He appears to have confused the mother of Noah for his wife (cf. Jub. 4:28). These are the only references to the wives of the patriarchs in Epiphanius.

Although some scholars have questioned whether Epiphanius knew Jubilees firsthand15, it is clear that he has internalized much important material from the work. More significantly, he believes that Jubilees constitutes authentic sacred history against the competing histories of the Sethians (Panarion 39) or the Manichaeans (Panarion 66). The Book of Jubilees formed the basis for how this Byzantine author understood the history of Israel.

13 In Panarion 9.1.2, Epiphanius also cites this tradition against the Samaritans.
4.1.3 The Letter to Fabiola from Jerome (d. 420)

Jerome, who needs no introduction, refers to *Jubilees* twice in his letter to Fabiola about the stations of the Israelites in the wilderness (*Ad Fabiolam* 20, 26)\(^\text{16}\). He explicitly refers to the work under its Greek name, *Little Genesis* ("libro apocrypho, qui a Graecis λεπτὴ, id est 'parua' Genesis, appellatur")\(^\text{17}\). Both references, however, are inexact. In the first citation, Jerome says the Tower of Babel was surrounded by an athletic stadium\(^\text{18}\). No such tradition appears in *Jubilees*. In the second allusion, Jerome states that Terah, rather than Abraham, chased away the ravens during the time of famine (cf. *Jub.* 11:18-24)\(^\text{19}\). This is probably a garbled reference to *Jub.* 11:12, where Terah (תרח) is born at the moment that ravens devastated נ kB) the land. Jerome considers *Jubilees* apocryphal, an indication of his (lack of) esteem of the work. As a result, he probably did not read the work very carefully. His letter anticipates the reception of *Jubilees* in the *Gelasian Decree*. Incidentally, Jerome was personally acquainted with both Didymus the Blind and Epiphanius. These three constitute the earliest (and practically only) patristic citations of *Jubilees*.

4.1.4 The Greek Catena to Genesis (after 5\(^\text{th}\) c.)

A Catena is a collection of commentary on Scripture arranged by biblical verse\(^\text{20}\). They normally drawn upon the Church Fathers but will occasionally cite early Jewish sources, including Philo and Josephus. Françoise Petit has edited a Catena to Genesis which includes named authorities ranging from Philo of Alexandria in the first century to Cyril of Alexandria in the fifth, with some manuscripts adding the sixth-century Miaphysite theologian Severus of Antioch. Numerous entries cite *Jubilees* or otherwise contain traditions from the book. The following is a list of these entries\(^\text{21}\):

Number 551 (Gen 4:17) is a quotation of *Jubilees* 4:9. It names “Asaoul” (Ἀσαούλ) as the sister and wife of Cain\(^\text{22}\). This is another variant on Awan.

Number 585 (Gen 5:6-32) is a list of the wives of the patriarchs from *Jubilees* 4\(^\text{23}\).

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18 Ibid.


21 C. Werman, *The Book of Jubilees: Introduction, Translation, and Interpretation*, Jerusalem, 2015 [Hebrew], p. 98 notes most (but not all) of the following citations.


Number 590 (Gen. 5:21-24), citing Jubilees 4:17, names Enoch as the first scribe24.

Number 805 (Gen 9:25-27) attributed to Diodorus of Tarsus (d. 390), mentions the idea that the Medes were dissatisfied with their initial allotment of territory and decided to dwell in current territory of Media, within the “tents of Shem” (cf. Jub. 10:35)25.

Number 833 (Gen 10:24-25) is another list of the wives of the patriarchs, this time from the postdiluvian period (Jub. 8:5-7; 10:18)26.

Number 839 (Gen 11:4) quotes Jub. 10:21 on the dimensions of the tower of Babel. The tradition is attributed to “The Covenant” (ἡ Διαθήκη)27. This might be a reference to the Book of the Covenant mentioned by Didymus the Blind (supra Section 4.1.1).

Number 857 (Gen 11:13) refers to the second Cainan’s experiments in astrology and divination (cf. Jub. 8:3)28.

Number 861 (Gen 11:20-25) completes the list of the wives of the patriarchs (cf. Jub. 11)29.

Number 867 (Gen 11:28) refers to the death of Haran in the conflagration of the idols. The passage explicitly refers to Jubilees (Ἰωβηλαίος), but it is not a textual citation. It is at best a paraphrase of Jub. 12:1230.

Number 1804b (Gen 37:29-30) refers to the death of Bilhah and Dinah after they hear the news of Joseph’s disappearance. They are buried near the tomb of Rachel. Jacob then institutes Yom Kippur. The tradition appears in Jubilees 34:15-1831.

Number 2268 (Gen 50:26) is a citation of Jubilees 46:3, a timetable of Joseph’s life32.

Number 2270 (Gen 50:25-26) cites Jubilees 46:6-12 and 47:1. It covers the period from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses33.

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24 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 60.
31 Ibid., vol. 4, p. 183.
32 Ibid., vol. 4, p. 452.
The rest of the Catena has yet to be published in a critical edition. R. H. Charles points to two other traditions from Jubilees which comes from the inferior Catena of Nicephorus, published in 1772-3: 1) Isidore of Pelusiota (d. c. 450), discussing Deut 33:9, reports the election of Levi from Jubilees 32:1-3 (Catena i.1660)\(^{34}\); 2) Severus of Antioch (d. 542), commenting on Deuteronomy 34:6, ascribes the contest between Michael and Satan over the body of Moses (cf. Jude 1:9) to the Little Genesis (Catena i.1673)\(^{35}\). Severus may be referring to a manuscript that included a Moses apocryphon after Jubilees. There is a precedent: The text of Jubilees in the Latin palimpsest is followed sole extant copy of the Testament of Moses\(^{36}\).

The Catena contains a great deal of material from Jubilees which does not appear elsewhere. Conversely, many recurring motifs found in Greek chronicles do not appear in the Catena, such as the twenty-two works of creation. The Catena is especially noteworthy as the first source to provide the names of all the wives of the patriarchs. This list of the wives subsequently became one of the best-known of all traditions from Jubilees. Within Greek literature, the wives are also found in a ninth century historical Ekloge\(^{37}\) and in the margins of a thirteenth century Septuagint manuscript (Basel 135)\(^{38}\).

4.1.5 The Gelasian Decree (6th c.)

The Gelasian Decree is a Latin canon list attributed (falsely) to Pope Gelasius (d. 496). The decree lists the Little Genesis as an apocryphal book that contains information about the daughters of Adam (“Liber de filiabus Adae, Leptogenesis—apocryphus”)\(^{39}\). This brief notice demonstrates that the work was known in Europe. In fact, the proposed date of the decree—the sixth century—corresponds with the date of the only known Latin manuscript of the work, Ceriani’s Latin palimpsest. The denunciation of the work as apocryphus probably affected its overall reception in the West—but see the next entry.

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\(^{35}\) Ibid., p. lxxviii.

\(^{36}\) A.M. Ceriani, Monumenta Sacra et Profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae, 7 vol., Milan, 1861-1874, vol. 1, p. 55-64.


\(^{38}\) P. de Lagarde, Genesis Graece e Fide Editionis Sixtinae Addita Scripturae Discrepantia e Libris Manu Scriptis a Se Ipso Conlatus et Editionibus Complutensi et Aldina Adcuratissime Enotata, Leipzig, 1868. See the notes to Genesis 5, 10:21-25, and 11:10-26. De Lagarde lists the LXX manuscript Basel 135 as Manuscript r. The names here are identical to the ones in the Catena.

\(^{39}\) E. von Dobschütz, Das Decretum Gelasianum De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis in kritischem Text, Leipzig, 1912, p. 52.
4.1.6 The Biblical Scholia of the Students of Theodore of Tarsus (d. 690)

Theodore of Tarsus was a Byzantine divine who served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 668 to 690 CE. He did not leave any written works, but the notes of his students have survived in the form of scholia to the Pentateuch and the Gospels. These little-known works provide a unique window into the transmission of Jubilees in Western Europe. There are two direct references to the Book of Jubilees (as Leptigeneseos) and two possible allusions.

The first reference occurs in a discussion of the length of time Adam spent in Paradise:

Ad auram post meridiem (Gen 3:8): .i. incipiente septima hora, quia Iohannes Crisosotomus dicit Adam factum tertia hora et sexta peccasse et quasi ad horam nonam ejece in paradise. Et hoc dicit per convenientiam futuram de passion Christi destinatam. Alii autem eum septem annos peregisse in paradiso praeter .xl. dies, ut in Leptigeneseos dicit.

At the afternoon air (Gen 3:8): that is, at the beginning of the seventh hour, since John Chrysostom says that Adam was created at the third hour, sinned at the sixth hour, and was cast out of Paradise at the ninth hour. And he says this à propos the future occurrences at the crucifixion of Christ. Other commentators say that he spent seven years less forty days in Paradise, as it says in the Little Genesis. (Pent 1: 44)

The passage here refers to the forty days of purification (Jub. 3:9). It also mentions the seven years Adam spent in Eden (Jub. 3:17). This particular tradition was also attached to the end of the Latin Life of Adam and Eve. Theodore of Tarsus could represent one channel for the transmission of this tradition from East to West. Incidentally, the competing tradition, attributed to John Chrysostom, does not appear in his works but was widely known in Eastern sources, including the Cave of Treasures (COT 5:1).

The second direct reference in the scholia appears a few pages after the first:

Quoniam occidi uirum (Gen 4:23) Nescimus quem occidit, et de quo dicit, nisi tantum quod non ipse est Cain, licet multi arbitrentur ut in Leptigeneseos dixit.
I have slain a man (Gen 4:23) We do not know whom he killed, and of whom he is here speaking, except that it is not Cain, even though many commentators think it was Cain, as was said in the Little Genesis (Pent1: 54). This comment refers to Lamech’s boast about having killed a man (Gen 4:23-24). The tradition that Lamech killed Cain does not appear in the Book of Jubilees, but the story was well-known in Christian sources and appears (again) in the Cave of Treasures (COT 8:2-10). Like Didymus the Blind, the author has confused two traditions about the death of Cain. In Jubilees, Cain dies when his house collapses on him (Jub. 4:31).

Bernhard Bischoff and Michael Lapidge, the editors of the scholia, also point to two traditions which may have come from Jubilees. The commentaries state that Enoch was transported from earth to the mountain of Paradise (PentI 62; cf. Jub. 4:23) and that Cain killed Abel with a stone (Gn-Ex-EvIa 7; cf. Jub. 4:31). While both of these traditions are found in Jubilees, they are also quite common. In any case, the scholia demonstrate that at one point the channels between Western Europe and Byzantium were sufficiently open that Latin Christians could import their clergy from the East—and, with them, knowledge of Eastern works, including Jubilees.

4.1.7 The Chronography of George Syncellus (d. after 810)
George Syncellus was a Byzantine functionary. His unfinished Chronography represents the most extensive use of Jubilees in a Byzantine chronicle. He cites Jubilees under several titles, including the Little Genesis and the Apocalypse of Moses. He also mentions the Life of

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46 Ibid., p. 200.
48 Ibid., p. 388-389.
49 For general information, see W.T. Treadgold, The Middle Byzantine Historians, Basingstoke, 2013., p. 38-63.
51 From the Apocalypse of Moses: Ecloga Chronographica, p. 3 (Chronography, p. 4): the twenty-two works of creation; Ecloga Chronographica, p. 27 (Chronography, p. 36): an allusion to Jub. 5:12 in Gal 6:15; Ecloga Chronographica, p. 28. (Chronography, p. 37): Noah and the demons, cf. Jub. 10:1-14;
Adam, which has a tradition from the book. Occasionally he misattributes material from Jubilees to Josephus, an indication that Jubilees was the functional equivalent of the Antiquities in the eyes of Byzantine historians. In one exceptional instance, he ascribes a verse from Jubilees to the canonical book of Genesis. In many other cases, he gives common traditions without obvious attribution. Perhaps the traditions were too common to require specific citation. Syncellus is typically credited with having relied on the lost works of Julius Africanus (d. 240) and the Alexandrian historians Panodorus and Annianus (both c. 400) for his knowledge of Jubilees. However, he only cites Julius Africanus once as the source of a tradition from Jubilees. While he cites both Alexandrian chroniclers within his work, he does not attribute any material Jubilees to them. There is no reason why Syncellus could not have known the Greek text of Jubilees in addition to other chronicles.

Over the course of the Chronography, Syncellus records nearly every extrabiblical tradition found in Jubilees. Only one other work, the Syriac Chronicle up to 1234, provides more detailed and accurate citations. Syncellus proves at the very least that Byzantine historians managed to preserve the traditions of Jubilees regardless of the status of the text. Most significantly for the present study, George Syncellus is an exact contemporary of PRE. The Chronography demonstrates that all the major traditions from Jubilees were circulating as late as the ninth century.

52 From the Life of Adam: Ecgloga Chronographica, p. 4-5, (Chronography, p. 6-8): the purification of Adam and Eve, cf. Jub. 3:8-14
58 Of the most frequently repeated traditions from Jubilees, the only one not found in Syncellus is the idea that idolatry originated in the days of Serug (see infra Section 4.2.8).
4.1.8 The Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete (d. 990)

Symeon the Logothete, like George Syncellus, was a Byzantine functionary. His work depends heavily on earlier chronicles such as those of John Malalas and George the Monk. In turn, the work of Symeon inspired numerous imitators, collectively known as the “Logothetes,” including the chronicles of Leo Grammaticus, Theodosius Melitenus (or Melissenus), and Pseudo-Julius Pollux (the “Chronicle of Creation”). These writers are copyists: They have reproduced the work of Symeon under a different name.

Symeon uses most of the Jubilees material from John Malalas and George the Monk. In addition, Symeon adds traditions that are not found in these earlier chronicles, including: the twenty-two works of creation (cf. Jub. 2:1-23); the talking animals (cf. Jub. 3:28); the deaths of Adam and Cain (cf. Jub. 4:29-31); the biography of Enoch (cf. Jub. 4:15-26); and the discovery of antediluvian wisdom (Jub. 8:1-4)—by Selah instead of Cainan. Curiously, he omits that the generation of Serug invented idolatry but instead mentions the invention of warfare during the same generation (Jub. 11:1-6). He adds that Serug taught his son Nahor divination and astrology (Jub. 11:7-8). Finally, he mentions that Abraham instituted the feast of tabernacles, an uncommon tradition (Jub. 16:20).

59 For general information, see W.T. Treadgold, The Middle Byzantine Historians, op. cit., p. 203-217.
63 Theodosius Melitenus, Theodosi Meliteni qui fertur Chronographia, L. Tafel (ed.), Munich, 1859.
64 Pseudo-Julius Pollux, Historia Physica seu chronicon ab origine mundi usque ad Valentis tempora, I. Hardt (ed.), Munich, 1792.
65 W. Adler, Time Immemorial, op. cit., who wrote his monograph before the publication of Symeon’s chronicle, refers to the Logothetes (especially Leo Grammaticus) throughout.
67 Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit. p. 10.
68 Ibid., p. 16
69 Ibid., p. 25. His source here is “Moses”.
70 Ibid., p. 27. Following Malalas, he also states that Seth is the first scribe (p. 26).
71 Ibid., p. 29. W. Adler, Time Immemorial, op. cit., p. 196-198, discusses the discrepancy between Cainan and Selah. See also below (Section 4.2.5).
72 Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 36.
73 Ibid., p. 39.
Symeon only cites the *Little Genesis* by name four times, and two of these citations are inaccurate. According to Symeon, *Jubilees* mentions Cain’s natural disposition to evil\(^7^4\) and Nimrod’s role in the construction of Babel\(^7^5\). Neither idea is found in *Jubilees*. Symeon’s source is probably Josephus (*Ant*. I.53; I.113-114). The two accurate citations both involve the Hexameron: the angels are created on the first day\(^7^6\), and the total number of creations is twenty-two\(^7^7\). In the balance of things, it seems that Symeon only used earlier chronicles rather than *Jubilees* itself\(^7^8\). He does not appear to have used George Syncellus as a source.

### 4.1.9 The Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon (10\(^{th}\) c.) and the Compendium of Histories of George Cedrenus (d. 1115)

The chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon is an extensive, unpublished work which exists in a single manuscript (BNF Grec 1712)\(^7^9\). The lack of a printed edition and the Byzantine cursive writing of the manuscript make the work inaccessible to most. Fortuitously, this work also survives through its incorporation into the larger chronicle of George Cedrenus, who adopted Pseudo-Symeon wholesale for his own work\(^8^0\). The significance of Cedrenus’ work lies in its enormous popularity, reflected by at least forty extant manuscripts\(^8^1\).

Cedrenus—or, rather, Pseudo-Symeon—names the *Little Genesis* as one of his sources\(^8^2\). Indeed, the work abounds in references to the book, but most of them are secondhand\(^8^3\). William Adler demonstrated that this chronicle combined the traditions found in George Syncellus with the distinct set of traditions from Symeon the Logothete\(^8^4\). The chronicler does make some new references. For example, he mentions the ten months during which the infants were thrown into the Nile (cf. *Jub*. 47:3)\(^8^5\). He also summarizes the entire book,

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\(^{7^5}\) *Ibid*., p. 30.
\(^{7^7}\) *Ibid*., p. 10.
\(^{7^8}\) According to W. Adler, *Time Immemorial*, op. cit., p. 193-206, this source was Julius Africanus.
\(^{7^9}\) For general information, see W.T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, op. cit., p. 217-224.
\(^{8^0}\) *Ibid*., p. 339-342.
\(^{8^1}\) *Ibid*., p. 492.
\(^{8^5}\) George Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, op. cit., p. 86.
including the frame narrative86. Therefore, his knowledge of Jubilees is not entirely dependent on earlier chronicles. He may have known something of the original.

4.1.10 The Epitome of Histories of John Zonaras (d. 1145)

John Zonaras wrote one of the most popular (and longest) of all the Byzantine chronicles87. He cites the Little Genesis at the very beginning of his work, only to reject it88. Specifically, he says that the Church Fathers did not accept it as an approved book. Therefore, he will neither use the book nor cite its opinions (but he does mention the creation of the angels on the first day). His dismissal suggests that the text of Jubilees still existed in his day. He represents an important turning point in the Byzantine attitude to Jubilees, which is completed by Michael Glycas.

4.1.11 The Chronicle of Michael Glycas (12th c.)

Michael Glycas was a historian and theologian who wrote his chronicle for the instruction of his son89. His attitude towards Jubilees is revealing: He dismisses the work as a joke90. In most cases he uses Jubilees indirectly, drawing on earlier chroniclers and repeating their errors (such as attributing the war against Esau to Josephus)91. Paradoxically, he is the only chronicler to provide textual evidence of Jubilees 3:1692. The passage in which this citation occurs—the same one where he derides Jubilees—is also one of the few instances where he names the Little Genesis as his source93. Therefore, it is possible that, like John Zonaras, he consulted Jubilees only to reject it. Ironically, he still included much material from Jubilees through the mediation of earlier chronicles.

86 Ibid., p. 87.
87 For general information, see W.T. Treadgold, The Middle Byzantine Historians, op. cit., p. 388-399.
89 W.T. Treadgold, The Middle Byzantine Historians, op. cit., p. 403-407. His theological impulses appear in the first, longest section of his chronicle, which is entirely dedicated to the Hexameron. This section is over two hundred pages long.
93 Michael Glycas, Annales, op. cit., names Jubilees on p. 197-198 (with Josephus—the serpent loses its feet), 206 (Adam guards the garden, cf. Jub. 3:16), and 392 (the purification of Adam and Eve, cf. Jub. 3:8-14). The first tradition is from the Life of Adam and Eve. It is not found in either Jubilees or Josephus. On p. 250, he cites a “Mosaic history” (Μωσαϊκὴ ιστορίαν) in an apparent reference to Jubilees 12:9.
4.1.12 The Historiae Romanae of Theodore Metochites (d. 1332)
The last known Byzantine writer to cite Jubilees by name is Theodore Metochites, another Byzantine statesman\textsuperscript{94}. At the beginning of his history of Roman emperors, he refers briefly to the purification of Adam and Eve before their entrance into Eden\textsuperscript{95}. The reference is lifted wholesale from a passage in Michael Glycas\textsuperscript{96}. Thus the transmission of Jubilees comes to an end, a little more than a century before the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

4.2 The Synchronic Perspective
The Byzantine chronicles, in particular, repeat the same handful of motifs from Jubilees. The following are the most common traditions from Jubilees found in secondary literature. They constitute the traditions from the book which were widely known at the time of the composition of PRE. With one exception, none of the traditions appears in PRE\textsuperscript{97}. I have incorporated data from some of the works mentioned in the previous chapter (e.g., the works attributed to R. Moshe ha-Darshan, the Chronicle up to 1234) in addition to the sources discussed above.

4.2.1 The Twenty-two Works of Creation (Jub. 2:1-23)
According to Jubilees, God created twenty-two works over the course of the six days of creation (Jub. 2:1-23). This number corresponds to the number of patriarchs from Adam to Jacob. Epiphanius of Salamis, through De mensuris et ponderibus 22, is most responsible for promulgating this tradition. It appears in multiple chronicles\textsuperscript{98} as well as in Midrash Tadshe, where it is attributed to “Rabbi Phinehas” rather than Epiphanius\textsuperscript{99}. John Zonaras merely refers to the related tradition that the angels were created on the first day\textsuperscript{100}. The version in Epiphanius correlates the twenty-two works with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the twenty-two books of the Hebrew Bible. This addition does not appear in Jubilees. Its appearance in secondary literature betrays the influence of Epiphanius. Tellingly, it appears in Midrash Tadshe\textsuperscript{101} but not the Chronicle up to 1234. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 3-11

\textsuperscript{94} W.J. Deane, Pseudepigrapha: An Account of Certain Apocryphal Sacred Writings of the Jews and Early Christians, Edinburgh, 1891, p. 291.
\textsuperscript{96} Michael Glycas, Annales, op. cit., p. 392.
\textsuperscript{97} W. Adler, Time Immemorial, op. cit., p. 206-231 discusses many (but not all) of these traditions in a slightly different context: he is demonstrating the high degree of interdependence among the Greek chroniclers.
\textsuperscript{98} George Syncellus, Ecgloga Chronographica, op. cit., p. 3 (George Syncellus, Chronography, op. cit., p. 4); Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 10; George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit., p. 9; J.-B. Chabot, Anonymi auctoris Chronicum ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens 1, Paris, 1920, p. 27-29.
\textsuperscript{99} A. Jellinek, Bet ha-Midrasch, op. cit., p. 164 and 169.
\textsuperscript{100} John Zonaras, Annales, op. cit., p. 18.
\textsuperscript{101} A. Jellinek, Bet ha-Midrasch, op. cit., p. 169.
gives a very full account of the Hexameron, but it does not mention the figure twenty-two and, in fact, names considerably more than twenty-two works.

4.2.2 The Purification of Adam and Eve (Jub. 3:8-14)
The *Book of Jubilees* states that Adam and Eve were obliged to wait several days before they were permitted to enter the Garden of Eden (Jub. 3:8-14). The *Canterbury Scholia* is the earliest source to cite the *Little Genesis* for this tradition\(^{102}\). This idea is particularly linked to the Adam books rather than the Greek chronographic tradition. George Syncellus attributes this tradition to a *Life of Adam* as well as the *Little Genesis*\(^{103}\). The *Life of Adam* is unknown, but the tradition does appear at the very end of the Latin *Life of Adam and Eve*\(^{104}\). The next chronicler to cite this tradition is Michael Glycas, who draws it directly from *Jubilees*\(^{105}\). Theodore Metochites merely copies Michael Glycas\(^{106}\). Finally, *Midrash Tadshe* knows this tradition. The most probable source of *Midrash Tadshe* is the Adam literature, which was widespread in both Latin and Greek literature. The tradition is not mentioned at all in *PRE*.

4.2.3 The Wives of the Antediluvian Patriarchs (Jub. 4)
The list of the wives of the patriarchs is probably the most popular tradition from the *Book of Jubilees*. Epiphanius only mentions a few of the wives, notably the daughters of Adam and Eve (*Panarion* 39.6.1; cf. *Jub* 4:1-8)\(^{107}\). He was followed by the Byzantine chroniclers, who principally focus on the daughters of Adam\(^{108}\). The first full list of wives appears in *Catena*\(^{109}\). Within Greek literature, complete lists appear in an historical *Ekloge*\(^{110}\) and the Septuagint Codex Basel 135\(^{111}\). Full lists appear outside of Greek literature in Syriac\(^{112}\),

\(^{105}\) Michael Glycas, *Annales*, op. cit., p. 392. In fact, Glycas only cites the *Little Genesis* in conjunction with Adam traditions.
\(^{107}\) Epiphanius, *Ancoratus und Panarion*, op. cit., vol. 2 p. 76 (*Panarion: Book I*, op. cit., p. 280). In *Panarion* 26.1.6, Epiphanius claims that Barthenos is the wife of Noah. In Second Temple sources, such as *Jubilees* (4:28) and the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1 QapGen II), she is the wife of Lamech and the mother of Noah. Epiphanius cites this name against Gnostic tradition, which states that Noah’s wife is Noria. Even if Epiphanius is mistaken, the name Barthenos is nevertheless part of the wives tradition.
Arabic\textsuperscript{113}, Hebrew\textsuperscript{114}, and Armenian\textsuperscript{115}. Some of the wives’ names also appear in the Coptic florilegium\textsuperscript{116}. The list is the only tradition to be found widely outside of Greek literature. Significantly, the \textit{Gelasian Decree} identifies \textit{Jubilees} as the “Book of the Daughters of Adam”\textsuperscript{117}, underlining the association of this tradition with \textit{Jubilees} in particular. Menahem Kister claims to have found the wife of Noah in the \textit{editio princeps} of PRE (Constantinople, 1514)\textsuperscript{118}, but she does not appear in any other edition of the work (see \textit{infra} Section 5.5).

4.2.4 The Death of Cain (Jub. 4:31)

According to \textit{Jubilees}, a house collapsed on Cain because he had killed in Abel with a stone (Jub. 4:31). Didymus the Blind and the \textit{Canterbury Scholia} refer to the death of Cain from \textit{Jubilees}, but both citations are misidentifications\textsuperscript{119}. In fact, there are two competing traditions about the death of Cain. The \textit{Book of Jubilees} reports that Cain’s house collapsed on him, while later tradition favored the story that Lamech killed Cain (cf. \textit{COT} 8:2-10)\textsuperscript{120}. Byzantine chroniclers, including George Syncellus\textsuperscript{121}, Symeon the Logothete\textsuperscript{122}, George Cedrenus\textsuperscript{123}, and Michael Glycas\textsuperscript{124}, preferred the version in \textit{Jubilees}\textsuperscript{125}. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer} says nothing about the death of Cain.


\textsuperscript{114} E.g., S. Algazi, \textit{Toledot Adam}, Jerusalem, 1944.


\textsuperscript{117} E. von Dobschütz, \textit{Der Decretum Gelasianum}, op. cit., p. 52.


\textsuperscript{120} B. Murdoch, \textit{The Medieval Popular Bible}, op. cit., p. 70-95.

\textsuperscript{121} George Syncellus, \textit{Ecloga Chronographica}, op. cit., p. 111 (\textit{Chronography}, op. cit., p. 115).

\textsuperscript{122} Symeon the Logothete, \textit{Chronicon}, op. cit., p. 25.

\textsuperscript{123} George Cedrenus, \textit{Compendium Historiarum}, op. cit., p. 16.

\textsuperscript{124} Michael Glycas, \textit{Annales}, op. cit., p. 223.

\textsuperscript{125} Similarly, W. Adler, « Parabiblical Traditions and Their Use in the \textit{Palaea Historica} », in \textit{Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity}, M. Kister, H.I. Newman, M. Segal, et al. (ed.), Leiden ; Boston, 2015, p. 35, notes a manuscript of the \textit{Palaea Historica} (Paris BNF Greek 928, f. 7) where the scribe replaced that work’s Lamech tradition with the tradition from \textit{Jubilees}. The eleventh century \textit{Aggadat Bereshit}, possibly from Italy, also knows this tradition. See L.M. Teugels, \textit{Aggadat Bereshit: Translated from the Hebrew with an Introduction and Notes}, Leiden, 2001, p. 83-84 (chapter 26). In this case, the Italian midrash, written within the Byzantine sphere of influence, is parallel to the examples of R. Moshe ha-Darshan.
4.2.5 The Second Cainan Rediscovers Astrology (Jub. 8:1-4)

Among Greek sources, the Catena first mentions the second Cainan's discovery of astrology and divination after the Flood. Several chroniclers also reported the tradition. Symeon the Logothete, however, attributes the same tradition to Selah, the son of Cainan. George Cedrenus mentions both Cainan and Selah. Cainan, in fact, was a controversial figure in Greek chronography. Although he appears in the Septuagint and the New Testament, he is missing from the Hebrew Bible. Consequently, Selah was substituted for his non-existent father. The Chronicle up to 1234 does not omit this tradition. However, in Syriac literature, including the chronicle, Cainan is also the name of an idol. When Abraham burns down the temple of idols, he is specifically burning down the temple of Cainan. The Muslim historian al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) explains the connection: Cainan was a sorcerer and idolater who presented himself as a god to the Chaldeans. For this reason, he is omitted in the Torah. The Greek chronographic tradition, like Jubilees, does not mention this darker aspect of Cainan; on the contrary, he has a positive reputation as the inventor of astronomy. Cainan does not appear in PRE.

4.2.6 The Construction of the Tower of Babel (Jub. 10:21)

The Catena and a surprising number of Greek chronicles mention the minor detail that the tower of Babel was constructed during forty (or forty-three) years. The extant (Ethiopic) text reads “forty years and three years” (Jub. 10:21). This figure does not appear in PRE.

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128 Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 29.
129 George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit., p. 27.
130 On this topic, see W. Adler, Time Immemorial, op. cit., p. 196-198.
133 Al-Ṭabarī, Annales quos scripsit Abu Djafar Mohammed Ibn Djaîrît tabarî, M.J. de Goeje (ed.), 16 vol., Leiden, 1879-1901, vol. 1, p. 216 (Translation: The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume II: Prophets and Patriarchs, translated by William M. Brinner, Albany, 1987, p. 15): “To Arpachshad b. Shem was born his son Qaynan, who is not mentioned in the Torah. He was the one of whom it was said that he was not worthy of being mentioned in the revealed scriptures, because he was a magician and called himself a god.”
134 See John Malalas, Chronographia, op. cit., p. 7 (Chronicle op. cit. p. 4).
135 F. Petit, La Chaîne sur la Genèse, op. cit., p. 202; George Syncellus, Ecgloga Chronographica, op. cit., p. 43 (Chronography, op. cit., p. 58); Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 30; George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit. 21; Michael Glycas, Annales, op. cit., p. 240; J.-B. Chabot, Chronicum ad annum 1234, op. cit., p. 47.
4.2.7 Canaan Occupies the Territory of Shem (Jub. 10:28-34)

In the Book of Jubilees, Canaan covets the territory of Shem and seizes it in violation of an oath made by his father. For this reason, the land is called Canaan (Jub. 10:28-34). Epiphanius cites this tradition in order to justify Joshua’s conquest of Canaan (Panarion 66.84.1)\(^{137}\). All of the major chroniclers report this tradition\(^{138}\). It also appears in Midrash Aggadah, probably via a Greek chronicle\(^{139}\). For example, George Syncellus and George Cedrenus agree with Midrash Aggadah that the seven nations (cf. Deut 7:1) occupied the territory along with Canaan. This idea is not in Jubilees. In PRE, Canaan is not mentioned in conjunction with the partition of the land after the Flood (see infra Section 5.6).

4.2.8 The Origin of Idolatry in the Days of Serug (Jub. 11:1-6)

According to Jubilees, idolatry began in the days of Serug (Jub. 11:1-6). Epiphanius first mentions that Serug’s generation marks the beginning of “Hellenism”\(^{140}\). George Syncellus does not report this tradition at all, while Symeon the Logothete instead writes that warfare and divination appeared during Serug’s generation, which also comes from this section of Jubilees\(^{141}\). Cedrenus gives two forms of the tradition, one from Symeon\(^{142}\), and one from the chronicle of John Malalas\(^{143}\). The Syriac Chronicle up to 1234 ignores Jubilees and gives the parallel tradition from the Cave of Treasures (25:8-14)\(^{144}\). This tradition was thus widely known and came from multiple sources, yet it does not appear in PRE.

4.2.9 Abraham burns the Temple of Idols (Jub. 12:12-14)

Among the stories of the young Abraham one finds in Jubilees, Greek tradition privileges the story that Abraham burned the temple of idols in Ur (Jub. 12:12-14). The Catena and the most important chronicles all mention this tradition\(^{145}\). The chronicles, but not the Catena, also mention Abraham’s rejection of astrology, an event that immediately follows the destruction of the temple in Jubilees (Jub. 12:15-29). Michael Glycas only mentions Abraham’s rejection

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\(^{138}\) George Syncellus, Ecgloga Chronographica, op. cit., p. 47-48 (Chronography, op. cit., p. 61-62); Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 35; George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit., p. 25; Michael Glycas, Annales, op. cit., p. 242; J.-B. Chabot, Chronicum ad annum 1234, op. cit., p. 47.

\(^{139}\) S. Buber, Agadischer Commentar zum Pentateuch nach einer Handschrift aus Aleppo [Midrash Aggadah], 2 vol., Vienna, 1894 [Hebrew], vol. 1, p. 27.


\(^{141}\) Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 36.

\(^{142}\) George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit., p. 47.

\(^{143}\) Ibid., p. 81. See John Malalas, Chronographia, op. cit., p. 38 (Chronicle, p. 26).

\(^{144}\) J.-B. Chabot, Chronicum ad annum 1234, op. cit., p. 49.

\(^{145}\) F. Petit, La Chaîne sur la Genèse, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 218; George Syncellus, Ecloga Chronographica, op. cit., p. 107 (Chronography, op. cit., p. 134); Symeon the Logothete, Chronicon, op. cit., p. 38; George Cedrenus, Compendium Historiarum, op. cit., p. 48; and J.-B. Chabot, Chronicum ad annum 1234, op. cit., p. 52.
of astrology. The Greek chronicles omit the story of Abraham and the ravens which precedes this episode. Only the *Chronicle up to 1234* includes it. He harmonizes the version in *Jubilees* with the variant of this story found in the letter of Jacob of Edessa. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not report this episode.

### 4.2.10 The Election of Levi at Bethel (Jub. 32:1-3)

In *Jubilees*, Jacob chooses Levi from among his sons to serve as a priest. He makes this decision at Bethel in order to fulfill a promised tithe (*Jub. 32:1-3*). The Catena and the Greek chroniclers all mention the election of Levi at Bethel. It is notably absent from the *Chronicle up to 1234*. The Greek reports are faithful to the tradition as it appears in *Jubilees*: Jacob chooses Levi by counting backwards from Benjamin; Levi is the tenth. There is no mention of the ascension of Levi as found, for example, in the *Testament of Levi*. This tradition is the only recurring motif from *Jubilees* which has a (distant) parallel in PRE. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not report this episode.

### 4.2.11 The War with Esau (Jub. 37-38)

After the death of Isaac, Esau attacks Jacob in a bid to win back his inheritance (*Jub. 37-38*). All the major chronicles mention this war. Most of them, beginning with George Syncellus, misattribute this tradition to Josephus. The only Greek chronicler who does not make this error is Symeon the Logothete, although his source, George the Monk, does. The *Chronicle up to 1234*, which cites the text of *Jubilees* directly, does not attribute it to Josephus. Despite this misattribution, the chroniclers closely follow *Jubilees*. *Pirqe de-

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150 The war begins in *Jubilees* 37. However, *Jubilees* 35-36 contains premonitions of the conflict. The Greek sources usually begin the story from this point, when Isaac and Rebekah encourage their sons to avoid conflict.
154 J.-B. Chabot, *Chronicum ad annum 1234*, op. cit., p. 56.
Rabbi Eliezer 39, following a rabbinic tradition (cf. b. Sotah 13a), instead places Esau’s death during the funeral of Jacob (see infra Section 5.9).

4.3 Conclusion
The Book of Jubilees was a primary source of Byzantine sacred history. In this respect it was akin to Josephus and the Septuagint. Surprisingly, the most impressive evidence for the transmission of Jubilees comes from the ninth century or later. The sources demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the contents of Jubilees at the time of the redaction of PRE. However, the transmission of Jubilees is largely restricted to Greek and Latin works circulating in Christendom, particularly the Byzantine Empire. The Greek chronographic tradition, in particular, has preserved a large number of traditions from the Book of Jubilees which were transmitted continuously until, at least, the fourteenth century. The chronicles know most of the extrabiblical episodes from the Book of Jubilees, yet only one of these traditions appears in any form in PRE. Thus, there is little reason to believe, a priori, that the author of PRE had access to Jubilees. This suspicion is justified by further examination of the alleged parallels between PRE and Jubilees—the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter Five: Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Book of Jubilees

5.0 Introduction

Chapters three and four established that Jubilees was well-known in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. However, outside of Ethiopia, knowledge of the book is mainly restricted to Byzantium. The most important witnesses to the late survival of Jubilees are two chronicles, the Chronography of George Syncellus (9th c.) and the anonymous Chronicle up to 1234 (13th c.), which independently reproduce substantial portions of the Book of Jubilees. Furthermore, some medieval Hebrew works know traditions from Jubilees. Older scholarship argues that PRE uses the Book of Jubilees to an even greater extent than these few medieval witnesses. The evidence of the previous chapter shows that, theoretically, it would have been possible for the author of PRE to have had recourse to Jubilees, even without postulating a secret transmission of the book among Jews or the sudden reappearance of the book in Hebrew. The present chapter will argue, however, that Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer does not know the Book of Jubilees. In many cases, the traditions from PRE come from the classical rabbinic corpus or even the Hebrew Bible. In other cases, the traditions of PRE have parallels in Syriac and Arabic. Only a few traditions can be traced back to Second Temple sources—but not, specifically, Jubilees.

The following chapter presents ten representative parallels between Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Book of Jubilees in the order of the biblical narrative. The examples are drawn from previous work on PRE and Jubilees, including the books and articles of Hanoch Albeck, Steven Ballaban, Rachel Adelman, Katharina Keim, and (especially) Menahem Kister. In a few instances, I have even drawn from the notes of Gerald Friedlander, although I have not included any of the parallels that Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein addressed in her critique of

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1 Only one of the four parallels mentioned by Menahem Kister is not discussed below. M. Kister, « Ancient Material in Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer: Basilides, Qumran, the Book of Jubilees », in « Go Out and Study the Land » (Judges 18:2): Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel, A.M. Maeir, J. Magness, L.H. Schiffman (ed.), Leiden, 2012, p. 82-83 considers both PRE 14 (end) and Jubilees 4:5-6 “covert exegesis” of Leviticus 5:1. Both works state that failure to report a sin is tantamount to committing the sin, although in different contexts: Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 14 refers to the earth’s failure to disclose the sin of Adam, while Jubilees is addressing the sin of Cain. Neither work cites Leviticus. Furthermore, the idea is quite common. See, for example, J. Hämeen-Anttila, The Last Pagans of Iraq: Ibn Wahshiyya and his Nabatean Agriculture, Leiden; Boston, 2006, p. 263: “Vermin and poisonous reptiles, either lethal or sickening, are generated when someone commits a sinful deed or someone else sees this taking place without rebuking the sinner for this misdeed, or fighting against him, or trying to deflect that misdeed. If on the other hand, someone rebukes the sinner for doing such damage to his own kind and prevents him from doing that deed, then the poisonous and other vermin will be obliterated.”
Friedlander. The list of parallels is not intended to be exhaustive. The notion of “parallel” is subjective, and the list could be infinitely extended. It does, however, cover the most important points of alleged contact between PRE and Jubilees.

The citations from Jubilees are taken from the recent Hebrew translation of Cana Werman, for the reasons stated in the note at the beginning of the study. The Greek version, which would have been the most logical choice, is lost and so unavailable. The Latin version, which was also considered, lacks key portions of the text. The Ethiopic text, which derives from the Greek version, is the only complete version of the book. However, this study is intended for specialists of ancient Judaism and Late Antiquity. In both fields, knowledge of Hebrew is more widespread than knowledge of Ethiopic. It does not seem appropriate to reproduce a text for a public that, in many instances, cannot read it. The Hebrew translation—or retroversion—has both a practical and aesthetic advantage. The Book of Jubilees, after all, was written in Hebrew, and citing a Hebrew text of Jubilees provides easy comparison with the Hebrew text of PRE. In all cases, the Hebrew retroversion has been checked against the critical Ethiopic text of James VanderKam.

The method for the present chapter is the following: Each section of this chapter opens with a summary of the tradition in PRE and its departure (if any) from rabbinic literature. The alleged parallel from Jubilees is then cited and evaluated. The section ends with a discussion of the most likely source for the tradition from PRE, beginning with the Bible and rabbinic literature and followed by other contemporary Jewish literature. Christian and Muslim parallels are also considered. In every case, there is evidence that the source was known within the Abbasid Caliphate, that is, the region where PRE was written.

5.1 The Hexameron (PRE 3; Jub. 2)

Following the prologue, PRE opens with a long discourse on the six days of creation. Gerald Friedlander draws attention to the specific enumeration of created things in PRE. He compares this to the widely reported tradition of the twenty-two works of creation from Jubilees 2, which does not appear in classical rabbinic literature. However, there is no real

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correlation between the two accounts. All of the common elements shared between PRE and Jubilees can be found in Genesis 1.

The first day of creation is sufficient to illustrate this phenomenon. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 3 names eight things which were created on the first day:

Eight things were created the first day, and they are: heaven, earth, light, darkness, tohu, bohu, wind, and waters. The Book of Jubilees names only seven works of creation:

For on the first day he created the upper heavens and the earth and the waters and all the spirits which minister before him… the abysses, darkness, and light (Jub. 2:2). Despite the discrepancy in number, the two lists are nearly identical. The abysses in Jubilees have been split into two works—thou and bohu—in PRE. Also, the “spirits” in Jubilees are “winds” in PRE, although both use the same Hebrew word (רוח). Friedlander cites similar examples from Philo and Midrash Tadshe and concludes: “It seems that Philo knew a cosmology which was known to Jubilees, to Midrash Tadsheh, and to our author”.

Both PRE and Jubilees draw their lists from the first verses of Genesis, which also accounts for the differences between the two lists. First, the “wind” (רוח) in PRE and the “spirits” (רוחות) in Jubilees are based on different interpretations of the “wind from God” (רוח אלהים) in Genesis 1:2. The Book of Jubilees attributes the creation of the angels to the first day, while PRE 4, following rabbinic tradition, attributes their creation to the second day (cf. Gen.

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7 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit., p. 147.
8 G. Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 13 n. 6.
Rab. 1:3)\(^9\). Second, both works also refer to the creation of “dark materials”\(^10\) on the first day, but they identify the primordial chaos with different terms. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* names the formless void (תֶּהוֹו וְבֵיתוֹ) while *Jubilees* mentions the abyss (תרומת). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not agree with *Jubilees*, yet both agree with Genesis.

The greatest discrepancy between the two accounts involves the number of works created over the six days. In *Jubilees* and dependent literature, the number is fixed at twenty-two. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not refer to this figure. The final tally, which is not specified in the text, is considerably more than twenty-two. The twenty-two works of creation is one of the best-represented traditions from *Jubilees* in later literature. Furthermore, it is faithfully reproduced in a Hebrew work—*Midrash Tadshe*\(^11\). The appearance of the tradition in *Midrash Tadshe* provides an instructive contrast with PRE. There is no reason to believe that *Jubilees* informs any part of the Hexameron in PRE.

5.2 Enoch and the Calendar (PRE 8; *Jub.* 4:17)

Despite a mixed reception in classical rabbinic literature (cf. *Gen. Rab.* 25:1), Enoch is a positive figure in PRE. Enoch is also one of the most important biblical figures in Second Temple Judaism. *Jubilees* 4:15-26 gives a succinct but dense account of the career of Enoch based on the earlier Aramaic booklets that now constitute *1 Enoch*\(^12\). In addition to the biblical motif of Enoch’s assumption (Gen 5:24), *Jubilees* adds two additional themes to the life of Enoch. First, Enoch is heralded as the first scribe, who committed both prophetic and astronomical treatises to writing (*Jub.* 4:17-19). Second, Enoch intercedes in the matter of the Watchers, the angels who descended to earth, married human women, and produced giants.

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\(^9\) The rabbis also accept the possibility that the angels were created on the fifth day. They categorically refuse creation on the first day. Some piyyut state otherwise. See Y. Granat, « No Angels Before the World? A Preexistence Tradition and its Transformation from Second Temple Literature to Early Piyyut », in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity*, M. Kister, H.I. Newman, M. Segal, et al. (ed.), Leiden ; Boston, 2015, p. 69-92.

\(^10\) Cf. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk. II, ll. 910-919:

\[\text{The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,}\
\text{Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,}\
\text{But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt}\
\text{Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,}\
\text{Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain}\
\text{His dark materials to create more Worlds,}\
\text{Into this wilde Abyss the warie fiend}\
\text{Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,}\
\text{Pondering his Voyage.}\]


Both themes are typical of Second Temple literature. Neither tradition appears in PRE. Rather, the primary passage about Enoch in PRE 8 discusses the "secret of intercalation," a concept foreign to Jubilees’ solar calendar but reflected in Late Antique sources, including a piyyut and a Syriac commentary on Genesis.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer only mentions Enoch twice. In both cases, he is merely a link in a chain. In the first reference, he is one of the worthies who received the secret of intercalation:

On the twenty-eighth of Elul, the sun and the moon were created. And the number of years, months, days, nights, the hours, terms, seasons, cycles, and intercalations were before the Holy One, Blessed Be He. He intercalated the year and, after this, he transmitted them [the calculations] to the first Adam in the Garden of Eden, as it is written, “This is the counting [ספר] of the generations of Adam” (Gen 5:1), a universal calculation for the whole history of the children of Adam. Adam transmitted [it] to Enoch. He was initiated into the secret of intercalation, and he intercalated the year, as it is written, “Enoch walked with God” (Gen 5:22). He walked in the ways of universal calculation which God had transmitted Adam (PRE 8)\(^\text{13}\).

In the second reference, Enoch is listed as one of the patriarchs who handled the staff that would become the rod of Moses:

Rabbi Levi says: The very staff, which was created the Eve of the first Sabbath, was taken by Adam from the Garden of Eden. Adam gave it to Enoch; Enoch gave it to Noah; Noah gave it to Shem; Shem gave it to Abraham; Abraham gave it to Isaac; Isaac gave it to Jacob; and Jacob took it down to Egypt and gave it to Joseph, his son. When Joseph died, his whole house was pillaged, and it was placed in the palace of Pharaoh. Jethro was one of magicians of Egypt. He saw the staff and the letters

\(^{13}\) D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit. p. 36.
inscribed on it, and he desired it with his whole heart. He took it and planted it in the
garden of his house. No man was even able to approach it, but when Moses came to
his house, he entered the garden of Jethro’s house and saw the staff. He read the letters
which were on it, and he put forth his hand and took it. When Jethro saw Moses, he
said, “In the future, this one will redeem Israel from Egypt” (PRE 40)14.

The two chains are related. Although the passage in PRE 8 is much longer, the sequence of
worthies is the same: Adam—Enoch—Noah—Shem—Abraham—Isaac—Jacob—Joseph—
Moses. Hanoch Albeck, while commenting on the Enoch’s knowledge of the calendar in both
PRE and Jubilees, observed that the presence of Enoch in both chains is problematic, since
Enoch had already vanished from the earth before the birth of Noah15. If this is not an outright
error, then it could be an allusion to the assumption of Enoch, who continued living in
Paradise after his translation. If so, this is the only allusion to this event in PRE. There is
nothing else remarkable about Enoch in PRE.

Although the references are brief, the portrait of Enoch is essentially positive. This contrasts
with his mixed reception in classical rabbinic literature. An oft-quoted passage of Genesis
Rabbah states that Enoch did not ascend to heaven but died at an early age because he was
neither righteous nor especially wicked (Gen. Rab. 25:1). This passage is a direct polemic
against the belief that Enoch ascended to heaven. On the other hand, Leviticus Rabbah 29:11
has a positive evaluation of Enoch: He is especially blessed as the seventh of a series of seven
patriarchs. Outside of classical rabbinic literature, but within Late Antique Judaism, 3 Enoch
(Sefer Hekhalot) posits that the angel Metatron (cf. b. Hagigah 15a) is a transfigured Enoch.
This apotheosis of Enoch goes far beyond anything found in Second Temple or Christian
literature. None of these traditions, however, inform the portrayal of Enoch in PRE.

Menahem Kister, following Albeck, refers to “the depiction of Enoch as establishing the
calendar in 1 Enoch and the Book of Jubilees as well as in PRE chapter 7 [sic] (the solar
calendar according to 1 Enoch and Jubilees, the lunar calendar according to PRE) and the
calendar’s transmission to Noah” as one of the stronger cases for PRE’s dependence on
Second Temple literature16. Albeck mentioned the following verse in particular:

זה primeiro מבני האדם אשר למד ספר ומוסר חכמה ואשר כתב בספר את
אותות השמים כסדר חודשיהם למען ידעו בני האדם את תקופות השנה כסדרן לכול חודשיהם

14 Ibid. p. 264.
15 H. Albeck in L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt: ein Beitrag zur
Altertumskunde und biblischen Kritik, zur Literatur- und Religionsgeschichte, translated by Hanoch Albeck,
Jerusalem, 1947 [Hebrew], p. 139.
16 M. Kister, « Ancient Material in Pirqê de-Rabbi Eliezer », op. cit., p. 70.
This one [Enoch] was the first human being born on the earth who learned writing, instruction, and wisdom, and who recorded in a book the signs of the heavens according to the order of the months so that humanity might know the seasons of the years according to their order for all of their months (Jub. 4:17).\footnote{C. Werman, \textit{Book of Jubilees, op. cit.}, p. 195.}

\textit{Jubilees} later specifies that Enoch learned the working of the calendars from his centuries-long sojourn with the angels (Jub. 4:21). In \textit{PRE}, however, Enoch does not establish the calendar. God had already taught the calendar to Adam, who transmits it to Enoch. More fundamentally, Enoch does not write anything down. The “secret of intercalation” is transmitted \textit{orally}. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer} 8 narrates the rest of the history of the secret. At one point, it is lost after the death of Joseph and must be retransmitted by God to Moses. The new transmission would not be necessary if the secret was kept in a book. Later, God castigates Ezekiel for attempting to intercalate while in Babylon. Only those in the Land of Israel may intercalate, even if they are unlettered:

\begin{quote}
מכאן אמרו אףין ידיעת בתוכם בוחנה לא comunità הנכורה כל יום אשר יעבור אחר השנה
אליא על די ווהת אח כל ימי בוחנה על comunità הנכורה ויאברה אחר השנה

Thus [the Sages] teach: Even if there are righteous and wise men outside the Land, and shepherds of sheep and cattle in the Land, they do not intercalate the year except through the shepherds of sheep and cattle. Even when prophets are outside the Land and the simple-minded (ה迪士尼) are in the Land of Israel, they do not intercalate the year except through the simple-minded who are in the Land (\textit{PRE} 8).\footnote{D. Börner-Klein, \textit{Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit.} p. 38.}

The implication is that proper knowledge of the calendar is lost whenever one leaves the Land of Israel for foreign lands such as Egypt or Babylon. No amount of book-learning can compensate for the secret passed down among those who remain in the Land.

There is nothing in \textit{PRE} to suggest that its Enoch tradition—if it can be called that—is indebted to the \textit{Book of Jubilees} or any other work of Second Temple literature. Enoch is a complete cipher in the work. The secret of intercalation, which is the actual interest of \textit{PRE}, is first attested in a Palestinian piyyut\footnote{A. Marmorstein, « Kiddush Yerahim of R. Pinhas », \textit{Ha-Tzofeh le-Hokhmat Yisrael}, vol. 5 (1921), p. 254 [Hebrew].}. The idea that Adam already knew the calendar, including intercalation, can also be found in other Late Antique sources. Ephrem the Syrian explains in his \textit{Commentary on Genesis} that the eleven-day difference between the lunar and solar years (necessitating intercalation) was built into the very fabric of creation:
From that [first] year onward, the house of Adam learned that they were to add eleven days to every year. Therefore, the Chaldaeans did not establish the times and the years. They were already established before the time of Adam (Comm. Gen. I.25)²⁰.

Although it is doubtful that the author of PRE knew the work of Ephrem, this tradition is better reflects the background informing the secret of intercalation in PRE 8 than anything from the Second Temple period.

5.3 Passover (PRE 21 & 32; Jub. 17-18 & 49)
Hanoch Albeck noted that in PRE the actions of the patriarchs are paradigmatic for later rabbinic customs, such as Adam’s observance of the havdalah (PRE 20)²¹. In some isolated incidents, the patriarchs in PRE also celebrate Mosaic festivals. For example, both Adam (PRE 21) and Isaac (PRE 32) instruct their sons in the celebration of Passover. While there are many rabbinic traditions about the patriarchs observing the Mosaic Law, there is nothing comparable to the tradition that Adam celebrated Passover. The patriarchal institution of Jewish holidays prior to their codification in the Mosaic Law is also one of the recurring themes of Jubilees. However, Adam is the one patriarch who does not institute a holiday in the Book of Jubilees. Furthermore, the festival of Passover is not firmly instituted until the time of Moses—it is the one holiday in the work which is not pre-Mosaic. The tradition in PRE, while thematically similar to Jubilees, is part of a contemporary discourse about the nature of the religion of the patriarchs.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer only depicts patriarchs celebrating Mosaic festivals twice, and both times they are celebrating Passover. First, in PRE 21, the sacrifice of Cain and Abel is presented as a Passover sacrifice:

הגוון ליל יום טוב של פסח אמר להם אדם לבניו בליל זה עתידין ישר
הקריבו גם אתם לפני בוראכם

The night of the festival of Passover arrived. Adam said to his sons: “On this night, Israel will offer Passover sacrifices. You, also, offer sacrifices before your Creator” (PRE 21)²².

²¹ H. Albeck in L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge, op. cit., p. 136-140. Classical rabbinic sources, however, already associate Adam with the institution of the havdalah (e.g. Gen. Rab. 11:2).
²² D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit. p. 113.
In the second instance, from *PRE* 32, Isaac and Rebekah likewise instruct their children in the celebration of Passover:

The night of Passover came, and Isaac called Esau, his older son, and said to him: “My son, on this night all the renders praise unto Him, and the treasuries of dew are opened on this night. Prepare savory meats for me, so that I may bless you while I am still alive.”

[...] Rebekah said to Jacob, “My son, on this night, the treasuries of dew are opened, and all the heavenly ones sing songs to Him. On this night, in the future, your children will be redeemed from the yoke of servitude. On this night, in the future, they will sing songs. Go, make savory meats for your father that he may bless you while he is still alive (*PRE* 32).”

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* later explains that one of the two kids which Jacob brought for Isaac was a Paschal sacrifice (cf. Gen 27:9). The two passages have thematic resonances—the transmission of tradition from one generation to another, the election of one son over his older brother, and the rupture of the family on account of jealousy—but there is also an implied continuous celebration of Passover among the patriarchs from Adam onward.

Rabbinic literature occasionally intimates that the patriarchs, especially Abraham, observed aspects of the Mosaic Law (e.g., *m. Qiddushin* 5:14). However, the classical rabbinic corpus nowhere states that the antediluvian patriarchs observed later Jewish festivals such as Passover. At least one researcher has attempted to find the patriarchal celebration of Passover in *Genesis Rabbah* 22:4, but the tradition there is very different. In this passage, two rabbis debate whether the year begins in Nisan or Tishri. Both rabbis, citing Genesis 4:3, presume that Abel was born in one of these months and died at the “end of days” (*מקץ ימים*), that is, at the end of the season. R. Eliezer states that Abel lived from Sukkot (in Tishri, at the beginning

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of fall) until Hanukkah (in Kislev, near the end of fall), while R. Joshua states that Abel was born at Passover (in Nisan, at the beginning of spring) and died at Shavuot (in Sivan, near the end of spring). The feasts mark time. The tradition does not imply that Cain and Abel celebrated Shavuot, much less Hanukkah. Furthermore, it is impossible to link the sacrifice of Cain and Abel with Passover based on this tradition.

These two Passover passages are the only indications that the patriarchs celebrated Mosaic festivals in PRE. Occasionally, PRE mentions that significant events occurred during the time of important festivals, including Passover. However, this is not the same as the observation of the festival. For example, Sarah is abducted by Pharaoh on the night of Passover (PRE 26),25 and the Covenant of the Pieces is concluded on Passover (PRE 28).26 In a similar manner, PRE 29 states that Abraham is circumcised on Yom Kippur.27 Abraham’s life is a prefiguration of the institution of the future holidays, but the text does not state that he observed the holidays himself. Indeed, PRE 46 describes the institution of Yom Kippur in the days of Moses, following the sin of the Golden Calf.

Similarly, the sacrifice of Isaac in Jubilees coincides with the date of Passover, but it does not follow that Abraham instituted Passover at this moment28. Abraham’s trial begins on the twelfth day of the first month, that is, 12 Nisan:

יהי ב슛אא השביעי שנה ההראשהתיו הראשהי ימויי הזה השביעי שנה לשוב ויהי דריה

בשעה על אבידה מי נאום הזה בבלו דברי ואדם ולאחרים号楼י הוא נאום

25 Ibid., p. 143. The oldest version of the story (Gen 12:10-20) is already an Exodus in nuce. Sara is taken by Pharaoh, but he releases her after a series of plagues. Abram and Sara leave with gifts from Pharaoh.

26 Ibid., p. 150. In the biblical equivalent of this passage (Gen 15:13-16), God foretells the slavery in Egypt and the eventual redemption at Passover—some four hundred years in the future.


28 There is fairly extensive scholarship on the binding of Isaac as it appears in Jubilees. The context of these studies is usually the debate over whether Christianity influenced the rabbinic conception of the Aqedah. The debate is summarized in the opening pages of G. McDowell, « Satan at the Sacrifices of Isaac and Jesus », in New Vistas on Early Judaism and Christianity, L. DiTommaso, G.S. Oegema (ed.), London, 2016, p. 337-354. One pertinent article which the author omitted is L.A. Huizenga, « The Battle for Isaac: The Composition and Function of the Aqedah in the Book of Jubilees », Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha, vol. 13 (2002), p. 33-59. The pre-Christian Jubilees is a valuable witness to the debate. Only one datum is relevant here: Jubilees and the Palestinian Targumim (in the Poem of the Four Nights, Exod 12:42), date the binding of Isaac to Passover. The rabbis (including Lev. Rab. 20:2 and PRE 31) date the binding to Yom Kippur. The Seder Avodah, a Late Antique “synagogal” source, however, connects the binding to Yom Kippur (see M.D. Swartz and J. Yahalom, Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur, University Park, PA, 2005). For other evidence on the gradual transfer of the binding of Isaac from Passover to Yom Kippur, see D. Stökl Ben Ezra, The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity, Tübingen, 2003.
In the seventh week, in the first year, in the first month in this jubilee, on the twelfth day of the month, there was discussion (דברים) in heaven concerning Abraham, that he was faithful in everything and that he loved God, and he remained faithful in every affliction (Jub. 17:15). The demon Mastema is not convinced of Abraham’s righteousness and demands that God put him to the test one final time. God acquiesces to the challenge and commands Abraham to offer his son as a sacrifice. As in the book of Genesis, Abraham’s journey takes three days:

יָכוֹן עָפָר שְׁתֵּי יָמִים אֶת תֹּם וְאֶת שְׁתֵּי בְּנֵי שָׁם אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ אֶת עֲצֵי העו

וילך אל המוקד ב pomi השלישי וירא את המקד במרחק

He rose with the dawn and saddled his donkey. He took two servants with him along with Isaac his son. He split the wood for the burnt offering and went toward the place. On the third day, he saw the place from afar (Jub. 18:3; cf. Gen 22:3-4). Abraham therefore arrives towards the evening of 14 Nisan, the day of preparation, which means that Jubilees coordinates the sacrifice of Isaac with the Paschal sacrifice.

When Abraham returns, he institutes a seven-day festival, which complicates the picture:

ויָעָשׂה עַד הַיּוֹם הַשָּׁבוֹעַ יְמֵי בַּשָּׁמוֹם יָכוֹן אֲבֹעַר וְהִכְּלוֹ נֵאֶשֶׁר הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ וְשָׁבוֹעַ בשלום

He celebrated this festival, a week of days of joy, every year. He called it the festival of the LORD, according to the seven days which he departed and returned in peace (Jub. 18:18). The narrator presumes, in addition to the three days of the outward journey, three days for the return journey, separated, presumably, by 15 Nisan, Passover proper. The seven days remind one of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which immediately follows Passover but is distinct from it (15-21 Nisan, cf. Exod 12:18). However, Abraham’s journey begins before Passover and continues afterward. The meaning of Jubilees 18:18 is not clear, but it is certain that the author intends to correlate the sacrifice of Isaac with the date of Passover. The correlation of the two events does not mean that Abraham himself instituted Passover. Within the narrative, Abraham has already instituted Sukkot, which the narrator designates by name (Jub. 16:21). The word “Passover,” however, is not mentioned before Jubilees 49, the regulations pertaining to the commemoration of the Passover in Egypt. It is the culmination of

29 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit. p. 316.
30 Ibid. p. 317.
31 Ibid. p. 318.
the institution of various holidays, which is a major *leitmotif* of *Jubilees*. The most important patriarchs each institute at least one major holiday: Enoch establishes the calendar, including the observance of the Sabbath (*Jub. 4:18*); Noah institutes Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks (*Jub. 6:18-22*); Abraham institutes Sukkot, the Festival of Booths (*Jub. 16:20-31*); Jacob institutes Yom Kippur (*Jub. 34:18-19*); finally, Moses institutes Passover (*Jub. 49*). One major patriarch is missing from this list. Adam offers the first sacrifice (*Jub. 3:27*), but he does not institute any feast day. In *PRE*, Adam is the only patriarch to institute a holiday.

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* resembles *Jubilees* only in that the authors of both works attribute contemporary religious practices to the ancient patriarchs. This idea in itself is not unusual, especially in Late Antiquity. A key component of Islam is the belief that Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian but a Muslim (Q 3:67). Christian works such as the *Cave of Treasures* depict the antediluvian patriarchs venerating saints and celebrating the Eucharist, a Christian rite intimately tied to Passover (see *infra* Section 8.5). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*’s attribution of Jewish practices to Adam—not just Passover and the *havdalah* but also observance of the Sabbath (*PRE 20*) and marriage under a *chuppah* (*PRE 12*)—seems to participate in the same discourse by transforming Adam into a Jew.

### 5.4 The Fallen Angels (*PRE 22 & 34; Jub. 5 & 10*)

Almost every researcher who has examined *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* observes that *PRE* 22 reintroduces the myth of the Watchers, fallen angels who took human wives and fathered giants, into Jewish literature. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 22 certainly departs from one established rabbinic tradition by portraying the “sons of God” (Gen 6:1-4) as fallen angels rather than as human beings. However, it is an overgeneralization to equate the fallen angel story of *PRE* 22 with the myth of the Watchers found in the *Book of the Watchers* (1 Enoch 1-36) or *Jubilees* 5. A closer examination of the evidence reveals that the primary source of...
PRE 22 is Genesis 6. This conclusion is even more surprising in light of the evidence that classical rabbinic literature does, in fact, know the myth of the Watchers. Despite this negative assessment, an allusion to the ancient Watcher tradition does appear in PRE 34.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 22 opens with the separation of the children of Adam into Sethites and Cainites (see also infra Section 8.7). The Cainites soon sink into debauchery, which attracts a group of angels who had fallen from their heavenly dwelling. The angels couple with the Cainite women and produce giants. The giants are both violent and lascivious. Noah preaches to them, to no avail. The giants boast that they are tall enough to survive the rains and strong enough to stop up the sources of the water, but God heats the flood waters and kills them all.

The particularity of PRE 22 is not its alleged adherence to the Watcher myth but its departure from Palestinian rabbinic tradition. Genesis Rabbah 26:5 interprets the “sons of God” (בני אלוהים) in Genesis 6:1-4 as corrupt nobles who exercise a droit du Seigneur over the “daughters of men” (בנות האדם). This interpretation is based on the ambiguity of the word for God, elohim (אלוהים), which, in certain contexts, seems to indicate human leaders (e.g., Exod 21:6). The tradition euhemerizes the biblical myth, whose literal meaning indicates that divine beings did indeed couple with human women. Apparently, some rabbis were uncomfortable with this idea. In this sense, PRE 22 is an excellent example of what Rachel Adelman termed (by means of Freud) the “return of the repressed”37. The old interpretation resurfaced through re-reading the biblical text.

Not all rabbis objected to the ancient tradition. In two passages (b. Yoma 67b; b. Niddah 61a), the Babylonian Talmud alludes to the names of leaders of the Watchers, Shemihazah (שمىושא) and Asael (אסאאל), under the slightly different forms Shemhazai (שمىושאיא) and Azael (אזהאל). In all likelihood, the Talmudic tradition alludes to a short tale called the Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael, which, however, is only preserved in late medieval Hebrew anthologies38. This

38 J.T. Milik, The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4, Oxford, 1976, p. 317-339. A.Y. Reed, Fallen Angels, op. cit., p. 233-272, rejects the Talmudic citations as allusions and believes that the Midrash Shemhazai and Azael is a post-Talmudic product of Jewish interaction with Christian, Jewish-Christian, Manichaean, Mandaean, Muslim, and other sources. However, a pre-Talmudic redaction of the Midrash and its dissemination within rabbinic literature is the simplest explanation that fits all of the evidence. When later rabbinic works allude to the story of the Watchers, they inevitably mention Shemhazai (Uzzai/Azzah) and Azael (e.g. 3 Enoch 5; Deuteronomy Rabbah 11:10, Pesikta Rabbati 34; Aggadat Bereshit to Gen 6:2). Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 22 is a major exception—it does not mention these angels at all.
work, which is filled with rabbinic motifs\(^{39}\), is nevertheless partially based on a Second Temple work, the *Book of Giants*\(^{40}\). The *Midrash* is a perfect example of what *PRE* is not: A rabbinic composition that engages directly with Second Temple literature. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not share a single detail with the *Midrash* beyond a connection to Genesis 6:1-4. Therefore, *PRE 22* breaks with rabbinic tradition in two major ways. It ignores the euhemeristic tradition of *Genesis Rabbah*, but it also ignores the traces of the ancient Watcher tradition preserved in rabbinic literature.

In fact, none of the motifs specific to the Watcher myth appears in *PRE 22*. The *Book of Jubilees* serves as an instructive point of comparison. The word “Watchers” (עירין), for example, never appears in *PRE* (cf. *Jub.* 4:15:22; 7:21). The leaders of the Watchers are never named\(^{41}\). The angels do not teach humans forbidden lore (or any lore, for that matter, cf. *Jub.* 4:15). The evil angels are never bound (cf. *Jub.* 5:6.10). Their children, the giants, do not engage in cannibalism, their chief crime in the ancient sources (cf. *Jub.* 5:2; 7:28-29). In *PRE 22*, the giants are still alive at the time of the Flood. In the ancient Watcher myth, the giants kill each other off prior to the Flood (cf. *Jub.* 5:9). Enoch, who is integral to the ancient Watcher tradition, is nowhere mentioned in *PRE 22* (cf. *Jub.* 4:22). Almost every element of *PRE 22* can be inferred from Genesis 6 alone\(^{42}\).

Katharina Keim, however, has drawn attention to *PRE 34* as the conclusion of the story of the fallen angels and the giants\(^{43}\). Although Keim does not note it, this portion of the story is

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\(^{39}\) In the version from *Sefer ha-Zikhronot* translated by Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, op. cit., p. 327-328, one finds references to the wicked “generation of Enosh”, angelic hostility to the creation of man, the notion of the Evil Inclination (יצר הרע), and the magical invocation of the Ineffable Name (שם המפורש). None of these ideas are found in Second Temple Jewish literature, yet they are all typical of rabbinic literature. Note that these motifs congregate in the first part of the tale, the part that is not parallel to the *Book of Giants*. The first two motifs have inspired monographs: S.D. Fraade, *Enosh and His Generation: Pre-Israelite Hero and History in Postbiblical Interpretation*, Chico, CA, 1984, and P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur rabbinischen Engelvorstellung*, Berlin, 1975. For the Evil Inclination, see E.E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, translated by Israel Abrahams, 2 vol. Jerusalem, 1975, vol. 1, p. 471-483. For the Ineffable Name, *Ibid.*, p. 124-134.


\(^{41}\) The *Book of Jubilees* does not name the Watchers either. However, the absence of the names in *PRE* is even more striking because the names of the chief angels are found in the Talmud.

\(^{42}\) The one element which does not come from Genesis, the distinction between the “sons of Seth” and the “daughters of Cain” is a Christian tradition that will be discussed in Section 8.7.

parallel to the *Book of Jubilees*. The chapter is a homily on the resurrection of the dead. An early passage reads:

 אבל דור המבול אף ביום הדין
אין עומדים שנאמר רפאים בל יקומי
(וּלָלַּמְתָּו וּמְדָרָא יְדֵה לְכֵל הַמִּשְׁמָר וְהָלָּא לְכָל הַמֵּעָלָה)

But the generation of the Flood, even on the Day of Judgment, will not stand, as it is written, “The ghosts (רפאים) will not rise” (Isa 26:14). All of their souls were turned into spirits and demons (מזיקין) [afflicting] humanity. In the future to come, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, will banish them from the world (PRE 34).

The basic idea, that the generation of the Flood will not be resurrected, is Talmudic (*b. Sanhedrin* 108a), but PRE identifies their ghosts as evil spirits. This is not the conventional rabbinic explanation of the origin of demons. According to *Genesis Rabbah* 7:5, the demons are disembodied souls left uncreated on the eve of the first Sabbath. The explanation in PRE 34, however, is found in *Jubilees*. The first reference to demons appears in *Jubilees* 7:27, where Noah observes that demons have begun to appear following the Flood. In *Jubilees* 10:5, in the midst of rampant demonic attacks on his children, Noah invokes God and mentions “thy Watchers, the father of these spirits” (עיריך אב והרוחות אלה).

The *Book of Jubilees* did not invent this idea. The *Book of the Watchers* (*1 Enoch* 15) is the earliest source to mention that the demons are the ghosts of giants. Annette Yoshiko Reed has drawn attention to similar ideas in the Pseudo-Clementine Romance (*Homilies VIII.7-8*), an early Jewish-Christian work indebted to Second Temple sources. Loren Stuckenbruck has offered the provocative idea that this story informed all Second Temple demonology. He even suggested that the demons in the Gospels were the spirits of the Enochic giants. In any case, this brief passage of PRE 34 attests a genuinely ancient Second Temple Jewish idea.

To our great fortune, we have clues to the manner of the transmission of this particular idea. Section 3.1.1 of the present study describes *Sefer Asaph*, a ninth or tenth century work whose

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44 D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit., p. 204.
45 See also J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion*, New York, 1939, p. 44-60, for rabbinic views on demons.
prologue is parallel to *Jubilees* 10. In fact, it appears to preserve the source of *Jubilees* 10. *Sefer Asaph* is functionally a Solomonic book of magic, since it is attributed to Asaph b. Berakhiah, the court magician of Solomon in medieval lore. It is precisely within the Solomonic tradition that one continues to find the idea that the demons are the spirits of the giants. For example, Loren Stuckenbruck noted that the Late Antique *Testament of Solomon* presents the demon Asmodeus as one of the children of the Watchers (*T. Solomon* 5:3 and 17:1). The Solomonic tradition is vast, and books of Solomonic magic circulated in both Hebrew and Arabic. It is through this channel that *PRE* probably acquired an isolated motif of the Watcher myth while knowing nothing of the rest of the tradition.

5.5 The Wives of the Antediluvian Patriarchs (*PRE 23; Jub. 4:33*)

The list of the wives of the patriarchs is probably the most widespread tradition first attested in the *Book of Jubilees*. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not give a full list of the names of the wives of the patriarchs, but it might contain a reference to Emzara, the wife of Noah according to Second Temple sources—not only *Jubilees* but also the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1 QapGen VI). This differs from earlier rabbinic tradition, which gives Naamah as the name of Noah’s wife (*Gen. Rab. 23:3*). The wives tradition as a whole has no precedent in earlier rabbinic literature, which is even dismissive of attempts to name anonymous biblical characters, such as the mother of Abraham (*b. Baba Batra* 91a). The only utility of such lists, the Talmud states, is to answer the *minim* (*>*הַמְּנִים*). Although this passage names several anonymous women, no similar tradition is found elsewhere in rabbinic literature, and the Talmud only names one wife of a patriarch—Amathlai (*>*אַמתָלָא*), the wife of Terah.

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53. The term refers to diverse non-rabbinic groups. It is usually translated as “heretic.”

The reference to Emzara in \textit{PRE} is complicated by textual problems, but even if \textit{PRE} knows this part of the wives tradition, so did many other Christian and Muslim authors.

Menahem Kister claims to have found the name Emzara, the wife of Noah in \textit{Jubilees} (4:33) in the \textit{editio princeps} of \textit{PRE} (Constantinople, 1514)\textsuperscript{55}. This edition refers to the “Necklace of \textit{mzr}‘their mother” (רברד של מזרת אמא)\textsuperscript{56}. Kister emends the text to the “cloak of Emzara their mother” (רדיד של אמזרה אמא). This cloak is used to cover the naked Noah after his experiments in viticulture (cf. Gen 9:20-27). The Venice Edition of Dagmar Börner-Klein has a completely different reading:

\begin{quote}
ולקחו כסות עמהם והלכו להם אחורנית וכסו את עורתם אביהם
\end{quote}

They took a covering with them, and they walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father (\textit{PRE} 23)\textsuperscript{57}.

The printed edition is at odds with most of the manuscript evidence. It is probably an attempt to correct a difficult text. According to Kister, most manuscripts read “They took the cloak of the East with them” (ולקח רדיד שלמזרח עמן) or some variation, and this is indeed the reading found in JTS Enelow 866 (which, however, lacks \textit{שלמזרח} and in Gerald Friedlander’s translation of Abraham Epstein’s manuscript\textsuperscript{58}.

Kister’s emendation is plausible, but there is a question of context: Why is Emzara (or, rather, her cloak) introduced into the narrative now, when she has not been mentioned before? And what is the significance of her cloak? The \textit{editio princeps} itself could be an emended text, an attempt to make sense of the “cloak of the East.” In this scenario, the Renaissance-era printer (a near contemporary of Samuel Algazi, who knew the names of the wives\textsuperscript{59}) adds the name of the wife of Noah, but the original author of \textit{PRE} does not necessarily know the tradition. In any case, there is no tradition about Emzara’s cloak (or necklace) in \textit{Jubilees}. This unique detail could not have come from that work.

If one allows that Emzara is part of the original text, there is at least ample precedent within contemporary literature. First, Byzantine authors knew the tradition from the Greek \textit{Jubilees}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} M. Kister, « Ancient Material in Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer », \textit{op. cit.}, p. 79-81.
\item \textsuperscript{56} It appears on folio 16a of the first edition hosted on Lewis Barth’s website “Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer Electronic Text Editing Project”: \texttt{http://pre-project.usc.edu/graphics/index-01.html}.
\item \textsuperscript{57} D. Börner-Klein, \textit{Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 127.
\item \textsuperscript{58} G. Friedlander, \textit{Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 171.
\item \textsuperscript{59} See \textit{supra} Section 3.1.8.
\end{itemize}
(see supra Section 4.2.3), but there are also sources closer to Abbasid Palestine, where PRE was written. While there is an isolated Syriac list of the wives of the patriarchs, the list of the wives appears to have circulated widely within Arabic literature in particular. This is true of both Christian and Muslim literature. For instance, the historian al-Tabari (d. 923), citing Muhammad ibn Ishaq (d. 757), names almost all of the Antediluvian wives, including Emzara. The biographer Ibn Sa’d (d. 845) knows Adam and Eve’s daughters Awan and Azura. Al-Maqdisi (d. 991) mentions the wives of Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Among Christian authors, Eutychius of Alexandria (d. 940) knows Awan and Azura, while one Hippolytus, the “Syrian expositor of the Targum” (익문티우스 مفسر السرياني الترجوم) names the wives of Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Finally, Shi’ite tradition gives “Amura” as the name of the wife of Noah, an apparent corruption of “Emzara” (ز ل for ز).

Arabic literature, therefore, is one channel through which PRE could have known the name Emzara. However, these names constitute the only tradition from Jubilees reflected in the Arabic sources. The names of the wives are incorporated into narratives which are otherwise based on the Cave of Treasures. Except for al-Maqdisi, every one of the authorities named in the previous paragraph reappears in chapter seven as links in the transmission of the Cave of Treasures (see infra Section 7.1).

5.6 Diamerismos (PRE 24; Jub. 8-10)

The word Diamerismos refers generally to the tradition of the division of the earth among the sons of Noah following the Flood and particularly to a section of the chronicle of Hippolytus of Rome (d. 235) dealing with this subject. The theme of the Diamerismos has Second Temple roots. It appears in Jubilees 8-10, the Genesis Apocryphon (1 QapGen XVI-XVII),
and the *Antiquities* of Josephus (I.122-147). Furthermore, it is quite widely represented in Late Antique and Medieval literature, including Greek, Syriac, and Arabic sources. The tradition is absent in classical rabbinic literature.

Gerald Friedlander claims that *PRE* briefly summarizes the detailed description of the territory of the three sons of Noah found in *Jubilees* 8:10-31 \(^{69}\). The printed edition reads:

ברך לשב לבנים וסריר ונהתיות או יאר נשבת ברך לשב לבנים וסריר ונהתיות או יאר נשבת

He blessed Shem and his sons, dark but handsome. He gave them all of the habitable earth. He blessed Ham and his sons, dark like a raven, and he gave them the coast of the sea. He blessed Japhet and his sons, all of them white and comely, and he gave them the wilderness and the fields. These are the inheritances that he bestowed on them (*PRE* 24) \(^{70}\).

The parallel passage in *Jubilees* is too long to quote here, but the details are familiar. First, Noah allot territory to his three sons (*Jub.* 8:10-31). The portions are further subdivided among the children of the three sons (*Jub.* 9:1-13). Finally, the three sons swear an oath not to invade each other’s territory (*Jub.* 9:14-15). Canaan, the son of Ham, eventually breaches this oath (*Jub.* 10:27-34).

The long passage in *Jubilees* serves two purposes. First, it gives a “scientific” description of the world based on Genesis 10 and the Ionian World Map, where each son inhabits one of the three principal continents \(^{71}\). Second, it explains why the Land of Israel is called Canaan (it also anticipates the conquest of Joshua, although *Jubilees* does not state this openly). Neither of these goals interests the author of *PRE*. He gives the broadest outline of the geographic division. Frankly, it is not entirely clear that *PRE* is even referring to the same tradition. He has no interest whatsoever in the division of the nations or in the transgression of Canaan, which goes unmentioned. This is a striking contrast with *Midrash Aggadah*, which introduces this tradition in order to explain why Canaan was singled out for Noah’s curse \(^{72}\).

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\(^{69}\) G. Friedlander, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. xxiv-xxv.

\(^{70}\) D. Börner-Klein, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. 128-129. In G. Friedlander, *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, op. cit., p. 172-173, this passage is found at the end of *PRE* 23. In fact, God, is the agent in the printed edition, but in the manuscripts (including Friedlander’s base manuscript and JTS Enelow 866), the agent is Noah. I have only quoted what is common to all three accounts.


\(^{72}\) S. Buber, *Agadischer Commentar zum Pentateuch nach einer Handschrift aus Aleppo [Midrash Aggadah]*, 2 vol., Vienna, 1894 [Hebrew], vol. 1, p. 27. See supra Section 3.1.7.
In any case, minimalist variants of the *Diemerismos* tradition are found in contemporary Christian and Muslim literature. The *Cave of Treasures* (6th c.), for instance, mentions the tripartite division in a few sentences:

\[
:\text{ܢ ܓܪ̈ܒܝܐ ܘܡ݂ܢ ܩܒܛܘܪܝܣ ܘܥܕܡܐ ܢ ܡܕܢܚܐ ܘܥܕܡܐ ܠܕܩܠܬܐ ܘܡܝܦܬ ܠܒܝܟܝܢ ܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܢܘܕ ܕܒܣܘܦܝܲܘܒܢܝ ܐܦ ܡܨܥܬܗ ܢܡܕܢܚܐ ܥܕܡܐ ܠܝܡܐ ܗܕܪܣܘܠܣܝﺴ ܕܝܠܗܘܢ ܐܝܬܝܗ ܪܣ ܡܢ ܦܫܝܡ ܠܒܝܟܝܢ ܡܓܙܘܙ ܘܒܢܝ ܘܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܗܢܘܢ ܐܚܝܕܝܢ ܕܐܪܥܐ ܕܗܢ ܢܡܥܪܒܐ ܚܡ ܠܒܝܟܝܢ ܟܠܗ ܦܢܝܬܐ ܬܡܢܝܬܐ ܘܩܠܝܠ ܡܒܢܝ.}
\]

The children of Japhet possessed the East of Nod and the fringes of the East until the Tigris, from the northern limits and from Bactria until Gazuz [Gades?]. The children of Shem possessed [the territory from] Persia and from the East until the Adriatic Sea. The middle of the earth also belongs to them, and they hold the government. [The children of Ham possess all the regions of the South and a little of the West] (*COT* 24:20-22).

The Muslim historian al-Tabari also gives a brief summary of this tradition:

\[
:\text{فجعل لسام وسطا من الارض فغيها بيت المقدس والنيل والغرات ودجلة وسيحان وجيحان وفيشون وذلك ما بين فيشون الى شرقى النيل وما بين منخر ريح الجنوب الى منخر الشمال وجعل لجام قسمه غربي النيل فما وراءه الى منخر ريح الدبور وجعل قسم يافث فى فيشون فما وراءه الى منخر ريح الصبا}
\]

To Shem, he gave the middle of the earth where Jerusalem, the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Sayhan, the Jayhan (Gihon), and the Fayshon (Pishon) are located. It extends from the Pishon to east of the Nile and from the region from where the south wind blows to the region from where the north wind blows. To Ham, he gave the part (of the earth) west of the Nile and regions beyond to the region from where the west wind blows. The part he gave to Japheth was located at the Pishon and regions beyond to the region from where the east wind blows.

The Arabic and Syriac examples do not provide a closer parallel to *PRE* than the one found in *Jubilees*, but they do demonstrate that the idea of the *Diemerismos* was so widespread that there is no reason why *Jubilees* should be singled out as a source of *PRE*.

5.7 Bilhah and Zilpah (*PRE* 36; *Jub. 28:9)

In the book of Genesis, Bilhah and Zilpah are the maidservants of Rachel and Leah and the mothers of Dan and Naphtali (Bilhah) and Gad and Asher (Zilpah). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 36 states that the maidservants are sisters or, at least, half-sisters, since they are both daughters of Laban, the father of Rachel and Leah. This passage builds on earlier rabbinic tradition that the

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73 Read ܒܩܛܪܝܘܣ  for ܩܒܛܘܪܝܣ.

74 S.-M. Ri, *La Caverne des trésors: les deux recensions syriques*, Louvain, 1987, p. 193 (Occidental Recension). Verse 22, which is missing, is supplied from British Museum Add. 25875 in the critical apparatus (Ri’s Manuscript A). For the “recensions” of *COT*, see infra Section 6.1.1.


76 See further W. Witakowski, « The Division of the Earth Between the Descendants of Noah in Syriac Tradition », *Aram*, vol. 5 (1993), p. 635-656, for examples of the *Diemerismos* in Syriac sources.
four matriarchs are all related. Gerald Friedlander believed that this tradition comes from *Jubilees*\(^77\). The *Book of Jubilees*, following a broader Second Temple tradition, mentions that the Bilhah and Zilpah are sisters (*Jub*. 28:9). However, they are not the daughters of Laban but rather the children of slaves, which undercuts the rabbinic tradition’s elevation of the servants to the same level as the other matriarchs.

In this case, *PRE* does not break with rabbinic tradition because the tradition is, in fact, rabbinic. *Pirqê de-Rabbi Eliezer* 36 states:

"לחק לבן את ששת שפוחתיוותן ללוש בנותיה וית שפוחתיי וחלה בנותיה וחלי לא לפדים"

Laban took his two handmaidens, and he gave them to his two daughters. Were they his handmaidens? Were they not his daughters? But this teaches you that the children of a man by his concubine are called handmaidens (*PRE* 36)\(^78\).

*Genesis Rabbah* 74:13 mentions the tradition in a different context, but the emphasis is the same. Bilhah and Zilpah are also the daughters of Laban:

"ויען לבן ויאמר אל יעקב הבנות בנתי וגו' (Gen 31:43) אמר ר ראובן כל בנתי יהנהנהות (Gen 31:43) היר ארכין"

Laban answered and said to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters” (Gen 31:34). R. Reuben said: They were all his daughters, for “The daughters are my daughters” indicates two, while “What will I do for my daughters?” (Gen 31:34) indicates four (*Gen. Rab. 74:13*)\(^79\).

In the biblical text cited here, Laban accuses Jacob of having absconded with all of his property. He refers to his daughters and their children, without making a distinction between the children born to Leah and Rachel and the children born to Bilhah and Zilpah. R. Reuben understands this to mean that Bilhah and Zilpah were Laban’s daughters too.

Gerald Friedlander has compared this tradition to a verse in *Jubilees* which states that Bilhah and Zilphah are sisters:

"ובעה אםר عبر שבועים ים מששה לאוה והלáb לב אוח ליעקב למשע בנות אחDetroit שاعتماد שמעת" "ויוה לאה את השלדה אחות לפלת לאמה"

---


\(^78\) D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit., p. 224

When Leah’s weeklong banquet ended, Laban gave Rachel to Jacob in order that he would serve him an additional seven years. He gave her Bilhah, the sister of Zilpah, as a handmaiden (Jub. 28:9)80.

Note that while Jubilees agrees with PRE that the two handmaidens are sisters, Jubilees says nothing about their paternity. The tradition is not explained, simply assumed.

While Jubilees leaves the question open, other Second Temple and early Christian sources provide a genealogy for Bilhah and Zilpah. They are emphatically not the daughters of Laban. Michael Stone has assembled all of the relevant evidence, namely the Qumran manuscript 4Q215 and its Christian analogue, the Testament of Naphtali81. According to T. Naphtali 1:9-12, the patriarch states:

ἡ δὲ μήτηρ μου ἐστι Βάλλα, θυγάτηρ Ῥωθέου, ἀδελφοῦ Δεββόρας, τῆς τροφοῦ Ρεβέκκας ἦτις ἐν μία ἡμέρᾳ ἔτεχθη ἐν ἤ καὶ ἡ Ραχήλ. ὁ δὲ Ρώθεος ἐκ τοῦ γένους ῾Υν Ἀβραάμ, Χαλδαῖος, θεοσέβης, ἐλεύθερος καὶ εὐγενής, καὶ αἰχμαλωτισθεῖς ἠγοράσθη ὑπὸ Λαβάν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ Αίναν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ εἰς γυναῖκα ἦτις ἔτεχε θυγατέρα, καὶ ἔκαλετο τὸ ἄνωμα αὐτῆς Ζέλλαν, ἐπονομάση ἡς κόμης ἐν ἤ ἡ ἡμιμαλωτεύθη, ἐξής ἔτεχε τὴν Βάλλαν λέγουσα, Καινόσπουδός μου ἡ θυγάτηρ εὐθὺς γὰρ τεχθεῖσα ἐσπευδῇ βηλάζειν.

And my mother is Bilhah the daughter of Rotheus, a brother of Debora, Rebecca’s nurse, who was born the same day as Rachel. And Rotheus was of the family of Abraham, a Chaldean, god-fearing, freeborn and noble. And after having been taken captive he was bought by Laban, and he gave him Aina his servant to wife, who bore him a daughter, and she called her name Zilpah, after the name of the village where he had been taken captive. Next she bore Bilhah, saying: “My daughter is eager for what is new”; for immediately after she was born she was eager to suck”82.

The Qumran manuscript 4Q215 gives a nearly identical account. In this text, the parents are named Ahiyot (אחיות) and Hannah (חנה). The other details are the same: Ahiyot is the brother of Deborah; both parents are servants of Laban; Zilpah is older than Bilhah; Zilpah is named after the city of her father’s captivity; Bilhah is named after her eagerness to feed. This account, rather than the rabbinic tradition, informs the tradition in Jubilees.

Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer, therefore, depends on rabbinic tradition, while Jubilees attests an older, separate tradition. The two traditions coexisted. Bereshit Rabbati (11th c.) awkwardly juxtaposes the two:

80 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit., p. 391.
ויתן לבן [הלמ] את הלפם [שפחתה] (Gen 29:24). He gave [her] Zilpah [his maid servant]. Were they his maidservants? Rather, the daughters of man by his concubines are called maidservants by a custom of the land. Someone says: The father of Bilhah and Zilpah was the brother of Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, and Ahotay was his name. Before he married, he was captured, but Laban redeemed him and gave him his maidservant as a wife. She gave birth to a daughter, and she called her Zilpah after the name of the city where he [Ahotay] was captured. She gave birth again and named her Bilhah, because when she was born she was eager to suck. He said, “How eager is my daughter!” When Jacob went to Laban, Ahotay, their father, was dead. Laban took Havah, his maidservant, and her two daughters, and he gave Zilpah, the older, to his elder daughter, Leah, and Bilhah, the younger, to his younger daughter, Rachel.

The opening lines, until the Aramaic expression “someone says” (אתי דאמר), are an adaptation of PRE 36. The rest is based on the tradition from 4Q215 and the Testament of Naphtali. The resulting tradition, however, makes no sense. The opening lines suggest that Laban is the father of Bilhah and Zilpah, but the rest of the passage claims they are the children of servants. They are indeed Laban’s maids, not his daughters.

5.8 The Election of Levi (PRE 37; Jub. 32:1-3)

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 37 describes the election of Levi, the third son of Jacob, to the priesthood. After Jacob “tithes” Levi among his sons, Levi ascends to heaven and is invested by God as priest and as the ancestor of the priestly tribe. Menahem Kister claims that every detail of the passage is paralleled in the Book of Jubilees and in the Testament of Levi, but the situation is more complicated. Although the election of Levi is usually studied in the context of Second Temple literature, there is also a rabbinic parallel. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer is further distinguished from Jubilees in several ways: PRE 37 changes the location of the event and the manner in which Jacob selects Levi. Levi also ascends to heaven in PRE, which

83 H. Albeck, Midrash Bereshit Rabbati, Jerusalem, 1940 [Hebrew], p. 119.
84 M.E. Stone, « The Genealogy of Bilhah », op. cit. concludes that Bereshit Rabbati knows traditions found in 4Q215 but not the Greek Testament of Naphtali. R. Moshe probably draws on a Second Temple source rather than the Greek Testaments.
does not happen in *Jubilees*. Rather, the ascension appears in the *Testament of Levi* and its Jewish analogue, the *Aramaic Levi Document*, found at Qumran and in the Cairo Genizah. This latter work could be a source of *PRE*.

According to *PRE* 37, Jacob tithes Levi as he crosses the Jabbok. At the moment of the crossing, an angel appears to remind Jacob of a vow that he had previously made to tithe everything he had if God prospered his journey (Gen 28:21-22). Jacob is also compelled to tithe one of his sons. He separates the four firstborn sons before he begins counting:

\[
\text{אמר לו המלך לא דכ אמרים לכל ראש חמתי לא תשם כןו י ConcurrentHashMapן ל (Gen 28:22)}
\]

The angel said to him, “Did you not say, ‘All which you give to me, I will give you a tenth’ (Gen 28:22)?” What did Jacob do? He took all of the possessions that he had brought from Paddan-Aram, and they were five thousand livestock, and [he gave] five hundred. The angel spoke to Jacob a second time, “Do you not have sons? You did not tithe them!” What did Jacob do? He separated the four firstborn of their mothers, and eight remained. He began [counting] from Simeon and finished with Benjamin, who was in the womb of his mother. He began again with Simeon and finished with Levi, and Levi went up, a tithe holy to the Lord, as it is written, “The tenth will be holy to the LORD” (Lev 27:32)87.

In this example, the law of the firstborn clashes with the law of the tithe. The firstborn cannot be tithed because they are already consecrated to God (cf. Exod 13:13-16). Therefore, the four firstborn sons are removed, and eight are left. Once Jacob reaches Benjamin (number 8) he resumes counting with Simeon, his second son, (number 9), and ends with Levi (number 10).

Once again, it is unnecessary to postulate a Second Temple source for *PRE* because the tradition itself is rabbinic. *Genesis Rabbah* states:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ר' יを通して הסכינים בשם ר' גדת אחא סאל את ר' מאיי אמר לא אים אמרים יحكבייה (Gen 28:22) (י' והפרישו} \\
\text{יה האמר לה bom co אמר לכל ראש התם לא תשם כןו י ConcurrentHashMapן ל (Gen 48:5)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{'ר' הני} \text{ סכינים בשם ר' גדת אחא סאל את ר' מאיי אמר לא אים אמרים יحكבייה (Gen 28:22) (י' והפרישו} \\
\text{יה האמר לה bom co אמר לכל ראש התם לא תשם כןו י ConcurrentHashMapן ל (Gen 48:5)} \\
\end{align*}

\[\text{אייספ קמח אמר לא אים אמרים יحكבייה (Gen 48:5)} \\
\]

R. Joshua of Siknin said in the name of R. Levi: A certain Samaritan asked R. Meir, “Tell me, do you not say that Jacob was truthful?” R. Meir said to him, “Yes.” The Samaritan said, “Did he not say ‘All which you give to me, I will give you a tenth’ (Gen 28:22)?” R. Meir said, “Yes, and he separated the tribe of Levi, [which is one from ten].” The Samaritan said: “Why did he not set aside the two remaining tribes?” R. Meir said: “Were there only twelve tribes? Were there not fourteen? ‘Ephraim and Manasses, just as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine’ (Gen 48:5).” The Samaritan said: “In that case, if you add water, you must add flour.” R. Meir said, “Do you not acknowledge that there are four matriarchs?” The Samaritan said, “Yes.” R. Meir said: “Remove from them the four firstborn of the four matriarchs. The firstborn is holy, and the holy does not exempt the holy.” The Samaritan said: “Blessed is your nation and everything within it” (Gen. Rab. 70:7).

This passage is also found (almost verbatim) in Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana 10:6. Although PRE does not introduce the idea of fourteen tribes, the basic principle is the same. The rabbinic tradition is noteworthy since it presumes that the tradition of the tithe of Levi is generally known. There is also an oblique reference to the tithe of Levi in the piyyut Atah Konanta ‘Olam be-Rov Hesed of Yose b. Yose (5th c.)91, which shows that the tradition even appears in Late Antique Jewish literature outside of the rabbinic corpus.

The Book of Jubilees reports the tithe of Levi but does not know the idea of separating the firstborn. Its tradition is simpler: Jacob starts with Benjamin, the twelfth son, and counts backwards to Levi, the third son, but the tenth in reverse order:

In those days, Rachel became pregnant. And Benjamin, her son, was in her womb. Jacob counted his sons from him and went up, and Levi fell within the portion of God. His father clothed him in the vestments of priesthood, and he filled his hands (Jub. 32:3).92

The separation of the firstborn, then, is a rabbinic idea in PRE which has no parallel in Jubilees. Furthermore, Jubilees and dependent literature (such as the Byzantine chronicles) affirm that the tithe took place at Bethel (Gen 35). In PRE, Jacob offers the tithe much earlier, as he crosses the Jabbok (Gen 32). Only PRE and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (Gen. 32:25) mention Jabbok and the angel in conjunction with this tradition.

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88 Meaning: This just increases the problem.
89 Meaning: The law of the firstborn does not exempt the law of the tithe.
The subsequent ascension of Levi in PRE, however, has no parallel in rabbinic literature. This poses a problem. The tradition does not appear in Jubilees, but it does appear in the fifth chapter of the Testament of Levi, an early Christian work rooted in Second Temple traditions. The Testament of Levi, however, barely alludes to the tithe of Levi (T. Levi 9:3). This is not the only instance where a medieval Hebrew work assembles traditions found separately in Jubilees and in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Two other examples were discussed in chapter three. For example, Midrash Vayissa’u (supra Section 3.1.5) knows the war against Edom from Jubilees 37-38 and the war against the Canaanites from T. Judah 3-8. Midrash Tadshe (Section 3.1.6) knows the birthdates of the patriarchs from Jubilees 28 and the death dates from the various Testaments. In both cases, following Martha Himmelfarb, I deemed it more likely that the Hebrew work preserved the common source of Jubilees and the Testaments than that the medieval author translated portions from both Jubilees and the Testaments and later combined them. This is also the most likely solution in the case of PRE.

In this case, a possible common source has survived in the form of the Aramaic Levi Document (ALD). Although the work is fragmentary, it attests both the election and the ascension of Levi, albeit not in the same manuscript. The Aramaic Levi Document is one of the oldest Second Temple writings, perhaps as old as the third century BCE. It was also found within the Cairo Genizah in manuscripts dating from the ninth and tenth centuries. Fragments of the work are preserved in medieval Greek and Syriac manuscripts. The

96 From the translation of J.R. Davila, “Aramaic Levi” op. cit., p. 134-5. “Then I set out in… to my father Jacob and whe[n] … from Abel Mayyin. Then I lay down and I myself stayed. Then I was shown a vision… in a vision of visions, and I saw the hea[vens] … under me, until it clung to the heave[ns] … to me the gates of heaven and a single angel …” (4QLevi 21-18). Levi meets his father after the vision: “…when Ja[cob [my father] was tith[ing] everything that he had, according to his vow…. I was first at the head of the [priest]hood and to me of all his ons he gave the sacrificial gift of the tit[he] to God, and he clothed me with the vestment of the priesthood and ordained me and I became a priest to the God of eternity” (Bodleian col. a).
98 Ibid., p. 122-123.
cumulative evidence, however scanty, shows that some Jews—as well as some Christians—were still reading ALD in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Perhaps the work was better known then than in subsequent periods. This is one of the rare instances where it seems possible that a Second Temple work directly influenced PRE. In this particular case, there is concrete evidence of the document’s preservation in its original language.

5.9 The Death of Esau (PRE 39; Jub. 37-38)

In his unpublished doctoral thesis, Stephen Ballaban suggested that the violent death of Esau in PRE 39 is a variation of the war between Jacob and Esau found in Jubilees 37-38, during which Esau also dies violently\(^{100}\). Ballaban claims that the tradition was mediated via Midrash Vayissa’u. While Midrash Vayissa’u and Jubilees 37-38 have a great deal in common, there is hardly a detail shared between these sources and PRE 39\(^{101}\). Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 39 is transparently indebted to an earlier rabbinic tradition found in (for example) the Babylonian Talmud (b. Sotah 13a)\(^{102}\). Nevertheless, Ballaban is not the only person to make this claim. Many years earlier, Gerald Friedlander made the same argument, so there is some need to disentangle the two traditions\(^{103}\).

According to PRE 39, Esau claims the Cave of Machpelah as his own property after the death of Jacob. He is met with resistance by the sons of Jacob. During the confrontation, Esau is killed by the son of Dan:

When they came to the Cave of Machpelah, Esau came upon them from Mount Seir in order to stir up trouble. He said: “The Cave of Machpelah belongs to me.” What did Joseph do? He sent Naphtali to consult the stars and then go down to Egypt in order to bring up the perpetual deed that was in their hands. Therefore it is written, “Naphtali is


\(^{101}\) Ibid., p. 112 states that both PRE and Midrash Vayissa’u, against Jubilees, locate Esau’s grave in the Cave of Machpelah, but this is untrue. Only PRE states that Esau (specifically, his head) was buried in Machpelah.

\(^{102}\) The story also appears in the “New Version” of Genesis Rabbah 97 that is printed at the end of the Vilna edition of Midrash Rabbah. It is part of a separate midrash on Jacob’s blessings (Gen 49). I am uncertain of the antiquity of this work. On this work see H. Freedman and M. Simon, Midrash Rabbah, 10 vol., London, 1961, vol. 2, p. 892. The story is on p. 909.

\(^{103}\) G. Friedlander, Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. xxvii.
a swift hind” (Gen 49:21). Hushim, the son of Dan, was defective in hearing and in speech. He said to them, “Why are we sitting around here?” They pointed and said to him, “Because this man will not permit us to bury Jacob, our father.” Immediately, he unsheathed his sword and struck off Esau’s head. The head rolled into the Cave of Machpelah. They sent his body to Mount Seir, the land of his inheritance (PRE 39)\textsuperscript{104}.

The Talmudic passage runs as follows. Some details are different, but the context is the same:

**When they arrived at the Cave of Machpelah, Esau came in order to hinder them…** He said to them, “Give me the deed.” They said to him, “The deed is in the land of Egypt. Who shall go down [for it]? Naphtali, for he is swift as a hind,” as it is written “Naphtali is a swift hind” (Gen 49:21)


\textsuperscript{105} The same tradition is attached to this verse in *Genesis Rabbah* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*. 

Both accounts have a common origin. They follow the same sequence of events and the same prooftext (Gen 49:21)\textsuperscript{105}. Both traditions are also broadly comic. Esau, the great warrior, is the victim of a misunderstanding. At the moment of his death, his body parts (eyes, head) go flying. The tone differs considerably from the celebration of martial valor in *Jubilees* 37-38.

In fact, *Jubilees* 37-38 differs in every conceivable way from *PRE*. First, Jacob is still alive in *Jubilees*, while the setting of *PRE* 39 is Jacob’s funeral. In *Jubilees*, Esau attacks Jacob in order to reclaim his inheritance (Jub. 37:1-15); in *PRE*, Esau tries to claim Jacob’s inheritance. In *Jubilees*, Judah encourages Jacob to kill Esau, to Judah’s glory (Jub. 38:1-2); in *PRE*, a deaf-mute kills Esau, to Esau’s disgrace. In *Jubilees*, the combat continues after the
death of Esau (Jub. 37:3-10); in PRE, the death of Esau brings the conflict to an end. At the end of the account in Jubilees, the armies of Esau are reduced to servitude (Jub. 37:11-14); in PRE, Esau acts alone. There is absolutely no point of contact between the two accounts other than Esau’s violent death.

Incidentally, early Palestinian sources, including Sifre to Deuteronomy (§348) and the Palestinian Talmud (y. Ketub. I.5 [25c]; y. Gittin V.6 [47a]), also refer to the violent death of Esau but claim that Judah killed him, perhaps in an oblique reference to the ancient tradition. According to the Palestinian Talmud, this was a tradition which Romans (“Edom”) cited in order to justify persecution of the Jews:

בראשית גזרו שמד על יהודה שכן מסורת להם מאבותם שיהודה הרג את עשיו דכתיב ידך בעורף איביך (Gen 49:8)

In former times, they decreed destruction over Judah on account of their ancestral tradition that Judah killed Esau, as it is written, “Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies” (Gen 49:8) (y. Ketub. 1.5 [25c]).

This passage suggests knowledge of the ancient tradition and offers a cryptic reason for its suppression. Furthermore, Midrash Tehillim 18:32 has an interesting variant where Judah does kill Esau—but during the burial of Isaac. The date of this midrash is disputed. It is probably later (10th c.?) rather than earlier. It reads like a harmonization of the Second Temple and rabbinic tradition. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer, however, remains completely aloof from the ancient tradition and adheres strictly to the rabbinic version.

5.10 The Birth of Moses (PRE 48; Jub. 47:1-3)

The story of Moses’ birth in the book of Exodus is a classic example of the traditional motif of the future savior who is exposed at birth. Later literature would supply an aspect of this tradition missing in the biblical account—a prophecy of the savior’s birth. The prophecy appears unambiguously in PRE 48 as well as in classical rabbinic literature. The tradition dates from the Second Temple period and is found in the Antiquities of Josephus (II.215-216).

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106 The idea that the Romans of the time of Titus or Hadrian took offense at the Second Temple tradition stretches credulity. However, it is possible to imagine Byzantine writers attacking the story of the war against Esau, especially since the story is well-attested in Christian literature. Note that the Byzantine-era Palestinian Talmud is apologetic about this tradition, but the pre-Constantinian Sifre is not.


108 The classic (but dated) study of the subject is O. Rank, The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Interpretation of Mythology, translated by F. Robbins and Smith Ely Jelliff, New York, 1914. It is still useful as a sourcebook of related legends.
It might also be presupposed in Jubilees 47:1-3, although the text is ambiguous\(^{109}\). Menahem Kister, rather than claiming that Jubilees influenced PRE, suggests that PRE gives a fuller rendition of a tradition that is only implicit in Jubilees\(^{110}\). This is doubtful, since the presentation of the tradition in PRE is unique and does not accord with examples of the tradition from other sources.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 48, which recounts the early life of Moses, mentions that his birth was foretold in advance by the magicians of Pharaoh. Consequently, Pharaoh begins killing the male children of the Israelites. The same magicians ascertained the moment that Moses was born, after which Pharaoh stops the killing of infants and instead enslaves the Israelites:

\[
\text{רב ימי אמור והלאה לא העבדו מצרים את ישראל אלא שעה נחלו שעה משמש הח resultat והמשפט על מצראלו ולא מושל וחוזר הלילה ווהית במקומך}
\]

\[
\text{יתא את ישראל וחוסמ חמש פ班子成员 את כל יהודה המירו ארבעים והוה מושל בטח שעה שעה}
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\text{שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלו שלשלو שלשלו שלshall be cast into the Nile” (Exod 1:22). The decree was annulled [after] three years and a third of a year, when Moses was born. After he was born, the magicians said, “Behold, he is born, and he is hidden from our eyes.” Pharaoh said to them, “Since he is born, henceforth do not throw the children into the Nile but give them over to a heavy yoke in order to embitter the lives of their fathers,” for it is written, “And he embittered their lives” (Exod 1:14)\(^{111}\).

The context of this passage is a discussion of the length of time the Israelites were in Egypt. The tradition, as presented here, supports the unusual idea that the Egyptian servitude lasted a relatively short time, a single hour of a day in the life of God. If the day of the Lord lasts one thousand years (Psalm 90:4), then one hour (of a twelve-hour day) is approximately eighty-three years. This duration of time accounts for the three years of the decree plus the eighty

\(^{109}\) J. Cohen, The Origins and Evolution of the Moses Nativity Story, Leiden ; New York, 1993, p. 30 n. 2 writes: “There is no escaping the far-reaching inference from the structure of the Book of Jubilees and the midrashic parallels that the annunciation of the birth of a savior also underlies the account in the Book of Jubilees.” This may be, but it is still an inference.


\(^{111}\) D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 326.
years of the life of Moses prior to the Exodus (Exod 7:7). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* also exploits the concept of the God-day in *PRE* 28\textsuperscript{112}. The author of *PRE* is probably responsible for both passages. The passage has no exact parallel in classical rabbinic literature.

However, the basic idea of the prophecy of Moses’ birth can be found in earlier rabbinic literature. The Babylonian Talmud explains that Pharaoh’s court magicians ascertained that Moses would be punished through water, so they decreed that the Israelite children be thrown into the Nile until the time of Moses’ exposure. What they did not know is that the punishment by water does not refer to the Nile but to the waters of Meribah (cf. Num 20):

Thus spoke Rabbi Eleazar: What is the meaning of the text “For they will say to you, ‘Consult the wizards and mediums who chirp and mutter’ (Isa 8:19). They foresee, but they do not know what they foresee. They mutter, but they do not know what they mutter. They saw that the savior of Israel would be punished through water. So they arose and decreed, “Every son that is born shall be cast into the Nile” (Exod 1:22). When they had cast Moses, they said, “We no longer see his sign.” They annulled their decree, but they did not know that it was through the waters of Meribah that he would be punished (*b. Sotah* 13a).

Kister is aware of this Talmudic parallel and cites it in his article\textsuperscript{113}. However, he is not concerned with the tradition of the prophecy in itself, but the time at which decree to kill the children was rescinded. In the Talmud, the decree is annulled when Moses touches the water rather than when he is born, as in *PRE*. The time between Moses’ birth and Moses’ exposure on the Nile is three months (Exod 2:2). This is a small but significant difference.

In the passage from *Jubilees*, the angelic narrator recounts the circumstances of the birth of Moses. The decree of Pharaoh apparently lasted the duration of Moses’ gestation. According to Kister, the decree ends at the time of Moses’ birth, as in *PRE*:


\textsuperscript{113} *Ibid.*, p. 89.
In the seventh week, in the seventh year of the forty-seventh jubilees, your father came from the land of Canaan and begot you in the fourth week in the sixth year of the forty-eighth jubilee, which were days of distress for the children of Israel. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, decreed concerning them to throw their children, every male which was born, into the river. They kept throwing for seven months until the day you were born, and she hid you three months until they informed on her (Jub. 47:1-3).  

The parallel Kister proposes between this passage and PRE 48 leans heavily on the meaning of “until” (עד), an ambiguous word. “Until” indicates that an action continues up to a certain point, but it does not specify what happens after that point. For example, Deuteronomy 34:6 says of Moses: “No one knows [the location of] his grave until today” (ללא ידע את הקברתו עד היום הזה). This verse does not imply that the grave of Moses was discovered after the writing of Deuteronomy, but it also does not prevent this possibility. The passage in Jubilees can be read to mean that the decree continued after the birth of Moses.

Even if one grants that the end of the decree coincides with the birth of Moses, there are still many basic differences between Jubilees and PRE. The Book of Jubilees nowhere mentions the court magicians or prophecy. Furthermore, there is a substantial difference in the length of the decree, which lasts at least seven months in Jubilees but over three years in PRE. Finally, the motif of the prophecy in PRE is in the service of a unique tradition about the length of the slavery in Egypt, which strongly implies that Moses’ birth is the cause of the Egyptian servitude. This idea, which overtly contradicts the biblical narrative, seems to be original to PRE. It is certainly not in Jubilees.

The prophecy of the birth of Moses was in no way obscure in the time of PRE. In addition to the Talmud, the tradition was well-represented in later Jewish literature, including the Chronicles of Moses, Exodus Rabbah (1:18), and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Exod 1:15. It is also found in Samaritan works such as the tenth-century (or later) Asfar Asatir (8:23-42).

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114 C. Werman, Book of Jubilees, op. cit., p. 530.
Christian writers undoubtedly knew the tradition from Josephus, although I have yet to find the motif in original Christian compositions\textsuperscript{116}. The prophecy is widely reported in Islamic literature\textsuperscript{117}. In the end, however, \textit{PRE} 48 is probably a modification of the Talmudic legend. Most of the stories about Moses in \textit{PRE}, and especially in \textit{PRE} 48, are also found in the Babylonian Talmud (\textit{b. Sotah} 9b-14a), including the prophecy of Moses’ birth\textsuperscript{118}.

5.11 Conclusion

Of the ten traditions examined in this chapter, not one of them clearly depends on the \textit{Book of Jubilees}. Two of them, the Hexameron (5.1) and the Watchers (5.4), are based on the book of Genesis. Four of them, the story about Bilhah and Zilpah (Section 5.7), the Election of Levi (5.8), the Death of Esau (5.9) and the Birth of Moses (5.10) are derived from classical rabbinic literature. The possible references to the Wives of the Patriarchs (5.5) and the \textit{Diambertismos} (5.6) are ancient traditions which were widely represented in contemporary literature. Their appearance in \textit{PRE} is not indicative of the use of ancient sources. The two remaining traditions, about Enoch and the calendar (5.2) and the celebration of Passover (5.3) are also found in contemporary, rather than ancient, sources: The “secret of intercalation” in \textit{PRE} 8 has a parallel in both piyyut and the work of Ephrem the Syrian (5.2). The antediluvian celebration of Passover in \textit{PRE} 21 has its closest parallel in works such as the \textit{Cave of Treasures} (5.3; cf. infra Section 8.5).

Over the course of this chapter, however, two traditions emerged from the periphery which both come from Second Temple literature and are not well-represented in rabbinic, Christian, or Muslim literature. These traditions are the origin of the demons from the bodies of the giants (Section 5.4) and the ascension of Levi (Section 5.8). The immediate sources of these traditions are not apparent, yet there are good grounds for speculation. The origin of the demons appears in the prologue to \textit{Sefer Asaph} (9\textsuperscript{th}-10\textsuperscript{th} c.), which probably reflects an

\textsuperscript{116} Surprisingly, it is not found in the \textit{Palaea Historica}, a tenth century Byzantine sacred history which became popular in Slavic territories. This work has the other stories of Moses from Josephus, including the infant Moses humiliating Pharaoh and young Moses’ conquest of Ethiopia. Both of these motifs are found in the \textit{Chronicles of Moses} but not \textit{PRE}. On the \textit{Palaea}, see W. Adler, «\textit{Palaea Historica}», in \textit{Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures}, R. Bauckham, J. Davila, A. Panayotov (ed.), Grand Rapids, 2013, p. 585-672.

\textsuperscript{117} E.g., Tha’labi, \textit{Lives of the Prophets}, op. cit., p. 279-280: “Then Pharaoh called the soothsayers and magicians, the interpreters and astrologers, and asked them about his dream. They said, ‘A boy will be born among the Children of Israel who will wrest dominion from you… The time of his birth is drawing near.’” See also the annotations in Tarafi, \textit{The Stories of the Prophets by Ibn Muṭarrif al-Ṭarafi}, R. Tottoli (ed.), Berlin, 2003, p. 85 (§351) for other references.

\textsuperscript{118} As noted above (Section 5.9), \textit{b. Sotah} 13a narrates the death of Esau. Material from Sotah 10a also appears in \textit{PRE} 53-54: Both list several men whose physical prowess proved their downfall, including Samson, Saul, Asahel, Zedekiah, and Absalom.
ancient survival within the Solomonic magic tradition (cf. *T. Solomon* 5:3 and 17:1). The ascension of Levi could have come directly from the *Aramaic Levi Document*, of which ninth or tenth century copies were found in the Cairo Genizah. These copies, and the Syriac and Greek fragments of the work, suggest that the work was better known in Late Antiquity than is usually supposed. These two examples constitute the exceptions rather than the rule.

In all cases, the traditions circulated within the languages and literatures of the Abbasid Caliphate. Notably, Syriac and Arabic literature accounts for those traditions which cannot be found in the Bible or the classical rabbinic corpus. The Wives of the Patriarchs (Section 5.5) and the *Diamerismos* (5.6) are well-represented in Syriac and Arabic literature. Both are found, for instance, in the chronicle of al-Tabari. Similarly, the traditions about the Calendar (5.2) and Passover (5.3) have Syriac precedents in (respectively) Ephrem’s *Commentary on Genesis* and the *Cave of Treasures*. Even Hebrew and Aramaic works like *Sefer Asaph* and the *Aramaic Levi Document* exhibit regional influence. Asaph b. Berechiah, the presumed author of *Sefer Asaph*, is a prominent figure in Arabic folklore; the *Aramaic Levi Document* was found in the Cairo Genizah. The ancient traditions found in these works may have been generally known to oriental Jews and, hence, to the author of *PRE*.

Ultimately, geography is the reason that *PRE* has so little in common with *Jubilees*. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the knowledge and transmission of *Jubilees* was a principally Byzantine phenomenon. The Jews, Christians, and Muslims of the Abbasid Caliphate simply did not know the *Book of Jubilees*. Although *PRE* does not use *Jubilees*, the work exhibits a broad knowledge of both rabbinic and non-rabbinic traditions. The author apparently used the very many sources that were at his disposal, including Christian and Muslim traditions. Part Three of this study will demonstrate this conclusion through the examination of the *Cave of Treasures*. This work is the mirror-image of *Jubilees*: It was known within the Caliphate but unknown in the Byzantine Empire. The comparison will reaffirm that region, rather than religion, was determinative for the sources of *PRE*.
Part Three: The Cave of Treasures

Chapter Six: The Text of the Cave of Treasures

6.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the different versions of the Cave of Treasures (COT) that circulated at the time of the redaction of PRE. The Cave of Treasures was written in Syriac, but the most widespread form of COT is the Arabic version. In fact, there are three Arabic versions of COT: 1) a direct translation of the Syriac original; 2) an adaptation called the Book of the Rolls, part of a massive compilation of Pseudo-Clementine literature; and 3) an expansive paraphrase called The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan. Other versions and adaptations of COT exist in Georgian, Ethiopic, and Coptic. They also derive from Arabic texts.

The Cave of Treasures is a Christian sacred history from the time of creation until the resurrection of Jesus. At the heart of the work is an unusual story about the burial and reburial of Adam. Adam, after his expulsion, lives on a mountain close to Paradise. The cave of treasures lies at the summit of this mountain. Adam is first buried in this cave, where the children of Seth venerate his body. At the time of the Flood, his remains are transferred to Noah’s Ark. Noah charges Shem to rebury Adam at Golgotha, the place of Adam’s creation. Shem delegates this task to his descendant Melchizedek, who maintains a sanctuary at Golgotha as a proto-Christian priest. He builds the city of Jerusalem on this location after Abraham sacrifices Isaac. A short history of the kings of Judah bridges this section to the time of Christ. The Passion of Christ recalls various events from the life of Adam. When Christ is crucified on Golgotha, his blood literally washes away the sins from Adam’s body.

The Cave of Treasures was never a lost text; it was continually copied until the nineteenth century\(^1\). However, it did not play a role in the literary history of Western Christianity. In modern research, the first reference appears in the Bibliotheca Orientalis of Giuseppe Simoni Assemani (d. 1768)\(^2\), but the work was not published until the translation (1883) and edition (1888) of Carl Bezold\(^3\). In his edition, he published both a Syriac text and the Arabic text from the Book of the Rolls. In 1927, E. A. Wallis Budge published an English translation of

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\(^3\) C. Bezold, Die Schatzhöhle: syrisch und deutsch herausgegeben, 2 vol., Leipzig, 1883-1888.
British Museum Add. 25875. Until recently, this was the only English translation. In the same year, Zurab Avalichvili published an important study of the Georgian version of COT. He noted that an edition, taken from a seventeenth-century Georgian chronicle, was printed in Tbilisi in 1906, but an independent version also existed. Paul Riessler updated the German translation of Bezold in 1928 with an important new addition to the text—chapter and verse numbers. His divisions would reappear in all future publications, including the critical editions of the Syriac and Georgian versions as well as the most recent English translation.

The history of research on COT is brief. The first major studies of COT focused on presumed Jewish elements of the work. The early study of Jacob Bamberger in 1901 outlined a number of parallels between COT and rabbinic literature. He believed that COT represented a Christian adaptation of an originally Jewish Adam book. A few decades later, in 1921, Albrecht Götze argued that COT was a revision of a Jewish-Christian work. Götze’s study proved highly influential. In a seminal 1979 article on “Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources”, Sebastian Brock singled out COT as the “richest source of Jewish traditions” within the Syriac tradition. In the same year, Antonio Battista and Bellarmino Bagatti published an Italian translation of multiple texts relating to COT. They believed COT illustrated ancient Jewish-Christian beliefs about the grave of Adam. Their position, however, has been refuted by Joan E. Taylor, who criticized this “myth of Jewish-Christian origins”. In the following decades,

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9 A. Toepel, « Cave of Treasures », op. cit., p. 531-584.
14 J.E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*, Oxford, 1993, p. 128. She maintains, however, the possibility that COT was originally a Jewish text: “The Christian author used a Jewish Syriac text written in the fourth century near Edessa, but while the work has a Jewish source and a Christian redaction, this does not make it a Jewish-Christian text as such.” She is referring to the hypothesis of Götze, although she does not name him.
Su-Min Ri published a number of shorter studies culminating in a commentary on COT in 2000\textsuperscript{15}. Ri, like Götze, believed that the work was originally Jewish-Christian.

Recent research on COT, however, is marked by a distancing from the “Jewish-Christian” hypothesis. In 2001, Clemens Leonhard criticized the atomization of COT by Götze and Ri. He argued for the essential unity of the text and a sixth century date\textsuperscript{16}. In a separate study, he showed that COT is entrenched in the Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries\textsuperscript{17}. Hence, it is not Jewish-Christian. In 2006, Alexander Toepel published a monograph on the Adam and Seth traditions in COT \textsuperscript{17-18}. Although he found a few motifs shared with Jewish literature (both Second Temple and rabbinic), he concluded that the author derived most of his material from Syriac literature. Finally, the unpublished thesis of Sergey Minov, “Syriac Christian Identity in Late Sasanian Mesopotamia: The Cave of Treasures in Context” (2013) argues for a West Syrian (Miaphysite) origin of COT in the sixth or even seventh century\textsuperscript{19}. He expanded this argument in a recent article which conclusively proves that COT is West Syrian\textsuperscript{20}. The conclusions of this most recent research, rather than the assumptions of Götze and Ri, guide the present study.

As in the chapter on the text of Jubilees, this chapter reviews each of the different versions of COT. The main goal, besides introducing the work, is to demonstrate the popularity of COT in Arabic, a language which the author of PRE likely knew. Many versions of COT are not straightforward translations of the original Syriac work but adaptations that are incorporated into larger works. The relevant texts can be divided into primary and secondary versions. The primary versions are 1) the Syriac original, 2) an Arabic translation, and 3) the Georgian


version, which was translated from an Arabic text. The secondary versions are found in 1) the Book of the Rolls, 2) an Encomium on Mary Magdalene, and 3) the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan. The Book of the Rolls and the Conflict were written in Arabic and translated into Ethiopian. The Encomium on Mary Magdalene only exists in Coptic, but the text of COT was probably translated from Arabic, since Arabic texts of COT were widespread in Egypt. Thus, all of the versions, save the Syriac original, are Arabic texts or translations from Arabic.

6.1 The Primary Versions
All scholars cited in the introduction believe that the Cave of Treasures was originally written in Syriac and completed around the sixth century. Following the Muslim Conquests, the Syriac version was rapidly translated into Arabic and from Arabic into Georgian. Like the Greek version of Jubilees, the Arabic translation of the primary version of COT is poorly attested. The only independent Arabic translations of COT survive in a handful of Garshuni manuscripts which are potentially (but not necessarily) representative of the earliest Arabic translation. The Georgian version was also translated from Arabic, but the translator has taken a few liberties with the text. Nevertheless, the Georgian text remains an important witness to the early Arabic translation.

6.1.1 The Syriac Version (6th c.)
The original version of the Cave of Treasures is the Syriac text, which is attested by at least forty manuscripts, none of them older than the sixteenth century. In the critical edition of the work, Su-Min Ri divided the Syriac text into two recensions, an East Syrian recension and a West Syrian recension, based on only nineteen manuscripts. This division was inspired by a major lacuna in a family of East Syrian manuscripts, where a scribe jumped from COT 36:9 to 41:11, that is, from the time of Solomon to the time of Zedekiah. Instead of acknowledging this as a scribal error, Ri maintained that this missing text was an addition of West Syrian scribes, and that the shorter text was more primitive. He described the East Syrian manuscripts which do not fit this typology, including British Museum Add. 25875, generally considered the textus optimus, as “contaminated” by the West Syrian tradition.

By this standard, most early textual evidence for COT is also “contaminated.” Many witnesses to the text of COT have readings from both “recensions,” which suggests that the division

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between the East Syrian and West Syrian manuscripts is arbitrary. Among these are the Georgian version\textsuperscript{24}, the Book of the Rolls\textsuperscript{25}, the Encomium on Mary Magdalene\textsuperscript{26}, the Zuqnin Chronicle\textsuperscript{27}, and the Chronicle up to 1234\textsuperscript{28}. The manuscripts of some of these works, such as the eighth century autograph of the Zuqnin Chronicle (Vat. Syr. 162), are considerably older than the oldest Syriac manuscripts (sixteenth century). In light of this evidence, I propose only one major recension of the Syriac COT. The East Syrian and West Syrian manuscripts are distinguished mainly by their script and the occasional confessional gloss (on which see below). Otherwise, the text of the two families is substantially the same.

Most (but not all) manuscripts of COT present themselves as the teaching of Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373), but COT is not the work of the great Syriac father. The work almost immediately contradicts the teachings of the authentic Ephrem: The opening chapter states that the Holy Spirit was the wind from God hovering over the waters (COT 1:4; cf. Gen 1:2), but Ephrem categorically denies that the wind is the Holy Spirit in his Commentary on Genesis (1.7)\textsuperscript{29}. The Cave of Treasures, nevertheless, draws heavily on the work of Ephrem. Its description of Eden and the Holy Mountain where Adam and Eve live after their expulsion is indebted, in particular, to the Hymns on Paradise\textsuperscript{30}.

The actual author of the work is a West Syrian (Miaphysite) author of the sixth century or later. Clemens Leonhard drew attention to the references to the christological controversies of the sixth century in the work, including passages which evoke the radical anti-Chalcedonian Christology of Julian of Halicarnassus (c. 527), who believed that the body of Jesus was

\textsuperscript{24} J.-P. Mahé, La Caverne des trésors: version géorgienne [translation], op. cit., p. xxiv.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid. Mahé notes the common points between the Georgian and Arabic versions, one of which is the juxtaposition of readings from the two Syriac “recensions.”
\textsuperscript{26} G. Coquin and R.-G. Godron, « Un encomion copte sur Marie-Madeleine attribué à Cyrille de Jérusalem », Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale, vol. 90 (1990), p. 212: « Nous laissons à des spécialistes le soin de comparer ce texte avec celui de la Caverne des trésors, dont les deux recensions sont bien différenciées maintenant. On remarquera seulement que si, dans l’ensemble, notre homélie témoigne en faveur de la recension occidentale, du moins les passages ne manquent pas où elle s’en écarterait, et semble plus proche de la recension orientale. L’auteur aurait-il eu à sa disposition un texte plus ancien que les manuscrits syriaques, dont nous disposons ; se serait-il servi d’un exemplaire plus proche de l’archétype ? »
\textsuperscript{27} J.-B. Chabot, Incerti auctoris Chronicon anonymum Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum 1, Louvain, 1927, p. 8: Noah’s sons are instructed to transport the gold, frankincense, and myrrh from the cave of treasures to the Ark. The chronicle is West Syrian, yet this tradition appears only in Ri’s East Syrian recension. (COT 17:16-28).
\textsuperscript{28} A. Hilkens, The Anonymou s Syriac Chronicle up to the Year 1234 and its Sources, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ghent University, 2014, p. 279, gives two examples.
\textsuperscript{29} Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim et in Exodum commentarii, R.-M. Tonneau (ed.), Louvain, 1955, p. 11.
incorruptible on account of its inherent divinity (cf. *COT* 46:17-18)\(^{31}\). These passages alone denote the work as Miaphysite. Sergey Minov adduced other arguments for the West Syrian provenance of the original work, noting, for example, that East Syrian manuscripts preserve “Miaphysite” passages (such as *COT* 46:17-18), but West Syrian manuscripts do not attest the “Nestorian” glosses found in East Syrian manuscripts\(^{32}\).

The assertion that *COT* reflects Jewish (or Jewish-Christian) influence is mainly based on the work’s relation to the *Life of Adam and Eve*\(^ {33}\). For a long time, the Adam books were presumed to be Jewish, but there are no references to the Adam literature in Jewish literature before *PRE*. The earliest attestation of the *Life of Adam and Eve*—in the *Gelasian Decree*—appears only in the sixth century\(^ {34}\). This coincides with the earliest manuscript evidence, a Coptic fragment of the sixth or seventh century\(^ {35}\). While it is possible that this massively popular composition was never cited by anyone during the first five centuries of its existence, this does not seem very likely. The simplest explanation is that the Adam books are a Late Antique Christian phenomenon which builds upon centuries of Christian speculation on Adam and Eve. Since the *Life of Adam and Eve* was never translated into Syriac, one might venture to call the *Cave of Treasures* the “Syriac Adam book.”

The unity of *COT* is a final point of contention. Beginning with *COT* 44:17, the author repeatedly addresses one Namosaya, who has not been mentioned before\(^ {36}\). Furthermore, all of the secondary versions of *COT* stop before the Passion narrative, a major section of the Syriac, Garshuni, and Georgian versions. It is tempting to see the Namosaya section—corresponding to the life of Christ (*COT* 44-54)—as an addition. Namosaya, however, is part of the original work. Secondary versions, such as the *Book of the Rolls* and the *Encomium on Mary Magdalene*, maintain the Namosaya passages. In fact, they have replaced the name

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\(^{32}\) S. Minov, « Date and provenance of the Syriac Cave of Treasures », *op. cit.*, p. 151-164.

\(^{33}\) M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*, Atlanta, 1992, p. 90-96, classified *COT* as a “secondary” Adam book, one that was dependent in some way on the *Life of Adam and Eve*. The work shares a number of traditions with the *Life* and probably uses it as a source. They are restricted, as one would expect, to the chapters about Adam and Eve (*COT* 2-6). Two major episodes from the *Life* are missing in *COT*: 1) the penitence of Adam in the Jordan and 2) the quest of Seth for the oil of Life.

\(^{34}\) *Ibid.* , p. 75-83 provides a list of *testimonia*. The earliest, from the Apostolic Constitutions, only mentions a work written in Adam’s name, but this could refer to a gnostic work (like the *Apocalypse of Adam*). The earliest reference to the *Life of Adam and Eve* might be the *Gelasian Decree*, which names a book called the *Penitence of Adam (Paenitentia Adae)* as apocryphus. This is the name of the longer Armenian recension of the *Life of Adam and Eve*. I suspect that it is also the original title of the *Life of Adam and Eve* as a whole.


\(^{36}\) See also the references at *COT* 44:19.49.53; 45:1.13; 47:6; 48:4; 49:20; 51:11; 52:14; 53:11.
Namosaya with different interlocutors—Clement and Theophilus—in the exact places where Namosaya appears in the original text\(^37\).

The sudden appearance of Namosaya is explicable in light of the overall plan of the work. Namosaya appears at the very moment that the work adopts a specifically polemical tone against the Jews, that is, when the author begins the story of Jesus. Paul de Lagarde mentioned the possibility that the name Namosaya (ܢܡܘܣܝܐ) is related to nomikos (νομικός), the title of the “lawyers” in the New Testament (Matt 22:35; Luke 10:25)\(^38\). The word nomos (νόμος), of course, is also the Greek designation for the Torah. Lagarde saw COT as a conversation between the Church and the Synagogue. Although Namosaya is addressed as “my brother,” he does seem to be representative of some kind of Judaism, perhaps a potential convert receiving instruction in the faith, much like Clement and Theophilus in the secondary versions. Explicit polemic is not necessary for the history of Israel before the Babylonian Exile, which is the common patrimony of Jews and Christians.

Finally, there is a strong thematic unity which supports the integrity of the composition. The typology between Adam and Christ, introduced in the early chapters of the work, only finds its fulfillment in the Passion narrative. In COT 48, for instance, the author coordinates the hours of the crucifixion with the hours of Adam’s time in Paradise (COT 4:1). Chapter 49:1-10 refers to the different roles Golgotha has played throughout sacred history, including the reburial of Adam, a motif from COT 23. The next section, COT 49:11-22, refers to Christ’s purple garment, which, as Clemens Leonhard has indicated, was anticipated by story of the discovery of purple dye in the time of Solomon (COT 36:1-9)\(^39\). Adam’s role as king, priest, and prophet (COT 2:18) anticipates the Jews’ loss of these gifts (COT 50:13-18). Most

importantly, Christ baptizes Adam with his blood and restores his garment of glory (COT 51:22; cf. COT 3:14). The entire narrative of Adam’s reburial anticipates this moment.\footnote{On this theme, see J. Thekeparampil, « Adam-Christus in den Passionssedre und in der Schatzhöhle », in III Symposium Syriacum 1980: Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures, R. Lavenant (ed.), Rome, 1983, p. 323-332. Like S. Minov, « Date and provenance of the Syriac Cave of Treasures », op. cit., he notes that the Adam-Christ typology is distinctively West Syrian (as opposed to East Syrian).}

To summarize: The Syriac Cave of Treasures is a unified composition. The work is often attributed to Ephrem the Syrian, but he is not the author. It was written around the sixth century by a West Syrian Christian. Its reading of the history of Israel is primarily typological: Everything, but especially the life of Adam, anticipates the coming of Christ. The work has a pronounced anti-Jewish tone, and the addressee appears to be a Jew, but the actual content of the work owes little to Jewish literature.

### 6.1.2 The Arabic Version (8th or 9th c.)

The Cave of Treasures was translated into Arabic by the ninth century at the latest. Muslim authors begin referring to COT in this century.\footnote{N. Abbott, Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri I: Historical Texts, Chicago, 1957, p. 38-56 cites an eighth-century papyrus (Chicago Oriental Institute 17624) as the earliest allusion to COT in Arabic. This papyrus is very fragmentary, and the evidence is inconclusive. The earliest concrete examples are ninth century texts, which, however, cite authorities going back to the seventh and eighth centuries (see the next chapter).}

Furthermore, the Book of the Rolls, an Arabic adaptation of the Cave of Treasures, dates from this century.\footnote{B. Roggema, « Biblical Exegesis and Interreligious Polemics in the Arabic Apocalypse of Peter—the Book of the Rolls », in The Bible in Arab Christianity, D.R. Thomas (ed.), Leiden, 2006, p. 138-140.}

The Arabic version of COT is extant in at least three Garshuni manuscripts: Mingana Syr 32, f. 89b-145b and Mingana Syr 258, f. 87b-146a, from the University of Birmingham,\footnote{A. Mingana, Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, Cambridge, 2 vol., 1933-1936, vol. 1, p. 87 and 514-515.} and Borgia Arab 135, f. 228a-274b, in the Vatican Library.\footnote{E. Tisserant, Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits arabes du fonds Borgia à la Bibliothèque Vaticane, Rome, 1924, p. 17.}

The text of Mingana Syr 258 and Borgia Arab 135 are straightforward renderings of the Syriac texts and have none of the eccentricities of the secondary Arabic versions or, for that matter, the Georgian version (for which see below). Mingana Syr 32, however, differs in several places from the conventional Syriac text.\footnote{A. Mingana, Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 87. See also the comments of S.-M. Ri, Commentaire de la Caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 57-61.}

The other two Garshuni texts remain potential witnesses to the form of the original Arabic translation. That such an Arabic translation once existed is further confirmed by the Georgian evidence.
6.1.3 The Georgian Version (9th or 10th c.)

The last primary version of *COT* is the Georgian text, translated from Arabic. It does not reflect the text found in the Garshuni manuscripts. The earliest manuscripts of the Georgian version come from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ciala Kourcikidzé, who edited the critical text, dates the translation to the ninth or tenth century based on the language. This date coheres with the posited Arabic translation before the ninth century. The Georgian version is therefore another potentially valuable witness to the Arabic text of *COT*. However, it also contains a number of idiosyncrasies which appear to have been introduced by the Georgian translator.

The Georgian version differs in three major ways from the Syriac version. These differences anticipate the changes found in secondary Arabic versions. First, a separate work, the *Testament of Adam*, is inserted into the text right before the death of Adam (*COT* 6). The Georgian version also has a number of lacunae, the most notable of which is a complete absence of the fall of Satan (*COT* 3:1-7). Finally, the Georgian version substantially abridges the Passion narrative. Each of these differences will be discussed in turn.

The *Testament of Adam* is a very short work with a long and complex literary history. The idea of a testament of Adam is a literary fiction which appears in several Syriac works about the Nativity of Jesus. In all cases the book is a prophecy of the coming of Christ dictated by Adam. The written work called the *Testament of Adam* is a miscellany which, in its most ample form, contains three parts: 1) an *horarium* of the days and nights; 2) the testament proper, about the coming of Christ; and 3) a list of the hierarchy of angels. The work is composite. While the hierarchy of angels is a late addition, the *horarium* is much earlier and circulated independently in Greek, Arabic, and Armenian. The author of *T. Adam* probably joined the *horarium* to the testament: The earliest references to *T. Adam*, in the chronicles of

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48 S.E. Robinson, *The Testament of Adam: An Examination of the Syriac and Greek Traditions*, Chico, CA, 1982, has written the most recent monograph on the subject. His history of scholarship is helpful, but he believes that the work originates from the second and third century, a conclusion that is not supported by the evidence. For a brief summary of his position, see S.E. Robinson, « The Testament of Adam: An Updated Arbeitsbericht », *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 5 (1989), p. 95-100.
George Syncellus (c. 810) and al-Tabari (d. 923), mention the two parts together\textsuperscript{51}. The original language of the composition is Syriac.

The date of the \textit{T. Adam} and its relationship to the \textit{Cave of Treasures} is still a mystery. The \textit{Testament of Adam}, like \textit{COT}, shares traditions with the \textit{Life of Adam and Eve} and, consequently, belongs to the greater cycle of Adam literature\textsuperscript{52}. Furthermore, both works mention a location called the cave of treasures. G. J. Reinink has shown that the cave of treasures functions differently in the two works\textsuperscript{53}. In \textit{T. Adam}, the cave is where the testament is deposed. In \textit{COT}, it is the final resting place of Adam himself. The tradition of \textit{T. Adam} is older: The other Syriac works which refer to a testament of Adam all claim that the Magi kept this document in a cave of treasures along with the three gifts, which Adam had taken out of Paradise. This is the original meaning of the “cave of treasures.” The idea that the cave of treasures was the tomb of Adam in addition to the depository for the three gifts is an innovation of \textit{COT}. In any case, \textit{T. Adam} is an independent document which was initially unrelated to \textit{COT}. The \textit{Testament of Adam} is integrated into some (but not all) copies of the \textit{Book of the Rolls}\textsuperscript{54}. In addition, it is not found in the Garshuni texts of \textit{COT}. The Georgian translator probably introduced it into the work under the influence of the \textit{Book of the Rolls}.

Another telling difference between the Syriac and the Georgian versions is the latter’s complete omission of the fall of Satan (\textit{COT} 3:1-7), where Satan refuses to worship Adam. In the Syriac version, this passage reads:

\begin{verbatim}
ܠܗ ܐܕܡ ܚܣܡ ܒܗ ܘܟܕ ܚܙܐ ܪܝܫܐ ܕܗܢܐ ܬܐܓܡܐ ܬܚܬܝܐ ܕܐܝܕܐ ܪܒܘܬܐ ܐܬܝܗܒܬ
ܠܐܟܐ ܘܠܐ ܠܘܬܗ ܠܐ ܬܣܓܘܕ ܥܡ ܡ ܪ ܠܚܝ ܠܐܟܐ ܘܐܡ ܐ ܕܢܣܓܘدس ܠܗ ܥܡ ܡ ܘܠܐ ܨܒ
ܬܫܩ ܕܢܣܓܘدس ܕܐܝܬܝ ܢܘܪܐ ܘܪܘܚܐ ܘܠܘ ܠܝ ܕܒܚܘܢ ܠܗ ܠܝ ܙܕ ܐܣܓܘدس ܠ ܥܦܪܐ ܕܐܬܓܒܠ
ܒܨܒܝܢ ܚܐܪܘܬܗ ܦܪܫ ܘ ܡܪܘܕܐ ܘלܐ ܡܫܬܡܥܢܐ ܘܗܘ ܠܝܢ ܐܬܪܥܝ ܗ ܡܢ ܚܝܚܐ ܘܟ็ด ܗ ܥܝܢ ܥܪܘܒܬܐ ܒܬܪ̈ܬܝܢ ܫ
ܠ ܗܘ ܦ ܘܢܦ ܢܦܫܗ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܣܬܚ
\end{verbatim}

When the leader of the lowest choir saw what greatness had been bestowed upon Adam, he envied him and did not want to bow down to him along with the other angels. He said to his forces, “Do not bow down with the other angels, and do not


\textsuperscript{52} M.E. Stone, \textit{A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve}, op. cit., p. 97-98.


\textsuperscript{54} The text of M.D. Gibson, \textit{Apocrypha Arabica}, op. cit., p. 12-15 (translation, p. 13-17), has the \textit{Testament of Adam}, but the text of C. Bezold, \textit{Die Schatzhöhle}, op. cit. does not.
honor him. Rather, it is proper that he should bow down to me, for I am fire and spirit, and it is not for me to bow down to dirt fashioned out of dust!” The moment that this rebel thought these things, and he was disobedient according to his free will, he separated himself from God. He was cast down, and he fell with all his hosts, on the sixth day, that is, the day of preparation, at the second hour (COT 3:1-4)\textsuperscript{55}.

The rest of the passage states that Satan and his angels lost “their glory” (ܬܫܒܘܚܬܗܘܢ) and became hideous in appearance. It also gives etymologies for the different names of Satan (COT 3:5-7). The same tradition is already altered in the Book of the Rolls to omit the reason for Satan’s refusal. In the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan, the tradition has been replaced with an entirely different story about the fall of Satan. This change is explicable in light of its similarity to a Quranic passage:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَََلِّينَ اسْجُدُوا لِِدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلاَّ إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ

Indeed, We created you and We fashioned you, and We called upon the angels to prostrate to Adam. They prostrated, except Iblis, who was not among those who prostrated.

[God] said: “What prevented you from prostrating as I commanded you?” He said: “I am better than he. You created me from fire, but you created him from clay.”

[God] said: “Get down from here! It is not your place to be arrogant here. Get out, you disgraceful creature!” (Q 7:11-13; cf. Q 38:71-85)\textsuperscript{56}

In fact, the Quranic tradition may ultimately derive from COT\textsuperscript{57}. The tradition differs slightly from parallel version in the Life of Adam and Eve, where Satan’s age, rather than his nature, is the basis of his refusal\textsuperscript{58}.

This shared tradition upset some Christian writers. Anastasius of Sinai, who lived during the Muslim Conquests (7\textsuperscript{th} c.), said of this story, “These are fables of the Greeks and Arabs” (Ἐλληνον καὶ Ἀράβων εἰσὶ οἱ τοιοῦτοι μῦθοι), apparently referring to the Life of Adam and Eve and the Qur’an\textsuperscript{59}. He wrote that pride, rather than jealousy, was the reason for Satan’s fall, citing Ezekiel 28. Similarly, an eleventh century Slavonic text, “Of All Things,” derides this

\textsuperscript{55} S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 23 (West Syrian).
\textsuperscript{56} The translation is my own.
\textsuperscript{59} Anastasius of Sinai Questiones 126 (PG 89: 776b-c)
tradition: “The devil was brought down before the creation of Adam and, not as the
ignoramuses say, because he did not bow to Adam. That was not the reason for the fall of
Satan. He fell from the glory of God because of his pride.”\(^{60}\) Apparently, the Greek and
Slavonic copyists of the *Life of Adam and Eve* took notice of these complaints: Of all the
versions of the *Life*, only these two lack the fall of Satan\(^{61}\). The omission of this episode in the
Georgian *COT* is a possible reaction to the Islamic adoption of the Christian myth\(^{62}\).

Finally, the Passion narrative differs in many places from the Syriac text. Verses
(e.g., *COT* 48:4-8; *COT* 49:4-8; *COT* 54:1-3) and entire chapters (e.g., *COT* 52; most of
*COT* 51) have vanished. The name Namosaya has been replaced by the generic “my brothers”
(e.g., *COT* 44:19; 45:1; 45:13). Some of the passages addressed to him have disappeared
(e.g., *COT* 49:20-22; 53:11-19). The missing passages are often typological explanations of
the Passion directed to Namosaya. These could be seen as either additions to the Syriac text or
omissions of the Georgian translator. The Georgian version also omits the references to the
Descent into Hell (*COT* 51:20-23; *COT* 54:1-3) and, hence, the redemption of Adam which is
anticipated by the rest of the work. This change, at least, seems like an editorial decision.

Another intentional change occurs at the moment that Pilate sentences Jesus to death. In the
Syriac version, the Jews rush into the Temple and build the cross out of the poles of the Ark
of the Covenant (*COT* 50:20-21). In the Georgian version, the Jews tear down the Temple
Veil—which, the narrator explains, had covered the Ark of the Covenant—and clothe Jesus in
it. The Syriac tradition is odd, but it follows a narrative logic: The Jews build the instrument
of Jesus’ execution at the moment he is condemned to death. The action is also highly
significant from a typological perspective: The death of Jesus is implicitly compared to the
sacrifice for the Day of Atonement (see *infra* Sections 8.9 and 8.10). The Georgian version
maintains the typology but loses the narrative logic. It is not clear why the pronouncement of
death would inspire the Jews to clothe Jesus with the Temple Veil.

The text gives two further indications that the “Temple Veil” tradition is secondary. First, in
both Syriac and Georgian versions, the Jews fight each other over possession of Jesus’
clothing, which would be highly irregular if Jesus’ clothing is part of the Temple furniture

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\(^{62}\) The Georgian *Life of Adam and Eve*, however, retains this episode.
(COT 49:11; 50:4). By contrast, the Jews return the wood of the cross to the Temple in the Syriac version (COT 53:6). Second, the Georgian version mentions the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark and the Veil are both connected to the Holy of Holies, but the two are not connected to each other: The Veil does not cover the Ark in the Hebrew Bible. The Georgian scribe had no need to mention the Ark unless it was part of the text he was translating.

One suspects that a number of these changes occurred during the process of translating the Arabic text. The presence of the T. Adam, in particular, suggests the influence of the Book of the Rolls. Apart from these major changes, the Georgian version is fairly close to the Syriac text. The retention of the Passion narrative, despite the changes, is particularly significant. The Passion was part of the translator’s Arabic Vorlage, even though it is missing in the most widespread Arabic version of the work. The Georgian version proves that the Passion narrative was part of the early Arabic translation of COT.

6.2 The Secondary Versions
The secondary versions of COT are distinguished from the primary versions in a several ways. First, they are all parts of longer works. In most cases, the text of COT is placed in the mouth of an authoritative figure who recounts the Christian version of sacred history to a privileged disciple. This addressee replaces the character of Namosaya from the Syriac COT. Second, they end with the genealogy of Mary or the birth of Christ and contain only brief allusions to the Passion and Resurrection. Finally, the secondary versions modify the story of the angels’ adoration of Adam to obscure the nature of Satan’s disobedience.

6.2.1 The Book of the Rolls (9th c.)
The most popular version of COT is an extract from a late Pseudo-Clementine work, attributed to the Apostle Peter but directed to Clement, his disciple and successor. This work—or, rather, group of works—exists in a large number of manuscripts, but it has never been published in full. This work has been partially translated under a number of titles, such as the Book of the Rolls, the Apocalypse of Peter, or (in the Ethiopic version)

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66 A. Mingana, Woodbroke Studies 3: Vision of Theophilus and Apocalypse of Peter, Cambridge, 1931, p. 93-450. He did not publish the full manuscript, as he intended this work to supplement the work of Gibson.
Qalementos. The nomenclature is apt to confuse. Although the work belongs to the Pseudo-Clementine literature, and the author is cognizant of the earlier Clementine romances (the Recognitions and the Homilies), the Arabic book is not in any way a recension or translation of these works. It is also, emphatically, Miaphysite rather than Jewish-Christian.

The Arabic Pseudo-Clement is divided into several discrete sections. The Book of the Rolls denotes the extract from COT, where Peter instructs Clement about the genealogy of Mary (the “Rolls” of the title). The title Apocalypse of Peter properly belongs to the next section, where Jesus reveals to Peter the course of world history, including the advent of Islam. In the Ethiopic Qalementos, the Book of the Rolls (Book 1) and the Apocalypse of Peter (Book 2) are followed by a series of discourses on church ordinances and other ecclesial topics (Books 3-7). The Qalementos, incidentally, is also part of the greater canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. It is classed with the books of the New Testament.

The Book of the Rolls was written in the ninth century at the latest. Margaret Gibson tentatively dated her manuscript of the work (Sinai 508) to this century based on paleography. There is also internal evidence within the Pseudo-Clementine complex which suggests a ninth century date. The Apocalypse of Peter, an “historical” apocalypse, refers multiple times to the Abbasid revolution of 750 CE. Barbara Roggema has further adduced coded references to ninth century Abbasid Caliphs.

The Book of the Rolls differs from the Syriac COT in several respects. The first difference is the addition of Peter and Clement to the narrative framework. Clement takes the place of Namosaya as the addressee. Peter also underlines that the purpose of his instruction is the defense of Mary from Jewish attacks on her family history (cf. COT 44). Thus, the work ends


68 This Apocalypse of Peter should not be confused with the second century Greek apocalypse of the same name, where Peter has a vision of hell. For this work see J.K. Elliott, The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation, Oxford, 2005, p. 593-612 and M. Himmelfarb, Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature, Philadelphia, 1983, p. 8-11 and passim. There is also a gnostic Apocalypse of Peter (NHC VII,3:70-84).

69 A. Bausi, Qalementos etiopico, op. cit. has translated this lengthy section into Italian.


72 B. Roggema, «Apocalypse of Peter—the Book of the Rolls», op. cit., p. 138-140.
shortly after the genealogy of Mary and does not include the Passion narrative. The ending is not consistent in the manuscripts. The text published by Gibson stops after the genealogy of Mary in COT 44. The Arabic text of COT published by Carl Bezold, which is from the Book of the Rolls, ends with COT 48:7, after the Nativity. The Ethiopic Qalementos stops during the reign of Joram (COT 37:18). This is a scribal error. As in the Arabic version, Peter promises to give the genealogy of Mary, which indicates an ending after COT 44.

Some manuscripts of the Book of the Rolls insert the Testament of Adam into the text of COT. The Testament of Adam, however, was not part of the original Book of the Rolls. Since T. Adam briefly summarizes the life of Christ, its insertion may have been inspired by the omission of the Passion narrative. This hypothesis is confirmed by different endings of the text of Gibson and Bezold. The text of Gibson, which includes T. Adam, ends after the genealogy of Mary (COT 44). The text of Bezold does not include T. Adam and, consequently, includes the Nativity as well as a notice about the ministry and death of Jesus at the end of the work (COT 48:1-7). The other secondary versions of COT, which are probably based on the Book of the Rolls, also end at this point.

The Book of the Rolls sometimes paraphrases rather than translates the Arabic text. This is especially true of the early sections on the Hexameron and the creation of Adam (much longer) as well as the fall of Satan (much shorter). Differences such as these should be understood as editorial changes rather than reflections of the original Syriac text of COT. In particular, the absence of the Passion narrative in the Book of the Rolls is a conscious omission. The Georgian version shows that the Passion narrative appeared is an integral part of the original text. If the Passion narrative is an addition, it would be difficult to explain why almost every Syriac manuscript has a Passion narrative, but no Syriac manuscript inserts T. Adam, which is certainly an addition. The reason for the omission of the Passion is obscure. Perhaps the author thought that it was redundant within the new literary framework.

According to Alexander Toepel, there are forty-six manuscripts of the Book of the Rolls. If this figure is accurate, then the Book of the Rolls was more popular than the Syriac Cave of Treasures (forty manuscripts). It is certainly the most popular Arabic version of COT. Extant


74 A. Toepel, « Cave of Treasures », op. cit., p. 533.. B. Roggema, « Apocalypse of Peter—the Book of the Rolls », op. cit., p. 134, n. 11, gives the more modest estimate of twenty-three manuscripts (which she then lists). She only counts complete manuscripts.
manuscripts come mainly from Egypt and Syria. Not coincidentally, the tenth-century chronicles of Eutychius of Alexandria (in Egypt) and Agapius of Manbij (in Syria) both use an Arabic version of COT—probably the Book of the Rolls. Both chroniclers were Melkite bishops, that is, neither was from one of the major Syriac-speaking communities. One can only speculate on the influence this particular work may have had on Muslim historiography. It appears to have had wide diffusion across both geographical and confessional boundaries.

6.2.2 The Encomium on Mary Magdalene (9th c.)

Like the Book of the Rolls, the Coptic text of COT is part of a larger work, an Encomium on Mary Magdalene attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386). The work belongs to a Coptic cycle that Alin Suciu dubbed “Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs.” The texts of this cycle share a similar literary framework: They claim to be writings of the Apostles about the life of Christ which were deposed in the “library of Jerusalem,” where they were found by one of the Church Fathers and incorporated into their homilies. The Encomium on Mary Magdalene is only one of a cycle of homilies on the Passion of Christ attributed to Cyril. This background is a literary fiction. The works are actually anonymous Coptic productions.

The Encomium has survived in three fragments: Institut français d’archéologie orientale (IFAO), Copt. 27 (11th-12th c.); Pierpont Morgan Library 665 (9th c.); and a fragment belonging to Sylvestre Chauleur. The first two fragments preserve material from COT. The Chauleur fragment is an excerpt on the life of Mary Magdalene. The whole work is classed as a homily, but it more closely resembles hagiography. At one point, Mary Magdalene discusses the Scriptures with her attendant, Theophilus, who desires clarification on the

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75 See the next chapter, Sections 7.1.6 and 7.1.7.
76 Al-Yaqubi (d. 898), who cites the Cave of Treasures in his world chronicle, died in Egypt. His source could have been the Book of the Rolls. For him, see infra Section 7.1.4.
80 C.L. Marquis, « An Encomium on Mary Magdalene », op. cit., p. 198: This manuscript is also classified as IFAO 186-187; 190-197.
82 G. Coquin and R.-G. Godron, « Un encomion copte sur Marie-Madeleine attribué à Cyrille de Jérusalem », op. cit., class IFAO Copt 27 as “Codex A” and the Chauleur fragment with Pierpoint-Morgan 665 as “Codex B”.
different genealogies in the sacred text. Mary summons the angel Gabriel, who recounts the Cave of Treasures, beginning with the creation of Adam (COT 2). The first manuscript (IFAO Copte 27 6r-10v) breaks off shortly after the death of Adam in COT 6. The second manuscript (Pierpoint-Morgan 665, f. 1-2) has the beginning of the genealogy of Mary (COT 44:21-31), extracts from the infancy narrative (COT 47) and the chronological notice about the ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist (COT 48:1-7). This manuscript cuts off before the Passion narrative. Presumably, the Encomium contained the entire text between COT 2-48.

The original language of the Coptic text raises particular difficulties. René-Georges Coquin and Gérard Godron argued that it was translated from a Greek version. However, there is no other evidence of a Greek COT. A translation from the Syriac text would be unusual, but it is not unprecedented. Among the Manichaean texts found at the Dakhleh Oasis are bilingual Syriac-Coptic texts. Presumably, other Coptic Manichaean works were translated from Syriac, Mani’s mother tongue. However, the text of COT in the Encomium is most likely a translation from Arabic. Arabic texts of COT abounded in Egypt, including several copies of the Book of the Rolls, and Egyptian historians such as Eutychius of Alexandria (d. 940) and George al-Makin of Cairo (d. 1273) used COT in their chronicles.

In fact, the Book of the Rolls seems to be the source of the Encomium. In the first place, the frame narrative, in which an authoritative figure (Peter, Gabriel) teaches a privileged disciple (Clement, Theophilus), is very similar. In this case, the frame narrative of the Encomium is secondary, since the topos of Peter instructing Clement about sacred history had long been established in Christian literature, going back to the original Clementine Romance (Recognitions I.27-71).

Second, the two works have a similar abbreviated tradition about the fall of Satan:

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83 Ibid., p. 173.
85 S.-M. Ri, Commentaire de la Caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 60, also suspected that the Encomium was translated from Arabic.
86 B. Roggema, « Apocalypse of Peter—the Book of the Rolls », op. cit.
87 See infra Sections 7.1.6 and 7.1.10.
When Satan... saw the height and the glory that God had granted Adam, he became jealous from that moment, and he did not want to worship him. When the jealousy overtook him, he fled. (Encomium 16:1-7)\(^9^0\).

The text of the *Book of the Rolls* reads:

ولما رأى الشيطان الموهبة التي أعطىها أدم من الرَب حسده منذ ذلك اليوم واعمل المارق من الله الفكر في الاحتيال عليه ليطغيه بجراته ولعنته وانه لما كفر بنعمة الرَب التي كانت عليه صار وقاحا حربا

When the Satan saw the gift that was given to Adam from the Lord, he envied him from that day, and the schismatic from God set his mind in cunning toward him to seduce him by his boldness and his curse; and when he denied the grace of the Lord towards him, he became shameless and warlike.\(^9^0\).

Both passages are reworded to avoid the Quranic boast of fire trumping dust.

Third, there are other parallels between the *Book of the Rolls* and the *Encomium* that are missing in the primary versions. For example, the Coptic and Arabic texts name the wives of the patriarchs from Shem to Reu, who are not in the Syriac version (*COT* 44:31)\(^9^1\). Finally, both the *Encomium* and longer texts of the *Book of the Rolls* (e.g., the Arabic text published by Bezold) end with the same paragraph, a brief notice about the ministry of John the Baptist and the death of Jesus\(^9^2\). However, this could be a coincidence, as the Coptic text breaks off mid-sentence, and it is unknown how much further the *Encomium* continued.

If the *Book of the Rolls* is a model for the *Encomium*, then one can immediately deduce the date of the composition: The *Encomium* cannot be earlier than the ninth century. This is the approximate date of the *Book of the Rolls* as well as the date of the earliest manuscript of the *Encomium*. An early Islamic date of the work is further confirmed by the presence of Muslim traditions. Gabriel mentions that God left the body of Adam for forty days before he blew the breath of life into him. During this period, Satan examined the body\(^9^3\). This idea appears in no Christian work prior to the Islamic period. However, it is abundantly attested in Muslim

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\(^9^0\) C.L. Marquis, « An Encomium on Mary Magdalene », *op. cit.*, p. 212.

\(^9^1\) M.D. Gibson, *Apocrypha Arabica*, *op. cit.*, p. 6 (Translation p. 7, slightly modified).


sources. The methodology of the present study posits that majority cultures influence minority cultures. Thus Christianity, like Judaism, was also susceptible to the influences of Islam within the Abbasid Caliphate. Since this tradition appears only here in Christian literature but universally in Muslim literature, one can suppose the influence of Islam (and, hence, a post-Conquest date for the work as a whole).

6.2.3 The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan (before 12th c.)

The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan is a final, much looser adaptation of the Cave of Treasures. This work exists in both Arabic and Ethiopic. Despite the survival of numerous Arabic manuscripts, the Ethiopic version has received more scholarly attention. The work can be divided into three parts. The first part is a description of the Hexameron attributed to Epiphanius of Salamis (d. 403), with an interlude on the fall of Satan attributed to Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 390). Scholars continue to treat the “Hexameron of Pseudo-Epiphanius” as a separate work, although it appears in every manuscript of the Conflict. Apart from the headings attributing these sections to Epiphanius and Gregory of Nazianzus, the text flows

See, for example, the annotations to al-Ṭaraffī, The Stories of the Prophets by Ibn Muṭṭarrīf al-Ṭaraffī, R. Totoli (ed.), Berlin, 2003, p. 22–23 (§10). For a concrete example, see al-Thaʿlabī, ‘Arāʾīs al-majālis fī qiṣāṣ al-anbiyāʾ or Lives of the Prophets, translated by William M. Brinner, Leiden ; Boston, 2002, p. 44–45. The Encium is not the only Pseudo-Apostolic Memoir that knows Muslim traditions. The “Investiture of Abbadon, the Angel of Death,” in which the Angel of Death forcefully takes dust from an unwilling Earth so that God can create Adam, also reflects a commonly found story in Islamic literature. For this text and Muslim parallels see A. Suciui and I. Saweros, « The Investiture of Abbaton, the Angel of Death », in New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Texts, T. Burke, B. Landau (ed.), Grand Rapids, Mich., 2013, p. 526–554. Suciui believes Islamic influence is unlikely, but he does not explain why.

A. Battista and B. Bagatti, Il Combattimento di Adamo: Testo arabo inedito con traduzione italiana e commento, Jerusalem, 1982, p. 14–20, describe the contents of nine Arabic manuscripts. They missed BNF Arab 4894, a manuscript of 228 folios which contains only this text. Mingana Syr 258 contains the first half of the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan (1–87b). It is supplemented by a Garshuni version of the Cave of Treasures (87b–146a). For a description of the manuscript, see A. Mingana, Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, op. cit., vol. 1., p. 514–515. British Museum Or. 4436 also reproduces the first part of the Conflict (f. 45a–78b). For the description of this manuscript, see G. Margoliouth, Descriptive List of Syriac and Karshuni Mss. in the British Museum acquired since 1873, London, 1899, p. 42–43. The Ethiopic manuscripts include British Museum Or. 751 (f. 90a–171b), which also has the Quelamentos (f. 2a–89b), and Paris Coll. Abbadie 125 (f. 85a–151b). For these manuscripts, see W. Wright, Catalogue of the Ethiopic Manuscripts in the British Museum, London, 1877, 211-213 (Number 320 in the catalogue), and M. Chaîne, Collection des manuscrits éthiopiens de la collection Antoine d’Abbadié, Paris, 1912, p. 80. I consulted BNF Arab 4894 and Abbadie 125.


seamlessly. The second part, the *Conflict* proper, describes a series of encounters between the first couple and Satan from the time of their expulsion until their marriage. Antonio Battista and Bellarmino Bagatti published the Arabic text of this section as an independent work. However, the manuscript they used, Vatican Arab 129, contains the complete text and does not isolate this section from the other two parts. The third part, covering the history of the world from the first generations to the death of Christ, corresponds to *COT* 5-48. The entire work follows the outline of the *Cave of Treasures*, but only this last section incorporates the text of *COT* into the work.

The author’s primary method is to rewrite *COT* using as many words as possible. The Hexameron, the life of Adam and Eve, and Antediluvian history are described in minute detail. History following the Flood is recounted in a summary fashion; the life of Christ is shockingly brief. The changes to the story of *COT* are noteworthy but familiar. Most importantly, Pseudo-Gregory of Nazianzus’ aside on the fall of Satan completely replaces the story of the adoration of the angels. Pseudo-Gregory explains that Satan fell on the fourth day (rather than the sixth day) on account of his pride, drawing on Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. Through this device, the author replaces a canonical Islamic tradition with an exclusively Christian account of Satan’s fall. The *Testament of Adam* does not appear, but the *Conflict* ends at the same point as the longer text of the *Book of the Rolls*, the short notice on Jesus and John the Baptist which follows the Nativity (cf. *COT* 48:1-7).

The *Conflict* blurs the line between a translation of *COT* and a separate work that uses *COT* as a source. It is probably best described as an adaptation of *COT* rather than a translation. Its relationship to *COT* is similar to the relationship between *COT* and the *Life of Adam and Eve*, in that the later work builds upon the earlier in both length and scope. Furthermore, the *Conflict* seems to know the *Life* independently of *COT*: Both report the penitence of Adam and Eve, which is missing in *COT* (cf. *PRE* 20). The *Conflict* shows that the tradition was

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99 In Abbadie 125, the *Conflict* is sandwiched between the “Hexameron of Pseudo-Epiphanus” and the *Ancoratus*, a genuine work of Epiphanius. This suggests that the scribe thought that the whole of the *Conflict* was the work of Epiphanius and therefore a unity.


102 The *Conflict* only begins to closely follow the text (rather than the plot) of *COT* from the story Noah. This corresponds to Books III and IV of S.C. Malan, *The Book of Adam and Eve*, op. cit.

known to Arabic-speaking Christians, even though the Life of Adam and Eve was never translated into Arabic or any other Semitic language\textsuperscript{104}. It is certainly part of the greater cycle of Adam books. If COT is a “secondary” Adam book, then the Conflict is a “tertiary” Adam book. Or, rather, if COT is the Syriac Adam book, then the Conflict is the Arabic Adam book.

The date of the Conflict cannot be pinpointed with any precision. The earliest citation of the work appears in the Arabic Catena to the Pentateuch, whose latest source is Dionysius bar Salibi (d. 1171)\textsuperscript{105}. The terminus ante quem is therefore the twelfth century. The terminus post quem is any time after the redaction of the Book of the Rolls, which seems to inform the ending of the Conflict. It certainly postdates the translation of COT into Arabic. The work was therefore composed sometime between the ninth and the twelfth centuries. A later date fits the work’s position as the culminating point of the development of the Adam books.

6.3 Conclusion
This chapter has shown that the Syriac Cave of Treasures is a narrative unity, the product of one specific time and place. However, the Arabic COT was polymorphic and could be found in at least three distinct versions: 1) one or more straightforward Arabic translations; 2) the Book of the Rolls; and 3) the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan. Of these versions, the Book of the Rolls is the most important and influential. It is the basis of the Coptic Encomium on Mary Magdalene and first book of the Ethiopic Qalementos, and it also probably influenced the Georgian version of COT and the Conflict. Therefore, all of the versions of COT are related, in some way, to the Book of the Rolls. If the number of manuscripts is an indication, this Arabic version appears to have been more popular than its Syriac counterpart. The next chapter will confirm that Arabic literature was the primary (though not exclusive) means of the diffusion of texts and traditions related to the Cave of Treasures.

\textsuperscript{104} See also T. Gluck, The Arabic Legend of Seth, the Father of Mankind, Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, 1968. Muslim writers knew the episode of the quest of Seth but not the penitence narrative.

\textsuperscript{105} A. Gözte, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », op. cit., p. 169-175. See infra Section 7.1.11.
Chapter Seven: The Transmission of the Cave of Treasures

7.0 Introduction

The Cave of Treasures enjoyed a popularity equal to that of the Book of Jubilees. Also like Jubilees, its popularity and influence was restricted to specific geographic and linguistic borders. Following the same method as chapter four, this chapter examines the transmission of COT from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The diachonic perspective considers the principal works that used COT as a source. The synchronic perspective enumerates the most common motifs one finds in these secondary sources. The resulting map of the transmission of COT is the inverse of the transmission of Jubilees: Whereas Jubilees was known primarily in the Byzantine Empire, COT is almost exclusively known within the Abbasid Caliphate. Consequently, the author of PRE had, a priori, a much better chance of knowing this work than Jubilees. Most of the motifs listed in the second part of this chapter will reappear in some form in the next chapter.

As in the corresponding chapter on Jubilees, there is a need to apply an objective criterion in order to limit the number of entries. The criterion used for Jubilees (a direct reference to its Greek title) will not work for COT, for the simple reason that the Cave of Treasures is not only the name of the work but also a place within it. The cave of treasures appears in a number of Syriac works that are not dependent on COT. It was originally linked to the Magi as the place where they stored the gifts they brought to the infant Jesus. The cave also preserved an ancient document called the testament of Adam, a literary fiction which an enterprising Syriac writer transformed into an actual book. In the Cave of Treasures, the


2 For this text, see S.E. Robinson, The Testament of Adam: An Examination of the Syriac and Greek Traditions, Chico, CA, 1982, although I disagree with his conclusions regarding the date and provenance of the work. The contents of the Testament of Adam are first summarized by George Syncellus, Georgii Synelli Ecloga Chronographica, A.A. Mosshammer (ed.), Leipzig, 1984, p. 10 (The Chronography of George Synkellos: A
eponymous cave is still the repository of the gifts of the Magi, but it is primarily the tomb of Adam. All dependent works also understand the cave of treasures as the tomb of Adam. This function of the cave, rather than the cave by itself, will serve as the primary criterion.

This criterion excludes all of the earlier Syriac sources which refer to the cave of treasures, but it also excludes at least one important work which certainly depends on COT, the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*. This seventh-century work never mentions the cave of treasures, but it includes several other traditions from COT. Most significantly, it mentions Yoniton, the fourth son of Noah, who first appears in COT 27:7-11. In the end, *Pseudo-Methodius* became more popular than COT due to dissemination in Western Europe through Greek and Latin translations. In Western Europe, for example, Yoniton (as Jonitus) replaced Enoch, Seth, and Zoroaster as the inventor of astronomy. An entire monograph could be written about the influence of this apocalypse. A separate monograph could be written about Yoniton. The *Nachleben of Pseudo-Methodius* is distinct from that of COT, which justifies its absence here.

The criterion also excludes a great number of Islamic works, beginning with the Qur’an. The previous chapter discussed the Quranic tradition of the fall of Satan (particularly Q 7:11-13), which is shared with COT 3:1-7 (supra Section 6.1.3). This is about the only tradition shared between the two works, however. The *Stories of the Prophets* literature, in particular, knows several important traditions from COT but not in the Qur’an, including Adam’s descent from

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Eden to the land of Nod (COT 5:14-15), the story of the twin sisters of Cain and Abel (COT 5:21-32), the burial of Adam at Jerusalem (COT 23), and the translation of Adam aboard the Ark (COT 18:3). The preservation of Adam’s body by the Sethites and its subsequent translation to Jerusalem (i.e., Golgotha) via Noah’s Ark is the central narrative of COT. Although Muslim sources report most of this narrative, they often neglect to mention the cave of treasures itself. The current chapter thus focuses on only a few representative sources. The Cave of Treasures, however, is entrenched in Muslim tradition, both Sunni and Shiite. This subject, like Pseudo-Methodius, merits its own monograph.

7.1 The Diachronic Perspective
The Cave of Treasures served as an important historical source in Syriac and Arabic literature from the seventh to the fourteenth centuries. The peak of the literary activity related to COT occurs between the eighth and the tenth centuries. During this epoch, the time of the redaction of PRE, COT was translated from Syriac to Arabic and began crossing confessional boundaries.

7.1.1 The Zuqnin Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysus of Tel-Mahre (c. 775)
Like Jubilees, the Cave of Treasures made its strongest impact in the world of historiography. The first extant chronicle to use COT is the Zuqnin Chronicle or the Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahre (c. 775). This anonymous work uses the Chronicon of Eusebius for its account of Israelite history. Eusebius, however, begins with the time of Abraham. Pseudo-Dionysius fills the gap with the biblical account of creation, followed by a summary of COT until the time of the Flood. According to the chronicle, Adam and the other Antediluvian

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8 Al-Tha'labī, Lives of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 74; al-Ṭaraffī, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 28-29 (§46-47).
9 Al-Tha'labī, Lives of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 82; al-Ṭaraffī, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 29-30 (§49).
10 Al-Tha'labī, Lives of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 98; al-Ṭaraffī, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 35 (§73).
11 Muslim authors often locate the cave of treasures on a mountain near Mecca rather than a mountain outside Paradise. I have excluded these sources on the grounds that this variant tradition is secondary and of evident Islamic origin. See M.J. Kister, « Ādam: A Study of Some Legends in Tafsīr and Ḥadīth Literature », Israel Oriental Studies, vol. 13 (1993), p. 171.
13 This tally includes the seventh-century Apocrypha of Pseudo-Methodius, which is not discussed below.
patriarchs lived on a mountain in the land of Shir. All of them are buried in the cave of treasures. The chronicler also mentions the descent of the Sethites and the translation of Adam’s body on the Ark. He does not, however, mention Melchizedek or the reburial of Adam at Jerusalem. Albrecht Götze notes some other incidental citations of the work from postdiluvian history. The Zuqnin Chronicle is the last original Syriac work to use COT as a source before the thirteenth century. Furthermore, the work exists in a unique manuscript, the autograph (Cod. Vat. Syr. 162). It attests to a limited influence of COT on Syriac literature during the time of the redaction of PRE.

7.1.2 The Book of Idols of Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi (d. 819)

Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi (d. 819) was an Arabic historian who lived in Baghdad. He was a prolific author, although most of his work has been lost. One extant work, the Book of Idols, alludes to COT. This short text is an account of polytheism in pre-Islamic Arabia. The author’s explanation of the origin of idolatry depends on a tradition first found in COT:

ان ادم عليه السلام لما مات جعله بنو شيث بن ادم في مغرة في الجبل الذي اهبط عليه ادم بارض الهند ويقال الجبل نود

[...]

وكان بنو شيث يأتون جسد ادم في المغارة ويعظمون عليه ويترحمون عليه فقال رجل من بنى قابيل بن ادم يا بنى قابيل ان لبني شيث دواويا بدورون حوله ويعظمونه وليس لكم شيء فتحت لهم صننا فكانا أول من عملها

Behold, when Adam, peace be upon him, died, the children of Seth b. Adam deposed him in a cave on the mountain where he had descended in the land of India, and they called the mountain Nod.

[...]

The children of Seth cared for the body of Adam in the cave, and they magnified him and venerated him. A man from the children of Cain b. Adam said: “Oh, children of Cain! Behold, the children of Seth have an enclosure that they circumambulate and

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18 Ibid.

19 Ibid., p. 8-9.

20 A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (2) », op. cit., p. 58-60.
worship, and you have no such thing.” He sculpted an idol for them, and he was the first of those who make them.²¹

The reference to the story of COT could not be clearer. The first couple live on a mountain below the heavenly Paradise (COT 5:14-15), and the children of Seth venerate the body of Adam after his death (COT 7:12). In COT, the cult of Adam is a prefiguration of the Christian religion. Here, it is the very origin of idolatry! The transformation of the tradition represents an “Islamicization” of COT material. It is a recurring trend in Muslim adaptations of COT.

Hisham ibn Muhammad is part of a chain of tradition (isnad) which consistently links him and his father (Muhammad ibn al-Sa’ib al-Kalbi, d. 763) with material from COT (see infra Section 7.1.3). There is no doubt that Hisham ibn Muhammad knew of COT from his father.²² Whether Hisham knew COT directly is an open question. It is a great misfortune that among Hisham ibn Muhammad’s lost works is a book on Adam and his descendants.²³

7.1.3 The Tabaqat of Ibn Sa’d (d. 845),

Muhammad ibn Sa’d ibn Mani’ al-Hashimi (d. 845), was a prominent Muslim biographer. He is the author of the eight-volume Kitab Tabaqat al-Kabir (“Book of the Major Classes”), which focuses mainly on the life of the Prophet and his companions but also gives a short account of Muhammad’s ancestors, including the prophets from Adam to Ishmael. His work is not a continuous narrative but a collection of traditions (Hadīth), each with its own isnad. A handful of these traditions recounts the story of COT from the expulsion from Eden to the reburial of Adam. Hisham ibn Muhammad, the author of the Book of Idols (see above), and his father are both prominent members in the chain of transmission. The work of Ibn Sa’d reveals the extent to which Hisham and his father knew COT.

The narrative of COT is divided into two parts. The first part is cited under traditions about Adam.²⁴ Ibn Sa’d reports that Adam spent a half-day in Paradise before he descended to Mount Nod (نوذ), cf. COT 5:14-15). A number of gifts descend with him, including

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²² For father and son, see T. Nagel, Die Qiṣṣa al-anbiyā’ : Ein Beitrag zur Arabischen Literaturgeschichte, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Bonn, Cottbus, 1967, p. 74-78.


frankincense and myrrh (cf. COT 5:17), the rod of Moses, and the black stone of the Ka'ba\textsuperscript{25}.

The narrator then recounts the story of Cain, Abel, and their twin sisters (cf. COT 5:21-32)\textsuperscript{26}. Cain is eventually killed by his descendant Lamech in a hunting accident (cf. COT 8:2-10)\textsuperscript{27}. The section ends with the death of Adam and the separation of the Sethites and the Cainites\textsuperscript{28}.

The Sethites guard the body of Adam from the Cainites (cf. COT 6:22). Eventually, the Sethites intermingle with the Cainites (cf. COT 12), and they all die in the Flood.

The second part appears in the traditions about Noah\textsuperscript{29}. Ibn Sa'd states that Noah placed the body of Adam on the Ark, and the body divided the males from the females (cf. COT 18:3-6)\textsuperscript{30}. During the Flood, the Ark circumambulates the Ka'ba, whereas in COT the Ark makes the sign of the cross over the waters (COT 19:5)\textsuperscript{31}. This change marks another example of the “Islamicization” of COT material. When Noah disembarks, he and the other survivors establish the city of Thamanin (ثمانين), commemorating the eighty (not eight) survivors (cf. COT 20:7-8)\textsuperscript{32}. A final tradition concerning Noah mentions the birth of Yoniton (يوناطن) and the burial of Adam at Jerusalem (بيت المقدس)\textsuperscript{33}.

The isnad of these traditions is always the same: Ibn Sa'd—Hisham ibn Muhammad—his father—Abu Salih—Ibn Abbas. The purported source, Ibn Abbas (d. 687), is the father of Quranic exegesis (Tafsīr) and a specialist in matters concerning the history of Israel. He was considered a bastion of orthodoxy. Consequently, he features prominently in fabricated isnads\textsuperscript{34}. Abu Salih is the author of a lost Tafsīr\textsuperscript{35}. Little is known about him. The first certain link in the chain is the father of Hisham (supra Section 7.1.2), Muhammad al-Kalbi (d. 763). Knowledge of these traditions from COT can therefore be reliably dated to the middle of the eighth century, if not earlier.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., p. 12.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 13-14.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p. 14.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. 15-16.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p. 16-18.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. The Qur'an does not specify the numbers of people aboard the Ark. Muslims are therefore free to speculate on the number of survivors of the Flood.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 18.
\textsuperscript{35} N. Abbott, Arabic Literary Papyri, op. cit., p. 47.
7.1.4 The Chronicle of al-Yaqubi (d. 898)

Ahmad ibn Abu Yaqub ibn Jafar ibn Wahb ibn Wadih al-Yaqubi was a geographer and historian with noted Shi'a sympathies. He lived in Armenia and Khorasan, but he traveled widely and died in Egypt. His history of Israel, the first part of his Chronicle, has two notable features. First he accurately quotes the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, one of the few Muslim authors to do so. Second, his chronicle constitutes the most extensive use of COT in an extant Muslim source. Unlike Ibn Sa’d, his traditions do not come from Muslim transmitters but directly from the “People of the Book.”

Like other authors, al-Yaqubi relies on COT for antediluvian history in particular. He uses COT as a primary source until the time of Abraham. His knowledge of COT is far more precise and detailed than any other Muslim author before or after his time. For instance, he names Labuda, rather than Qalima, as the twin sister of Cain, against Islamic tradition, which reverses the names (COT 5:19). He notes that the name of Noah’s wife is Haykal (COT 14:3). He even names Melchizedek, a figure who does not appear in the Qur’an and has no role in mainstream Muslim tradition. As in COT 23, Melchizedek guards the body of Adam at the center of the earth. Al-Yaqubi mentions that there is some controversy about whether Adam was buried in Jerusalem or Mecca, another example of the gradual Islamicization of COT. Consequently, al-Yaqubi does not mention the Testament of Adam or the prophecies of Yoniton, both of which anticipate the coming of Christ. He returns to COT towards the end of his history of the kings of Judah. For example, he mentions the hiding and recovery of the Scriptures right before and after the Babylonian Exile (COT 42-43).

Al-Yaqubi does not distinguish between canonical scriptures and apocryphal narratives. The book of Genesis is just one source among many. His choice of COT as an historical source is eminently logical: The Cave of Treasures contains more information on the primordial history.

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36 For general information, see C. Adang, Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm, Leiden, 1996, p. 36-39. See also A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (2) », op. cit., p. 60-71.
38 Or rather, one suspects, an Arabic version of COT. The most likely candidate would be the Book of the Rolls.
40 Al-Ya’qūbī, L’histoire des Prophètes, op. cit., p. 11.
42 Al-Ya’qūbī, L’histoire des Prophètes, op. cit., p. 16.
43 Ibid., p. 86-87.
than Genesis. He uses Genesis and other biblical books to fill in the information that only appears briefly in COT. Unfortunately, al-Yaqubi has no successors in the realm of Islamic historiography. Future authors avoided both COT and the Bible as inherently unreliable. His work remains an impressive example of direct contact with the primary sources.

7.1.5 The Chronicle of al-Tabari (d. 923)

Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari is the greatest Muslim historian. His massive chronicle (forty volumes in English translation, totaling over 10,000 pages) covers history from the creation to his own days. His chronicle contains some material from COT, although al-Tabari did not know the work firsthand. He only used what were, in his eyes, authentic Muslim traditions with reliable chains of transmission. In theory, this means his work consists of pure Muslim tradition. In practice, he included Jewish and Christian traditions from Muslims who were less discriminating in their choice of materials.

His traditions from COT are identical to those found in Ibn Sa’d and have the same isnad. That is, they go back to Ibn Abbas via Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi and his father. Therefore, his chronicle reports Adam and Eve’s descent to the land of Nod, the story of the twin sisters and the death of Cain, the burial of Adam, the descent of the Sethites, and the translation of Adam aboard the Ark. Al-Tabari is a further witness to the progressive Islamicization of COT materials: According to him, some believe that Adam was buried in a cave of treasures on Mount Abu Qubays near Mecca rather than in Jerusalem. Many of these traditions reappear in his Tafsīr, which is even longer than his chronicle.

The influence of al-Tabari cannot be overstated. His (Sunni) orthodoxy is unimpeachable, and therefore the COT material he transmits received a quasi-canonical status. Later Muslim writers could quote him with impunity. However, he also represents the stagnation of the transmission of COT in Islam. Later authors depend on him rather than COT.

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44 For general information, see C. Adang, Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, op. cit., p. 39-44. See also A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », op. cit., p. 153-155.
50 Al-Ṭabarī, Annales, op. cit., p. 162 (The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume I, op. cit., p. 333). In Islamic tradition, Abu Qubays is the first mountain created by God.
51 The work of al-Ṭaraffi, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit. is principally derived from the Tafsīr of Tabari.
7.1.6 The Annals of Eutychius of Alexandria (d. 940)

Eutychius of Alexandria (Sa’id ibn Batrīq) was the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria. His *Annales*, written in Arabic, is heavily indebted to COT: References to COT are early and frequent. Eutychius begins his history with the story of Cain, Abel, and their twin sisters. Adam and the other patriarchs are buried in the cave of treasures; the Sethites take an oath on the blood of Abel to separate from the Cainites; the Sethites, attracted by the music of the Cainites, descend in the time of Jared; Adam’s body is transferred from the cave of treasures to Noah’s Ark; Adam is buried in the center of the earth, with Melchizedek as the guardian of Adam’s body. Further traditions from COT appear intermittently for the rest of the history of Israel, but his dependence on the work wanes after the time of Abraham.

Eutychius is the first Christian since Pseudo-Dionysus of Tel-Mahre to use COT as an historical source. His use of COT is far more extensive than what appears in the *Zuqnin Chronicle*. Unlike that chronicle, the *Annales* of Eutychius was copied, expanded, and read by Christians and Muslims alike. For example, the Muslim historian al-Mas’udi (d. 956) cites Eutychius as one of his sources in his great historical work, the *Meadows of Gold*. Much later, the Muslim controversialist Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) read—and refuted—the work of

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54 Eutychius of Alexandria [Sa‘id ibn Battrīq], *Annales*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 6-7.

55 Ibid., p. 7.

56 Ibid., p. 7-8.

57 Ibid., p. 9-10.

58 Ibid., p. 11-14.

59 Ibid., p. 15-16.


61 U. Simonsohn, « Sa‘id ibn Batrīq », op. cit., p. 229. Al-Mas’udi also knows COT either directly or indirectly, although he does not name the cave of treasures. Instead, he refers to the “Islamicized” tradition where Adam’s grave is Abu Qubays outside Mecca, a tradition that appeared in al-Tabari (another of his sources). See further A. Götzè, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », op. cit., p. 169.
Eutychius\textsuperscript{62}. The \textit{Annales} is a high point in the vitality of \textit{COT} within the Christian community. It represents the standardization of \textit{COT} as an historical source.

7.1.7 The Universal History of Agapius of Manbij (d. 942)

Agapius of Manbij (Mahbūb ibn Qūṣṭānṭīn) was the Melkite bishop of Hierapolis (Manbij) in Syria\textsuperscript{63}. Like his contemporary Eutychius of Alexandria, the first part of his \textit{Historia Universalis} makes frequent (but independent) use of \textit{COT}\textsuperscript{64}. However, his work has generally been overlooked in the study of the transmission of \textit{COT}\textsuperscript{65}. As other authors, Agapius concentrates mostly on the story of Adam. The first reference is his description of the heavenly Paradise, which is only several cubits above the earth, as in \textit{COT} (3:15)\textsuperscript{66}. The same page refers to Adam’s glorification above all other creation and his investiture as king (cf. \textit{COT} 2:17). When Adam disobeys, God orders him to descend to the mountains opposite Paradise (\textit{COT} 5:15)\textsuperscript{67}. Surprisingly, he does not refer to the story of the twin sisters. He does, however, describe the death of Cain at the hands of Lamech, a common story that also appears in \textit{COT} (8:2-10)\textsuperscript{68}. The invention of music eventually lures the Sethites from the mountains (cf. \textit{COT} 11-12)\textsuperscript{69}. Agapius refers briefly to the translation of Adam aboard the Ark (cf. \textit{COT} 18:3)\textsuperscript{70}. Much later, during his description of the sacrifice of Isaac, he returns to the subject of Adam: Abraham brought Isaac to the mountain where Adam was buried, and where the Temple Mount will be built and where Christ will be crucified (cf. \textit{COT} 29:3-8)\textsuperscript{71}. Melchizedek builds the city of Jerusalem around this mountain (\textit{COT} 30). A final allusion to \textit{COT} occurs in his description of the nativity: The Magi claim that they knew about the birth of the Messiah in advance thanks to writings left by Nimrod (\textit{COT} 45:12)\textsuperscript{72}.


\textsuperscript{63} For general information, see M. Debié, \textit{L’Écriture de l’histoire en Syrieue}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 632-634.


\textsuperscript{65} Albrecht Götze completely neglected him despite the publication of two different editions of his work at the beginning of the twentieth century.

\textsuperscript{66} Agapius of Manbij, « Histoire Universelle », \textit{op. cit.}, p. 576.

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 577.

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 578-579.

\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 580.

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 584.

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 664-666.

\textsuperscript{72} Agapius of Manbij [Mahbūb ibn-Qūṣṭānṭīn], « Kitab al-‘Unvan: Histoire Universellen Second Partie (1) », \textit{Patrologia Orientalis}, A. Vasiliev (ed.), vol. 7 (1911), p. 464. The content of their revelation is further described on p. 466.
Agapius’ independent use of COT is a second attestation of the popularity of the work as an historical source. Both Eutychius and Agapius, Melkite bishops, confirm the popularity of COT among Christians outside of the West Syrian “Miaphysite” community. They also demonstrate this popularity in two distinct regions: Syria and Egypt. The two chronicles were known in both communities. Syrians read and expanded the Annales of Eutychius73, while the thirteenth century Egyptian chronicler George al-Makin (d. 1273; see infra Section 7.1.10) used both Eutychius and Agapius as sources74.

7.1.8 The Book of the Bee of Solomon of Basra (c. 1222)
Despite the great number of East Syrian manuscripts of COT, Solomon of Basra’s Book of the Bee is the only East Syrian (“Nestorian”) work to use COT as a major source75. The Book of the Bee, like COT, is a sacred history that covers the period from creation to the time of Christ. It also includes a section on eschatology. The work was written in Syriac but it was also translated into Arabic76. The style of the work is remote from the chronicles of West Syrian Christians and Muslims. Rather, the orientation of the Book of the Bee is catechetical. True to its name, the Book of the Bee draws from several sources, as a bee collects pollen from several flowers. One of the “flowers” is the Cave of Treasures: Chapters 13-25 draw primarily on COT for its account of sacred history from creation (COT 1) until the sacrifice of Isaac (COT 29)77. Unlike most adaptations of COT, the Book of the Bee also includes the typologies of the Passion, including the detail that Jesus was crucified on the bars of the Ark of the Covenant (cf. COT 50:20-21)78. The work serves as a reminder that COT continued to circulate in Syriac, despite its popularity in Arabic, and that East Syrian Christians, like West Syrian and Melkite Christians, also knew the work.

73 M. Breydy, Études sur Saïd ibn Batrîq et ses sources, op. cit. According to him, the standard version of Eutychius is a Syrian expansion of the original.
75 For the text and English translation, see Solomon of Basra, The Book of the Bee, E.A.W. Budge (ed.), Oxford, 1886. The author of this work only mentions the cave of treasures as the repository of Moses’ rod (Text, p. 51, Translation, p. 50), yet he indicates that Adam’s remains were translated from Eden to the terrestrial world, implying an initial burial in a place like the cave of treasures (Text, p. 35 and Translation, p. 35). Solomon’s use of COT is certain, so I have included the work despite its doubtful fulfillment of the criterion. See also A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », op. cit., p. 175-176.
77 Ibid., Text, p. 20-42 (Translation, p. 15-43). Since the use of COT is continuous, I will not enumerate every detail borrowed from this work. See the second section of this chapter for specific examples.
78 Ibid., p. 106-111 (p. 94-99).
7.1.9 *The Chronicle up to 1234*

The *Chronicle up to 1234*, like the *Zuqnin Chronicle*, is a Syriac universal history known from a single manuscript. The chronicle was mentioned in chapters three and four of the present study, since it contains the most extensive account of *Jubilees* in Syriac literature. The *Cave of Treasures*, however, is the primary source for the chronicler’s account of patriarchal history. His adaptation of the material is extensive and includes most of the material found in *COT 1-29*, that is, from the creation until the sacrifice of Isaac. He resorts to *Jubilees* and other sources only in places where *COT* is silent, such as the early history of Abraham (*Jub*. 11-12) or the war between Jacob and Esau (*Jub*. 37-38). The chronicle is an additional attestation that *COT* remained popular in its original language.

7.1.10 *The Blessed Collection of George al-Makin (d. 1273)*

George al-Makin (Ibn al-Amid) is an Arabo-Coptic historian who was born in Cairo but died in Damascus. His sole surviving work, the *Blessed Collection*, is a universal history beginning with creation and ending with the accession of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars in 1260. Most of the work is occupied with sacred history rather than the events of the author’s own days. The work is also derivative, being heavily dependent on Eutychius and Agapius. The latter part of the chronicle, beginning with the time of Muhammed, is taken from the history of al-Tabari. Only a portion of this second part has even been printed, in Latin, as the *Historia saracenica* by Thomas van Erpen in 1625. The portion dealing with the *Cave of Treasures* has never been printed. I consulted BNF Arab 4729, a nineteenth century Egyptian manuscript.

George names his sources, including Eutychius and Agapius. The chronicler cites Eutychius of Alexandria as his primary source for the opening portion of his chronicle. The first six folios correspond to *COT 1-23*, which includes the antediluvian history and the reburial of Adam on Golgotha by Shem and Melchizedek. The rest of the biblical history is taken from other sources. The chronicle is not only a witness to the vitality of *COT* as an authoritative

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80 J.-B. Chabot, *Anonymi auctoris Chronicum ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens I*, Paris, 1920, p. 28-55. Like the *Book of the Bee*, the chronicle includes most of the traditions from *COT 1-29*, although it is interrupted by passages from *Jubilees* and Michael the Syrian.
83 For his life, see W. Witakowski, « Ethioptic Universal Chronography », op. cit., p. 293-298.
source but also the authority of Eutychius and Agapius as historians. George’s own chronicle was translated into Ethiopic, and it is highly regarded within the Ethiopian Church.

7.1.11 Pseudo-Hippolytus in the Arabic Catena to the Pentateuch (13th c.)
The Arabic Catena to the Pentateuch is a remarkable work which has not yet received its due. The Catena focuses mainly on the book of Genesis and draws overwhelmingly on Syriac sources. It is the work of a West Syrian Christian. In 1716, Johann Albert Fabricius published excerpts of the Catena with Latin translation from Leiden Orient 2364 (Scalinger 230), a sixteen-century manuscript. In 1867, Paul de Lagarde published the Catena from the same manuscript. Only Fabricius’ fragments have ever been translated. The Catena was probably written in Arabic rather than Syriac, since it cites Arabic authors such as Eutychius of Alexandria, but it occasionally cites sources in Syriac. The latest authority is Dionysius bar Salibi, who died in 1171. His death provides the terminus post quem for the whole work, which probably was not compiled until the thirteenth or even fourteenth centuries.

The most accessible part of the Catena is the English translation of the excerpts published by Fabricius in his collection of the works of Hippolytus of Rome (d. 235). The excerpts, however, are not the work of this Hippolytus. Instead, they are attributed to one “Hippolytus, the Syrian expositor of the Targum” (إيفونيليوس مفسر السرياني الترجم). He is quoted in sections dealing with the Flood. Some of his material is drawn from COT. First, the author describes the three stories of the Ark in exactly the same terms as found in COT (14:5-14). He then mentions that Noah and his sons withdrew the body of Adam and the three gifts from the cave of treasures, which also contains the bodies of the other antediluvian patriarch (COT 17:5-6). They bid farewell to Paradise and then load the body of Adam onto the Ark.

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88 P. de Lagarde, Materialien zur Kritik und Geschichte des Pentateuchs, 2 vol., Leipzig, 1867.
89 NPNF (2) 5:194-199.
(COT 17:7-18). In a later passage, Hippolytus mentions that the Ark made the sign of the cross over the waters (COT 19:5).

Albrecht Götze has indicated that the Catena knows COT from many different sources apart from Pseudo-Hippolytus. First, the Catena cites the original Syriac work under the name of Ephrem the Syrian. The Catena also cites the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan under the name of Epiphanius, the purported author of this work. As mentioned above, he refers to the Annales of Eutychius under the author’s Arabic name, Sa’id ibn Batriq. When confronted with so many different accounts of the same story, the compiler of the Catena was not above harmonizing his sources, essentially creating a new account of the same story. The work is a testament to the prominence of COT in the West Syrian tradition.

7.1.12 The Ethiopian Synaxarium (14th c.?)

The Ethiopian Church added much material from COT to their translation of the West Syrian (“Jacobite”) Synaxarium, called Maṣḥafa Senkesar. Several entries in the Synaxarium contain material from COT. The entry on Abel (II Terr), refers to the descent of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden to a lower land (COT 5:14-15), the story of the twin sisters (COT 5:21-32), and the oath by the blood of Abel (COT 7:11). The entry on Noah (VI Terr) mentions the veneration of Adam’s body (COT 7:13-14), the intermarriage of Sethites and

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96 A. Götze, « Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle (3) », op. cit., p. 169-175.
97 Ibid., p. 172-173.
Cainites (COT 12), and the translation of Adam onto the Ark (COT 18:3)\(^{100}\). The entry on Mahalalel (II Miyazya) states that he was buried in the cave of treasures (COT 10:9-10)\(^{101}\). The entry on Adam and Eve (VI Miyazya) closely follows the early chapters of COT (2-6) and includes a brief reference to the testament of Adam\(^{102}\). The entry on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (XXVIII Nahasê) mentions Adam’s burial on Golgotha in the context of the binding of Isaac (COT 29)\(^{103}\). The entry on Melchizedek (III Pâguemên) tells the story of the reburial following the Flood (COT 23)\(^{104}\). The entries in the Synaxarium probably derive from an adaptation such as the Qlementos or the Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan rather than the original COT. In the first place, COT was never translated into Ethiopic. Furthermore, certain details in the narratives reveal the influence of the longer works. For instance, Melchizedek is the son of the second Cainan (as in the Conflict) rather than the otherwise unknown Melek and Yozadaq from COT 23\(^{105}\).

7.2 The Synchronic Perspective

The following is a list of the most common motifs shared between the Christian and Muslim works that use COT as a source. They appear in more than half of the twelve sources cited above. In all cases, the traditions come from the first half of the work, the story of Adam’s burial, translation, and reburial. Five of the six traditions appear in some form in PRE. The missing tradition concerns the death of Cain (Section 7.2.3). There are two major traditions about the death of Cain; Pirge de-Rabbi Eliezer mentions neither of them.

7.2.1 The Holy Mountain (COT 5-17)

The Cave of Treasures states that after the expulsion of Adam from Paradise, the first humans lived on a mountain somewhere between Paradise and the terrestrial world (COT 5:14-17). The cave of treasures is on the summit of this mountain, which lies in the Far East (COT 45:12). It is neither Mount Paradise, which is above it (COT 3:15; 7:5-6), nor is it the navel of the world, which is Golgotha (COT 23:15). It is an intermediate place, somewhat like

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Mount Purgatory in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*[^106]. The mountain is not named in *COT*. Christian sources simply designate it the “Holy Mountain” in both Syriac (الجبل المقدس) and Arabic (َََُْلا). Muslim sources frequently refer to it as the Mountain of Nod (نود), usually located in India[^108]. Nod is a biblical toponym (Gen 4:16) whose application to the Holy Mountain can be inferred from the text of *COT* (e.g., 5:31; 45:12). *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not refer to the Holy Mountain as such. Its functions have been absorbed by Mount Moriah, which incorporates aspects of both the Holy Mountain and Golgotha, in that it is the habitation of Adam following the expulsion (*PRE* 20) but also the center of the earth (*PRE* 11-12). Most importantly, Mount Moriah, as the Temple Mount, combines the cultic functions of the Holy Mountain and Golgotha found in *COT* (see *infra* Section 8.1).

### 7.2.2 The Twin Sisters (*COT* 5:21-32)

The *Cave of Treasures* popularized the story of the twin sisters of Cain and Abel, who married their brothers yet became the source of the tension that led to the death of Abel. The *Cave of Treasures* is the first source to name both sisters[^109] and the first to introduce the notion that the brothers could not marry their own twin, which leads to Cain’s jealousy. The *Cave of Treasures* also explicitly links the twin sisters with the sacrifice of Cain and Abel. In *COT*, the sacrifice is the occasion of their marriages. In later works, but especially Islamic literature, the sacrifice is intended to arbitrate which brother has the right to marry the more beautiful sister[^110]. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 21 has an abbreviated form of the story. It does not name the twins, but it is otherwise quite close to the story of *COT* (see *infra* Section 8.6).

[^106]: Dante’s work reflects a tripartite sacred geography similar to *COT*. In the *Inferno*, Dante passes through the navel of the world from the earthly Jerusalem to the Antipodes on the other side, where he finds *Purgatorio*. He ascends Mount Purgatory until the Garden of Eden at its summit and, from there, enters *Paradiso*.


7.2.3 The Death of Cain (COT 8:2-10)
According to COT, Cain dies when his descendant Lamech mistakes him for a wild animal and kills him. This tradition is opposed to the death of Cain in Jubilees 4:31, where Cain’s house collapses on him. The Church Fathers knew both versions and sometimes confused them. Examples of this phenomenon were cited in the chapter on the transmission of Jubilees (supra Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.6). The story of Lamech and Cain is attested from the fourth century onward in principally Christian sources. The earliest Jewish source to mention the story is the printed Midrash Tanhuma, a work which quotes PRE. It therefore appears that the tradition is a Late Antique Christian invention. The Cave of Treasures features a prominent manifestation of the tradition. It is frequently reported in sources dependent on COT, both Muslim and Christian. Unfortunately, Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer does not report the death of Cain in any form, which would have been an important clue to the author’s sources.

7.2.4 The Cainites and the Sethites (COT 11-12)
Following the death of Adam, the children of Seth separate themselves from the children of Cain. The Sethites inhabit the Holy Mountain and tend to the body of Adam in the cave of treasures. The Cainites live in the plain where Abel was murdered. The Sethites swear on the blood of Abel to remain on the Holy Mountain, but the music of the Cainites eventually lures the Sethites into the plain. Both the Sethites and the Cainites are subsequently destroyed in the Flood. The story of COT is based on the euhemerized version of the story of the Sons of God and the daughters of men (Gen 6:1-4) first found in the chronicle of Julius Africanus and widely adopted in Christian tradition. The geographic separation of the two groups and the

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111 E. Gypreou and H. Spurling, The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis, Leiden, 2013, p. 128-131. In addition to Didymus the Blind (supra Section 4.1.1), they mention Ephrem the Syrian, Basil of Caesarea, Theodoret of Cyrillus, Procopius of Gaza, the Greek Catena, and Jerome, all Christian sources from the fourth century or later. Basil and Theodoret are noteworthy in that they mention the tradition only to deny it. It appears to have had greater authority in Syriac literature.


113 Earlier research presumes, rather than proves, a Jewish provenance of the story. For a prominent example, see J.L. Kugel, « Why was Lamech Blind? », in In Potiphar’s House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts, Cambridge, Mass, 1994, p. 91-103.


polemic against music are both inventions of COT. They are reproduced in later Christian and Muslim sources. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 22 refers to the moral distinction between the Sethites and the Cainites but does not mention their geographical separation or the polemic against music. It does, however, reproduce the list of the sexual perversions of the Cainites from COT (see infra Section 8.7).

7.2.5 Adam on the Ark (COT 18:3-6)
The translation of Adam’s body aboard Noah’s Ark is probably the most distinctive tradition from COT. Except for Ibn al-Kalbi (Section 7.1.2), every source mentioned in the first part of this chapter tells the story of the removal of Adam from the cave of treasures, his transfer aboard the Ark, and his eventual reburial in Jerusalem. In addition to these sources, the presence of Adam on the Ark is extremely widespread in both Christian and Muslim literature. Such works typically mention, at least, that Adam was placed in the center of the Ark to separate the men and women. Sometimes they also narrate the burial of Adam in Jerusalem. While Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer replicates very specific details of the design of the Ark in COT which are not commonly found in other sources, it also contains a possible allusion to the translation of Adam aboard the Ark (see infra Section 8.8).


118 Other Christian examples can be found in Armenian literature, such as the “History of the Repentance of Adam” in W.L. Lipscomb, The Armenian Apocryphal Adam Literature, Atlanta, 1990, p. 233; the story of the “Tree of Sabek and Melchizedek,” in M.E. Stone, Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Abraham, Atlanta, 2012, p. 94-100; and a fragment attributed (falsey) to Epiphanius in F.C. Conybeare, « The Gospel Commentary of Epiphanius. », Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, vol. 7 (1906), p. 319-321. For Muslim literature, see Al-Tha’labî, Lives of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 98; M.J. Kister, « Adam », op. cit., p. 171-172; and the annotations in al-Ṭaraff, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 35 (§73).
7.2.6 The Burial of Adam in Jerusalem (COT 6 & 23)

In COT, Adam is buried twice. His first burial, in the cave of treasures on the Holy Mountain, is the occasion of the separation of the Cainites and the Sethites (COT 6:22). His second, definitive burial is at Golgotha following the Flood (COT 23). Origen (d. 254) is the first person to mention Adam’s burial at Golgotha (Comm. Matt. 27:33)\(^\text{119}\). He considered it a “Hebrew tradition,” which is unlikely. Golgotha has no significance within the Jewish religion. Furthermore, there is no Jewish tradition about Adam’s burial in Jerusalem\(^\text{120}\). Rabbinic tradition, including PRE, consistently locates Adam’s tomb in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron (Gen. Rab. 58:4.9; PRE 20). Adam’s burial at Golgotha, however, remained a popular Christian tradition. In COT and dependent sources, Adam is only buried there after the Flood. Muslim sources state that Adam was buried in Jerusalem rather than Golgotha specifically\(^\text{121}\). Although PRE places Adam at Machpelah, the author defines the cave in relation to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount rather than Hebron, a possible reference to the Christian tradition (see infra Section 8.4)\(^\text{122}\).

7.3 Conclusion

The Cave of Treasures was the sacred history of Eastern Christianity and early Islam just as the Book of Jubilees was the sacred history of Byzantium. It was a primary source of information for the earliest events of human history for both Christians and Muslims. Eastern Christian traditions—Syriac, Arabo-Coptic, and Ethiopic—preserved the work because it was part of their heritage. The Islamic use of COT is more difficult to explain. One can draw a parallel between the use of Jubilees by Byzantine historians and the use of COT in early Islamic historiography. Byzantine Christians shared few of the theological presuppositions of Jubilees. Nevertheless, they continued to use the work as an historical source, in part, one


\(^\text{120}\) V. Aptowitzer, « Les éléments juifs dans la légende du Golgotha », Revue des Études Juives, vol. 79 (1924), p. 158, cites the Palestinian Talmud (y. Naz. 7.2 [56b]) as evidence that Jews once maintained that Adam was buried at the Temple Mount. This passage states that one would incur impurity even by touching Adam’s corpse, despite his creation at the Temple Mount. Corpse impurity, however, is the precise reason why Jews would not have a tradition about the burial of Adam in Jerusalem, much less the Temple Mount. The first text in D.J. Lasker and S. Stroumsa, The Polemic of Nestor the Priest: Qiṣṣat mujādalat al-usqaf and Sefer Nestor ha-Komer, Jerusalem, 1996, §128-133 (Text, p. 70-72, Translation, p. 77-78) strongly objects to burying dead in places of worship—a feature that distinguishes Christianity from Judaism and Islam.


suspects, because the work was ancient and therefore had a high degree of authority. More importantly, the work contained information that could not be found in the canonical scriptures. The same is true of COT in Islamic tradition. Although the work is Christian in orientation, it provides important details that supplement the sparse narratives of the Qur’an.

As a result of COT’s wide dispersion, PRE was likely to have known the work in either Syriac or Arabic. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer was written at the height of the popularity of COT. Although Palestine itself did not attract the same literary activity as other parts of the Abbasid Caliphate, it was situated between Egypt and Syria, the two regions where COT achieved the greatest popularity. The greatest obstacle to PRE’s acquaintance with COT is the religious barrier. No Jewish work clearly attests the key narrative of COT, namely Adam’s burial and reburial. The next chapter, however, will show that PRE was aware of many traditions from COT and introduced them into rabbinic literature.
Chapter Eight: *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* and the Cave of Treasures

8.0 Introduction

Chapter six established that both Syriac and Arabic versions of the *Cave of Treasures* maintained a steady popularity from the end of Late Antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages. Chapter seven showed that the work was known to both Christians and Muslims, and it was the primary vehicle for traditions about the history of Israel in both Christianity and Islam. The current chapter is a comparison of *PRE* with ten representative traditions from *COT*. The main goal of the chapter is *not* to prove that *PRE* used *COT* (although this appears to be the case), but that *PRE* was aware of the traditions found within *COT*. To this end, the parallels are intended to represent popular traditions in Syriac and Arabic literature and not necessarily ones exclusive to *COT*. Nevertheless, they are absent from rabbinic literature before *PRE*.

Although I have emphasized the importance of the Arabic version of the *Cave of Treasures*, the citations of come from the West Syrian recension edited by Su-Min Ri¹. The first reason is the lack of a critical edition (or, for the Garshuni manuscripts, any edition) of an Arabic version of *COT*. The second reason is, admittedly, consistency. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* and *Jubilees* are cited in their original languages; so is *COT*. The ten parallel traditions are found in all the primary versions of *COT* (Syriac, Garshuni, Georgian). The secondary versions only lack the tenth tradition, which comes from the Passion narrative. The selection of material is thus representative of the *COT* tradition as a whole, both Syriac and Arabic.

Arabic language and literature remains the most likely channel through which *PRE* could have known *COT* and related traditions. Some Jews did know Syriac (which is, after all, a dialect of Aramaic), but examples of Judeo-Syriac are uncommon². Learning the Syriac script(s) is not an insurmountable task, but it requires motive. In an Arabophone environment, the only reason a Jew would learn Syriac would be to read Syriac manuscripts. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* tends to add polemical elements to its adaptation of *COT* traditions, which suggests a reaction to foreign traditions rather than an objective inquiry into comparative

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religion. However, the *Cave of Treasures* is also filled with the sort of anti-Jewish traditions one might envision Christians preaching to Jews\(^3\). In this regard, it is significant that the addressee of this work, Namosaya, is probably intended to be Jewish. A hypothetical oral transmission of *COT* material could have occurred in either Aramaic/Syriac or Arabic.

The method is the same as chapter five. Each section opens with a summary of the tradition from *PRE* and its relationship with earlier rabbinic tradition. In particular, each section emphasizes ways that the tradition in *PRE* is discontinuous with rabbinic literature. The parallel from *COT* is then cited and evaluated. Each section ends with other examples of contemporary Christian and Muslim literature which could have also served as potential sources for the author of *PRE*. In all examples, the tradition in *PRE* is representative of trends in contemporary literature. In many cases, *PRE* reformulates the tradition in a manner that polemicizes against specifically Christian traditions.

8.1 The Holy Mountain (*PRE* 11-35; *COT* 2-31)

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* makes early and frequent references to Mount Moriah, the Temple Mount (cf. 2 Chr 3:1). For example, *PRE* 11-12 claims that Adam was created at the Temple Mount. According to *PRE* 31, Abraham bound Isaac at Mount Moriah (cf. Gen 22:2) on an altar that had previously been used by Noah (*PRE* 23) and Abel (*PRE* 21). Finally, *PRE* 35 states that Jacob’s vision of the ladder (cf. Gen 28) occurred at Mount Moriah. All of these traditions appear in nuce in Palestinian rabbinic tradition (e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 14:8; 34:7 56:10; 69:7). However, *PRE* 32 introduces a new tradition where Rebekah travels to Mount Moriah to seek counsel from God regarding her twins (cf. Gen 25:22-23). This tradition contradicts classical rabbinic literature, which states that Rebekah inquired of God at the Academy (בית מדרש) of Shem and Eber (*Gen. Rab.* 63:6-7).

In *Cave of Treasures* 31:5-6, Rebekah visits Melchizedek on Mount Golgotha, the future site of the crucifixion (Matt 27:33), rather than Mount Moriah. Moriah and Golgotha are different locations but with similar functions: Mount Moriah is the site of Adam’s creation, the navel of the earth, and the central cult site. These are also the functions of Golgotha in *COT*. In fact, every episode where *COT* alludes to Golgotha, one finds a corresponding reference to Mount

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\(^3\) S.H. Griffith, « Theodore Abū Qurrah’s Arabic Tract on the Christian Practice of Venerating Images », *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1985), p. 59-62, discusses several examples of renewed polemics between Jews and Christians following the rise of Islam. D.J. Lasker and S. Stroumsa, *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest*, op. cit., is a particularly aggressive example of Jewish resistance to Christian claims. According to these texts, Christians saw Jews as complicit with Islam; conversely, Jews looked to Muslims for support against Christians on topics such as the Incarnation, the Trinity, and the veneration of images.
Moriah in PRE. This is less surprising when one considers that the Cave of Treasures views Golgotha, rather than Mount Moriah, as the Temple Mount (COT 29:3-8). Throughout the work, PRE not only builds on older rabbinic traditions but essentially creates a programmatic counter-narrative opposed to a distinctly Christian conception of sacred history. In doing so, PRE unites the two major cult sites of COT—the cave of treasures and Golgotha—into a unique Holy Mountain.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 32 mentions two successive instances where Rebekah visits Mount Moriah, once with Isaac to pray for fertility, and a second time during her pregnancy:

רב יהודה אמר ל rekha שניה רבקה רבקה לאהר ושרים שניה ועקחוה יטעו והלך טמה להרה

(Gen 25:21)

והוסרוה על הה EAR ובאתי

(Gen 25:22)

Rabbi Judah said: Rebekah was barren for twenty years, and after twenty years Isaac took her and went with her to Mount Moriah, the place where he had been bound, and he prayed for pregnancy, and he supplicated him, as it is written, “And he supplicated him, the LORD” (Gen 25:21). The pregnancy came to term, and her pains brought her near to death. She went to pray in the pure place, as it is written, “She went to inquire of the LORD” (Gen 25:22).

The passage here underscores the continuity with other appearances of Mount Moriah in PRE. First, it refers to the binding of Isaac on Mount Moriah, which is described in the previous chapter. It also looks forward to Jacob’s sojourn on Mount Moriah in PRE 35, where Isaac’s altar becomes the Foundation Stone, the site of the Holy of Holies. The binding of Isaac itself was anticipated by the sacrifices of Abel (PRE 21) and Noah (PRE 23) on the same altar, which PRE explicitly invokes at the time of the binding (PRE 31). All of the references to Mount Moriah throughout the work are interconnected, constituting a major leitmotif of PRE.

Classical rabbinic sources are less insistent on the importance of the Temple Mount in the patriarchal period. For example, Genesis Rabbah 34:9 mentions that Noah reestablished the altar in Jerusalem where Adam sacrificed, but it does not discuss the location of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. The chapters on the binding of Isaac (Gen. Rab. 55-56) only incidentally mention Mount Moriah, and Genesis Rabbah 69:7 discusses the Temple Mount as one place among many where Jacob could have had his famous vision. Classical sources do not connect

4 The “pure place” is an epithet for the Temple Mount found in PRE 11-12 (cf. Gen. Rab. 14:8).
Rebekah to the Temple Mount at all. According to *Genesis Rabbah* 63:6-7 and the Palestinian Targumim (e.g., *Targum Neofiti* to Gen 25:22), Rebekah went to the Academy of Shem and Eber, a rabbinic cliché which appears nowhere in *PRE*. The Academy of Shem and Eber is modeled on the *beit midrash* or House of Study, a rabbinic institution, which is distinct from the priestly institution of the Temple. Too much should not be read into this apparent opposition between the Temple and synagogue, since *Genesis Rabbah* considers Shem, identified with Melchizedek, to be a priest (*Gen. Rab.* 26:3; cf. *Targum Neofiti* to Gen. 14:18).

In the *Cave of Treasures*, Rebekah receives her oracle from Melchizedek:

When Rebekah conceived Jacob and Esau, she was suffering, so she went before Melchizedek, and he prayed over her and said to her: “Two kings (!) are in your womb⁵, and two peoples will emerge from your belly. The older is subjected to the younger (*COT* 31:5-6; cf. Gen 25:23)⁶.

At first glance, this passage seems comparable to the classical rabbinic (and Targumic) tradition that Rebekah visited Shem, especially since Late Antique Jews, like some Syriac Christians, identified Shem with Melchizedek⁷. The *Cave of Treasures*, however, does not make this identification, and neither do older Greek and Latin Christian sources which report this tradition⁸. In addition to *COT*, many later Syriac authors also reject the identification of Shem and Melchizedek, yet they still suppose that Rebekah visited either Melchizedek or some other priest who was on duty that day⁹.

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⁵ For other references to the Academy in Palestinian literature, see *Genesis Rabbah* 45:10 and 56:11 and *Targum Neofiti* to Genesis 24:62 and 25:27. The *Fragment Targum* and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* also refer to the Academy in these verses. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* has an additional reference in Genesis 22:19.

⁶ The East Syrian manuscripts and the West Syrian manuscript D have the biblical “nations” (ܐܢܘܕܝܢ̈). See, for example, Augustine, *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum* I (PL 34:567); Théodore of Cyrillus, *Quaestiones in Genesis* 76 (PG 80:188a) and Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Christian Topography* V.98 (Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Topographie chrétienne*, W. Wolska-Conus (ed.), 3 vol., Paris, 1968-1970, vol. 2, p. 144-147). Greek and Latin authors did not accept the identification between the chronology of the Septuagint and Vetus Latina prevents Shem from living until the time of Abraham, but the Peshitta follows the chronology of the Masoretic Text.


¹⁰ Cf. A. Levene, *The Early Syrian Fathers on Genesis: from a Syriac Ms. on the Pentateuch in the Mingana Collection*, London, 1951, p. 96: “But it is probable that she inquired of a priest such as Melchizedek or of some one else.”
The tradition from *COT* must be read in the greater context of the work, which consistently links Melchizedek to Golgotha. In the *Cave of Treasures*, Melchizedek is the great-grandson of Shem, who maintains a proto-Christian “cult of Adam” at Golgotha, where the patriarch is buried (*COT* 23). Abraham first meets Melchizedek at his mountain abode, where Melchizedek blesses him and offers him the “holy mysteries” of bread and wine (*COT* 28:8-14; see *infra* Section 8.9). Significantly, it is Golgotha, rather than Mount Moriah, where Abraham offers Isaac. This change is doubly significant because the *Cave of Treasures* believes that Golgotha is the Temple Mount:

When [Isaac] was twelve years old, Abraham took him and ascended the mountain of Jebus, which is the mountain of the Amorites, and in that place was fixed the cross of Christ our Savior. And there grew the tree that carried the ram which redeemed Isaac. This place is the middle of the earth and the grave of Adam and also the altar of Melchizedek and Golgotha, the place of the skull, and Gabbatha. There David saw the angel standing, carrying a fiery sword. There Abraham made Isaac ascend the altar, and he saw the cross of Christ and the salvation of Adam. (*COT* 29:3-8)\(^\text{13}\)

The allusion to David and the angel is an explicit reference to the biblical story where David purchases the site of the future Temple from Araunah the Jebusite (*2 Sam* 24; *1 Chr* 21). Even though Jesus was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem while the Temple was still standing, the Christian author of *COT* considers Golgotha to be the authentic cultic site, the true center of Jerusalem and the navel of the world. The author is almost certainly thinking of the Church of the Anastasis which was built on the alleged site of Golgotha. From its inception, this church appropriated the iconography of the Temple\(^\text{14}\).

All of this is a roundabout way of saying that when Rebekah visits Melchizedek in *COT*, she is visiting him at Golgotha. If Golgotha is the Temple Mount, then the tradition is parallel to the passage in *PRE*. In fact, every episode in the saga of Golgotha in *COT* has its counterpart in *PRE*. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 11 states that Adam was created “in a pure place, in the navel

\(^{12}\) Corrected from *ԩܝܠ.*

\(^{13}\) S.-M. Ri, *La caverne des trésors*, op. cit., p. 225.

of the earth” (במקום טהור בטבור הארץ)\textsuperscript{15}, while \textit{COT} 2:15-16 claims that Adam was created “in the middle of the earth” (ܕܐܪܥܐ ܲܒܡܨܥܬܗ) at “the place where the cross of our savior would be fixed” (ܥ ܙܩܝܦܐ ܕܦܪܘܩܢ ܕܘܩܬܐ ܕܐܬܩܒ)\textsuperscript{16}. Abel offers sacrifices at the altar on Mount Moriah according to \textit{PRE} 23 and 31, while \textit{COT} 5:25-27 depicts Abel offering sacrifices at the cave of treasures, which served as a “house of prayer” (\textit{COT} 5:17) before the establishment of Golgotha (see \textit{infra} Sections 8.4 and 8.5). Noah reestablishes the cult of Abel in \textit{PRE} 23; in \textit{COT} 22, Noah charges Shem to consecrate Melchizedek and reestablish the cult of the cave of treasures at Golgotha. The binding of Isaac takes place at Mount Moriah in \textit{PRE} 31; in \textit{COT} 29, it takes place on Golgotha. Rebekah visits Mount Moriah in \textit{PRE} 32 but Golgotha in \textit{COT} 31. Finally, Jacob sleeps on the altar of Mount Moriah in \textit{PRE} 35, which then becomes the Foundation Stone, where the Ark will rest. The Georgian version of \textit{COT} 31:19 (and, potentially, its Arabic Vorlage), identifies Jacob’s stone, where he has a vision of the cross, as Golgotha\textsuperscript{17}. Both stories culminate with the description of the object that marks the “Holy of Holies,” the Foundation Stone and the cross (cf. \textit{infra} Section 8.10).

The entirety of \textit{PRE} can be read as a counter-history intending to glorify the site of the Temple to the exclusion of competing cult sites. The immediate target appears to be Christianity, which had appropriated a number of traditions related to the Jewish Temple and applied them to Golgotha. \textit{Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer}, however, asserts the sanctity of Mount Moriah in the face of two other competing traditions. First, Islam also appropriated Temple traditions for the prehistory of the Ka’ba. The most notable example is the sacrifice of Ishmael, which occurs immediately after Abraham builds the Ka’ba\textsuperscript{18}. Other traditions state that Adam built the Ka’ba even before the time of Abraham\textsuperscript{19}.

\textsuperscript{16} S.-M. Ri, \textit{La caverne des trésors, op. cit.}, p. 17 and 19.
\textsuperscript{17} J.-P. Mahé, \textit{La Caverne des trésors: version géorgienne} [translation], Louvain, 1993, p. 56: « Et quand la croix du Christ apparut au bienheureux Iak’ob, l’ange lui annonça aussi la bonne nouvelle de la venue du haut du ciel de notre Dieu, Jésus-Christ. Et la maison de Dieu, c’est l’église, et la pierre (qu’il avait pour) chevet, c’est le saint Golgota et l’onction d’huile ; et la descente de Iak’ob vers l’orient, c’est pour que Dieu lui montrât là-bas le baptême.» The Syriac version simply identifies the stone as the altar (ܡܕܒܚܐ). The vision of the cross occurs in all versions of \textit{COT}.
\textsuperscript{18} R. Firestone, \textit{Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis}, Albany, 1990, p. 105-151. He also notes competing traditions within Islam where Abraham sacrifices Isaac in Jerusalem. The location of the sacrifice, in fact, determines which son was sacrificed. Al-Mas‘udi states: “If the sacrifice occurred in the Hijaz, it was Ishmael, because Isaac never entered the Hijaz. If the sacrifice took place in Syria, then it was Isaac, because Ishmael did not enter Syria after he was taken from there” (quoted p. 117).
Second, the Samaritans emphasize Mount Gerizim (their Temple Mount) as the site of important events from the age of the patriarchs. The collection of hymns known as *Memar* (or *Tibat Marqah*), compiled over several centuries, maintains that Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Gerizim and that all the patriarchs worshiped there. The *Asfar Asatir*, a chronicle of biblical history from the tenth century or later, also maintains the continuity of patriarchal worship on the future site of Gerizim. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is Judaism’s contribution to a discourse in which the central cult site is the locus of all the major events in sacred history. Many of *PRE*’s distinctive episodes, however, such as Rebekah’s journey (discussed here), Abel’s Passover sacrifice (*infra* Section 8.5), the meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek (Section 8.9), and a possible allusion to Jesus’ crucifixion (Section 8.10) have counterparts in *COT* but not in rabinic, Islamic, or Samaritan tradition.

8.2 Satan and the Serpent (*PRE 13; COT 4*)

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is the first rabbinic text to introduce the devil into the narrative of the Garden of Eden. This motif is so common in Christian and Islamic traditions that the seven Quranic renditions of this story do not even mention the serpent and speak only of the devil. Rabbinic tradition, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of the serpent. The devil never appears in the Garden of Eden story in any classical rabbinic composition, and the serpent is never identified with the devil or any other angelic being. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* inserts the devil into the Eden narrative, but even in *PRE* the serpent and Satan are distinct beings. The distinction between Satan and the serpent in the Garden of Eden story is found in the *Cave of Treasures* and numerous other Syriac and Arabic sources.

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23 See, for example, J. Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, New Haven, 1955, p. 10-11: “What was the wicked serpent contemplating at that time? He thought: I shall go and kill Adam and wed his wife, and I shall be king over the whole world. I shall walk with upright posture and eat all the world’s dainties. Rabbi Judah ben Bathyra says: Adam was reclining in the Garden of Eden and the ministering angels stood before him, roasting meat for him and cooling wine for him. Along came the serpent and saw him, beheld his glory, and grew jealous of him.” These are not the thoughts of an angel. For the Hebrew text, see S. Schechter, *Avot de-Rabbi Nathan: In Two Versions*, Vienna, 1887, p. 5 (Version A).
In PRE 13, the angels become jealous of Adam after the latter demonstrates his superior wisdom through naming the animals. A similar tradition is found in the classical literature (cf. Gen. Rab. 17:4), but the sequel is an innovation of PRE. Sammael, the leader of these jealous angels, decides to exact revenge on Adam by inciting him to rebel against God:

והיה سمאלSHOT השר הגדול שבשמים והחיות מארבע כנפים ושארים משלים כנפים וסמהילגין לעיל
נעשוה חכמה כל יכח וידרора פハウיה שבאו הקביר ואמצא בהם הכס לחרית
והיה דברת כל מבלה ועבב (Gen 3:1) büyübu
Sammael was the greatest prince in heaven. The Living Creatures had four wings, and the Seraphim had six wings, but Sammael had twelve wings. He took his band and descended and saw all of the animals which the Holy One, Blessed Be He, had created, but he did not find any among them as predisposed to wickedness as the serpent, as it is written, “The serpent was the most cunning of the animals of the field” (Gen 3:1). The serpent was in the form of a camel. Sammael mounted and rode upon it (PRE 13)\textsuperscript{24}.

The passage goes on to compare the relationship between Sammael and the serpent to a man possessed by a demon. The serpent therefore spoke through the power of Sammael. Sammael is then forgotten. The rest of the chapter, which focuses exclusively on the serpent, is taken almost verbatim from the first chapter of Avot de-Rabbi Nathan, Version B\textsuperscript{25}. The sudden appearance and disappearance of Sammael is a redactional seam: PRE has inserted this tradition in between two blocks of traditional material, the animal-naming contest and the serpent’s jealousy of Adam.

No rabbinic work before PRE introduces Satan into the Eden story, in part because Genesis says nothing about Satan in the garden. The ancient Jewish sources usually adduced as the earliest attestations of this tradition are ambiguous\textsuperscript{26}. The Wisdom of Solomon 2:24, for example, famously states that “through the envy of the devil death entered the world” (\textit{φθόνῳ}...\textit{κατακελεύθερων\})

\textsuperscript{24} D. Börner-Klein, \textit{Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser}, op. cit., p. 67.
\textsuperscript{26} In addition to the two sources cited below, there is also \textit{1 Enoch} 69:6, which states that Eve was misled by an evil angel. This verse comes from the \textit{Similitudes} (or \textit{Parables}) of Enoch (\textit{1 Enoch} 37-71), the only part of \textit{1 Enoch} which was not found at Qumran. Manuscripts of the \textit{Similitudes} are not known apart from the (late) Ethiopic manuscripts of \textit{1 Enoch}, although J. T. Milik who believed the \textit{Similitudes} were a fourth century Christian composition, has deduced the existence of the work by the ninth century based on the reported length of \textit{1 Enoch} according to the \textit{Stichometry of Nicephorus} (\textit{The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4}, Oxford, 1976, p. 77). According to the methodology of the present study, the \textit{Similitudes} cannot be accepted as an ancient Jewish work. It must be noted, however, that the provenance of this work is hotly contested. For differing perspectives, see G. Boccaccini (ed.), \textit{Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables}, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2007.
δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσήλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον), but it says nothing about Adam, Eve, the Garden of Eden, or the serpent. The devil is not part of the Genesis narrative, and the Greek word διάβολος can refer to human beings as well as angels (e.g., John 6:70) According to the earliest allusion to Wisdom, the First Epistle of Clement (1st c.), the passage refers to the story of Cain and Abel (1 Clement 3:4-4:7). In the second century, Theophilus of Antioch (To Autolycus II.29) offered a similar interpretation: Cain, who was of the evil one (1 John 3:12; cf. John 8:44), did indeed introduce death into the world through the murder of his brother.27

Similarly, the Apocalypse of John 12:9 refers to “that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan” (ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς), but there is nothing in the vision of the woman and the dragon that is specific to the Genesis narrative—no references to Adam, Eve, Eden, or the trees. The association of the two narratives is rather the work of later Christian exegesis.28 Modern research has determined that the serpent of the Apocalypse is a chaos monster more akin to the Leviathan of Isaiah 27:1 than the Garden of Eden-variety serpent in Genesis 3.29 The Apocalypse, however, is probably responsible for the identification of the serpent with the devil, which dominates Western Christian tradition. Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer maintains a distinction between the serpent and the devil. This is typical of Eastern Christian tradition—which, for a long time, rejected the Apocalypse as canonical—as well as post-Quranic Muslim tradition.

The Cave of Treasures is representative of this Eastern tradition. Satan hides himself in the serpent on account of his hideous appearance. His jealousy is occasioned by Adam and Eve’s blessed state in Paradise, after he had already fallen from heaven for his refusal to worship Adam (COT 3:1-7):

When Satan saw Adam and Eve rejoicing in Paradise, the rebel became agitated from jealousy. Satan entered and dwelt within the serpent. He guided it through the air until

27 Epiphanius of Salamis, writing several centuries after Clement, believed that the “devil” (διάβολος) of John 8:44 refers to Cain rather than the leader of the fallen angels (Panarion 38.4-5 and 40.5-6). If Epiphanius’ reading of John 8:44 reflects the original meaning, John would be another early reference to Wisdom 2:24.
28 For example, Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho CXXIV.3 and Irenaeus, Against Heresies III.23.7.
29 Modern research on this question is indebted to the classic study of H. Gunkel, Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12, translated by K. William Whitney, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2006. His insight that the dragon of Apocalypse 12 is based on an Ancient Near Eastern chaos monster was later confirmed by the references to the seven-headed dragon Lotan (Leviathan) in the mythological texts found at Ugarit. For a translation of these texts, see S.B. Parker (ed.), Ugaritic Narrative Poetry, Atlanta, 1997.
the borders of Paradise. For what reason did Satan enter the serpent? Because he knew that his appearance was unsightly, and if Eve had seen his true form, she would have fled before him (COT 4:4-7).

The account of PRE reproduces the essential points of the narrative in COT. The mere presence of the devil in PRE’s Eden story is already significant, although this is far from the only point of contact. The basis of Satan/Sammael’s conspiracy against Adam is revenge motivated by jealousy. In both works, Satan’s fall is directly tied to the creation of Adam. In COT, Satan refuses to worship Adam; in PRE, Sammael refuses to accept Adam’s superior wisdom. Both traditions are opposed to the more typically occidental motif of Luciferian pride leading to a “War in Heaven” (cf. Apoc 12:7-10). On a similar note, the “Lucifer” tradition places the rebellion of Satan before the creation of Adam, while in the oriental tradition, including PRE, Satan’s fall does not precede Adam’s creation on the sixth day. Finally, the serpent is merely an animal in both PRE and COT, albeit one that becomes a vessel of the devil. As noted above, this distinction is lost in other accounts of the fall; European sources tend to consider Satan and the serpent to be one and the same.

This distinction between Satan and the serpent is ubiquitous in oriental Christian literature from the third century onward. Islamic sources, such as the chronicle of al-Tabari, also depict the serpent as the instrument of the devil, even though the serpent is not part of the Quranic narrative. Subsequently, Satan and the serpent became a fixed part of the Stories of the Prophets literature, although in these stories they are sometimes joined by a third party, the peacock. The introduction of Satan into the Garden of Eden story and the depiction of the serpent as his willing vessel is therefore a widespread tradition in both Christian and Muslim literature with no precedent in the rabbinic tradition. Pirqa de-Rabbi Eliezer first introduces the idea into rabbinic literature, probably from an outside source.

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30 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 29 and 31.
31 Sammael descends to earth in PRE 13, but he is not formally expelled from heaven until PRE 14 as punishment for instigating Adam’s sin.
32 This tradition is based on Isaiah 14:12-14, which depicts an astral being (“Lucifer” in Latin translation) bragging that he will place his throne above the stars. Satan’s rebellion is thus dated to the fourth day of creation, the day that the stars came into being.
34 Al-Ṭabarī, Annales, op. cit., p. 104-107 (The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume I, op. cit., p. 275-278), gives several traditions about the serpent.
8.3 The Garments of Glory (PRE 14 & 20; COT 3-4)

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*, in opposition to the biblical tradition (Gen 2:25) depicts the first parents as fully clothed prior to their sin: They were covered in both a “skin of nail” (עור צפורן) and a “cloud of glory” (ענן כבוד), which departed at the moment of their sin. However, Adam quickly acquires new “garments of glory” (כת נ développe) after his expulsion from Eden.

Classical rabbinic tradition also discusses the clothing of the first parents, but only in relation to the garments they receive from God after the expulsion (Gen. Rab. 20:12; cf. Gen 3:21). The rabbis do not mention any garments that Adam and Eve wore prior to their expulsion.

The notion of prelapsarian garments of glory, however, is a frequently-occurring motif in Syriac Christianity, including the *Cave of Treasures*. The garments refer to the clothing that adorned Adam and Eve before their sin, after which they were stripped naked. They are finally restored to Adam through the ministry of Christ. Although it initially seems connected to exegesis of Genesis 3:21, the tradition is rather rooted in Christian baptismal theology, where one “puts on Christ” (Gal 3:27)36. The Syriac tradition, especially the hymns of Ephrem the Syrian, emphasize that the garments are restored through Christ’s baptism in the Jordan rather than as a result of the Passion37. Even the *Cave of Treasures*, which emphasizes the Passion, equates the restoral of the garments of glory with the baptism of Adam by the blood and water flowing from the side of Christ (COT 49:10, 51:22; cf. John 19:34). Therefore, it is remarkable that PRE’s narrative of the loss and restoration of the garments immediately precedes Adam’s penitence in the Gihon (PRE 20).

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* refers to the garments of glory twice. In the first instance (PRE 14), the author describes the clothing of Adam and Eve before their sin. This clothing includes both a “cloud of glory” (ענן כבוד) and a “skin of nail” (עור צפורן):

מה היה לבושו של אדם הראשון עור צפורן וענן כבוד מכסה עליו כיון שאכל מפירות אילן נفلسطين עפרו וצפורן מעליו והראה עצמו ערום ונסתלק ענן כבוד מעליו (PRE 14)

What was the clothing of the first man? A skin of nail and a cloud of glory covered him. When he ate of the fruits of the tree, the skin of nail was taken from him, and he saw himself naked. The cloud of glory also fled from him (PRE 14)38.


In the second instance (PREF 20) Adam and Eve receive new “garments of glory” (חתנות כבוד) from the skin of the serpent after the fall. This tradition corresponds to the garments which God gives Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:21:

רבי אליעזר אומ"ר: מזון שмаркיטנות חמה עשה הקב"ה חתנות כבוד לאדם ולאשה שנותם וישש

(Gen 3:21)

Rabbi Eliezer said: The Holy One, Blessed Be He, fabricated garments of glory from the skin which the serpent had shed for Adam and his helpmate, as it is said, “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and he clothed them” (Gen 3:21).39

Both passages have ties to Palestinian rabbinic tradition, with some notable differences. The skin of nail from PREF 14 also appears in Genesis Rabbah 20:12, where the garments of Adam and Eve are “smooth as nail” (חלקים בציפורן). However, these are garments which Adam and Eve receive after their expulsion from Eden, as in PREF 20. The rabbinic tradition is based on Genesis 3:21, where God gives garments of skin to Adam and Eve. In Genesis Rabbah 20:12, one rabbi even claims that his Bible does not read “garments of skin” (חתנות עור) but rather “garments of light” (חתנות אור). The Targumim also render the “garments of skin” as “garments of glory” (לבושין דיקר), which is closer to the phrase in PREF. The concept of postlapsarian garments of glory was certainly known in Late Antique Judaism.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer departs from older sources by adding a set of prelapsarian garments. The closest approximation of this idea in earlier Jewish literature is the occasional reference to the “glory of Adam” (כבוד אדם) in the writings from Qumran.40 This phrase has been connected to the garments of glory, although it denotes the initial state of Adam and Eve without any reference to clothing or even the loss and restoration of glory, which are both key aspects of the Christian tradition. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer, however, recounts the loss and recovery of these garments in an imitation of the Christian narrative. The restoration of the garments in PREF 20 even coincides with Adam’s penitential sojourn in the Gihon at the end.

39 Ibid., p. 106. The snake skin is also found in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 3:21 (Appendix §11). The author does not expound on the meaning of the shed skin as a garment. Perhaps it serves as reminder of Adam and Eve’s sin.

40 In the Damascus Document (CD III,20), the Community Rule (1QS IV,23), and the Thanksgiving Hymns (1QH IV,15). There is also an echo in the Words of the Luminaries (4Q504 1,4).

of the chapter. This episode is modeled on Adam’s penitence in the Jordan in the *Life of Adam and Eve*, a typological anticipation of Christian baptism. While this episode does not appear in the *Cave of Treasures*, the garments of glory do. Even there, the restoration of the garments culminates with the baptism of Adam.

Like *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 14, the *Cave of Treasures* 3:14 specifically says Adam and Eve were “clothed with glory” prior to their fall. After their sin, Adam and Eve lose their clothing:

When [Eve] transgressed the commandment, she was stripped bare. When she saw the shame of her nudity, she hid herself among the trees. And afterwards, she called Adam and he came to her. She gave him the fruit, and he ate it. When he ate it, he was also stripped bare (*COT* 4:15-17).

The reference to “stripping” implies that, prior to this moment, they had been clothed. They hastily fabricate new clothing out of fig leaves, as in Genesis 3:7. God, however, makes new garments for them, which are of a very different nature from the garments of glory:

![Image of a clothing metaphor]

[God] made for them tunics of skin, and he clothed them. This is the skin which is spread over the body, born for suffering (*COT* 4:22-23).

The garments of Genesis 3:21 serve a very different purpose in *COT*. They are garments of humility rather than garments of glory. The garments of glory are only restored with the death of Christ and the baptism of Adam (*COT* 51:18-22). The piercing of Christ’s side causes water and blood to flow into Adam’s mouth. The fluids are explicitly called the “waters of baptism” and Adam, following this postmortem baptism, once more “wore the garment of glory”.

The first major convergence between *PRE* and *COT* is the description of the prelapsarian glory of Adam and Eve as a *clothing metaphor*. This distinguishes these two works from other
sources which refer more generic descriptions of the primordial state of first humans, such as the Qumranic “glory of Adam”. Second, both **PRE** and **COT** understand the immediate consequence of Adam and Eve’s sin to be the physical loss of this clothing, rather than a realization that they are naked. Finally, both **PRE** and **COT** posit the restoration of the clothing at a later time. However, the two works also diverge at this point. In **COT**, the restoration of the garments is explicitly tied to the baptism of Adam. In **PRE**, Adam receives new garments even before he repents! The presentation of events in **PRE** creates a lopsided narrative, where Adam loses his garments—only to immediately receive new ones. This narrative could have a polemical dimension, indicating that baptism is not necessary for the restoration of glory. Since Adam does eventually repent with a sort of baptism, and his repentance is accepted, it could indicate that penance is sufficient without the intermediary work of Christ. On this note, the parallel episode in the *Life of Adam and Eve* depicts Adam’s penitence as ultimately a failure—he must wait until the coming of Christ for his redemption.

The idea of prelapsarian garments of glory was common in both Syriac and Arabic literature. In addition to the writings of Syriac fathers such as Ephrem, the garments of glory are also found in chapter 12 of the *History of the Rechabites*, a Greek Christian apocryphon which was also translated into Syriac and Arabic.**45** Within Islamic literature, the Qur’an (7:26-27) refers to the “raiment” or, literally, “feathers” (ريش) of Adam and Eve, which they lose as a result of their sin. Gabriel Reynolds argues that the Qur’an presents a pattern of loss and immediate restoration comparable to the one found in **PRE**, since God sends down new garments to the “children of Adam” (بَنِي آدَمَ). The prelapsarian garments also became a fixture of later Islamic literature, but they are comparable to the skin of nail rather than the garments of glory.**46** In the *Stories of the Prophets* of al-Kisa’i (13th c.), Adam and Eve wear fine clothes and jewelry during their stay in the Garden, but the clothes fall off once they sin. Again,


48 Al-Kisa’i, *Tales of the Prophets*, op. cit., p. 41: “Ibn Abbas said : And by Him in whose hand is my soul, no sooner had Adam tasted one of the ears of grain than the crown flew off his head, his rings squirmed off his hand and everything that had been on both him and Eve fell off—their clothes, jewelry, and ornaments. Each article, as it flew from them, cried out, “O Adam! O Eve! Long may you sorrow and may your affliction be great! Peace be with you until the Day of Resurrection, for we made a covenant with God that we should clothe only obedient, humble servants.”
there are a number of outside channels through which PRE could have known about the postlapsarian garments, although a Christian source seems more likely than a Muslim one.

8.4 The Burial of Adam (PRE 20 & 36; COT 5-6)
In its narrative of the postlapsarian life of Adam, PRE 20 mentions three different tiers of sacred space. First, Adam lives on Mount Moriah, the place of his creation, which is the “gate of the Garden of Eden” (שער גן עדן). As his death approaches, Adam decides to build a tomb for himself “outside Mount Moriah” (חוץ לחרמון). The tomb is the Cave of Machpelah, which, in rabbinc tradition, is indeed the grave of Adam (cf. Gen. Rab. 58:4.9). However, Machpelah is not merely outside of Mount Moriah but in Hebron, some thirty kilometers from Jerusalem. The reorientation of Machpelah in PRE creates a tripartite sacred geography of Eden—Moriah—Machpelah which is quite similar to the three sacred spaces of Paradise—the Holy Mount—Golgotha in COT. Furthermore, PRE 20 includes a polemic against the veneration of Adam’s remains, a central part of COT.

_Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer_ 20 describes the peregrinations of Adam after his expulsion from the Garden of Eden. First, Adam lives on Mount Moriah—the Temple Mount—which lies just beyond the Garden. This is also the place from which Adam was created:

> ויצא מגן עדן וישב לו בהר המוריה ששער גן עדן סמוך להר המוריה משם לקחו ושם החזרו
>
> באִֽם זֶה מֶֽׁת זֶה לְדוּת רְבַצּוֹ וַלְּכִֽלְּחֵי אֶחָד

_D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 106._

Adam, however, is not buried on the Temple Mount. Instead, he resolves to build his own sepulcher “beyond Mount Moriah” (חרמון):
Adam sat down and thought to himself, saying, “I know you will bring me to death, to the house appointed for all the living” (Job 30:23). Adam said: “While I am still in this world, I will build for myself a resting place for my repose outside Mount Moriah.” So he carved out and built a resting place for his repose. Adam said: “If, in the future, the Tablets [of the Law] will be written by the finger of the Holy One, Blessed Be He, so that, in the future, the waters of the Jordan will run backwards, how much greater is my body, which He formed with his two hands, and the spirit of the breath of his mouth was blown into my nose? After my death, they will take me and my bones, and they will commit idolatry, unless I place my coffin in the lower chamber of the cave within the cave. Therefore it was called the Cave of Machpelah (מכפלה), for it is a double cave (מכפלה)\(^{50}\).

Therefore, there are three sacred spaces, which are like three concentric circles. First, the Garden of Eden lies in the center. Second, Mount Moriah lies outside the Garden of Eden. Third, the Cave of Machpelah lies outside of Mount Moriah.

Although \textit{PRE} agrees with rabbinic tradition that Adam is buried in the Cave of Machpelah (\textit{Gen. Rab.} 58:4.9), it breaks with earlier tradition by linking Machpelah with Jerusalem rather than Hebron, where the cave is located (cf. Gen 23:2). Without explicitly denying its traditional location, \textit{PRE} defines Machpelah in relation to the Temple Mount. While \textit{PRE} 20 does mention Qiryat Arba, the ancient name of the city of Hebron (Josh 14:15), the author avoids naming Hebron itself\(^{51}\). The orientation, if not the location, of Machpelah has changed, and it now faces the Temple Mount as part of the author’s sacred geography.

The new orientation towards Jerusalem is confirmed in a later passage, where Abraham stumbles upon the Cave of Machpelah and finds Adam and Eve lying in state:

\[
משהי שם אדם וחוה שוכבים על המותים וישנים נריה דודקילעלמה וריה טופ עלייה בירה נויה
\]

לפיך חמה המערה המכסה לאחזת קודר


\(^{51}\) The ancient name is a necessary support for the rabbinic tradition. Qiryat Arba literally means the “City of Four” which, in the rabbinic imagination, indicates the four patriarchs buried there—Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Adam’s presence is suggested by the reference to the “great man” (האדם הגדול) in Joshua 14:15. The prooftext from Joshua, which is typical of the midrashic style, does not appear in \textit{Genesis Rabbah} but rather the writings of the Church Father Jerome. See A. Hilhorst, « Ager Damascenus: Views on the Place of Adam’s Creation », \textit{Warszawskie Studia Theologiczne}, vol. 20 (2007), p. 133-134.
[Abraham] found there Adam and Eve, who were lying on beds and sleeping, while lamps were burning above them, and a pleasant smell was upon them like a pleasing odor. Therefore, he desired the Cave of Machpelah as a burial plot (PRE 36). According to PRE 36, the Cave of Machpelah is the possession of the Jebusites, the Gentile inhabitants of Jerusalem (cf. 1 Chr 11:4) rather than the Hittites, as in Genesis 23. The author even draws attention to this change: “Were they Jebusites? Were they not Hittites? But they were called Jebusites because of the city Jebus” (וכי יבוסים היו והלא חתיים היו אלא על שם עיר יבוס נקראו יבוסים). The city “Jebus” is Jerusalem. Again, PRE does not mention Hebron. The passages from Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer demonstrate some awareness of the idea that Adam was buried in Jerusalem (“Jebus”), although it emphatically denies that he was buried on the Temple Mount (“outside Mount Moriah”).

The Cave of Treasures has a tripartite sacred geography similar to the one in PRE. After the expulsion from Eden, Adam and Eve live on a Holy Mountain near the fringes of Paradise. Adam builds a “house of prayer” (ܒܝܬ ܨܠܘܬܐ) on its summit:

When Adam and Eve left Paradise, its gate was shut. The Cherub stood before it, carrying a sharp-pointed sword. Adam and Eve descended upon a bridge of wind onto the mountains [surrounding] Paradise. They found a cave on the summit of the mountain. They took shelter within it. At that time, Adam and Eve were both virgins. When Adam sought to know Eve, he took from the borders of Paradise gold, myrrh, and frankincense and he placed them within the cave. He blessed and sanctified it so that it might be a house of prayer for themselves and for their children. He called it the cave of treasures (COT 5:14-17).

According to this text, the cave of treasures is near the “borders of Paradise” (ܠܝ ܦܪܕܝܣܐ), indicating that, like Eden and Mount Moriah, Paradise and the Holy Mountain are adjacent. Furthermore, Adam transforms the cave into a “house of prayer” (ܒܝܬ ܨܠܘܬܐ), a term which evokes the Temple (Matt 21:13; cf. Isa 56:7). In other words, the Holy Mountain is a kind of Temple Mount, like Mount Moriah. We have already seen (supra Section 8.1) that Mount

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52 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 227.
53 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 228.
54 Pace E. Grypeou and H. Spurling, «Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and Eastern Christian Exegesis», Collectanea Christiana Orientalia, vol. 4 (2007), p. 232-238, who interpret the end of PRE 20 as implying that Adam was buried on Mount Moriah. They are right, however, that PRE suggests that Adam is buried in Jerusalem.
55 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 41 and 43.
Moriah has absorbed some of the functions of the Holy Mountain—both are the habitation of Adam after his expulsion and the site of Cain and Abel’s sacrifice.

Although Adam is initially buried in the cave of treasures, it is not his final resting place. On his deathbed, he instructs his son Seth:

Once I die, embalm my body with myrrh, cassia, and stacte, and place it in the cave of treasures. Those of your descendants who remain in that time when you will leave this holy place, the environs of Paradise, will take my body with them and will go until the angel of God shows where to take it and depose it, in the center of the earth, because there redemption will be effected for me and for all of my children (COT 6:11-13).56

This command is carried out by Shem and Melchizedek, who bury Adam’s body at Golgotha after the Flood (COT 23). In two instances (COT 28:8; 29:4), the Cave of Treasures identifies Golgotha as “Mount Jebus” (ܛܘܪܐ ܕܝܒܘܣ), much as PRE claims that the Cave of Machpelah lies in the territory of the Jebusites. This is a concrete link between the two works. Neither mentions Jebus or the Jebusites in any other context except in reference to the site where Adam is buried. There is therefore the same division of sacred spaces, where Paradise (the Garden)—the Holy Mountain (the first cultic site)—Golgotha (the final grave of Adam) in COT are replaced by Eden (the Garden)—Moriah (the first, and only, cultic site)—Machpelah (the first, and only, grave of Adam) in PRE.

The transfer of the body of Adam in COT represents the continuity between the cave of treasures and Golgotha as places of worship. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer breaks this continuity. In PRE, Mount Moriah is the central cult site, but Adam’s tomb is elsewhere, and it is not intended to be a place of worship. Adam, in fact, constructs his tomb precisely to avoid the possibility that his remains might be venerated. It appears that he failed, and the Jebusites—the non-Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem—found his body and transformed the Cave of Machpelah into the image of a Christian shrine.57 If the actual Cave of Machpelah was not

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56 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 51.
57 P. Brown, The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000, 10th anniversary rev. ed, Chichester, West Sussex, 2013, p. 162: “At the time, however, one only had to enter any shrine which housed a relic of the saints to find oneself in ‘a fragment of Paradise.’ Incessantly lit, at great expense, with oil lamps made fragrant with aromatic substances, the basilicas of the saints […] stood out in a dark, violent, and malodorous world as places where Paradise could be found on earth.”
already a shrine in Late Antiquity, shared by Jews and Christians alike\textsuperscript{58}, it would be tempting to claim that the portrait of the Cave of Machpelah in \textit{PRE} 36 is based on the cave of treasures. \textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer}'s critique of the “cult of Adam,” however, is specific to the adoration of Adam depicted in \textit{COT}.

\textit{Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer}'s polemic against the cult of Adam is closest to the passage from the \textit{Book of Idols} of Hisham ibn al-Kalbi (d. 819), which was quoted in the previous chapter (Section 7.1.2). It is important enough to repeat here:

\begin{quote}
ان ادم عليه السلام لما مات جعل بنو شيث بن ادم في مغرة في الجبل الذي اهبط عليه ادم بارض الهند ويقال الجبل نوذ

[...]
\end{quote}

وكان بنو شيث يانون جسد ادم في المغارة فيعظونه ويرحمون عليه فقال رجل من بنى قابيل بن ادم يا بنى قابيل ان لبني شيث دوارا يدورون حوله ويعظونه وليس لكم شىء فنحت لهم

صnama فكان أول من عملها

Behold, when Adam, peace be upon him, died, the children of Seth b. Adam deposed him in a cave on the mountain where he had descended in the land of India, and they called the mountain Nod.

[...]

The children of Seth cared for the body of Adam in the cave, and they magnified him and venerated him. A man from the children of Cain b. Adam said: “Oh, children of Cain! Behold, the children of Seth have an enclosure that they circumambulate and worship, and you have no such thing.” He sculpted an idol for them, and he was the first of those who make them\textsuperscript{59}.

Ibn al-Kalbi, one of the earliest Muslim authors to use \textit{COT}, and a contemporary of the author of \textit{PRE}, linked the veneration of Adam with the origin of idolatry. Both works abhor the cult of relics. Paradoxically, both appear to use \textit{COT} in order to construct this polemic.

8.5 Passover (\textit{PRE} 21; \textit{COT} 6:1-18)
In \textit{PRE} 21, Adam instructs Cain and Abel concerning the Passover sacrifice on 14 Nisan. Adam knows the significance of the date and that future generations will sacrifice “on this night” (יִהְיוּ הָעַרְכָּת). As discussed in a previous chapter, this episode has no real equivalent in


earlier Jewish literature (see supra Section 5.3). In the Cave of Treasures, however, Adam foretells the coming redemption on his deathbed and gives specific religious instructions to his son Seth (COT 6:9-15), including segregation from the descendants of Cain. Adam then dies on 14 Nisan, the same day as the crucifixion (COT 6:17-18). The intersection of PRE and COT is not merely the prophecy of future events on the eve of Passover but the foundation of particular cults which anticipate these events. In both cases, Abel plays an important role.

In PRE 21, Adam teaches Cain and Abel about the celebration of Passover. Adam briefly mentions the importance of the sacrifice for future generations:

הנני ליל יום טוב של פסח אמר להם אדם לבני בלול ואמר להם ישראל להקריב קרבנות פסחים

The night of the festival of Passover arrived. Adam said to his sons: “On this night, Israel will offer Passover sacrifices. You shall also offer sacrifices before your Creator” (PRE 21)\(^{60}\).

Adam’s instruction becomes the basis of what appears to be a continuous patriarchal celebration of Passover prior to the events of the Exodus. Passover is also the occasion of Isaac’s blessing of his children (PRE 32). Both patriarchal celebrations of Passover anticipate the Passover during the Exodus (PRE 48) as well as Esther’s Passover (PRE 49-50), the dramatic high point of PRE. While Jubilees depicts the patriarchs celebrating Jewish holidays after the Flood, and classical rabbinic literature states that Abraham observed all of the Torah (m. Qiddushin 5:14), the idea that Adam celebrated Passover is unique to PRE (cf. supra Section 5.3).

In the Cave of Treasures, Adam predicts the coming of Christ on the day of his death. As in PRE, Adam assembles his descendants and gives them instructions pertaining to the foundation of a cult. In this case, he requests that he be buried in the cave of treasures until he can be transferred to Golgotha, where the future redemption will take place (COT 6:11-13; quoted supra Section 8.4). He also exhorts the children of Seth to separate from the children of Cain on account of Abel’s murder:

비용สว משל המות תשימ עבדו אמשלא ביזרא ואשלא ביזרא לאשלם אמשלא ביזרא

And you, my son Seth, shall be the governor of your descendants. Guide them in all righteousness, and separate yourselves from the generations of Cain the murderer (COT 6:14)\(^{61}\).

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\(^{60}\) D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit. p. 113.
Adam then expires. The day of his death happens to be 14 Nisan, the day of the redemption which Adam had foreseen:

Adam died at the age of 930 years according to the reckoning from the creation of the world. He slept on the fourteenth of the month of Nisan, on the sixth day of the week, the day of preparation, at the ninth hour. At the same hour that the Son of Man gave up his soul on the cross, Adam gave up his soul to his Maker (COT 6:17-18)\(^{62}\).

Although Adam had already established the cave of treasures as a place of worship (COT 5:14, 25-27), his last two directives become the basis of the novel religious practices of the Sethites. They observe two rites in particular: 1) They venerate the body of Adam (ܡܡܐ ܕܐܕܡ) in the cave of treasures; and 2) They swear on the innocent blood of Abel (ܕܡܗ ܙܟܝܐ ܕܗܒܝܠ)\(^{63}\) to avoid contact with the Cainites (COT 7:8-13)\(^{64}\). The two practices are mentioned repeatedly throughout the rest of the antediluvian history (COT 7:18-20; 8:13-15; 9:5-7; 10:6-8; 12:11; 13:3-7). After the Flood, Melchizedek reestablishes the cult of Adam at Golgotha and offers bloodless sacrifices of bread and wine (COT 23:21; 28:11-12). The proto-Christian religion’s emphasis on body, blood, bread, and wine evokes the Eucharist, a rite which is intimately linked with Passover (cf. COT 48:9)\(^{65}\).

_Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer_ presents an inversion of a specifically Christian typology. In _PRE_, Adam establishes a proto-Jewish, rather than a proto-Christian, cult on 14 Nisan. In both _PRE_ and _COT_, the cult is based on the sacrifice of Abel. Abel’s offering establishes the precedent for the future celebration of Passover in _PRE_. By contrast, Abel’s death becomes a central part of the proto-Christian religion in _COT_. The _Cave of Treasures_ does not explicitly connect Abel to Passover, but another Christian text does. The _Life of Abel_ (4th-6th c.), a

\(^{61}\) S.-M. Ri, _La caverne des trésors_, op. cit., p. 53.

\(^{62}\) Ibid.

\(^{63}\) The term “innocent blood” (ܕܡܐ ܙܟܝܐ) comes from Matthew 27:4 (Peshitta, cf. Matt 23:35), where Judas refers to the “innocent blood” of Christ. This is one of the ways that _COT_ implicitly compares Abel to Jesus.

\(^{64}\) S. Ruzer, «The Cave of Treasures on Swearing by Abel’s Blood and Expulsion from Paradise: Two Exceptional Motifs in Context», _Journal of Early Christian Studies_, vol. 9 (2001), p. 251-271, argues that the oath on the blood of Abel is presented as an alternative to the traditional Christian narrative of redemption. The argument is not convincing for two reasons. First, the oath has no connection to salvation in the sense of life after death. It is designed to maintain the sanctity of the community while preserving the memory of Abel. Second, Abel is an overt “type of Christ” in the Christian tradition, beginning with the New Testament (cf. Heb 12:24). The religion of the Sethites is not a divergence from Christianity but a convergence.

\(^{65}\) In the discussion of the Passion, the author of _COT_ is insistent that the Passover is one of those gifts (along with kingship, priesthood, and prophecy) which had been taken away from the Jews (COT 50:18-19; 52:17-18; cf. _COT_ 43:8-9). Since Jews do, in fact, continue to celebrate Passover, perhaps the author has in mind the Eucharistic practices of his proto-Christian cult.
hagiographical Syriac work, is the only text before PRE to date the sacrifice of Cain and Abel to Nisan. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer therefore appropriates ideas which had only appeared before in Christian literature.

8.6 The Twin Sisters (PRE 21; COT 5:21-32)
The story of the twin sisters of Cain and Abel in PRE is closer to the version found in COT than an earlier narrative about twins sisters found in Genesis Rabbah. As noted in the previous chapter, the story of the sisters is one of the most frequently recurring motifs from COT in Syriac and Arabic literature. It is unsurprising to also find it in PRE.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 21 reports that Cain and Abel were born with their twin sisters. Adam does not prohibit his sons from marrying their own twin, yet it appears that Abel married the twin of Cain:

רבי צדוק אומר כן אתה קאה והנה הגלל בלע יין על שרטיאת מנהה של vulner אלה ענאם
שורתיא אשתה תאמותה פה נשעים אמר אני ענוה את הבול אתי ואהא את אשתה

Rabbi Zadok said: Jealousy and great hatred entered the heart of Cain, because the offering of Abel was accepted. Not only this, but because his [Abel’s] wife, his [Cain’s] twin-sister, was the most beautiful of women. He said, “I will kill Abel, my brother, and I will take his wife” (PRE 21).

The idea that Cain and Abel fought over a woman already appears in Genesis Rabbah, but the tradition there differs in a fundamental way. According to Genesis Rabbah 22:7, Cain and Abel were born together with three sisters. The brothers married two of these sisters. They quarrel over the third, “unclaimed” sister. This motif ties into the greater theme of the section, Cain and Abel’s attempt to divide the world between themselves. In Genesis Rabbah, Cain and Abel have an equal claim to the third woman. In PRE, Cain is jealous of Abel and wishes to take something that is not rightfully his.

The passage in PRE is directly parallel to the familiar story of COT:

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The passage in PRE is directly parallel to the familiar story of COT:

67 Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 4:3, in turn, follows PRE by presenting Cain and Abel as offering a Passover sacrifice (Appendix §14).
68 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 114.
69 This version of the story is also known to Epiphanius (Panarion 40.5.3).
70 Corrected from ומכשא.
When Adam, the first priest, was ascending the mountain with Cain and Abel… Satan entered into him\(^{71}\), into Cain, in order that he might kill Abel, his brother, on account of Labuda his sister, and also because his sacrifice was rejected, while Abel’s was accepted (\textit{COT} 5:27)\(^{72}\).

The very wording of the two traditions is similar. Both passages link the story of the twin-sisters with the story of the sacrifice. They also speak of the possession of Cain, when evil (abstract in \textit{PRE}; personified in \textit{COT}) enters his heart\(^{73}\). Unfortunately, \textit{PRE} does not name either sister. The story of the twin sisters is abundantly attested in both Syriac and Arabic sources (see \textit{supra} Section 7.2.2)\(^{74}\).

8.7 The Cainites and the Sethites (\textit{PRE} 22; \textit{COT} 11-12 & 15)

As noted in chapter five (Section 5.4), \textit{PRE} 22 understands Genesis 6:1-4 literally, where the “sons of God” are divine beings. However, \textit{PRE} introduces another tradition which comes from the euhemeristic reading of Genesis 6. \textit{Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer} 22 divides the antediluvian world into the righteous children of Seth and the wicked children of Cain. The distinction between the Cainites and Sethites is not rabbinic. Julius Africanus (d. 240), in his chronicle, first proposed that the “sons of God” of Genesis were the “sons of Seth” rather than angels\(^{75}\). The tradition is widespread in Late Antique Christian literature, and it has a prominent place in \textit{COT}. \textit{Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer}, by harmonizing the mythological and euhemeristic traditions, creates an unnecessary duplication. Both the Sethites and the angels— the “sons of God”—appear in \textit{PRE} 22, but only the angels play a significant role in the story. The children of Seth remain unsullied by any contact with the Cainite women, yet (one supposes) they die in the Flood anyway.

\textit{Pirqē de-Rabbi Eliezer} mentions the distinction between the children of Seth and the children of Cain at the beginning of \textit{PRE} 22:

\footnotesize

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{71} An allusion to John 13:32 (Peshitta), when Satan enters Judas. Again, Abel is implicitly identified with Christ.
  \item \textsuperscript{72} S.-M. Ri, \textit{La caverne des trésors}, op. cit., p. 45 and 47.
  \item \textsuperscript{73} The same dichotomy can be observed in the discussion of the sexual perversions of the Cainites (see \textit{infra} Section 8.7). In \textit{PRE} 22, the daughters of Cain are under the sway of the Evil Inclination. In \textit{COT} 11-12, the daughters of Cain are possessed by demons, and Satan rules over them.
  \item \textsuperscript{74} See the notes to al-Ṭarāfī, \textit{Stories of the Prophets}, op. cit., p. 28-29 (§46-47) and the bibliography there. See also \textit{Targum Pseudo-Jonathan} to Gen 4:2 (Appendix §13).
\end{itemize}
Rabbi Ishmael said: All humanity, and all the generations of the righteous, were descended from Seth, while all the generations of the wicked, the evil-doers, and the rebels who rebelled against God (המקום) were descended from Cain. They said: “We have no need of the drops of your rain or to know your ways,” as it is written, “They said to God, ‘Depart from us!’” (Job 21:14)76

The Sethites are then promptly forgotten. The text focuses instead on the sexual immorality of the daughters of Cain, which eventually attracts the fallen angels. This passage breaks with the earlier rabbinic tradition found in Genesis Rabbah 26:5, where the women are the victims of corrupt rulers. In PRE 22, the Cainite women entice the angels.

In the Cave of Treasures, the story of the Cainites and Sethites occupies a significant portion of the story of the antediluvian patriarchs (COT 6-18). The two groups separate after the death of Adam. The Cainites inhabit the plain where Cain slew Abel; the Sethites remain on the Holy Mountain, where they maintain the tomb of Adam in the cave of treasures (COT 6:23-24). This is an innovation of COT; Julius Africanus says nothing about the geographic location of the Sethites and Cainites. The Sethites swear on the blood of Abel to avoid contact with the Cainites. They break the oath during the days of Jared, when the Cainites lure the Sethites with their music (COT 11-12). At the end of the section, the author rails against the mythological interpretation of the “sons of God” in an aside to the reader:

Therefore, all of the children of Seth descended from the borders of Paradise to the valley where the children of Cain dwelt. They coupled with them, and the daughters of Cain conceived from the children of Seth and bore men, giants in the form of towers.

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76 D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 118.
77 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 113 reads ינאה. I suspect that this is a modern scribal error rather than an ancient one.
78 Ibid., p. 115 has ינאה. See the previous note.
Because of these things, the ancient scribes went astray and wrote that angels descended from heaven and coupled with the daughters of women. From them were born the giants, the men of renown. They do not understand clearly. Behold, in the light of truth: It is not in the nature of spirits, and it is not even in the nature of demons, who are creatures of impurity and lovers of adultery, that they should unite with human women, because there is no male nor female among them, and nothing is added to their number to replace those who have fallen. If the demons were able to unite with women, they would not leave a single daughter of the human race uncorrupted (COT 15)\(^79\).

The Cave of Treasures is thus aware of the older tradition and polemicizes against it. This means that the old tradition is still current: The mythological and the euhemeristic versions of the story coexisted in Late Antiquity. Instead of choosing between the traditions, as COT has done, PRE uses both, juxtaposing them awkwardly\(^80\).

A more specific parallel between PRE and COT can be found in the description of the exhibitionism of the daughters of Cain. Here is how PRE describes the sins of the Cainites:

רבי מייר אומר גלוי בשר ערו
היו הולכים דורות של קין האנשים והנשים כבהמה ומטמאין בכל
זנות איש באמו ובבתו ובאשת אחיו גלוי ברחובו
ות ביצר הרע ובмыслות לבם

Rabbi Meir said: The men and the women of the generations of Cain were walking around stark naked like animals, and they polluted themselves with all sorts of whoredom, a man with his mother and with his daughter and with the wife of his brother, naked in the streets, under the influence of the Evil Inclination and the thoughts of their hearts (PRE 22)\(^81\).

The Cave of Treasures described the misconduct of the Cainites in similar terms:

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\(^{79}\) Ibid., p. 113 and 115.

\(^{80}\) Jacob of Edessa also harmonizes the “mythological” and “euhemeristic” traditions: J.C. Reeves, « Jacob of Edessa and the Manichaean Book of Giants? », in Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences, M.J. Goff, L.T. Stuckenbruck, E. Morano (ed.), Tübingen, 2016, p. 201, cites a remnant of Jacob’s lost book of Scholia: “From the tenth scholion, when he [Jacob of Edessa] comments about those giants regarding whom it is written that they were born before the flood to the daughters of Cain. Some tales about them are recorded and recounted which are fuller than those belonging to the Hebrews. (These relate) that since God wished to destroy them and their wickedness even prior to the total wrath (expressed) by means of the flood, he allowed them to perish through the evil machinations of their (own) minds: they fell upon each other as if waging war, exercising neither reason nor sense... Thus the destruction of those arrogant and insolent giants—the evil offspring of those who violated their covenant, being those who were illicitly born from the daughters of Cain—transgressed in such a manner that many stadia of the earth were rendered putrid by their blood and by the foul discharge from their (rotting) carcasses. Large and mighty heaps of their bones were compiled from the corpses. These things are in accordance with what the tale has said. It happened that the visible signs of this destruction remained evident until the flood.”

\(^{81}\) D. Börner-Klein, Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser, op. cit., p. 118.
Whoredom ruled over the daughters of Cain so that women shamelessly chased after men. They intermingled with one another, like a herd in agitation, a man before his neighbor fornicating openly and without shame. Two or three men ran after and fell upon one woman, and likewise the women were running after the men… Fathers and sons sullied themselves with their mothers and their sisters. Children did not know their fathers, nor could the fathers distinguish their children. Satan had been made the head of their camp (COT 12:1-3a.5-6)\(^{82}\).

Classical rabbinic literature attests the sexual misbehavior of the generation of the Flood, but not in these terms. In *Genesis Rabbah*, the generation is condemned for contraceptive practices (*Gen. Rab. 22:2*) and for homosexuality and bestiality (*Gen. Rab. 26:5*), none of which are mentioned in the two passages quoted above. The *Cave of Treasures*, however, singles out the invention of music as the cause of the orgiastic behavior (*COT 11*), while *PRE* does not explain the exhibitionism of the Cainites.

In addition to *COT* and dependent texts, the euhemeristic tradition also appears in Muslim literature, although with one key difference: Muslim writers, such as al-Tha’labi, do not identify the two groups as “Sethites” and “Cainites” but rather the “people of the mountain” and the “people of the plain”\(^{83}\). In this instance, Muslim literature cannot be the source of *PRE*. The form of the tradition in al-Tha’labi, however, comes specifically from *COT*, which is the first Christian source to assign the Sethites and the Cainites to the mountain and the plain. Furthermore, al-Tha’labi claims that the invention of music corrupted both communities, another idea particular to *COT*. Since *COT* is the probable source of the Islamic version of this tradition, it could also be a source for the tradition in *PRE*.

\(^{82}\) S.-M. Ri, *La caverne des trésors*, op. cit., p. 89 and 91.


8.8 Adam in the Ark (*PRE* 23; *COT* 14:9 & 18:3-6)

Although *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not recount the translation of Adam’s body aboard Noah’s Ark and its subsequent reburial—the core narrative of *COT*—it does know an obscure motif from the story of the Flood which is only otherwise found in works dependent on *COT*. The book of Genesis mentions three decks of Noah’s Ark without further specification (Gen 6:16). Both rabbinic literature and Christian authors proposed different plans for the arrangement of the decks. It is very unlikely that two authors, by chance, would partition the three levels of the Ark in the same manner. The plan of the Ark in *PRE*, however, is identical
to the one found in COT. Furthermore, there might be a polemical allusion to the translation of Adam found in COT and dependent sources.

*Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* 23 presents the following division of the Ark:

מדור כל בהמה וחיה ביציע
התחתנה מדור לכל העופות ביציע השניה
מדור שקצים ורמשים ובני אדם ביציע השלישית

The compartment of all the cattle and other animals was on the lowest level. The compartment for all the birds was on the second level. Abominations (שקצים), creeping things, and human beings were on the third level.

Helen Spurling and Emmanouela Grypeou have shown that *PRE* differs from the schemes proposed in *Genesis Rabbah* 31:11 and the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Sanhedrin* 108b). *Genesis Rabbah* divides the three decks into 1) waste, 2) clean animals and humans, and 3) unclean animals, while the Talmud proposes 1) waste, 2) animals, and 3) people.

The scheme in *PRE*, however, mirrors the division of the Ark in COT. God commands Noah:

And make for it three compartments, the lowest for the animals and the cattle, the middle for the birds, and the highest for you and your children (*COT* 14:9).

The major difference between *PRE* and *COT* is that *PRE* adds unclean animals to the topmost deck. It is odd that they share space with human beings rather than with the other animals on the lower decks. However, there is another difference between the two accounts: *Cave of Treasures* 18:3-6 places Adam’s body on the Ark, dividing the women from the men and turning the Ark into an image of a Syriac church:

The body of Adam was placed in the middle in order that all the mysteries of the Church would be depicted in the Ark. The men were in the east and the women in the west, so that the women could not see the men, and not even the men could see the faces of the women. Thus the body of Adam was situated like the lectern (*bema*).

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87 Read אֲיָךְ בַּיְמָוֶת.
Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer has replaced Adam’s body and its liturgical function with the word sheketz (שקץ), which means “abomination” but also designates idols. This is another possible polemic against the veneration of Adam in PRE.

If so, it is a particularly clever polemic. The most famous biblical abomination is the “abomination of desolation” (שקוץ משומם) from the book of Daniel (Dan 11:31, 12:11; cf. Matt 24:15), which designates the defilement of the Temple. The Cave of Treasures associates Adam’s body with sanctuaries, whether in the cave of treasures, within the Ark, or on Golgotha, COT’s version of the Temple Mount. The single word sheketz could be an oblique reference to the cult of Adam in COT and, by extension, the Christian cult of relics or even the Eucharist: The body of Adam is an abomination—a source of corpse impurity and an idol—which COT claims to be an object of adoration on the Temple Mount (COT 23; cf. supra Section 8.1). If this explanation does not convince, the similar design of the Ark remains a compelling parallel between PRE and COT.

The tradition of Adam’s presence on the Ark is frequent in Syriac and Arabic sources, but the division of the Ark by beasts/birds/humans is far less common. As Grypeou and Spurling have indicated, this tripartite division ultimately derives from Ephrem the Syrian’s Hymns on Paradise, one of the sources of COT. The same tradition is transmitted in works based on COT, such as the Arabic Catena to the Pentateuch. However, other Syriac writers, including Theodore bar Koni and Isho’dad of Merv, proposed different divisions for the three decks of the Ark. This isolates COT and dependent sources as a specific stream within Syriac tradition. Muslim sources which reflect knowledge of COT know a similar tripartite scheme.

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89 See E. Horowitz, Reckless Rites: Purim and the Legacy of Jewish Violence, Princeton, 2006, p. 157-158, who discusses this term in relation to another passage from PRE, relating to a pectoral cross worn by Haman (see infra Section 8.10 for Haman and the cross).

90 Jews (and Muslims) considered veneration of the dead to be a particularly abhorrent aspect of Christianity. See D.J. Lasker and S. Stroumsa, The Polemic of Nestor the Priest: Qissat mujādalat al-usquf and Sefer Nestor ha-Komer, Jerusalem, 1996, p. 77 (translation): “You put your dead in your churches, then you anoint the dead bones and claim to cleanse them by so doing… You believe that such deeds will get you closer to Paradise, but upon my life! You are falling further away from Paradise, and it is Hell that you will enter, you and all your people! Shame you, in this world and in the next! How, with such a law and such a creed, can you hold your heads high among the nations? Your obvious purpose is to exhibit your hatred of the Jews, so as to abolish the law of Moses, peace be on him.”

91 See the previous chapter (Section 7.2.5) and the notes to al-Ṭarāfi, Stories of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 35 (§73).


of 1) beasts, 2) humans, and 3) birds. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer however, is closer to the Christian tradition.

8.9 Abraham and Melchizedek (PRE 29; COT 28:8-13)

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer places an emphasis on Melchizedek not found in other rabbinic writings. In PRE 8, the author identifies Shem with Melchizedek, a tradition which is common in rabbinic literature. This identification is reinforced in PRE 27, which claims that Abraham met with Shem, rather than Melchizedek, following the War of the Kings (cf. Gen 14:18-20). Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 29 adds a new episode, not found in classical rabbinic literature, where Shem/Melchizedek circumcises Abraham on the Temple Mount during Yom Kippur. This narrative is both strange in itself and an unambiguously positive portrayal of the priest-king, whose reception in classical rabbinic literature is more reserved (cf. Gen. Rab.44:7; b. Nedarim 32b). In the classical literature, Melchizedek is a positive figure, yet he is subservient to Abraham, who assumes his priesthood.

The portrayal of Shem/Melchizedek in PRE is akin to the Melchizedek who appears in COT. Building on the Epistle to the Hebrews, which describes Jesus as a high priest “according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 6:20), COT presents Melchizedek as a forerunner of Christian priesthood. Melchizedek is a Christian priest avant la lettre who initiates Abraham into the “holy mysteries” (ܐܰܪ̈ܝܓܓܐ ܩܕܝ) of the Eucharist (cf. Gen 14:18-20). One could also say that Melchizedek initiates Abraham into “holy mysteries” in PRE. The “historicized typology” of COT could be the model for PRE, especially since there is no exegetical basis for the tradition that Melchizedek circumcised Abraham.

The tradition about Shem/Melchizedek appears toward the beginning of PRE 29, on the trial of circumcision:

95 Al-Ṭabarī, Annales, op. cit., p. 187 (The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume I, op. cit., p. 357) and al-Tha’labī, Lives of the Prophets, op. cit., p. 100. The context is a strange tradition in which Jesus revives Shem and interrogates him about the circumstances of the Flood.

96 M. Simon, « Melchisédech dans la polémique entre juifs et chrétiens et dans la légende », Revue d’Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses, vol. 17 (1937), p. 85, summarizes COT’s approach to sacred history and its essential difference from older typological exegesis. In typological exegesis, the New Covenant reveals the meaning of the Old. In COT, however, the diptych becomes unhinged: « Il ne leur suffit pas de confiner les Juifs dans la préhistoire de l’humanité rachetée. Bien plutôt faut-il les bannir de cette préhistoire même : le rôle qu’ils y jouent, et qu’on leur reconnaît communément, est usurpé ; il n’y a plus, dans la Bible, de place pour eux. Elle ne retrace, pour qui sait la lire, qu’une seule histoire, celle de l’Eglise éternelle. Le diptyque fait place à une fresque unique et continue. Le christianisme n’est pas seulement préfiguré dans l’Ancien Testament, il y est avec toute la réalité de ses institutions et de ses rites. »
Rabban Gamaliel says: Abraham sent for Shem b. Noah, and he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin and the flesh of the foreskin of Ishmael his son, as it is written, “On this very day, Abraham was circumcised along with Ishmael his son” (Gen 17:26). What is the meaning of “On this very day”? It means during the strength of the sun at midday. Not only this, but the phrase “the very day” means the very Day of Atonement. Therefore, “And you will not do any work on this very day, which is the Day of Atonement” (Lev 23:25). Abraham was circumcised on this day. Every year the Holy One, Blessed Be He, sees the blood of the covenant (דם הברית) of the circumcision of Abraham, our father, and he pardons all of our faults, as it is written, “For on this day atonement will be made for you, to purify you” (Lev 16:30). In the same place that Abraham was circumcised, where his blood remained, the altar was built, and therefore it is said: “All the blood will be poured at the base of the altar” (Lev 4:7). “I said to you, ‘By your blood, live’; I said to you, ‘By your blood, live’” (Ezek 16:7).97

The tradition is unusual for several reasons. First, it is gratuitous. There is no reason why Shem/Melchizedek should circumcise Abraham. Circumcision is not a priestly prerogative. Genesis Rabbah, for example, presumes that Abraham circumcised himself (e.g., Gen. Rab. 46:5). Second, circumcision is more frequently associated with Passover than the Day of Atonement. The two are already linked in the Hebrew Bible (cf. Exod 12:43-44).98 Third, the status of Melchizedek in rabbinic tradition is not entirely positive. In the Babylonian Talmud, Melchizedek is stripped of his priesthood because he blesses Abraham before he blesses God (b. Nedarim 32b; cf. Gen 14:19-20). In PRE, however, he maintains his priestly status. Melchizedek is even compared to the high priest on the Day of Atonement.

This is exactly the function of Melchizedek within Christianity. Melchizedek is linked to the Yom Kippur through the Epistle to the Hebrews, which compares the death of Jesus to a

98 Later in the same chapter (Ibid., p. 163), PRE also makes this association: “The Holy One, Blessed Be He, said: By the merit of the blood of the covenant of circumcision and the blood of Passover, I redeemed you from Egypt, and through their merit you will be redeemed in the future at the end of the fourth kingdom” (אם אבר BALL)
sacrifice for the Day of Atonement. Melchizedek is also linked to the Eucharist based on a typological reading of his offering of bread and wine in Genesis 14:18-20. The figure of Melchizedek in COT is therefore a high priest who administers the Eucharist. Through Melchizedek, the Eucharist, more logically linked with Passover, is implicitly linked to the Day of Atonement as well. In COT, God blesses Abraham only after this meeting with Melchizedek. Abraham’s election even depends on his reception of the Eucharist:

When he returned from the war of the kings, [Abraham] crossed the mountain of Jebus. Melchizedek, that is, the king of Salem, the priest of the Most High God, came out to meet him. Abraham hurried to Melchizedek and fell on his face and prostrated before him. He rose, embraced him, kissed him, and was blessed by him. Melchizedek blessed Abraham, and he gave to Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods that were with him. Melchizedek initiated Abraham into the holy mysteries of bread and wine, the offering of salvation. Thus God spoke to Abraham and said, “Very great is your reward because Melchizedek blessed you. Also I will bless you and greatly increase your posterity” (COT 28:8-13).

Furthermore, God’s words to Abraham evoke the two covenants God makes with Abraham in Genesis. God tells Abraham his reward will be very great, his first words to Abraham during the Covenant between the Pieces, which occurs right after his meeting with Melchizedek (Gen 15:1). The second sentence, “I will bless you and greatly increase your posterity,” echoes the Covenant of Circumcision (Gen 17:2), which is otherwise not mentioned in COT. The Eucharist has replaced circumcision as the sign of the covenant with Abraham.

In both PRE and COT, Shem/Melchizedek pours out the “blood of the covenant” in what can be described as a sacrament of initiation. Nor is this the only point of contact between the two works. Pirge de-Rabbi Eliezer emphasizes that Shem/Melchizedek circumcises Abraham on the Temple Mount (“where the altar was built”), another gratuitous detail which has its counterpart in COT. As mentioned above (Sections 8.1 and 8.4), COT

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99 For the Day of Atonement in Christianity, see D. Stökl Ben Ezra, The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity, Tübingen, 2003. He discusses PRE 29 on p. 123-124 and comments: “The vacillation between Nisan and Tishri might perhaps be a reaction to the Christian linkage of these events to Easter.”


101 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 219 and 221.
believes that the “mountain of Jebus” is Golgotha, and that both of these places are the Temple Mount (COT 29:3-8). Melchizedek therefore offers Abraham the holy mysteries on the future site of the Temple. This is another instance where Mount Moriah in PRE stands in opposition to Golgotha in COT. Therefore, in both works, 1) Melchizedek 2) performs a rite associated with both Passover and the Day of Atonement 3) on the Temple Mount.

The tradition of COT is unusual, but it builds on established traditions about Melchizedek which date back to the earliest Christian centuries. In PRE, however, there is no particular reason why Shem/Melchizedek should circumcise Abraham (instead of Abraham circumcising himself), why the circumcision should occur on the Day of Atonement (instead of Passover), and why the circumcision should take place on the Temple Mount. The entire episode, which departs so radically from rabbinc tradition, is explicable in light of its Christian model. In this case, PRE is reclaiming the figure of Melchizedek for Judaism. On a final note, Melchizedek is practically nonexistent in Muslim tradition. He is never mentioned in the Qur’an, and, consequently, he does not appear in the Stories of the Prophets. The tradition in PRE is therefore part of the author’s discourse with Christianity.

8.10 The Wood of the Cross (PRE 50; COT 50:20)

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer 50 contains a curious detail about the execution of Haman, the villain of the story of Esther, which flatly contradicts the biblical narrative and has no equivalent in the many rabbinic writings about Esther. In the biblical book, Haman is hanged on a gallows that he had built for his rival, Mordechai (Esth 7:9-10). In PRE 50, Haman is hanged on a beam that is pulled from his own house. This beam, in fact, originates from the Holy of Holies of the Temple of Solomon—part of the plunder the Persians had inherited from the Babylonians. In the Cave of Treasures, a very different figure is hanged on a beam from the Holy of Holies: At the moment of the crucifixion, “the Jews” disassemble the Ark of the Covenant, still standing in the Temple, in order to construct the cross of Christ (COT 50:19-21). The confluence of the two traditions is significant. First, as we have seen, Mount Moriah and Golgotha stand in opposition in the two works (supra Section 8.1). Second, there is a pre-existing Jewish tradition associating Jesus with Haman. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer builds on this tradition in a way that betrays knowledge of COT.


The story of Esther in **PRE** 49-50 overtly contradicts the canonical book of Esther. In the biblical book, Haman is hanged on a gallows that he had built for his rival, Mordechai (Esth 7:9-10; cf. Esth 5:14). This does not happen in **PRE** 50. Rather, the beam for Haman’s execution is extracted from his house, conforming to the decree in Ezra 6:11:

What did Elijah of blessed memory do at that very moment? He assumed the appearance of Harbonah, one of the eunuchs of the king. He said: “There is a tree in the house of Haman from the house of the Holy of Holies, fifty cubits tall,” as it is written, “He made the hall of the pillars fifty cubits long” (1 Kgs 7:6). Immediately the king commanded to hang him on it, as it is written, “The king said: ‘Hang him on it’” (Esth 7:9) in order to fulfill what was written, “Let the wood be pulled out from his house” (Ezra 6:11)\(^{104}\).

This passage has no equivalent in rabbinic literature. In fact, it has no equivalent in any other work on Esther, including the commentary on Esther in the Talmud (**b. Megillah** 9b-17a) or the numerous Esther midrashim of the Middle Ages\(^{105}\). The tradition is unique to **PRE**.

Although this specific motif is unique to **PRE**, the larger context of the story of Haman can be read against a Late Antique Jewish tradition that associated Haman with Jesus. The clearest example of this tradition is a Byzantine-era Aramaic piyut written for the feast of Purim, the celebration of the events of the book of Esther. In this piyut, Haman interrogates a number of biblical villains, such as Pharaoh, Goliath, and Nebuchadnezzar. The sequence of villains, which follows chronological order, is interrupted by Jesus, who is inserted between Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar. Jesus tells Haman:

\[^{104}\text{D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Elieser*, op. cit., p. 351-352.}\]

\[^{105}\text{In addition to M.B. Lerner, « The Works of Aggadic Midrash and the Esther Midrashim », *op. cit.*, see D. Börner-Klein and E. Hollender, *Rabbinische Kommentare zum Buch Ester*, 2 vol., Leiden, 2000, for German translations of the major texts.}\]
You think yourself/That you were crucified alone/Yet I shared it with you.
Nailed to a beam/As my image, for idolatry/Is painted on wood.
They nailed me to a tree/My flesh lacerated by blows/The son of a carpenter
Afflicted by the scourge/Born of a woman/They called me Christ! (ll. 85-88)\(^{106}\)

The poem emphasizes that the primary association between Jesus and Haman is the manner of their deaths. Elliott Horowitz additionally points out that both men are linked to Edom, the kingdom of Esau and his descendants (Gen 36). Haman is linked to Edom genetically via Agag (Esth 3:1; cf. 1 Sam 15) and Amalek, the grandson of Esau (Gen 36:12), while Jesus is connected to Edom spiritually, since in rabbinic literature Edom is a cipher for Rome, including Christian Rome:

Haman was associated with Christianity and its adherents for a number of reasons. Not only was his form of death remarkably similar to that of Jesus, but he is repeatedly referred to in the book of Esther as an “Agagite”, linking him genealogically with the Amalekites and ultimately with Esau, the grandfather of Amalek through his first born son, Eliphaz. And “Esau” together with “Edom” became, in the early middle ages, the standard Hebrew term for Christendom\(^{107}\).

Israel Yuval has indicated a third connection between Jesus and Haman, their death during the feast of Passover:

Purim is closely linked with Passover and hence with Easter. Indeed, Jewish law decrees the study of the laws of Passover thirty days before the holidays, that is, on Purim. Purim is a story of deliverance whose beginning is rooted in Passover, since Haman was hanged in the middle of Passover. According to the Book of Esther, Haman cast the lot on the thirteenth day of the month of Nissan [cf. Esth 3:7.12]… Immediately after the lot was cast; Esther fasted for three days, and on the third day (the fifteenth of Nissan) invited the king to the first banquet. The next day Haman was invited to the second banquet, on which occasion she asked for his head, and the next day he was hanged… The connection between the hanging of Haman and the Crucifixion of Jesus is clear\(^{108}\).

Therefore, there are three primary connections between Haman and Jesus: 1) the manner of their death, 2) the time of their death, and 3) a connection to Edom.


\(^{107}\) E. Horowitz, *Reckless Rites*, op. cit., p. 87.

Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer is aware of all three connections and draws attention to them. The Esther story (PRE 49) begins as a discourse on the “seed of Amalek,” which traces the descent of Haman from Esau. In PRE 50, the author explicitly dates the first banquet of Esther to 15 Nisan, the first day of Passover. Finally, at the execution of Haman in PRE 50, the author appeals to Ezra 6:11 to justify his modification of the biblical story. This verse, from the Aramaic section of Ezra, contains the word zeqaf (זקף), a biblical hapax legomenon which has the mundane meaning of “to set up, set straight” but also can mean “to crucify.” The root is commonly used in Syriac to refer to the crucifixion and the cross of Jesus and is also found in COT (e.g., COT 50:20, cited below). The citation of Ezra 6:11 could be a clue that the whole passage should be read in reference to the crucifixion of Jesus.

Therefore, the tradition in PRE might have its origin in an equally curious passage from COT:

When the sentence was given by Pilate concerning the death of the Lord, [the Jews] entered the Temple, and they brought out from there the beams of the Ark [of the Covenant], and they constructed the cross (ŗeqaf) of Christ out of it. (COT 50:20)

When Jesus is taken down from the cross, the Jews then return to the wood of the cross to the Holy of Holies (COT 53:6; cf. 53:11). They therefore bring the blood of Christ into the inner sanctuary, completing the sacrifice of atonement (cf. Heb 9:12).

This strange tradition underlines the connection between Jesus and the Temple. It does not make much sense from an historical-critical perspective, but from the perspective of COT's

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110 Ibid., p. 346.
111 Ibid., p. 352.
112 S.-M. Ri, La caverne des trésors, op. cit., p. 421. J.-P. Mahé, La Caverne des trésors : version géorgienne [translation], op. cit., p. 94, mentions the Ark but not the wood of the cross: « Or c’était le vêtement de pourpre qui avait recouvert l’arche de la loi dans le saint des saints. Et quant le jugement de Pilate de crucifier le Christ avait été rendu public, en toute hâte les Juifs étaient entrés dans le temple et avaient décroché le rideau de leur autel, qu’on appelait le « saint des saints », et avec des railleries ils avaient revêtu le Christ de ce vêtement sans manches. Ainsi lui convenait-il, car le mystère de Dieu était dans l’arche à l’intérieur du saint des saints. Et ils retirèrent ce vêtement et en revêtirent le Christ. Dès lors, la grâce du mystère de Dieu s’éloigna des Juifs » (COT 50:5-12). The transformation of this passage appears to be the work of the Georgian translator (see supra Section 6.1.3). The Garshuni manuscripts keep the tradition about the Ark of the Covenant and the wood of the cross. The scribe of Mingana 258, f. 38b has even written the word ARK (ܛܝܒܘܬܗ) in large letters across the top margin, signifying its importance.
113 Contrary to COT, Golgotha and the Temple Mount are not the same place, the Ark of the Covenant never stood in the Second Temple, and entering the inner sanctum of the Temple is one of the strongest religious taboos in Judaism. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only on Yom Kippur. It would be a serious offense for one Jew, much less a mob of them, to enter the Holy of Holies in Nisan. It is even more offensive to dismantle the sacred furniture and, ultimately, introduce corpse impurity into the Temple.
“historicized typology,” it is perfectly coherent. Following the Epistle to the Hebrews, COT understands the death of Jesus in sacerdotal terms. Hebrews argues that Jesus, though not a Levitical priest, is a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek who brings his own blood into the heavenly sanctuary as an offering (Heb 9:11-12). In COT, Jesus stands in continuity with a literal order of Melchizedek, who founded the proto-Christian cult of Adam at Golgotha. Furthermore, Jesus’ blood is physically transported to the earthly sanctuary, emphasizing the connection between the death of Jesus and the sacrifice for the Day of Atonement. The identification of the cross of Christ with the Ark of the Covenant underscores the continuity between the Old and the New Covenants as well as the continuity between the Jewish Temple and the Church of the Anastasis that, in the Christian imaginaire, replaced it. The cross is, functionally, the Ark of this new, Christian Temple.

If the Cave of Treasures places the wood of the cross in the Holy of Holies, then Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer takes it back out. Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer’s modification of earlier Jewish tradition can be understood as a polemic against Christian triumphalism. The Cave of Treasures is representative of the Christian perspective: It presents the death of Jesus as moment of the abolition of Jewish ordinances and the transfer of priesthood, kingship, prophecy, and even Passover (i.e., the Eucharist) to Christianity (e.g., COT 52:14-19; 54:3). The very Ark of the Covenant is appropriated as the central Christian symbol, an object of both Jewish fascination and revulsion. In PRE 50, the beam from the Holy of Holies is removed from the “House of Haman.” Presumably, it returns to its rightful place. The very next chapter, PRE 51, is suggestive. It describes a new heaven and a new earth but also the construction of the eschatological Temple and the restoration of those observances that the death of Christ allegedly abolished.

In fact, the placement of the story of Esther in the overall design of PRE reflects the function of the story of Christ in COT. Both stories occupy the climactic positions of their respective works and represent the anticipated culmination of sacred history. In COT, the story of Christ is principally anticipated by the story of Adam, including his burial at Golgotha. In PRE, the story of Esther unites two recurring themes, the dual significance of Passover and the Temple Mount throughout history. According to PRE, Passover dates to the time of Adam and was practiced by the patriarchs until the time of Moses. Likewise, Adam worshiped on

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114 For other examples of Jewish attitudes to the cross from the time of PRE until the end of the Middle Ages, see E. Horowitz, Reckless Rites, op. cit., p. 149-185.
115 Although the final chapter of PRE returns to the story of Moses, it is less a continuation of the earlier chapters than an independent homily on slander.
the Temple Mount, and his example was followed by Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The death of Haman on a beam from the Holy of Holies during Passover is not just an incidental polemic against Christianity but a summary of the work’s major themes. Ironically, Haman’s death, like the death of Jesus, is also a moment of redemption. It might not be too much to call the story of Esther the “Jewish Gospel.”

The tradition about the Ark in COT is the germ of a legend about the origin of the wood of the cross which would become widespread in the Middle Ages. In the many works dedicated to this subject, the wood of the cross comes from the Temple, but there are no clear examples of the fully developed legend prior to the redaction of PRE. Syriac literature does know a legend about the staff of Moses which becomes the wood of the cross. This legend has Jewish and Muslim counterparts which, however, do not mention the cross. Furthermore, the Temple is not mentioned in this version of the legend. The Cave of Treasures remains the only known source prior to PRE which states that the wood of the cross came from the Temple.

8.11 Conclusion
The foregoing examples demonstrate Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer’s broad knowledge of traditions found in the Cave of Treasures. Some of these traditions, such as the introduction of Satan into the Garden of Eden (Section 8.2), were widespread. Others, however, are restricted to COT and related works, such as the specific tripartite division of Noah’s Ark (8.8). In all cases, the traditions can be found in either Syriac or Arabic literature. This signifies, first of all, that the traditions crossed religious boundaries. It also illustrates how people living within a given region could understand the history of Israel in a similar way, regardless of their religion. The same phenomenon was observed in the second part of this study, where the Jews of Europe adopted the same traditions from Jubilees as their Christian neighbors.

Although many of these traditions are also found in Muslim literature, they often take the form of anti-Christian polemic in PRE. This is most obvious in the traditions involving Passover (8.5), Melchizedek (Section 8.9), and the wood of the cross (8.10), which have no exact Islamic parallels. Other polemical elements appear in the remaining traditions. The

116 For the history of this legend, see G. McDowell, « «La Gloire du Liban viendra chez toi » (Is 60,13) : à l’origine de la légende du bois de la croix », Apocrypha, vol. 29 (2018) (forthcoming). This article is intended to replace the work of E.C. Quinn, The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life, Chicago, 1962, which nevertheless contains much useful information on the legend of the wood of the cross.


118 J.C. Reeves, « The Eschatological Appearance of the Staff of Moses », in Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic: A Postrabbinic Jewish Apocalypse Reader, Atlanta, 2005, p. 187-199. The earliest extant source of this legend is actually Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer. The passage from PRE 40 is quoted in Section 5.2.
Cave of Treasures claims that Golgotha is the center of the earth and the Temple Mount; Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer makes the same claim for Mount Moriah and invents new traditions in favor of the classical rabbinic position (8.1). The garments of glory (8.3) are restored to Adam only after the death of Jesus in COT 51:22, but in PRE 20 Adam receives new garments before he has even repented. In COT 6-7, the burial of Adam is the prelude to the establishment of a proto-Christian cult based on the veneration of his remains. In PRE 20, Adam plans his burial specifically to avoid such a cult (8.4). Concerning the “sons of God,” COT 15 denies that they were angels; PRE 22 affirms that they were (8.7). In COT 18, Adam is placed in the center of Noah’s Ark; in PRE 23, the Ark does not contain the body of Adam but rather “abominations” (8.8). For every thesis, there is an antithesis. Only the traditions about Satan (8.2) and the twin sisters (8.6) appear without any overt polemic.

This examination not only reveals that Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer knew traditions from the Cave of Treasures but also the reason why PRE would adopt so many non-rabbinic traditions: They served a polemical purpose. The reformulated traditions strengthened the author’s own religious identity while denigrating the religion of his opponents. Although PRE frequently departs from established rabbinic tradition, the traditions of PRE favor important markers of Jewish identity, e.g., the centrality of the Temple, circumcision, Passover, and aniconism. The new traditions subsequently became widespread in rabbinic writing of the Middle Ages. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer is an example of the construction of Jewish identity against Christianity and Islam. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer, rather than marking an invasion of foreign traditions, represents the invention of rabbinic tradition.
Conclusion

The present study has shown that Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer knows many traditions from the Cave of Treasures but almost nothing from the Book of Jubilees. This division is a product of the author’s historical circumstances. The author lived within the Abbasid Caliphate, where numerous versions of COT circulated in both Syriac and Arabic. The Book of Jubilees, still extant in its Greek version, was known primarily in the Byzantine Empire. Consequently, Jews from the Byzantine Empire and surrounding Christian territories cite traditions from Jubilees, as evidenced by Midash Tadshe and Midrash Aggadah. The author of PRE, however, was geographically and culturally remote from Christendom. He probably had no access to the Book of Jubilees. His work is the product of the environment in which he worked, where the dominant religious cultures were Syriac Christianity and Islam. Region, rather than religion, was the determinative factor.

The course of the study did reveal that PRE knows a few ancient traditions which date back to the Second Temple period. The transmission of these traditions might even depend on Jewish sources, although not the Book of Jubilees. The first of these is the idea that demons are the shades of the generation of the Flood (PRE 34). This tradition, found in Jubilees, is as old as the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 15) from the third century BCE. The tradition survived in the Solomonic magic tradition and is reflected in both Christian (Testament of Solomon) and Jewish (Sefer Asaph) sources. The report of the tradition in PRE is very brief. It is not necessarily dependent on a known contemporary source like Sefer Asaph. Nevertheless, it reflects the conservation of an ancient belief.

The other example of an “ancient tradition” in PRE is the election and ascension of Levi. Although Byzantine writers report the election of Levi as it appears in Jubilees, PRE knows a very different tradition about the election, one closer to rabbinic sources, and adds the narrative of Levi’s ascension, which appears in neither Jubilees nor the Byzantine chronicles. The ascension does appear in the Testament of Levi, but the tradition was also part of the Aramaic Levi Document, one of the Second Temple works found in the Cairo Genizah. Again, the ALD is not necessarily the source of PRE, but the evidence of the Genizah—as well as the Syriac and Greek fragments of ALD—suggests that the work (and, consequently, its traditions) was better known in Late Antiquity than previously believed. Therefore, while Muslim and Christian material account for a great deal of the non-rabbinic material in PRE,
this is not an absolute judgment. A small number of Second Temple traditions did survive in Jewish transmission. In both cases, documentary evidence survives apart from PRE.

These examples, however, are the exception rather than the rule. As Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein already indicated, most of the “Second Temple” traditions in PRE come directly from earlier rabbinic literature or even the Hebrew Bible. Some of these examples, although they may appear in Second Temple sources, are so widespread in Christian and Muslim literature that the hypothesis that PRE knew them specifically from Second Temple sources is superfluous. This is the case with the faint echo of the Diamerismos tradition that one finds in PRE 23/24 (Section 5.6). This tradition, first attested in the Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees, is one of the most popular in Christian and Muslim historiography. The same can be said about the prophecy of Moses’ birth implied in Jubilees and found in Josephus (Section 5.10). The tradition was so widespread that it produced a parallel Islamic tradition about the birth of Abraham. Both traditions found their way into PRE (chapters 26 and 48).

Most of the non-rabbinic traditions in PRE, however, are neither Second Temple nor Jewish. In fact, all the traditions shared between PRE and COT are of Christian origin. The Cave of Treasures did not invent most of these traditions. They are, therefore, still ancient, but they date to the second or third century CE rather than the second or third century BCE. The association between Satan and the serpent in the Garden of Eden, for example, does not have a clear attestation before the second century, and then only in Christian sources. The loss and recovery of prelapsarian garments of glory is a Christian tradition based on baptismal theology of the third or fourth century. The identification of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of men” with the sons of Seth and the daughters of Cain is a Christian tradition.

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dating from the chronicle of Julius Africanus (d. 240). The division of the ark into beasts, birds, and humans appears in Christian literature from Ephrem (d. 373) onwards.

The Christian influence on PRE permits us to rethink traditional assumptions about the relationship between Judaism on the one hand and Christianity and Islam on the other. For example, Syriac literature is believed to be particularly indebted to ancient Jewish tradition. Among Syriac works, the Cave of Treasures has been singled out as “the richest source for Jewish traditions”. Frequently, however, PRE is the earliest Jewish source recording these Syriac traditions. Rather than asserting that PRE contains otherwise undocumented “ancient Jewish traditions,” one can presume that Syriac Christianity influenced Judaism. This conclusion was already anticipated at the end of Tryggve Kronholm’s monograph Motifs from Genesis 1-11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian: With Particular Reference to the Influence of Jewish Exegetical Tradition. The subtitle indicates the orientation of the study, yet Kronholm concluded that the Jewish sources closest to Ephrem were Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. It is impossible that Ephrem could have been influenced by these later Jewish writings. Ephrem, however, could have influenced PRE and the Targum through the medium of the Cave of Treasures. For certain traditions, one could conceivably trace a straight line from the work of Ephrem to COT to PRE to the Targum.

The influence of the Syriac tradition, however, does not mean the influence of the Syriac language. Indeed, one can suspect the Arabic language as the primary channel through which PRE knew non-rabbinic material. The author of PRE probably knew Arabic, and COT had a particularly wide currency in Arabic literature. Arabic language and literature can explain other non-rabbinic traditions in PRE which were not discussed in the main body of this study. Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer 21, for example, is the first Jewish work to mention how a raven assisted in the burial of Abel. The earliest securely datable work to report this tradition is the

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9 T. Kronholm, Motifs from Genesis 1-11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian: With Particular Reference to the Influence of Jewish Exegetical Tradition, Lund, 1978, p. 224: “It becomes immediately apparent that the closest connexion between the exegesis of the genuine hymns of Ephrem and that of the various Targumim is discernible in T. PsJon. This fits well with the previously expressed conviction of a considerable affinity between the Haggadic traditions collected in PRE and those unveiling themselves in the hymns of Ephrem.”
Qur'an (5:27-32). It is repeated in Arabic sources *ad nauseam*. *Pirqe de-Rabbi* 21 (again) mentions that Cain is the son of a malevolent divine being, an idea which is well-attested in the Nag Hammadi codices. However, the tradition is also reported by Ibn al-Nadim (10th c.) in his *Kitab al-Fihrist*. He attributes this belief to the Manichaeans, who were still active in the Abbasid Caliphate. Finally, *PRE* 20 refers to the penitence of Adam, an important episode from the *Life of Adam and Eve* missing from the *Cave of Treasures*. The *Life of Adam and Eve* was never translated into Arabic, yet Arabic-speaking Christians (e.g., the author of the *Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*) and even Muslims record traditions from this work. Arabic is the common denominator behind these diverse traditions.

The idea that a writer was influenced by the surrounding culture is not a radical conclusion. However, the idea that that Islam and (especially) Christianity could influence a Jewish work remains a controversial hypothesis. Ordinarily, Judaism is presumed to be the major influence on Christianity and Islam. This is true of the formative periods of Christianity and Islam, when Jews outnumbered Christians and Muslims. Over the course of time, however, the situation was reversed. In these circumstances, it is not at all unusual for the majority culture to influence the minority. Consequently, *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* represents the infusion of Christian and Muslim traditions into rabbinic literature. The Jewish author, however, has adapted these traditions for his own purpose.

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15 For example, J.F. Healey, » Targum Proverbs and the Peshitta: Reflections on the Linguistics Environment », in *Studies on the Text and Versions of the Hebrew Bible in Honour of Robert Gordon*, G. Khan, D. Lipton (ed.), Leiden ; Boston, 2012, p. 325-335, discusses the difficulty with which scholars came to accept the fact that the Targum to Proverbs is based on the Peshitta. In general, there is a great reluctance to see Judaism as anything other than the progenitor of Abrahamic tradition.
Similar examples can be found elsewhere in medieval Jewish literature. The tenth-century *Sefer Yosippon*, for example, is a Hebrew adaptation of Josephus’ *Jewish War*, but its primary source is not the lost Aramaic original of the *Jewish War* or even the Greek version preserved by Christians but a Latin Christian adaptation of the Middle Ages, the *De excidio Hierosolymitano*. *Sefer Yosippon*, however, has completely changed the orientation of this anti-Jewish work. Instead of presenting the destruction of the Temple as a punishment for the crucifixion of Jesus, *Sefer Yosippon* celebrates Jewish heroism in the face of adversity. In this way, an originally anti-Jewish polemic became the “Jewish Josephus.”

The example of *Sefer Yosippon* is instructive for understanding PRE. While *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* does not revive Second Temple sources, it does introduce the traditions of the Adam books into rabbinic literature. The Adam books, which include the *Cave of Treasures*, had an enormous impact on both Christianity and Islam. The Qur’an even enshrines traditions from them as canonical elements of the story of Adam and Eve. It is a small wonder that a Jewish work would eventually adopt (and adapt) the Adam literature, much the way that *Sefer Yosippon* adapts Josephus. In sum, *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* is not the attestation of an ancient, lost Hebrew Adam book. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* itself is the Hebrew Adam book.

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Appendix: Parallels between Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

The following is a collection of fifty-five parallel passages between Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan where I believe that the Targum is dependent on PRE. It is not a complete list of parallels between the two works. I have only included traditions which do not already appear in classical rabbinic literature or the Palestinian Targumim. I have allowed, however, parallels which appear in other Jewish works outside the classical rabbinic and Targumic corpora (see especially numbers 23, 40, 45, and 51) as well as in later (rabbinic) medieval literature. It is possible that these later works could have been the source of the Targum, but there is usually a distinctive detail shared between PRE and TPJ alone.

I have arranged the passages synoptically, in their original languages, in order to emphasize not only parallel ideas but also parallel syntax and vocabulary, even though the two works were written in different languages. I have highlighted cognate words and phrases as well as shared biblical citations. Since I have not translated the texts, I have appended brief comments explaining the nature of the parallels. I also refer to earlier traditions which provide an interesting contrast with the parallels between PRE and TPJ. Some of the parallel traditions are discussed elsewhere in the study; I have noted these in the comments.

The list follows the sequence of the chapters of PRE rather than the biblical sequence of TPJ (sometimes several verses from the Targum refer to one tradition in PRE). The text of PRE is taken from the edition of Dagmar Börner-Klein. I refer to the text by chapter and page number. I have checked this text against both Friedlander’s translation of the Epstein manuscript and JTS Enelow 866. In two instances where the manuscript readings are superior (numbers 9 and 12), I quote these texts instead of Börner-Klein. For the Targum I have used E. G. Clarke’s Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance, which reproduces the text (including the errors) of British Museum Manuscript Add. 27031.

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the unique manuscript of TPJ. I have also had recourse to the printed edition via Brian Walton’s *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (1654-1657).

In constructing this list, I have profited from the following sources: Gerald Friedlander’s notes to his translation of the Epstein manuscript of *PRE*, Roger Le Déaut’s notes to his French translation of *TPJ*; Perez Fernandez’ introduction to his Spanish translation of *PRE*, which includes a list of parallels between *PRE* and the *TPJ*; Robert Hayward’s criticism of Perez Fernandez’ list; and Michael Maher’s notes to his English translation of *TPJ* Genesis and Exodus. This does not mean that I follow the authors’ proposals in every case. I have (re)evaluated each tradition individually.

In his article on the relationship between *PRE* and *TPJ*, Robert Hayward lists five criteria for showing dependence of one work upon another (I have numbered them):

- Before ever we may assert that one text depends in some way upon another, there must be clear and unequivocal evidence that this is truly the case. There must at least be [1] substantial borrowings of material; [2] regular use of identical phraseology and vocabulary over wide portions of text; [3] the use of the same material for the same general purpose; [4] firm grounds for holding that the texts in question are not themselves dependent upon sources prior in date to them which they might have drawn upon independently; and [5] good reason to believe that minor similarities between the documents are not, in fact, the result of coincidence or the work of later copyists.

While I find his third criterion unduly subjective (one could argue that some works, such as the Synoptic Gospels, use the same material for different purposes), I accept the other four. My goal is to show that they apply to *PRE* and *TPJ*: 1) There are at least fifty-five parallels; 2) There is regular use of identical phraseology and vocabulary, which can be observed in almost every example; 4) None of the parallels appear in classical rabbinic or Targumic literature, and the few parallels with earlier (non-rabbinic, non-Targumic) literature are insufficient to explain all the traditions; 5) The similarities are so numerous and specific that it would be even more remarkable if they were coincidental. The two works even use the same

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material for the “same general purpose,” since both works have the tendency of attaching extrabiblical traditions to the same biblical verses. The Targum is, to adopt words of Hayward, “simply and directly dependent” on PRE\textsuperscript{11}.

Many of the traditions below have occasioned articles and even entire monographs. In the interest of space, I have kept bibliographical references to a minimum. Instead of refuting every point of disagreement with Hayward, I invite readers to consider the evidence below and decide for themselves.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 246.
1. Tequfah, Mahzor, Ibbur (and Molad)  

**PRE 8** (p. 35)  

**TPJ Gen 1:14** (p. 1)  

אמר אלוקים זرهاب בקריעת ושם
לאפרשו ביני גבר וbyterianו ירחין וימים וּלַעֲשׂוּ
ולחנוקים יчкиו ו𝙨ְפִּיטוֹנֵּים וְיִשְׁפְּלוּ יַהֲעַר הָאֵל
ותקופת מתוחילה וִתּוּבָר וּלְאֵבָר וּלְבּוּשֵׂם וִיקִים הָאֵל
מעבר את השנה

**Comment:** Technical aspects of the lunar calendar are mentioned in conjunction with the fourth day of creation. The *molad* (מולד) in the Targum also appears throughout PRE 7.

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2. Tishri, Nisan, Tevet, Tammuz  

**PRE 8** (p. 36)  

**TPJ Gen 8:22** (p. 9)  

עד כָּל יֵשֵׁנוֹ אֲדוֹנָא בְּתֵכֹףְתֵּנָּה חֲשׂוֹר וְחֲשׂוֹר וְחֲשׂוֹר וְחֲשׂוֹר וּלְאִשָּׁבֶתּוֹ (Gen 8:22)  

**Comment:** God teaches Noah the characteristics of the four months during which seasonal changes occur. Both works have the order Tishri (the seventh month), Nisan (the first month), Tevet (the tenth month), and Tammuz (the fourth month)—that is, the months are not in their chronological order. Cf. *Gen. Rab.* 34:11 and *b. Baba Metzia* 106b, which present a similar tradition in the proper chronological sequence.
3. Clean and Unclean

PRE 9 (p. 41-42)

בlahoma השערים לא כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים
בּחַמְשֵׁי הַשָּׁרִיץ מֵן הָאָרֶץ
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים
בּחַמְשֵׁי הַשָּׁרִיץ מֵן הָאָרֶץ
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים

PRE 11 (p. 52-53)

בּשֶׁשָּׁי הִיא אֵין הַיּוֹם לָכֶם זֶכֶר וּנְנָקְבָּת
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים
בּשֶׁשָּׁי הִיא אֵין הַיּוֹם לָכֶם זֶכֶר וּנְנָקְבָּת
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים
בּשֶׁשָּׁי הִיא אֵין הַיּוֹם לָכֶם זֶכֶר וּנְנָקְבָּת
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים

TPJ Gen 1:21 (p. 2)

ובּרָא אֲלֵיהֶם אַפּוֹ דְּרָכָה בְּרָכָה יִתְנָשָׁו
יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֵין הַיּוֹם לָכֶם זֶכֶר וּנְנָקְבָּת
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים

TPJ Gen 1:24-25 (p. 2)

ואָמַר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֵין הַיּוֹם לָכֶם זֶכֶר וּנְנָקְבָּת
cל כל העופות זכר וננקבות טמאים וטהורים

Comment: Both works repeatedly note that God made both clean and unclean variants of each animal species. This idea is never mentioned in the classical literature or the other Targumim.
4. Adam Created from the Four Corners of the World

PRE 11 (p. 54)

Comment: God takes Adam the dust of Adam from the four corners (TPJ: “winds”) of the world and creates him on the Temple Mount. Adam is also composed of different colors, corresponding (in PRE) to different body parts.

5. Eve and Sammael

PRE 13 (p. 69-70)

Comment: Eve sees the angel of death before she even eats the forbidden fruit. The Targum identifies the angel with Sammael. The tradition in PRE is based on Avot de-Rabbi Nathan B (chapter 1), where the angel appears after she eats the fruit. Sammael, who is never mentioned in Avot, appears in PRE 13. The Targumist has identified the two evil angels, which is only implicit in PRE.
6. The Garments of Fingernail

PRE 14 (p. 71)

The garments of fingernail... before the fall. Cf. Gen. Rab. 20:12, where they receive garments after the fall. See supra Section 8.3.

7. The Punishment of the Serpent

PRE 14 (p. 72)

The serpent receives three punishments (in the same order): 1) his feet are cut off; 2) he must shed his skin once every seven years; and 3) he will have venom in his mouth. Cf. Gen. Rab. 20:5, which only mentions the feet.
8. The Curse of the Earth

PRE 14 (p. 73)  

The curse of the Earth

TPJ Gen 3:17 (p. 4)

Comment: God curses the earth because it failed to report Adam’s sin.

9. Eliezer b. Nimrod

PRE 16 (Friedlander, p. 111)  

The steward of Abraham’s household was his servant Eliezer, and whence was his servant? When (Abraham) went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, all the magnates of the kingdom came to give him gives; and Nimrod took his first-born (son) Eliezer and gave him to (Abraham) as a perpetual slave.

TPJ Gen 14:14 (p. 15)

Comment: Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, is actually the son of Nimrod. In the same chapter (p. 112), PRE identifies Eliezer with Og of Bashan, creating a contradiction, since Og lived before the Flood (see number 21, “Og the Stowaway,” below). The printed edition says that Eliezer/Og was Nimrod’s slave, correcting the contradiction. The reading of the Epstein Manuscript is original: A scribe is more likely to introduce a correction rather than an error.
10. Adam Lives on the Temple Mount

PRE 20 (p. 105)

ויגרש את האדם (Gen 3:24) ויחב ויצא מגן עדן והיווimestone him away from Eden and he settled in the mountains of Mount Moriah, which was near Eden. Then God took Adam from the place where he was taken (Gen 2:15) as a place where they brought to the place where God had taken Adam from the place where they brought the earth for Adam to work it. See supra Sections 8.1 and 8.4.

11. The Garments of Glory

PRE 20 (p. 106)

Gen 3:21 God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of light, as Gen. Rab. 20:12 mentions "garments of light" but no serpent. See also Section 8.3.
12. Cain, Son of the Devil

PRE 21 (JTS Enelow 866)

TPJ Gen 4:1, cf. TPJ Gen 5:3 (p. 5)

Comment: Eve conceived Cain through Sammael (PRE: “the rider of the serpent,” cf. PRE 13), the chief of the wicked angels. Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer harmonizes this originally gnostic idea with rabbinic tradition about Eve and the serpent (e.g., b. Shabbat 145b-146a). This idea does not appear in any Jewish work prior to PRE. See supra Section 2.1.

13. Cain’s Twin Sister

PRE 21 (p. 211)  

TPJ Gen 4:2 (p. 5)

Cain is born with a twin sister. Although the twin sisters of Cain and Abel appear in the classical literature (e.g., Gen. Rab. 22:7), Cain’s twin is of special significance. She is one of the sources of conflict between the brothers in PRE but not Genesis Rabbah (where it is the sister of Abel). In Syriac and Arabic literature, the argument over the right to marry the twin sister of Cain is the motive for Abel’s murder. The Targum, however, does not implicate her in the death of Abel. For this motif, see supra Sections 2.1, 7.2.2, and 8.6.
14. The First Passover

PRE 21 (p. 113)

TPJ Gen 4:3-4 (p. 5)

Comment: The sacrifice of Cain and Abel was in fact a Passover offering. Cain brought an unacceptable offering of flax which could not be mixed with Abel’s offering of wool (Lev 19:19; Deut 22:1). The Targum mentions the “fourteenth of Nisan” (בארסר בניסן) only here and in Gen 27:1. Both passages are parallel to PRE (see number 32 below). See also supra Sections 2.1, 5.3, and 8.5.

15. The Death of Abel: A Stone in the Forehead

PRE 21 (p. 115)

TPJ Gen 4:8 (end, p. 5)

Comment: Cain kills Abel by implanting a stone in his forehead. The wording is very similar. Cf. Gen. Rab. 22:8, which mentions the stone (among other options) as a murder weapon. The blow to the forehead is unique to PRE. See also supra Section 2.1.
16. The Sign of Cain

PRE 21 (p. 116)

The sign of Cain is a letter or letters written on Cain’s body. Cf. Gen. Rab. 22:12, which offers several interpretations, none of which involve a letter. See supra Section 2.1.

17. The Fall of the Angels and the Generation of the Flood

PRE 22 (p. 119)

Comment: Human women exposed themselves and painted their eyes during the generation of the Flood, when fallen angels roamed the earth. It is odd that the Targum identifies the Nephilim of Genesis 6:4 with the fallen angels rather than the giants. The phrase “they fell from heaven” (ָּנְפִּלוּ מִמֶּנֶּיהָ) is an exact calque on the Hebrew phrase יָנָפָלוּ מִמֶּנֶּיהָ in PRE.
18. The Giants Try to Stop the Flood

PRE 22 (p. 121)

Comment: The giants attempt to stop the Flood by plugging up the depths from which the water would flow—with their feet (PRE) or their children (TPJ). Cf. b. Sanhedrin 108b, which does not mention giants.

19. The Design of Noah’s Ark

PRE 23 (p. 121)

Comment: Noah’s Ark contains a number of rooms on all sides of the Ark and storage facilities in the center. In PRE, the Ark is symmetrical. The Targum describes a very lopsided Ark, probably as a result of homeoteleuton.
20. Angels Gather the Animals

PRE 23 (p. 123)  TPJ Gen 6:20 (p. 8)

Angels Gather the Animals

Comment: Angels (TPJ: one angel) bring the animals to the Ark.

21. Og the Stowaway

PRE 23 (p. 123-124)  TPJ Gen 14:13, cf. TPJ Deut 3:11 (p. 15)

Comment: Noah feeds the giant Og, who survives the Flood by stowing away on Noah’s Ark. Cf. b. Niddah 61a and b. Zebah 113b, which mention the bare fact of Og’s survival.
22. The Sacrifice of Noah

PRE 23 (p. 127)

 ישב נח ודרש בלבו ואמר הקבר'ה הצליל ממני המבוקל והציאני מון המטמר היהواصل ויבא בא להקריב לפגיני קרבון ועולות מזר היה נח ויבא בא והקריב שלוחות ושוור שלוחות ושב נח ויבא בא והקריב שלוחות ושוור שלוחות ושב נח ויבא בא והקריב שלוחות ושוור שלוחות ושב נח ויבא בא והקריב שלוחות ושוור שלוחות ושב נח ויבא בא והקריב (Gen 8:20)

TPJ Gen 8:20 (p. 9)

 הבנה נח ודרש קרבון יי יהו מדרשא דבנה אדום בעידן דאיטרד מן גינתא דעדן באקריב עיולי הקרבון אקריבי קרבון יי קרבות ובר נוהג ויהו דבעידה יי家の מבית קרבנהון בכריה ענייה דכין ומן כל עוף אסיק ארבע עלוון על הגנה מדרשא על העלוון קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון יי קרבון (Gen 8:20)

Comment: Noah restores the altar of Cain and Abel in order to offer four burnt offerings.
Comment: God consults his host of seventy angels before descending with them to Babel. They cast lots for the seventy nations, each with its own language and its own script. When the builders no longer understand each other, they turn to violence. Cf. the Hebrew Testament of Naphtali (of uncertain date), the only other source I know that links the casting of lots with the Tower of Babel. The Hebrew Testament does not feature the verbal overlaps found here, and it does not connect the division of the seventy nations with the casting of lots.

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Comment: Nimrod dies at the hands of Esau. *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer* specifies that Esau murders Nimrod to obtain the precious garments of Adam and Eve. Cf. *Gen. Rab.* 63:12 and *Targum Neofiti* to *Gen* 48:22, which mention that both Nimrod and Esau possessed the garments at different times. They do not mention the death of Nimrod.
Comment: The men of Sodom decree that anyone who gives bread to a poor man will be burnt. Peletith, the daughter of Lot, violates the decree and dies. Cf. *Gen. Rab.* 49:6 and *b. Sanhedrin* 109b, which do not mention the decree or name the maiden.
26. Abraham and Circumcision

PRE 29

TPJ Gen 17:3 (p. 17)

Comment: Both works record that Abraham fell on his face before God on (Gen 17:3.17) because he was not yet circumcised. There is no other source with the peculiar detail that Abraham’s uncircumcision prevented him from standing before God.
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27. Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness

PRE 30 (p. 168-169)

The Hebrew אברם בברךzbek us נזרית וותן תלולה

And he provided water for the camel, and Abraham went on his way. The donkey also watered the woman's hand with water from the well, and she gave him water to drink. Then she also drew water for the donkey and put it on the泉; and she washed her feet.

Genesis 21:14

Comment: Abraham formally divorces Hagar and ties a garment around her waist to show that she is a bondwoman. She practices idolatry once she reaches the entrance of the desert. As a consequence of her idolatry, the water supply fails. In PRE, the water miraculously vanishes, while in the Targum, Ishmael becomes feverish, leading him to drink all the water.

TPJ Gen 21:14-15 (p. 22)

The Hebrew אברם בברךzbek us נזרית וותן תלולה

And he provided water for the camel, and Abraham went on his way. The donkey also watered the woman's hand with water from the well, and she gave him water to drink. Then she also drew water for the donkey and put it on the 泉; and she washed her feet.

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28. Aisha and Fatima

PRE 30 (p. 170-171)

Shelah Ishmael and Ishmael married Aisha, then divorced her and married Fatima. See supra Section 1.3.

29. Abraham’s Altar

PRE 31 (p. 179)

Comment: Abraham restores the altar of Noah, just as Noah restored the altar of Cain and Abel. The reference to Adam in PRE is not found in all manuscripts and is probably an addition (note the absence of Adam in the discussion of Noah’s altar).
30. The Death of Sarah

PRE 32 (p. 185)

Sarah dies when the devil (PRE: Sammael; TPJ: Satan) informs Sarah that Abraham has killed Isaac. In classical sources (Lev. Rab. 20:2; PRK 26:3), Sarah dies from shock when Isaac himself tells her about the binding.

31. Isaac Returns to Mount Moriah

PRE 32 (p. 186)

Comment: Isaac returns to Mount Moriah to pray on behalf of Rebekah, who has been barren for twenty years. The Targum says twenty-two, but verses 20 and 26 of the same chapter state that Isaac was forty when he married Rebekah but sixty when the twins were born.
Comment: Isaac became blind as a result of seeing God’s glory during the Aqedah. He and Rebekah instruct their sons in the celebration of Passover, during which the celestial beings praise God and the treasuries of dew open up. The Targum mentions the “fourteenth of Nisan” (בארס בני) only here and in Genesis 4:3. Both passages are parallel to PRE (see number 14 above). See supra Section 5.3 for a discussion of the passage in PRE.
33. Jacob’s Fear of God and Rebekah’s Oath

PRE 32 (p. 189)

تعليב היה בקי בתורה פחד לבו על קללת אביו אמרה לו אמו בני ברכות עליך ועל זרעך ואם כי שני קללות עליךEndPoint(וַיֹּאמֶר֙ אֵלָ֔יָה אֲבֹתָן֙ בִּנְיָמִ֔ין מִלָּוַ֖תּרַה אֲבֹתָן֙ בִּנְיָמִ֔ין) וַנַּא אֲמַרְתָּ אָבִיךָ שֶׁנִּאֶמֶרָה לֹא אֵימוֹ אַלּוּ בָּאָבִיךָ תִּבְרֹכֶנָּה וָאַלּוּ בָּנָכָּה (Gen 27:13)

TPJ Gen 27:11 (p. 31)

על דיה טעבל חוחל חוזאת חוחל דילמה לשטפתה אמה ואמר היא שעשה עתים שוער אמה נבר שועי

TPJ Gen 27:13 (p. 31)

אמרתה לאכתי אמי ברוכי יברכנך י לעולם על הבן ואמיה לוהמיד יברכים יברך על על כל משלי 

ברב כל מי ואילו סב לי אמה

Comment: Since Jacob is a righteous man, he fears the incurring the curse of his father after deceiving him. Rebekah swears that any blessings Jacob obtains from his father will be on him and his children, while any curses will be on Rebekah.

34. The Passover Goat

PRE 32 (p. 189)

הלך והביא שני גדיי עזים כי שני גדיי עזים היה מאכלו של יצחק והלא די לו באחד מה דוי

TPJ Gen 27:9 (p. 31)

איש רגב ליגן ע{י}י ואדם מהם

Comment: Of the two goats which Jacob brings to Isaac, one is for the Passover offering, and the other is for Isaac’s personal consumption.
35. Isaac Sowed Charity

PRE 33 (p. 191)

חשה ויויה יצחק באליעזר (Gen 26:12) אילים אור двי צמח ורגע דגן טשלום עלא לחק את כל מעשר ממוןTHRודכִּית ליצחק זרע דגן והם ברוכו לשבעה של חמידו "ה מתו שיעור של ממון ובברך כל נאמרuntaויהי (Gen 26:12)

Comment: Isaac does not sow seed but charity.

TPJ Gen 26:12 (p. 30)

ותר צמח ליצחקオープンהikutא באה והיא אשר בכשתה ההיא על זה מהא ברכתו ובויהי

36. The Sheep Plague

PRE 36 (p. 221)

רב הוה אמר כל זרעי לפליפ ה"ה קודה שבא יתעב רחב המי על הקוה ה"ה שלמה בינמעה ושלי ונושיות מעט מחרובה מה שصيانة רחל רורה שמנהר יהל תאזו עם השיגה יאש אלאביה (Gen 29:9)

Comment: God sends a plague to destroy Laban’s sheep. This is a ploy to arrange the first meeting between Jacob and Rachel.

TPJ Gen 29:9 (p. 34)

עד דהוא מכלל עמהון ורתל את ub שועアンולאבהא ארומ רעייתה היה בההוא זימנא ארום הוה מחתא דייכי הענא דלבן ולא אשתיירו מינהון אלהין קלילין ותריק רעייה דיליה ויה דאשתהא ושוי קדם רחל ברותיה
37. An Angel Rebukes Laban

PRE 36 (p. 226)  
TPJ Gen 31:24 (p. 38)

An Angel Rebukes Laban

An angel threatens Laban in a dream with a drawn sword. Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer specifies that the angel was Michael.

38. The Teraphim

PRE 36 (p. 226-227)  
TPJ Gen 31:19 (p. 38)

Both works give near-identical accounts of Laban’s idols. It is not found in classical sources, but it appears in many medieval sources dependent on PRE (Tanhuma Wa-Yeze 12; Yalqut Shimoni Genesis §130 and Zechariah §578; Sefer ha-Yashar Wa-Yeze, 58b).
39. Jacob Curses Rachel

**PRE 36** (p. 227)

"ויעקב לא ידע בכל אלוהי אмор כל מי שגנב את מזלותיו ממה רחל ימות בל א" (Gen 35:18)

Comment: Jacob swears that anyone found with Laban’s idols will die. Without realizing it, he condemns his wife Rachel to death.

40. Isaac’s Covenant with the Philistines

**PRE 36** (p. 230-231)

"ואם יעשה יצחקlek דกะ אמה אשת ממהメール אָבָר הָרֶכֶב עַל דָּרָכָא וְנָתַן לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה בְּרִית בְּשׁוּקָה וּנְתַתָּן אֶלָיו וּנְתַתָּן אֶל הָאַרְגָּד בְּשָׁלוֹם."

Comment: When Isaac makes a covenant with the Philistines, he gives them a part of his donkey’s bridle as a sign of the covenant. There is a parallel in the piyyut of R. Pinhas ha-Cohen (mid-8th c.)¹.

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¹ E. Treitl, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer: Text, Redaction and a Sample Synopsis*, Jerusalem, 2012 [Hebrew], p. 261: "They stole his wells, and they inherited his bridle" (בארותיו גזלו ומקונן אמה נחלו).


41. The Tithe of Levi

PRE 37 (p. 234-235)

After crossing the Jabbok, Jacob is forced to tithe one of his sons. He sets aside the four firstborn sons, and counts from Simeon to Benjamin before starting over and counting to Levi. Levi is then consecrated priest. Both works have two important details in common against the parallel version found in Jubilees 32: 1) The tithe takes place at the crossing of the Jabbok, not Bethel; 2) Jacob sets aside the four firstborn sons and counts forward, instead of counting backward from Benjamin. Cf. Gen. Rab. 70:7 and PRK 10:6, which allude to setting aside the four sons. The tradition is discussed in Section 5.8.


42. The Story of Aseneth

PRE 38 (p. 238-240)

The Story of Aseneth

Torah Library (p. 238-240)

The Story of Aseneth

TPJ Gen 41:45 (p. 52)

The Story of Aseneth

TPJ Gen 41:50 (p. 52)

The Story of Aseneth

TPJ Gen 46:20 (p. 56)

The Story of Aseneth

TPJ Gen 48:9 (p. 61)

The Story of Aseneth

Comment: Aseneth is not an Egyptian woman but the daughter of Dinah, whom she bore after Shechem raped her. The Egyptian Potiphera was childless, so his wife raised Aseneth as their own daughter. Cf. Gen Rab 89:2, where Aseneth is the natural daughter of Potiphar, the former master of Joseph.
43. Gabriel Meets Joseph

PRE 38 (p. 244)  
TPJ Gen 37:15 (p. 46)

The man Joseph meets on the way to meet his brothers is in fact the angel Gabriel. Cf. Gen. Rab. 75:4 and 84:14, where Joseph meets several angels.

44. Reuben’s Plan to Save Joseph

PRE 38 (p. 244)  
TPJ Gen 37:29 (p. 46)

Comment: Reuben waits in the mountains until his brothers leave so that he can return and rescue Joseph.
Comment: The sons of Jacob use the money from Joseph’s sale to buy sandals. A similar statement appears in the Christian Testament of Zebulun 3:2, although this Testament (unlike those of Levi, Judah, and Naphtali) has no known Hebrew or Aramaic counterpart. The tradition is repeated in Midrash Tanhuma Wa-Yeshev 2, a section that cites PRE verbatim. The piyyut Elleh Ezkerah (and the “midrash” based on it) refers obliquely to this tradition.  

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1 A. Jellinek, Bet ha-Midrasch: Sammlung kleiner Midraschim und vermischter Abhandlungen aus der ältern jüdischen Literatur, 6 vol., Leipzig, 1853-1878 [Hebrew], vol. 2, p. 64-72.
Comment: During Jacob’s burial, Esau attempts to claim the Cave of Machpelah as his own property. Due to a misunderstanding, Hushim, the son of Dan, cuts off Esau’s head. It rolls into the cave and is welcome by Isaac, his father. This story appears in Genesis Rabbah 97 (New Version) and b. Sotah 13a, but these versions do not mention Isaac. See supra Section 5.9 for further discussion of this story.
47. Satan in the Golden Calf

PRE 45 (p. 305)

And the Lord said: Sammael came into Israel and was drinking in the midst of the people (Isa 1:3) and would have made the people forget their God. 44. Satan in the Golden Calf

TPJ Exod 32:24, cf. TPJ Exod 32:19 (p. 107)

Comment: The devil (PRE: Sammael; TPJ: Satan) animates the Golden Calf. In PRE, Sammael makes the calf low. In Exodus 32:19, the Targum implies, but does not state, that Satan made the calf dance and leap.

48. The Trial by Water

PRE 45 (p. 307)

And the Lord said: It is given to Aaron and to his sons to drink from the water containing the image of the calf. In this case, Aaron is the one who made the image of the calf, and the water is what the Levites used to drink. (Exod 32:26)

TPJ Exod 32:20 (p. 107)

Comment: The Israelites who worshiped the Golden Calf receive a mark on their face when they drink from the water containing the idol’s dust. The mark indicates whom the Levites should kill. Cf. b. Avodah Zarah 44a, which compares the drinking of water to an ordeal (like the sotah ritual) but says nothing of a sign (or the consequences).
Comment: God sends five angels of destruction to punish the Israelites for the sin of the Golden Calf. Moses calls upon the three Patriarchs, who turn back three angels. Moses then buries one (PRE) or both (Targum) of the remaining angels using the name of God. The tradition appears in many late sources (Qohelet Rabbah, 4:1.3; Midrash Tehillim 7:6; Tanhuma Buber Ki-Tissa 13; Exodus Rabbah 44:8). Of these sources, only PRE and TPJ mention that Moses buried one or more angels in the earth\(^1\).

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Comment: When Moses requests to see God, God sends his ministering angels rather than revealing his own glory, which is fatal to mortals.
51. Phinehas is Elijah

PRE 47 (p. 320)

רב אלעזר אומר והשכ החכים שמם של פנחס כשמו של אליהו וยอม לחוב מתושבי גלעד שעשש ישראל השמעה באוריวล ענסא inkl. רבי יהודה אתו המה והשליח (Mal 2:5)

ולו שהיה הוא והיה עצים הובה ננו ולא גコンテンツו בים עדותא OnCollision על גדול ש.Disabledו אתו צהרית אתו הנחת בין זכאי

TPJ Exod 6:18, cf. Exod. 40:10 (p. 72)

ובני דקהת עומר יוצר ובבי אלעזר והشهاد שיעני תייר דקהת הסדיא מהוה להיה טנית ישיא דנימא די פנחס היה אלהא כהנה ברה

ענני למשתתלה אניגלא נשאי בшение בפשקי טפייה

Comment: Both works identify Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, with the prophet Elijah, against rabbinic tradition, which states that Elijah is from Benjamin (Gen. Rab. 71:9). The identification does not appear in classical sources or the other Targumim, but Origen knows it (Comm. John VI.83-84), and it is implicit in the Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (48:1-2), a Jewish work preserved only in Latin which is quoted for the first time in the ninth century. The reference in Origen confirms the antiquity of the tradition, and LAB confirms its presence in Jewish circles, yet PRE and TPJ are the only major works to have preserved the tradition in Jewish transmission.

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2 I strongly suspect (though I have yet to confirm) that this idea circulated via piyyut or another “synagogal” source. E. Treitl, Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, op. cit., p. 257 and 262-263 cites other parallels from PRE 47 in Piyiyut.
Comment: When Bityah, Pharaoh’s daughter, is plagued with a skin disease, she decides to bathe in cool water. Touching the infant Moses heals her from this affliction.
Comment: An Egyptian man (PRE: men) kills the husband of an Israelite woman and rapes her, producing the blasphemous son of Leviticus 24:10-11. Cf. Lev. Rab. 32:4, where the blasphemous son is the offspring of an adulterous union, and the husband survives.
Comment: A Hebrew slave gives birth to her child while fabricating bricks for the Egyptians. The child becomes mixed in with the mortar. An angel (PRE: Michael; TPJ: Gabriel) retrieves the brick and places it underneath God’s throne of glory. The brick serves as memorial of the cruelty of the Egyptians. Cf. 3 Baruch 3:5, where the context is the Tower of Babel, and the child survives.
55. Korah’s Wealth

PRE 50 (p. 344)  
TPJ Num 16:19 (p. 178)

Comment: Korah was extraordinarily wealth, having obtained his wealth from Joseph. The wealth of Joseph appears in b. Pesahim 119b without reference to Korah. The theme appears in Esther Rabbah 7:4, but this midrash is a composite work, and Arnon Atzmon has argued that this section is dependent on PRE.  

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Bibliography

1. Abbreviations

1 QapGen: The Genesis Apocryphon

ALD: The Aramaic Levi Document

b.: The Babylonian Talmud (Bavli)

BNF: Bibliothèque Nationale de France

CD: The (Cairo) Damascus Document

COT/Cav.: The Cave of Treasures/ La Caverne des trésors

Comm.: Commentary on...

Conflict: The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan

CSCO: Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium

Jub.: The Book of Jubilees

LAB: Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)

Life: The Life of Adam and Eve

m.: Mishnah

NHC: Nag Hammadi Codex


PG: Patrologia Graeca

PL: Patrologia Latina

PRE: Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer

PRK: Pesiqta [Pesikta] de-Rav Kahana

Rab.: Rabbah (Midrash Rabbah)

t.: Tosefta

T. Reuben, Adam, etc: The Testament of...

TPJ: Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

y.: The Palestinian Talmud (Yerushalmi)
2. Electronic Resources


Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer Text Editing Project: http://pre-project.usc.edu/

The Quranic Arabic Corpus: http://corpus.quran.com/

3. Manuscripts Consulted

BNF Arab 76 (Book of the Rolls)
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BNF Arab 79 (Book of the Rolls)
BNF Arab 4729 (Chronicle of George al-Makin)
BNF Arab 4894 (Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan)
BNF Abbadie 125 (Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan)
BNF Grec 1712 (Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon)
Borgia Arab 135 (Garshuni Cave of Treasure)
British Museum Add. 25875 (Cave of Treasures)
HUCA Ms 75 (Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer)
HUCA Ms 2043 (Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer)
JTS Enelow 866 (Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer)
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Résumé


Mots Clés

Pseudepigraphues, Bible réécrite, Jubilés, Caverne des trésors, Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliézer, Targoum Pseudo-Jonathan

Abstract

Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer (PRE) is a watershed in the history of rabbinic literature. This ninth-century work, an account of “biblical history” from creation until the time of Esther, is the first extended, continuous narrative of any sort in rabbinic literature. It is also, in all probability, the first major rabbinic work to derive from the hand of a single author. The most remarkable aspect of PRE, however, is its introduction into rabbinic tradition of several legends about biblical figures which are not found in the classical rabbinic corpus. Modern scholarship considers the non-rabbinic legends in PRE an example of the survival of Second Temple literature within Jewish tradition. The present study, however, explains the non-rabbinic material found in PRE as the result of the author's adoption (and adaptation) of elements from the surrounding Christian and Muslim culture rather than through the direct transmission of Second Temple works among Jews. This hypothesis will be tested through the examination of two works close to PRE in form and content, the Book of Jubilees (Hebrew, second century BCE) and the Cave of Treasures (Syriac, sixth century CE). All three are examples of “Sacred History,” that is, the history of ancient Israel as recounted independently of the biblical text. It is not a study of biblical exegesis. Rather, it is an inquiry into comparative mythology, the evolution of tradition, and the construction of communal identities through the transformation of a shared history, the history of the ancient prophets and patriarchs.

Keywords

Pseudepigrapha, Rewritten Bible, Jubilees, Cave of Treasures, Pirqé de-Rabbi Eliezer, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan