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ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

The Visit of the Rural Sage – Text, Context and Intertext in a Rabbinic Narrative

Reuven Kiperwasser

This paper analyzes two stories from *Koheleth Rabbah*, which are found in the paragraph based on Ecclesiastes 3:2 but are actually a late version of the ancient narrative tradition, which probably stems from the popular storytelling tradition originated in a suburb of Sepphoris (Zippory). In this hypothetic storytelling tradition stories about the local hero, R. Shimon ben Halafta, were grouped together around this figure and the redactor of Kohelet Rabbah took the stories in which the theme of death was prominent, and connected them to the interpreted verse 'time to die'. Our aim in the comparative analysis of the stories is to reconstruct the culture in which they were told, and we conclude that a collision between different powers lies behind them: the academic Sepphorian center and the rural periphery. Analysis of the content of the stories and their deeper patterns exposes the political sociology that produced them. They are meant to demonstrate the superiority of rural sages over the urban sages of Sepphoris and illustrate the conflict between the rural sages, delegates of wide popular circles, and the academic elite. The rural sage visiting the city exposes its moral sickness but rescues its population from troubles. Comparison of this Midrashic text to rabbinic parallels and Syriac Patristic literature leads to investigation of a commonplace, a topos in the literature of late antiquity. The study of rabbinic *mirabilia* narrative, which is preserved in the late and secondary versions of the Palestinian Midrash, brings to light not only an ancient narrative tradition but also the ideological processes and changes that took place in Talmudic culture in its formative period, which include reverberations of historical changes and social conflicts

A Tale of One Stone and What Lay Beneath It – The Literary Trajectory of a Legend from *The Tales of the Baal Shem Tov* (*Shivhei ha-Besht*) until the Writings of S. Y. Agnon

Nicham Ross

This article traces the literary history of a Hassidic tale which deals with R. Adam Baal Shem. Alongside a thematic and inter-textual analysis, special attention is paid to the ideological use to which this tale was put in its original version in *Shivhei ha-Besht*, as well as in later sources – as these were developed in the courts of the Tzaddikim, in the satiric diatribes of the Maskilim, and mainly in Neo-Hassidic adaptations – when the very same legend is enlisted in order to convey new messages.

The second part of the article is devoted to examining Agnon's version of the tale of R. Adam (*Al Even Ahat*) in particular, reconstructing the relationship it bears to the earlier version in *Shivhei ha-Besht*, as well as to two midrashic sources, to the satiric rendition of Yosef Perl, and mainly to the agenda of subsequent neo-Hassidic works. Here too the discussion focuses on the hidden ideological significance invested in the plot, which emerges as an allegorical (and autobiographical) account of Agnon's own views regarding the precise nature of attachment to ancient Jewish tradition to be sought by the modern Jew.

Society, Economy, Religion, and Magic – Jews and Muslims in the Tribal Sphere

Bat-Zion Eraqi Klorman

This article examines Muslim–Jewish relations in the tribal society of Yemen. These relations are viewed as the result of the Jews' legal status and their economic, social and religious/mystical roles in the tribal society. Most of the Jews lived in the tribal-rural areas, alongside the tribesmen, in hundreds of small settlements, while some lived in San'a' and in a number of other towns. The paper focuses on the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, before most of the Jews emigrated from Yemen. It discusses the Jews' legal status as *dhimmis* (protected people), their protection by tribal customs, and their integration into the tribal economy. The core of the discussion elaborates on two previously unstudied issues: 1. Muslim attitude toward Jewish religion

and customs – two Jewish religious principles were best known to the Muslims of Yemen: the dietary laws and observation of the Sabbath. The article argues that the Yemeni tribesmen respected these Jewish values, expected the Jews to observe them, even used their superior position to monitor the Jews' religious conduct; 2. The role of the Jews as providing magical services – the discussion maintains that Jews and Muslims shared common mystical beliefs, and that the Jews were perceived as professing mystical-magical knowledge and capable of using it to do either good or bad. This notion intensified the Jews' position in the society as the ultimate 'other'. Although the Jews were integrated into tribal society, they nevertheless remained outsiders.

'Ja Ja Ja' and 'The European' – Gender in Nicknaming Among the Jews of Tetuan

Nina Pinto-Abecasis

In the early twentieth century, the city of Tetuan was the capital of the Spanish protectorate in Morocco, and the local Jewish community was the main community in northern Morocco. The use of nicknames among the people of Jewish Tetuan is an extensive phenomenon that persists to this day, long after they and their descendants dispersed all over the world, and it constitutes a full-fledged folklore genre whose study reveals the explicit and implicit norms of that society.

The nicknames given to women in Tetuan were scarce, and they were different in nature from those given to men: they were based on looks and body features alone (whereas men's nicknames could also refer to character, utterances or specific anecdotes), and they were mostly less humorous. An analysis of the social functions of nicknaming suggests that the reasons for these differences lie in the social hegemony of men in that patriarchal society, which relegated women to a marginal role in the communal life.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the rise of feminism and the new conditions the Tetuanis encountered after moving away from their place of origin brought about a turning point in the nicknaming of women: their nicknames became more frequent, and many of them belonged to categories that were previously closed to women. This transformation demonstrates the women's striving for equality and the rise in their status, and it is also a consequence of the new norms expected from them. We

interpret it as an indication that women were now taking part in shaping the collective identity of the society they lived in.

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'May he be with her in Hell' – A Structural Analysis of Stories from Romania in the Israel Folktale Archives (IFA)

Miri Yousov-Shalom

The study of the popular culture of the Jews of Romania is uncharted territory in Israeli research. The corpus under discussion is the group of Romanian Jewish folktales, recorded and stored in the Israel Folktale Archives (IFA) in Haifa in the years 1955–2000. The folktales of the Jews of Romania in the IFA commonly refer to universal life experience or to life in Eastern Europe in particular, with rare references to immigration and absorption in Israel. The article offers a Structuralist analysis of stories reflecting three major polarities: rich/poor, Jew/non-Jew and man/woman.

The article presents the group identity of Romanian immigrants to Israel as it emerged from the social labels transmitted through the folktales as recorded in the corpus preserved in the IFA. Future research is needed to collate additional stories from elderly members of the Romanian Jewish community that have not yet been recorded.

An analysis of the discussions between the recorders and the storytellers yield the picture of an ethnic culture that the IFA oral storytelling project has succeeded in preserving, and about which the general Israeli public is unaware. The goal of the current project is to pass on the corpus as part of the country's multicultural heritage.

'Little Red Riding Hood' – The *Haredi* Version in a National-Religious Virtual Forum

Rachel Ben-Cnaan and Ravit Raufman

The paper deals with an Internet version of Tale Type AT 333, named 'Little Red Riding Hood', as it appeared in a National-Religious internet forum in Israel. This version and the context in which it appears, as well as the hypertext, serve social, political and psychological goals, relevant to

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the National-Religious community in Israel. The forum exists as a virtual community on the Internet and expresses the radical political values of this minority group.

Our interpretation of this version is both textual and contextual and emphasizes the subversive messages. A special discussion is given to the analogy between the components of the text and the components of the discourse of the forum in which the text appears.

In this version, Little Red Riding Hood is a righteous girl who lives in Jerusalem. Her father is the head of a yeshiva, and her mother identifies with the role of the rabbi's wife. The wolf is a hypocritical beast, disguised in clothes of an ultra orthodox Jew. The ridiculous characteristics of the wolf, along with other details throughout this version, indicate that the story is a parody referring to an ultra orthodox community in Israel and its relations to other groups, which are in conflict with each other.

Science, Folklore and Rationality in Dream Discourse during Late-Antiquity

Haim Weiss

This article explores the complex and tense relationship between the authority granted to oral and written sources in discourse about dreams in Antiquity and late Antiquity.

Three different yet complementary approaches are adopted to demonstrate the complexity of this relationship. The first is that taken by modern scholarship, positioning dreams on an axis ranging from rational to irrational or from science to folklore. The second is the approach taken by the thinkers of Antiquity, in particular Aristotle, Cicero, and Artemidorus. The third and final approach, which emerges from the previous one, investigates the rational boundaries of dreams as they are reflected in rabbinic and Hellenistic literature.