

**REFLECTED IN HEAVEN: BIBLICAL AND ROMAN EVIDENCE FOR A MOTIF,
SHARED IN ANTIQUITY, ABOUT MATERIAL FEATURES OF THE METROPOLIS OF
THE CHOSEN PEOPLE BEING REFLECTED IN A CONSTELLATION IN HEAVEN.
PART ONE:
CASSIOPEIA IN *ISAIAH* 49:16; THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM; THE μένουσα
πόλις OF *HEBREWS*; AND ANDROMEDA, ONOSKELIS, PERSINNA, AND THE
RABBINIC SAGES**

EPHRAIM NISSAN
LONDON, ENGLAND
ephraim.nissan@hotmail.co.uk

ARDUINO MAIURI
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA I
arduino.maiuri@uniroma1.it

FELICE VINCI
ROME, ITALY
felicevinci@libero.it

ABSTRACT

Hypotheses from the scholarly literature concerning separate textual items — namely, the early medieval rabbinic (and in 1982, Wiesenberg's) interpretation of Jerusalem's walls being engraved as though on the palms of the hands of God in the sense that Jerusalem is always remembered by Him (*Isaiah* 49:16) in relation to the constellation of Cassiopeia (cf. *al-Kaff* 'the hand palm' in Arabic); and Vinci and Maiuri's proposal that the ascription of only seven hills to Rome within the Servian Wall, and the very plan of those walls, were intended for them to correspond to both the number of stars in the Pleiades, and the layout of respectively those hills and stars, with the Palatine hill corresponding to the star Maia (whose name was tabooed, under the death penalty, in the context of reference to the foundation of Rome) — are brought together here and in Part Two. We propose that there was in antiquity a motif by which, a people would consider its metropolis (its orography in the case of Rome, the city walls in Jerusalem's) as being reflected in heaven in a constellation. This was comforting, as the eternal city would endure as long as the firmament (a biblical expression indeed). Cf. the motif of the heavenly Jerusalem corresponding to the earthly Jerusalem, and besides, the motif of a city having seven hills (e.g., Constantinople and Jerusalem) is staggeringly widespread, mostly (probably exclusively) because of Rome's Seven Hills. The lunar mirror hypothesis is a different manner in which reflection of features of the Earth were believed to be reflected in heaven: hence (see Part Two), a mapmaker drew the southern tip of Africa with a bifurcated contour because of a feature of moon spots. In Part One, we also discuss Cassiopeia in relation to Andromeda, herself a character sometimes related to the Queen of Sheba (herself related to the demoness Onoskelis). Andromeda in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, in a genetic aetiology, apparently influenced a rabbinic tale.

KEY WORDS: CONSTELLATIONS; CASSIOPEIA; PLEIADES; SPOTS ON THE MOON; ETERNAL CITY; JERUSALEM; ISAIAH; HEAVENLY JERUSALEM; ROME; ANDROMEDA; QUEEN OF SHEBA; DEMONOLOGY; ONOSKELIS; THEORY OF MATERNAL IMAGINATION; HELIODORUS' *AETHIOPICA*; QUEEN PERSINNA; CHARIKLEA; ASENATH; DINAH.

REFLEJADO EN EL CIELO: EVIDENCIA BÍBLICA Y ROMANA DE UN MOTIVO COMPARTIDO EN LA ANTIGÜEDAD, SOBRE LOS RASGOS MATERIALES DE LA METRÓPOLIS DEL PUEBLO ELEGIDO REFLEJADA EN UNA CONSTELACIÓN CELESTE.

PRIMERA PARTE:

CASSIOPEIA EN ISAIAH 49:16; LA JERUSALÉN CELESTE; LA μένουσα πόλις DEL CIELO; Y ANDROMEDA, ONOSKELIS, PERSINNA, Y LOS SABIOS RABINOS.

RESUMEN

Hipótesis de la literatura culta referidas a temas textuales concretos — en particular la interpretación rabínica en el medievo temprano (y en 1982, de Wiesenberg) de los muros de Jerusalén como si estuvieran grabados en las palmas de las manos de Dios, en el sentido de que Jerusalén siempre está en Su pensamiento (*Isaías* 49:16) en relación con la constelación de Casiopea (cf. *al-Kaff* ‘la palma de la mano’ en árabe); y la propuesta de Vinci y Maiuri de que la adscripción de solamente siete colinas en Roma dentro del muro servio y el verdadero plan de estos muros fueron entendidos por ellos como respondiendo al número de estrellas de las Pléyades, así como la disposición respectivamente de estas colinas y las estrellas, con la colina del Palatino coincidiendo con la estrella Maya (cuyo nombre se convirtió en un tabú, bajo pena de muerte, en el contexto de referencia a la fundación de Roma) — se analizan en conjunto aquí y en una Segunda Parte. Observamos que a propósito de esto en la Antigüedad hubo algún motivo por el que un pueblo debió considerar que su metrópolis (su orografía en el caso de Roma y los muros de la ciudad en el de Jerusalén) estaría reflejada en los cielos en una constelación. Esta idea fue reconfortante, en cuanto que la ciudad eterna duraría tanto como el firmamento (de hecho una expresión bíblica). Cf. el motivo de la Jerusalén celeste que corresponde a la Jerusalén terrenal; y al lado, el motivo de una ciudad con siete colinas (p.ej., Constantinopla y Jerusalén) desarrollado de modo sorprendente, sobre todo (tal vez exclusivamente) por causa de las siete colinas de Roma. La hipótesis del espejo lunar es una cuestión diferente, en que se creían reflejados en el cielo elementos de la Tierra: aquí (véase la Parte Segunda) un cartógrafo dibujó la punta sur de África con un contorno bifurcado debido a una particularidad de las manchas lunares. En esta Primera Parte discutimos también el motivo de Casiopea en relación con Andrómeda, ella misma un personaje a veces relacionado con la Reina de Saba (que por su parte tiene que ver con la diablesa Onoskelis). Andrómeda en las *Etiópicas* de Heliodoro, en una etiología genética, influyó al parecer en un cuento rabínico.

PALABRAS CLAVE: CONSTELACIONES; *CASSIOPEA*; *PLÉYADES*; MANCHAS DE LA LUNA; CIUDAD ETERNA; JERUSALÉN; ISAÍAS; JERUSALÉN CELESTE; ROMA; *ANDRÓMEDA*; REINA DE SABA; DEMONOLOGÍA; *ONOSKELIS*; TEORÍA DE LA IMAGINACIÓN MATERNA; *ETIÓPICAS* DE HELIODORO; REINA PERSINNA; CARICLEA; ASENATH; DINAH.

1. *Isaiah's Jerusalem and the Cassiopeia Constellation*

1.1. Medieval Astronomy-Related Jewish Understanding of Isaiah 49:16, and E.J. Wiesenberg's Insights

In an article about which Nissan has already stated in the past¹ that he considers it to be a gem, because of how it provides insights into biblical and rabbinic astronomy (rigorously checking how the stars visible to the naked eyes have changed in the

¹ EPHRAIM NISSAN, “The Importance of Being Hairy: A Few Remarks on the Queen of Sheba, Esau, and the Andromeda Myth”, *La Ricerca Folklorica*, 70 (2015 [2016]) 273–283.

sky throughout history), a British scholar, E.J. [Ernest] Wiesenber², was concerned with the constellation *Cassiopeia*. Wiesenber cogently showed that in the eleventh century, and possibly already in the tenth, some Jewish biblical exegetes already entertained the view (compatible with Arabic celestial nomenclature) that a particular verse of God's direct speech, metaphorically ascribing to Him human-like anatomical features in order to convey the point that he would never forget Jerusalem even when the city lays destroyed, and this in a passage of consolation in the Book of *Isaiah*, contained a reference to the shape of a constellation in the vault of the sky. It may be that such a reception would already be possible in antiquity, and perhaps this is actually what the original authorial intention was meant to convey.

The following is quoted from Wiesenber's paper³:

The 13 stars in *Cassiopeia* visible to the naked eye, specified in Greek and Arabic by Ptolemy and Kazwini, respectively, and briefly stated in Hebrew by Ibn Zerah⁴, are distributed in the sky in a manner that suggested to the fancy

² E.J. WIESENBERG, "The Lady on her Throne and her Ursine Attendants", in: SHELDON R. BRUNSWICK (ed.), *Studies in Judaica, Karaitica and Islamica: Presented to Leon Nemoy on his Eightieth Birthday* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1982), pp. 87–113 (in the English part of the volume).

³ WIESENBERG, pp. 88–89.

⁴ This was a medieval Jewish author. WIESENBERG, on p. 88, remarks that: "The constellation *Cassiopeia* is the 10th in Ptolemy's Catalogue of 1022 stars, in its Arabic version by Zakaria Ibn Maḥmud Kazwini and in its brief *résumé* in the rabbinic code of laws *sui generis*, namely, *Ṣedah la-Darekh* by R. Menahem b[en] Aaron Ibn Zerah (d. 1385)". The title *Ṣedah la-Darekh* means "provisions for the road". It was part of a genre that flourished among medieval Spanish Jews: "During the late thirteenth and throughout the fourteenth century the regions of Aragon-Catalonia and Castile witnessed an unprecedented growth in the composition of halakhic literature, particularly relating to everyday religious observance". This quotation is from p. 306 in JUDAH D. GALINSKY, "On Popular Halakhic Literature and the Jewish Reading Audience in Fourteenth-Century Spain", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 98(3) (2008) 305–327 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/25470263>). Cf. on pp. 492–493 in Judah D. GALINSKY and JAMES T. ROBINSON, "Rabbi Jeruham b. Meshullam, Michael Scot, and the Development of Jewish Law in Fourteenth-Century Spain" [where *b.* = *ben*, 'son of'], *The Harvard Theological Review*, 100(4), No. 4 (Oct., 2007) 489–504 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4495131>): "In Spain during the fourteenth century, in both Castile and Aragon-Catalonia, there was an extraordinary proliferation of halakhic [i.e., Jewish law] works. To name just a few, besides those by Jacob b. Asher and Jeruham [b. Meshullam]: *Orhot Hayim* by R. Aharon ha-Kohen, *Mitsvot Zemaniyot* by Israel Israeli, *Shulhan ha-Panim* by R. Isaac Aboab, *Tsedah la-Derekh* by Menahem b. Zerah, *Tseror ha-Hayim* and *Tseror ha-Kessef* by Hayim of Tudela, *Ohel Mo'ed* by R. Samuel Gerundi. There was, it seems, an actual renaissance in the composition of legal handbooks, codes, and compilations. In general, as with Jeruham, the authors of these works made original contributions primarily in the area of literary form rather than legal content; that is, though their

of the ancients the outlines of the figure of a woman reclining on her chair. She was said to represent the Ethiopian queen Cassiopeia — or Cassiopeia, with some other variations both in the spelling of her name and in her habitat — who boasted that she (or, according to another version, her daughter Andromeda)⁵ was more beautiful than the nymphs of the sea. As a punishment for this *hubris*, her land was devastated by a sea monster. By way of vicarious atonement, her husband Cepheus had Andromeda chained to a rock and exposed to the monster. She was liberated by the gallant Perseus, who subsequently married her. After their deaths, the whole illustrious group — Cassiopeia, Andromeda, Cepheus and Perseus, as well as the latter's winged horse Pegasus — were translated to the Northern sky; whilst the monster, the constellation *Cetus* (= Κῆτος), was placed in the distant Southern hemisphere. The reclining figure — ἡ τοῦ θρόνου in Greek — suggested to the Arabs the name *dhāt al-kursī* (literally, “she with [or ‘of’]⁶ the throne”). This is rendered by Ibn Zerah in *Ṣedah la-Darekh* as הַיּוֹשֵׁבֶת עַל הַכִּסֵּא (= she that sits on the chair or throne)⁷.

Menahem ben Aaron ibn Zerah was born in Navarre (in Estella-Lizarrá?), the son of a Jewish refugee from France's 1306 expulsion of the Jews

who settled in Estella, where Menahem passed his youth. In the massacre which took place in Estella in 5th and 6 March 1328, Menahem's parents and his four younger brothers were slain. Menahem himself was stricken to the ground, and lay all but dead from his wounds, when he was saved through the compassion of a knight, a friend of his father's. He then studied two years under Joshua ibn Shuaib, after which he went to Alcalá to join Joseph ibn al-'Aish, with whom he studied the Talmud and Tosafot. His chief teacher was Judah ben Asher who went through the whole of the Talmud with him, with the exception of the third and fourth orders. In 1361 Menahem succeeded Joseph ibn al-'Aish as rabbi in Alcalá, and held office for eight years, during which time he also taught the Talmud.

In consequence of the civil war which broke out in 1368, Menahem lost all his property, and he then went to Toledo, where Don Samuel Abravanel took him under his protection, and enabled him to continue his studies during the rest of his life. Menahem died at Toledo July, 1385. [...]

works contain few fresh and original insights on Jewish law, they do present old material in new ways, in a more organized and accessible fashion than had been done previously”.

⁵ Concerning the Ethiopian Andromeda's being a Black woman, see: ELIZABETH MCGRATH, “The Black Andromeda”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 55 (1992) 1–18.

⁶ These particular brackets are Wiesenberg's.

⁷ Cf. in Arabic *dhāt al-kursī*, “the one [seated] in the chair”, a name referring to the constellation Cassiopeia. In Islamic art, she was representing as a woman in Islamic modest attire, on a posh chair.

In honor and for the benefit of]Abravanel, Menahem wrote *Zedah la-Derek* (Ferrara, 1554). This work occupies a peculiar position among codes, and is in a certain sense unique. As the author states in the introduction (ed. Sabbioneta, p. 166), it is intended mainly for rich Jews who associate with princes and who, on account of their high station and their intercourse with the non-Jewish world, are not over-rigorous in regard to Jewish regulations. For such a class of readers a law-codex must not be too voluminous, but must contain the most essential laws, especially those that the higher classes would be inclined to overstep. [...]

Menahem sought to emphasize the ethical side of the Law in his work. He was not satisfied with merely stating the regulations like other religious codifiers: he tried also to give a reason for them. [...]⁸

Wiesenberg's article touches upon the etymology of the name *Cassiopeia*:⁹

[A]ccording to a widespread version of the myth, she [i.e., Cassiopeia] is the queen of the “Phoenician” (evidently pre-Israelite) town of Joppa [i.e., Jaffa]. This version, however, is stated not to have any connection with the stars. [...] Regarding the etymological origin of the name *Cassiopeia*, which does not seem to have been discussed in the sources, it has been suggested by Dr. Marcus Schalimtzek that it may derive from כִּסֵּי [i.e., *kissé*], the Hebrew for “chair” or “throne”; a very plausible derivation in view of the Semitic — possibly even Phoenician (i.e., linguistically quasi-Hebrew) — background of the story.

Schalimtzek's suggestion is interesting and deserves consideration, but how to account for the origin of the entire name *Cassiopeia*? Etymologising is risky business, because the odds are too high of phono-semantic matches randomly occurring,¹⁰

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menahem_ben_Aaron_ibn_Zerah The scanned Ferrara *editio princeps* can be downloaded from <http://hebrewbooks.org/44488> The pdf file is searchable in Hebrew.

⁹ WIESENBERG, p. 89, fn. 6.

¹⁰ See, e.g., EPHRAIM NISSAN, “Asia at Both Ends: An Introduction to Etymology, with a Response to Chapter 9”, being Chapter 10 in G. ZUCKERMANN (ed.), *Burning Issues in Afro-Asiatic Linguistics*, edited by GHIL'AD ZUCKERMANN, Newcastle, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, pp. 202–387, 2012. (The table of contents of Ch. 10 is on pp. 12–13. The presentation of the book's Part II — the posthumous Ch. 9 by Bruria Bergman, and the response to it: Ch. 10 — and the two abstracts are on pp. 5–7. Biosketch on pp. 17–18.) The high odds of phono-semantic matching can be exploited for various creative purposes, including mythopoiesis (as shown in “Asia at Both Ends”, as well as in E. NISSAN, “In the Garden and in the Ark: The *belles lettres*, Aetiological Tales, and Narrative Explanatory Trajectories. The Concept of an Architecture Combining Phono-Semantic Matching, and NLP Story-Generation”, *DSH: Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 32(4) (2017) 859–886), and in neologisation by adapting loanwords, in the context of institutional language planning,

rather than because of some actual historical relation. It is worthwhile to consider how Goodspeed in 1898 reviewed *Semitic Influence in Hellenic Mythology* by Robert Brown. The following excerpts that book review¹¹:

Three causes lie at the basis of the attempts constantly being made to find elements of community between the two great families of language spoken by peoples which have dominated the literature and life of civilized man: [...] As for the latter, one must discriminate, or run the risk of falling into the clutches of the philological “crank” whose grist of derivations, combinations, and analogies is so amazing, bewildering, and captivating that he who came to scoff may be forced to remain to pray for mercy deliverance.

An especially happy hunting ground of this character is the language and literature of Greek mythology, in which Mr. Robert Brown, Jr., has been a diligent and delighted sportsman. The narrative of his adventures, the bags he has potted, the scalps he has taken, the happy way in which he has brought down game which Professor F. Max Müller has missed, and the strong indignation he manifests at the unnecessary mutilations caused by the clumsy shooting of Mr. Andrew Lang, in a field where he has been for some time lawlessly poaching — all this, and more, is set down in this book, in language which suggests the good old days of Salmasius, though tempered by the somewhat higher standard of controversial writing favored by modern scholarship. [...] What lies beneath all this as Mr. Brown’s contribution to scholarship?

something that has occurred in the modernisation of various languages, such as Hebrew, Republican Turkish, Japanese, Chinese, and Icelandic, as shown by G. ZUCKERMANN, *Camouflaged Borrowing: “Folk-Etymological Nativization” in the Service of Puristic Language Engineering* (DPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 2000), and Id., *Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew* (Palgrave Studies in Language History and Language Change, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). Also see Y. HACOHEM-KERNER, D.N. COHEN, E. NISSAN, and G. ZUCKERMANN, “Graphemic Puns, and Software Making Them Up. The Case of Hebrew, vs. Chinese and Japanese”, in O. FELECAN (ed.), *Onomastics in the Contemporary Public Space*, edited by Oliviu Felecan, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2013, pp. 548–556. Puns at the graphemic level are also the subject of E. NISSAN, “Anthroponomastic Puns in the Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Script, with Considerations on Onomastic Punning in Different Script Systems” (also on Japanese), in *Unconventional Anthroponyms: Formation Patterns and Discursive Function*, edited by OLIVIU FELECAN and DAIANA FELECAN, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, pp. 247–267.

¹¹ Its full text is in G.S. GOODSPEED, “Aryo-Semitic Philology” (reviewing ROBERT BROWN, JR., *Semitic Influence in Hellenic Mythology, with special reference to the recent mythological works of the Rt. Hon. Professor F. Max Müller and Mr. Andrew Lang*, London: Williams & Norgate, 1898; New York: Imported by Charles Scribner’s Sons), *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 15(1) (October 1898) 60–62, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/528053>

Really it is somewhat difficult to estimate. He has certainly succeeded in showing the inability of both the comparative mythologists and anthropologists to solve all the problems of Hellenic mythology. He has, also, called attention anew to the significance of the oriental influence on Hellenic life. His book gathers up the results of the work of those scholars who advocate the thesis that Semitic religion strongly affected the early religion of Hellas. He has offered some plausible explanations from Semitic sources of difficult names in Hellenic mythology. He has made some interesting and important suggestions on the relations of primitive constellation figures, the signs of the Zodiac, and similar complex and abstruse matters. But the brevity of his discussions on all these subjects prevents the presentation of enough evidence upon any of them to enable the reader to form a competent and satisfactory judgment on the characters of his results.

One of the etymologies (not necessarily original ones) from Brown's book was the explanation of the name of Herakles by deriving it from "Phoenician" "Harekhal", glossed as "the Traveller". But this is just a fare-fatched Hebrew neologisation for the sake of the etymology, from the term (*rakhil* in "to go rakhil", a cognate of *régel* 'leg') that denotes 'gossiping around'. As for *Dionysios*, it was etymologised from "Sem[itic]" "Dagan-nisi" for "judge of men", but this time the hypothesis is even more spurious, from Hebrew *dayyan*- 'judge of' and some conjectural cognate of Arabic *nās* 'humans, people' and Hebrew *enosh* 'humankind'.

Goospeed's review of Brown's book also listed these two consecutive entries (brackets in the original):

Perseus, *Phæn.* Barsav [cf. *Heb.* Esau], "the hairy."

Andromeda, *Phæn.* Adam-math, "the rosy."

Both are entirely immeritorious, to put it blandly. (*Barsav* is a neologism, mixing Hebrew and Aramaic, and is a compound that literally means 'son of the canute'. As for *Adam-math*, it is an even syntactically outrageous compound that combines the personal name *Adam* as though it was derived from *adom* 'red', with *math*, a conjectural singular form of a literary Hebrew *singularia tantum* noun for 'men'.) Some other entries are even fraudulent, because by no stretch of the imagination do the etyma invoked exist in the lexicon of Semitic languages, nor can be formed by Semitic-language morphology. Goospeed, who was affiliated with the University of Chicago, stated after the list: "The list is appetizing". Not so. It is quite unappetizing for ones who possess the requisite competence.

As for the diffusion of folklore motifs, and their adaptations to suit oikotypes (cultural environments) and belief systems, this is in fact commonplace. It is well-known that the myth of Perseus was transformed, in Christian hagiography, into the legend about St. George saving a maiden from a dragon¹². As for seeking in civilizations of the Fertile Crescent the origin of Greek mythological narratives, consider that this has not spared even Aesop¹³.

¹² But, then, knights saving maidens from dragons are a commonplace in medieval lore, and in particular in present-day vulgate perceptions of what tales of knightly deeds of old are about.

¹³ See J. ZÜNDEL, “Esopé était-il juif ou égyptien? A l’occasion de la découverte de nouvelles fables syriaques”, *Revue Archéologique*, Nouvelle Série, 3 (1861) 354–369. In a controversy (funny for present-day folklorists’ sensibilities) pitting him against Julius Landsberger of Darmstadt, who (in *Misle d’Esupos. Die Fabeln des Sophos, syrisches Original des griechischen Fabeln des Syntipas zum Erstenmal herausgegeben von D. Jul. Landsberger, Rabbiner in Darmstadt*, Posen/Poznan: Muzbach, 1859) had claimed a Jewish origin for Aesop’s fables, J. Zündel claimed an Egyptian origin instead. In particular Zündel (1861, p. 358) mentions that the role of the stork is interchangeable with a sacred ibis in fables: “Quand M[onsieur] Landsberger, pour revendiquer en faveur des Juifs l’honneur d’avoir reconnus les premiers la royauté du lion, rappelé que le trône de Salomon était décoré de lions, je lui répons que le trône de Sésostri et des rois éthiopiens étaient soutenus par le même animal [...]. Quand il prouve que la fable du loup et de la cigogne fut racontée à Alexandrie par un rabbin qui parlait d’un ibis et d’un loup, je répons que le rabbin peut avoir appris la fable aussi bien des Égyptiens qu’aux Égyptiens; lorsque, embarrassé de ce que le renard ne soit pas dans la Bible le type de la ruse, il remarque qu’il y est au moins, comme dans Babrius (Fables, II, 1. — Comparez Cantiques [sic] des cantiques, II, 15), l’ennemi des jardins et des vignes, je répons qu’en égyptien *être renard* signifie être rusé [...]” [“When Mr Landsberger, in order to claim for the Jews the honour of having been the first to recognise the royalty of the lion, mentions that Solomon’s throne was decorated with lions, I retort that the thrones of Sesostris and of the Ethiopian kings were supported by the same animal [...]. When he shows that the fable of the wolf and the stork was told in Alexandria by a rabbi who was talking about an ibis and a wolf, I retort that this rabbi may have learned the fable from the Egyptians, instead of teaching it to the Egyptians. When, embarrassed because the fox is not, in the Bible, the type of cunning, he points out that at any rate, the fox is, like in Babrius (*Fables*, 2:1, cf. *Song of Songs* 2:15), the enemy of gardens and vineyards. I retort that in ancient Egyptian, ‘to be a fox’ means being cunning [...].”]

The storytelling event referred to is one in which Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah (according to *Genesis Rabbah* 64:29, a homiletic text from the Land of Israel) tells a fable about a lion (not a wolf) with a bone stuck in its throat. A bird called *qoré mišri* comes and picks out that bone (it evidently has a long bill). That bird should expect no reward, other than his sheer survival after having put its head inside the mouth of a lion. The lesson to be derived is that Roman rule could not be resisted, and let people be content with surviving it. ABRAHAM OFIR SHEMESH (in “The Identity of *qore* and *qoré mišri* in Biblical and Rabbinic Literature” [in Hebrew], *Leshonenu La’am: a Popular Journal for the Hebrew Language* [Jerusalem: The Secretariat of the Academy of the Hebrew Language], 51/52(2) (2000–2001) 62–66) discussed the biblical and rabbinic senses of the Hebrew bird-names *qoré* (literally, ‘caller’) and *qoré mišri* (literally, ‘Egyptian *qoré*’). The latter bird is the subject of p. 65 in that article by Shemesh. Shemesh listed possible identifications, one of these being David Talshir’s

Wiesenberg proposes that the constellation of Cassiopeia has been conceived in biblical imagery in quite a different way than in Greek mythology, and that it was considered to be in the shape of the letter *shin* as in the most ancient form of the alphabet, the Palaeo-Hebrew script (before the “square” or “Assyrian” letters of Imperial Aramaic from the Persian Empire were adopted during or right after the Babylonian Captivity, which changed the shape but not the identity of the letters).

At first glance, it seems that any thought about Cassiopeia is quite far from any aspect of Hebraic or Judaic lore [...]. However, there is evidence — which appears to have so far escaped scholars’¹⁴ attention — that these stars are not outside the range of rabbinic thought, albeit they are associated with ideas that bear no resemblance to the Greek myth of the boastful Ethiopian queen. They may, in fact, be referred to in a biblical text presenting a dialogue between God and Zion (*Isa*[iah] 49:14 ff). Zion is portrayed as a wife, forsaken and forgotten by her husband, bemoaning her lot. The divine reply is (*ibid.* v. 16): “Behold, I have graven thee *upon the palms of my hands*, thy walls are continually before me”.

Next, Wiesenberg discusses ancient and modern commentaries. He then continues¹⁵:

However, a case can be made for the idea that these interpretations allude to the selfsame figure: the walls of Jerusalem — stylised from the real shape of their battlements with merlons and embrasures [...] — were likened in shape to a capital M or W. The latter is nearly identical with the shape of the letter *Shin* in the Palaeo-Hebrew script, the initial of Jerusalem’s ancient name **שְׁלֵם** [*Shalem*].

Arguably, the part of the hypothesis that involves merlons and embrasures needs to be checked with reference to what we know of the archaeology of city walls in the

verbal advice given to Shemesh that the identification of the bird from that fable should be with the sacred ibis (*Threskiornis aetiopica*). That identification is quite likely indeed.

¹⁴ Thus far, the quotation is from WIESENBERG, p. 97; henceforth, *ibid.*, p. 100, as there are two full-page illustrations in the middle. Wiesenberg showed in two celestial maps, the sky as seen from Jerusalem, and the way it could be seen in Isaiah’s times. This kind of historical celestial maps is used in the scholarly literature indeed. For example, the circumpolar constellations visible from the north-northeast part of the Acropolis in Athens in the period 600–300 B.C.E., and Panoramic view of the night sky from the Athenian Acropolis during the Panathenaia (including Cassiopeia), are shown in such maps in EFROSYNI BOUTSIKAS, “Astronomical Evidence for the Timing of the Panathenaia”, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 115(2) (2011) 303–309.

¹⁵ WIESENBERG, p. 101.

Near East in the several generations preceding the Assyrian conquest of the Kingdom of Israel, and then up to Jerusalem being conquered by Nebuchadnezzar II's Neo-Babylonians. Nevertheless, the detail about merlons and embrasures is not a vital component of Wiesenberg's hypothesis. Wiesenberg also remarks about the Hebrew word *kappáyim* ('hand palms') in Isaiah 49:16 as follows¹⁶:

In its literal sense, this resembles the popular notion, often heard in Eastern Europe, that when the palms are half folded the lines inside them combine into the shape of the capital M, which conveys the saddening *M[emento] M[ori]* = "Remember, thou must die."¹⁷

On the other hand, if כפיים [*kappáyim* ('hand palms')] is thought of as synonymous with the sky or with something in the sky, one is at once reminded of the W-like shape of the five principal stars in *Cassiopeia* and especially of their Arabic name *al-Kaff* (= the Hand). An interpretation of כפיים in this or in a similar sense is traceable from at least as early as the age of Rashi (1040–1105) and has even been attributed to R. Sa'adya Ga'on (892–942). In his commentary on Isaiah, Rashi quotes from an anonymous source [...] that על כפיים (*ibid.* 49:16) stands for מעל ענני הכבוד (= that which is above the clouds of glory), like על כפיים in Job 36:32. This probably refers to the sky. It is in fact explicitly stated in Rashi's commentary on Lamentations, likewise quoting an anonymous source [...] that [wording which states "to hand palms"] (*ibid.* 3:41) — parallel to ["in the sky"] in the second half of that verse and therefore quasi-synonymous with it — stands for ["to the clouds to the skies"], adducing in support of this Job 36:32, and also I Kings 18:44, where a little cloud (עב קטנה) is likened to a man's hand (כף איש).

Rav Sa'adiah Gaon, born in 882 C.E. in the hamlet of Dilas in the district of Fayyum, in Upper Egypt¹⁸, was active especially in Mesopotamia. He moved there from Tiberiad (in the Galilee) in 921, then was the head teacher (*allúf*) of the great

¹⁶ WIESENBERG, p. 102. His research was mainly in medieval studies, yet Wiesenberg contributed to *Vetus Testamentum* and was concerned e.g. with the biblical apocrypha ("The Jubilee of Jubilees", *Revue de Qumran*, 3, 1961–1962, pp. 3–40), the Zadokite Fragments, and biblical philology.

¹⁷ WIESENBERG, "The Lady on her Throne and her Ursine Attendants", p. 102, fn. 37: "This phrase 'rang a bell' to several members of the staff of the Department of Classics, University College, London, yet none of them could help me trace any ancient or medieval source in which it occurs".

¹⁸ Jewish presence in Egypt was ancient, so it comes as no surprise to find Jews in a small centre of the Fayyum region. Norman Golb dealt with the topography of the Jews in medieval Egypt: NORMAN GOLB, "The Topography of the Jews of Medieval Egypt", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 24 (1965), pp. 251–271; 33 (1974), pp. 116–149.

המאמר חא הכלל הא

שנים יקראו מולות כאשר כתבתי וכל מול ומול ל' מעלות ואמרו שיש שים צורות
שמשאליות ודרוסיות והנה בין כלם הם מח' צורות ומספר כוכביהם אלף ושנים ו
ועשרים הצורה הראשונה טלה כוכביו יג' מול שור לג' וכיסה על גביו :
תאומים יח' סרטן ט' אריה כו' בתולה כו' מאונים ח' עקרב כב' קשת לא'
גדי נח' רלו סח' גנים לר' הצורות הדרוסיות הם טו' וכוכביה שיו' הראשונה
ארי נהם כוכביו כב' השנייה הכלב הנכוד כוכביו לח' הג' הנהר כוכביו לר' הד'
הארנבת יג' החמישית הכלב הגדול יח' הו' הכלב הקטן שם שני כוכבים השבעה
הספינה שם סה' השמינית החיה שם כה' הט' הבוס שם ז' העשירית העורב שם
ז' האחד עשר נושאת האריה חציה צורת ארם וחציה צורת סוס שם לו' היב' ה
הנמר שם ה' היג' הסחתה שם ז' היר' הנמר שם יג' הטו' הרג הדרומי שם יא' הצור'
השמאליות הן בא' כוכביהם שם' האחת עיש וכניה וכוכביה שבעה השנית
הרוב הגדול וכוכביו יז' השלישית התנין ובה לא' הרביעית כעלת הלהב ובה
יא' : החמישית הכלב הנובח ובה כב' השישית הנמר השמשאלית ובה ח'
השביעית ההולך על ארבעותיו ובה כח' השמינית הנשר הנופל ובה עשרה
התשיעית התרנגולת ובה יז' העשירי היושבת על הכסא ובה יג' היא הנשוא
ראש השטן ובה כו' היב' הרועה אשר בירו הרסן ובה יר' היג' עוצרות החייה
ובה כד' היר' החייה ובה יח' הטו' השטן ובה כ' היו' הנשר המעופף
ובה טז' היו' רג הים ובה עשרה היו' ראש הסוס ובה ה' היט' הסוס בעל
הנפנים ובה כ' הכ' האשה אשר לא היה לה בעל ובה כג' הכא' המישולש ובה
ד' והנה בין כל אלו המח' צורות תמצא מספר הכוכבים אלף ועשרים ושנים גם
המולות חלקום לר' חלקים בדרך ר' יסורות טלה אריה קשת חמים ויבשים כ
בתולדת האש : שור בתולה גדי קרים ויבשים בתולדת הארץ
: תאומים מאונים דלי חמים ולחים בתולדת האויר : סרטן
עקרב והגים קרים ולחים בתולדת המים שבתאי קר ויבש צדק חם ולח כ
מאדים חם ויבש שורף השמש חם ויבש נוגה קר ולח כוכב חמה מתהפך
לתולדת הכוכב שיהיה עמו לבנה קרה ולחה עוד אמרו בעלי הנסיון מ
מו' כוכבי לנת מהם זכרים ומהם נקבות מהם מוכבי יום ומהם מוכבי לילה מהם
טובים ורעים והם שתי המאורות כ' טובים וכ' רעים ואחד מתהפך עם כל תולדת
השמש זכר כרו ביום הלבנה נקבה כחה כלילה צדק זכר וטוב מוכבי יום נוגה
נקבה מוכבי לילה טוב שבתאי זכר רע מוכבי יום מאדים נקבה רעה מוכבי
לילה כוכב חמה מתהפך פעם זכר פעם נקבה פעם רע פעם טוב פעם מוכבי
יום פעם מהלילה כפי הכוכב שיהיה עמו כאשר הארינו בספריהם ודי בזה
דקצור מדבריהם כי לפי האריכות לא מצאו מנוח לכת רגלירם כי לא ידעו ולא
יבעו מעגליהם ולא נאו במסילותיהם ומסלולירם כי נבוה מעל גבוה עומד
ונמתים עליהם :

Fig. 1. The page (the 71st following the frontispiece) from the Ferrara 1554 *editio princeps* of *Ṣedah la-Darekh* (*Provisions for the Road*) by Menahem ben Aaron ibn Zerah, listing several constellations by their Hebrew names, including Cassiopeia. Interestingly, the frontispiece shows an armillary sphere (below, fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The armillary sphere from the frontispiece of the Ferrara 1554 edition of *Sedah la-Darekh*. Psalms 130:5 is inscribed on the ribbon.



Fig. 3. The armillary sphere from Diderot's *Encyclopédie*.

Babylonian Jewish academy of Pumbedita, and in 928 was appointed as head (*ga'ón*) of the academy of Sura, the other great Babylonian rabbinic school, which tenure he held in two stints separated by an interval of seven years, during which he completed his main philosophical work. He died in 942. Sa'adiah was the leading rabbi of his generation. He was a legal scholar, but his lasting legacy was as an apologist and philosopher¹⁹. He also was a linguist and poet, and his other lasting legacy was in that he translated the Hebrew Bible into Judaeo-Arabic. It is the earliest extant Arabic translation of the Hebrew Bible, but Tobi²⁰ has discussed remnants of an earlier Arabic translation of the Pentateuch: the Jewish scholar Abū Kathīr,

Sa'adiah's teacher in Tiberias, apparently engaged in translating Scripture into Arabic.

In Sa'adiah Gaon's *Tafsīr* (Arabic Bible), which is extant in a partial longer version, and a fuller shorter version which is actually a translation, the exegesis is important; its lexicon, too, has been investigated²¹. Let us say something about his likely sources when it comes to geography (as geographical identifications are prominent in his translation), coeval or recent Islamic geographers²²:

¹⁹ E.g., GAD FREUDENTHAL (1996, 1998) discussed how through the conduit of Sa'adiah's writings, Stoic physics came to have an impact on medieval Jewish mysticism. See ID., "Stoic Physics in the Writings of R. Sa'adia Ga'on al-Fayyumi and Its Aftermath in Medieval Jewish Mysticism", *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 6, 1996, pp. 113-136; ID., "L'Héritage de la physique stoïcienne dans la pensée juive médiévale (Saadia Gaon, les Dévôts rhénans, *Sefer ha-Maskil*)", *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* (1998) 453-477.

²⁰ Y. TOBI, "Remnants of an Arabic Translation of the Pentateuch, Earlier Than R. Sa'adiah Gaon's *Tafsīr*" (in Hebrew: *Sride targum 'arvi la-Torah qodem le-Tafsir Rav Sa'adiah Gaon*). *Massorot*, 7 (1993) 87-127.

²¹ Y. RATZABY, *A Dictionary of Judaeo-Arabic in R. Saadya's "Tafsir"* (Hebrew and Arabic in Hebrew script). Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1985.

²² E.g., Ziauddin Alavi dealt with Arab geography in this period. See Z. ALAVI, "Physical Geography

The geographical works produced [by Islamic authors] during the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries may be divided into two broad categories: (1) works dealing with the world as a whole but treating the ‘Abbāsīd Empire (*Mamlakat al-Islām*) in greater detail. [...] Among the representatives of this class of geographers were: Ibn Khurradādhbih, al-Ya‘kūbī, Ibn al-Faḳīh, Ḳudāma and al-Mas‘ūdī. Since ‘Irāḳ was the most important centre of geographical learning at this time and many of the geographers belonged to it, we may for the sake of convenience use the term ‘Irāḳī School for them. Within this School, however, two groups of writers may be discerned: those who present the material following four directions, *viz.*, north, south, east and west, and tend to consider Baghdād as the centre of the world, and those who arrange it according to various *Iklīms* (regions) and for the most part treat Mecca as the centre. (2) To the second category belong the writings of al-Iṣṭakhārī, Ibn Ḥawḳal and al-Muḳaddasī, for whom the term Balkhī School has been used, as they followed Abū Zayd al-Balkhī [...] They confined their accounts to the world of Islam, describing each province as a separate *Iklīm*, and hardly touching upon non-Islamic lands except the frontier regions²³.

As for Rashi, this is Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, or Isaacides (Troyes, Champagne, 1040 – Worms, 1105; in Christian sources: *Rabi Salomon*). He studied at the rabbinic academies Troyes, Mainz, and Worms. In 1070, Rashi returned to Troyes and founded his own renowned school there²⁴. Rashi is the author of the Jewish *glossa*

of the Arabs in the Xth Century A.D.”, in *Indian Geographical Journal* (Madras), 22(2), 1947; Id., “Arab Geography in the 9th and 10th Centuries A.D.”, in *Muslim University Journal* (‘Alīgāf, Uttar Pradesh, India), 1948. Cf. C. SCHOY, “Geography of the Muslims of the Middle Ages”, in *Geographical Review* (American Geographical Society), 14 (1924) 257–269. Now see the chapters in *The History of Cartography, Volume 2, Book 1: Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, edited by J.B. HARLEY and DAVID WOODWARD, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1992, and the bibliography cited there. See the individual chapters at https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/Volume2_Book1.html

²³ Quoted from p. 579 (by Maqbul Ahmad) in S. MAQBUL AHMAD, and F. TAESCHNER, “*Djughrāfiyā*” [“Geography”, an entry in English] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, vol. 2: C–G. Leiden: Brill & London: Luzac, 1965, pp. 575–590. Taeschner signed Sec. VI: “The Ottoman Geographers”, *ibid.*, pp. 587–590.

²⁴ Current scholarly discussions concerned specifically with Rashi include MENAHEM BANITT, *Rashi, Interpreter of the Biblical Letter* (Tel Aviv: Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1985); Id., “Le commentaire biblique de Rashi: l’oeuvre d’un humaniste”, in *IV congrès européen des études juives. Rashi. Séance inaugurale* (Paris, 1990); GILBERT DAHAN, GÉRARD NAHON and ÉLIE NICOLAS (eds.), *Rashi et la culture juive en France du Nord au Moyen Âge* (Collection de la Revue des Études Juives, 16; Paris & Louvain: Peeters, 1997); S. SCHWARZFUCHS, *Rashi de Troyes* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1991); G. SED-RAJNA (ed.), *Rashi, 1040–1990* (Paris: Cerf, 1993);

ordinaria to both the Hebrew Bible, and the Babylonian Talmud.

The anthropomorphism in the concept “the Hand of God” was discussed by Meir Bar-Ilan in an article²⁵ which appeared in a book celebrating 950 years from Rashi’s birth. Nissan has discussed elsewhere²⁶ how Rashi dealt with the reference to pagan theonyms or what according to some medieval rabbinic exegetes was the name of a constellation in the Book of Isaiah. Rashi’s gloss to “those who prepare for the Gad” (*Isaiah* 65:11) is “idolatry made after the name of fortune”, where the Hebrew word he used for the latter is *hammazzáḏ*, which in other contexts may mean ‘the constellation’ instead. It is not excluded that Rashi was thinking of some particular constellation indeed, because his gloss continues by quoting an incantation (from a talmudic text (*Babylonian Talmud*, tractate *Shabbat* 67b)²⁷ in which it had been itself quoted)

V. MALKA, *Rashi* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993); ESRA SHERESHEVSKY, *Rashi, the Man and his World* (New York: Sepher–Hermon Press, 1982); SARAH KAMIN, “Rashi’s Exegetical Canonisation with Respect to the Distinction between Peshat and Derash”, *Immanuel*, 11 (1980) 16–32; B.J. GELLES, *Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi* (Leiden: Brill, 1981). For a discussion of Rashi and his reception beyond Judaism, see: HERMAN HAILPERIN, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh University Press, 1963); ESRA [sic] SHERESHEVSKY, “Rashi’s and Christian Interpretations”, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 56 (1970–1971) 76–86; ERWIN I.J. ROSENTHAL, “Rashi and the English Bible”, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 24(1), Manchester, 1940.

²⁵ MEIR BAR-ILAN, “The Hand of God: A Chapter in Rabbinic Anthropomorphism”, in *Rashi 1040–1990: Hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach, Congrès européen des Études juives*, edited by G. Sed-Rajna, Paris: CERF, 1993, pp. 321–335.

²⁶ In Sections 1.2.2 and 3.4 in E. NISSAN, “Gad as an Ancient Semitic Theonym, and Its Lexical Cognates. With an Exploration of the Semantics of *gad*, and of Its Medieval Exegesis”, *Philology: An International Journal on the Evolution of Languages, Cultures and Texts* [Bern: Peter Lang], 3 (2017 [2018]), pp. 169–342 [sic: 174 pages].

²⁷ The following translation is quoted from the Soncino English translation of the *Babylonian Talmud* (Epstein 1935–1948), *ad loc.* (their brackets, my braces): “He who says, ‘Be lucky, my luck [*gad gedi*] and tire not by day or night’, is guilty of Amorite practices. R. Judah said: Gad is none other but an idolatrous term, for it is said, ye that prepare a table for Gad. If husband and wife exchange their names, they are guilty of Amorite practices. [To say], ‘Be strong, o ye Barrels!’ is [forbidden] as the ways of the Amorite. R. Judah said: Dan [Barrel] {but this is not a usual word for ‘barrel’} is none other but the designation of an idol, for it is said, They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, As thy god Dan liveth. He who says to a raven, ‘Scream’, and to a she-raven, ‘Screech, and return me thy tuft for [my] good’, is guilty of Amorite practices. He who says, ‘Kill this cock, because it crowed in the evening’ {their note: “Later than usual. Others: it crowed like a raven”}, or, ‘this fowl, because it crowed like a cock’, is guilty of Amorite practices. He who says, ‘I will drink and leave over, I will drink and leave over’, is guilty of the ways of the Amorite. He who breaks eggs on a wall in front of fledglings, is guilty of Amorite practices”.

The English text is quoted from the now standard Soncino English translation. ISIDORE EPSTEIN (ed.), *The Babylonian Talmud*, translated into English with Notes, Glossary and Indices. London: The Soncino Press, 1935–1948. 35 volume edition: *Seder Nezikin* (8 vols., 1st edn, 1935, repr. 1952, 1956); *Seder*

constituted of four words, of which the first two are <gd gdy>, but whereas the last word could be taken to be /gaddi/ (“Gad of mine”), it may be that Rashi intended /gdi/ ‘kid’, being also the name of the Capricorn constellation of the Zodiac²⁸. Rashi’s next gloss is for *la-Mʿnī*, and is as follows: “to the *minyān* (number), to the computation (*ḥešbōn*) of the pagan priests, you fill vessels of poured wine”.

In his article “The Lady on her Throne and her Ursine Attendants”, Wiesenberg²⁹ provided further evidence from medieval texts, besides what we have quoted thus far from his paper. Wiesenberg proves (including by means of two celestial maps) that in the Middle Ages the sky in the northern hemisphere looked like it should be for this interpretation to hold.

This study is dedicated to the memory of the scholar Rabbi Dr. Ernest (Ephraim Yehudah)³⁰ Wiesenberg (fig. 3), on the occasion of 110 years from his birth, which was on 11 March 1909 in Habsburgic Kaschau, now Košice in Slovakia³¹. He died on 21 January 2000. “Having pursued traditional *yeshivah* (rabbinical academy) studies under distinguished teachers in various central European locations in the 1920s and 1930s, he was more than worthy of the rabbinical diploma he received in 1937 from Rabbi Joseph Horowitz, of Frankfurt-am-Main”³²; he pursued secular education in

Nashim (8 vols., 1st edn. 1937, repr. 1956); *Seder Moʿed* (8 vols., 1st edn., 1938; repr. 1956); *Seder Tohoroth* (2 vols., 1st edn. 1948, repr. 1960); *Seder Zeraʿim* (2 vols., 1st edn., 1948, repr. 1959); *Seder Kodashim* (6 vols., 1st edn. 1948, repr. 1960); *Index Volume* (1952). 18 volume edition: *Seder Nezikin* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Nashim* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Moʿed* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Tohoroth* (1 vol., 1961); *Seder Zeraʿim* (1 vol., 1961); *Seder Kodashim* (3 vols., 1961); *Index Volume* (1961).

²⁸ Capricorn and Aries are respectively called /mazzal gdi/ and /mazzal ṭale/ traditionally in Hebrew, that is, literally, ‘Constellation of the Kid’ and ‘Constellation of the Lamb’.

²⁹ By the way, Wiesenberg’s expertise in medieval understandings of astronomy is reflected in his contribution to *The Code of Maimonides [Yad-Hachazakah], Book Three: The Book of the Seasons [Sefer zemannim]*, trans. from the Hebrew by SOLOMON GANDZ and HYMAN KLEIN, with an appendix by ERNEST WIESENBERG (Yale Judaica Series, 14), New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1961.

³⁰ As Ephraim Jehudah Wiesenberg he signed “Calendar”, *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 4, pp. 354–358.

³¹ Nissan is grateful, for supplementing personal information about E.J. Wiesenberg, to Prof. Sacha Stern (like him an expert in calendars history), Head of the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies (where Wiesenberg worked in 1949–1976) at University College London, and to Dr. Ben Outhwaite, Head of Asian and African Collections & Genizah Research Unit at Cambridge University Library.

³² Genizah Unit Newsletter no. 22, October 1991, <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/Taylor-Schechter/GF/22/> Concerning the Jewish calendar, see: HYMAN GABAI, “Mathematics of the Hebrew Calendar”, Part 2 of his *Judaism, Mathematics and the Hebrew Calendar* (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 2002); N. BUSHWICK, *Understanding the Jewish Calendar* (New York: Moznaim, 1989); EDWARD M. REINGOLD & NACHUM DERSHOWITZ, “The Hebrew Calendar”, Chapter 7 (pp. 95–115) in their



Fig. 4. Rabbi Dr Ernest (Ephraim Yehudah) Wiesenberg.
Left: examining Genizah fragments.

Vienna, then enrolled at Jews' College³³ in London, and earned a B.A. in Semitics from the University of London, which also granted him in 1942 a Ph.D. for a dissertation on the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum (Aramaic translation) of the Pentateuch.

Calendrical Calculations: The Millennium Edition (25 calendars; Cambridge University Press, 2001. Shorter previous edition: 1997). Reingold and Dershowitz's book also covers the Gregorian, Julian, ecclesiastic, Coptic and Ethiopic, ISO, Islamic, Old Hindu, Mayan, Balinese, Persian, Baha'i, French Revolutionary, Chinese, and Modern Hindu calendars, and comes with algorithms and software. It can be supplemented with: Mark E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East* (Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 1993), on whatever can now be reconstructed of Mesopotamian calendars from the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st millennia BCE. Something more complex than the calendar the way it is now is the history of the development of the Jewish calendar; see Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar, 2nd Century BCE to 10th Century CE*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; Id., "Fictitious Calendars: Early Rabbinic Notions of Time, Astronomy, and Reality", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 87(1/2), 1996, pp. 103–129.

³³ At the time, it was directed by an outstanding historian of early Rabbinic ideas, Adolph Büchler.

He was an expert on calendrical calculations, astronomy, religious law and liturgy, and texts from antiquity to the Middle Ages. Perhaps his most important work to date is his annotated edition and translation of Abraham Maimonides' *Commentary on Genesis and Exodus*³⁴, a 13th-century Judaeo-Arabic source of exegesis by the son of the famous legal codifier and philosopher Moses Maimonides. After retiring as Reader (i.e., an associate professor) in Hebrew, a post he held in 1963–1976 at University College, University of London, Wiesenberg became a member of Cambridge University's Taylor–Schechter Genizah Research Unit at Cambridge University Library³⁵. He worked on both the inventory, and the reconstitution of texts. He made his way from London to Cambridge once or twice a week in order to prepare descriptions of Genizah manuscript fragments. A *genizah* is a repository of papers discarded by a Jewish congregation, but that owing to the respect due to them are disposed of by being kept in a synagogue's loft. An alternative is to bury them respectfully. Manuscripts or fragments cumulated over centuries, relatively better preserved than elsewhere because of the dry climate, was the Cairo Genizah (in a loft at the Ben Ezra Synagogue)³⁶, an extremely important trove of Jewish documents and fragments, dating from the early Middle Ages to the early modern period³⁷.

³⁴ *Perush 'al Bēreshit u-Shēmot*, translated into Hebrew from Abraham Maimonides' Judaeo-Arabic by EPHRAIM YĒHUDAH BEN SHRAGA VIZENBERG (E.J. Wiesenberg), from Oxford MS 166 Hunt., and edited (nominally) by SULAYMAN DAVID SASSOON. Letchworth [Hertfordshire, England]: S.D. SASSOON, 1959.

³⁵ Obituaries: *The Times*, 17 Feb. 2000; and <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/Taylor-Schechter/GF/39/#pietist>

³⁶ See STEFAN REIF, *A Jewish Archive from Old Cairo*, London: Curzon Press (now Routledge), 2000.

³⁷ REBECCA JEFFERSON pointed out (2014, p. 10): “Most of the Cambridge Genizah manuscripts were purchased by Cambridge scholars Solomon Schechter and Charles Taylor, primarily from the Ben Ezra synagogue in Old Cairo (some were purchased from other synagogues, local dealers, or excavated from the nearby Jewish cemetery). The resulting collection, shipped in eight large crates or ‘tea chests’, was donated to Cambridge University Library in 1898. The Library’s report for that year records that the Taylor-Schechter (T-S) Collection amounted to ‘about twenty large boxes of fragments’. Schechter did not know how many manuscripts he had sent back to England; his ‘policy’ in the dark, dusty Genizah was, he reported to the University Librarian, to ‘take as much as I can’. Surveying his collection in Cambridge, however, Schechter’s first estimate was that it comprised 100,000 manuscripts”. R.J.W. JEFFERSON, “The Historical Significance of the Cambridge Genizah Inventory Project”, in NAHUM DERSHOWITZ and EPHRAIM NISSAN (eds.), *Language, Culture, Computation: Essays Dedicated to Yaacov Choueka*. Vol. 2: *Computing for Humanities, Law, and Narrative*. [= *Choueka Festschrift*, Part II] (LNCS, Vol. 8002.) Heidelberg: Springer Verlag, 2014, pp. 9–37. YAACOV CHOUKA (Nissan’s former doctoral supervisor) has directed in Jerusalem the digital database of images of Genizah fragments from libraries worldwide. It is now possible, by image-processing techniques, to match fragments and reconstitute automatically a larger fragment comprising them: L. WOLF, R. LITTMAN, N. MAYER, T. GERMAN, N. DERSHOWITZ, R. SHWEKA, and Y. CHOUKA, “Automatically Identifying Join Candidates in the Cairo Genizah”, *International Journal of Computer Vision*, 94(1), 2011, pp. 118–135.

1.2. Culturally Variable Simile of a Constellation, and Its variable Delimitation: The Case of Cassiopeia as a Sitting Lady (Graeco-Roman, Europe, Islam), a Hand (Arabic), an Initial Letter (*Isaiah*), a Fish Tail or Tail of a Porpoise (Micronesia), and in Prehistoric Denmark

We have seen that Wiesenberg stated, concerning the shape of the constellation Cassiopeia, that it “is nearly identical with the shape of the letter *Shin* in the Palaeo-Hebrew script, the initial of Jerusalem’s ancient name **שָׁלֵם** [*Shalem*]”³⁸. Cassiopeia, because of its W shape, is considered the initial of the name of William Shakespeare in James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses*³⁹.

³⁸ WIESENBERG, “The Lady on her Throne and her Ursine Attendants”, p. 101.

³⁹ “Man’s dilemma is echoed in the stars, and he occasionally reflects the stars’ solutions. Thus *Ulysses* is cast into a framework of the total physical universe even as it is cast into the framework of the mythical universe of the *Odyssey*. This expansiveness into all space and time is everywhere to be found: for instance, in a consideration of the date. It is apparently not sufficient to specify that Ascension occurred on May 12 in the year 1904. We are told that the year is a leap year, here called bissextile, the technical name for the Julian intercalary year. We are given the correct year by Jewish and Islamic reckoning (652–653). Then follows the necessary Easter-dating date, serving to stress that this year is strangely both unique, being so heavily specified, and cyclical, resting on the ever-returning cycles of epact, golden number, dominical letter, solar cycle, and Roman indiction. ¶ Astronomical references are by no means confined to the science chapter ‘Ithaca’. They begin early in the novel, when Stephen desires to cast his shadow farther than just over the rocks: ‘why not endless to the farthest star?’ (49) He knows that behind the brightness of day the stars are shining ‘darkly (49)’ and he thinks explicitly of ‘delta of Cassiopeia (49)’. There is a very good reason why Stephen’s interest should be focused on this inconspicuous third magnitude star. We learn this reason as Stephen discusses his biographical theory about Shakespeare: ‘a star, a day star, a fire-drake rose at his birth. It shone by day in the heavens alone, brighter than Venus in the night, and by night it shone over delta in Cassiopeia, the recumbent constellation which is the signature of his initial among the stars (207)’. (Cassiopeia is a fine W, for William Shakespeare.) In 1572 (not 1564, but close), the great astronomer Tycho Brahe, and all the world, observed what was visually the brightest nova on record. It quickly rose to a magnitude of minus two, and could be seen in daylight. It came to be called Tycho’s Star”. The quotation is from p. 239 in MARK E. LITTMANN and CHARLES A. SCHWEIGHAUSER, “Astronomical Allusions, Their Meaning and Purpose, in *Ulysses*”, *James Joyce Quarterly* (University of Tulsa), 2(4) (1965) 238–246. The page numbers in the quotation are from the 1946 New York print of *Ulysses*.

Concerning William Shakespeare’s initial in Cassiopeia in the same passage from Joyce, also see pp. 284–285 in RONALD BATES, “The Correspondence of Birds to Things of the Intellect”, *James Joyce Quarterly*, 2(4) (1965) 281–290. Cf. p. 413 in JOHN GORDON, “Some Joyce Skies”, *James Joyce Quarterly*, 33(3) (1996) 411–427; and pp. 436, 438 in DAVID CHINITZ, “All the Dishevelled Wandering Stars: Astronomical Symbolism in ‘Ithaca’”, *Twentieth Century Literature*, 37(4) (1991) 432–441. (In the plates of the celestial globe in the 1693 Venice edition of Vincenzo Coronelli’s *Libro dei globi*, “the famous nova in Cassiopeia is drawn, though not labelled”, p. 438 in J.C. EADE, “The Accuracy of Vincenzo Coronelli’s Celestial Globe”, *Isis*, 68(3) (1977) 437–440.)

On p. 241 in Littmann and Schweighauser’s paper, one can read: “Then the apocalyptic sign appears;

Regardless of this specific case of a constellation being perceived to resemble a letter of the Hebrew alphabet (in one of its historical forms), consider the following. A historian of the Jews of England, David Katz, mentions “the anonymous interpreter of the ‘Celestial Hebrew Alphabet’, according to which the stars in the heavens formed Hebrew letters rather than traditional constellations. Indeed, he explained, ‘these Planets, which by reason of their wanderings, cannot be here set down, do daily, by their various Motions, create New, and Different Letters’”⁴⁰.

Whereas the text from which Katz was quoting cannot be dated precisely, Katz nevertheless explains⁴¹ as follows the circumstances of the text he cites⁴²:

The First Table of the Celestial⁴³ Constellations, Expressed by Hebrew Characters (n.p., n.d.). The copy in the Bod[leian] Lib[rary] (Heb. c. 6 [fos. 52–3]⁴⁴) was acquired in 1913, having been found in the copy of Moses Edrehi⁴⁵, *An Historical Account of the Ten Tribes* (London, 1836), which had been owned by Elizabeth Clarke. It seems to be a work of the early 18th century.

‘... winding, coiling, simply swirling, writhing in the skies a mysterious writing till after a myriad metamorphoses of symbol, it blazes, Alpha, a ruby and triangled sign upon the forehead of Taurus (407)’. Aldebaran, alpha-Tauri, would indeed appear at the crack of dawn on June 16 in Dublin. Aldebaran is a first magnitude red giant star in the triangle-shaped group called the Hyades within the forehead of Taurus the Bull. The sign is red because Bloom’s favorite color is red (438, 593, 698). The sign is a triangle because both Bloom and Stephen are associated with another triangle: the delta of Cassiopeia, and because Stephen’s Greek last name, Dedalus, begins with a delta”.

⁴⁰ On p. 236 in DAVID S. KATZ, *The Jews in the History of England, 1485–1850*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, hard cover; 1996, paperback.

⁴¹ KATZ, p. 236, fn. 170. The brackets are Katz’s own.

⁴² In fact, David Katz as a professor at Tel-Aviv University, has taught both English history and the history of books.

⁴³ *Sic*. The adjectival endings *-all* and *-iall* instead of the now standard *-al* and *-ial* occur indeed in English spelling of the early modern period.

⁴⁴ These particular brackets are Katz’s own; the other ones in this quotation are ours.

⁴⁵ The spelling of this family name (or pen-name?) reflects the biblical place-name *’Edrē’i* — which still nowadays names in Hebrew the town in Transjordan whose Arabic name is *Dar’a*. During the Middle Ages, that town had a Jewish community, and some of the Jews who were expelled from Arabia in the early phase of the Islamic conquest found refuge in *Dar’a* indeed. In the present-day Jewish onomasticon, some Moroccan families bear the Arabic name *Der’i*, and whereas some of these have retained this family name upon moving to Israel, nevertheless a Hebraised form *’Edrē’i* is found now in the Israeli onomasticon. The *h* in the spelling *Edrehi* reflects the fact that in Spanish (which used to be the language of Britain’s Sephardic Jewish community) *h* is either mute, or the glottal stop.

It is important to realise that not only is a constellation named and conceived of through some different simile, in different traditional cultures. Its very delimitation may be different, across cultures. We have seen that the Graeco-Roman idea that the Cassiopeia constellation is a sitting lady was not absent from medieval Jewish authors, and that these were also receptive to the Arab world viewing Cassiopeia as *al-Kaff*, the palm of a hand. We have considered Wiesenberg’s interpretation of *Isaiah* 49:16, considering Cassiopeia to be in the shape of the Proto-Hebrew initial letter of *Shalem*, a synonym of *Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem), and possibly also reminiscent of the merlons and embrasures of city walls.

It should not come as a surprise that, for example, in Micronesia the Cassiopeia constellation is not only identified with an animal (the porpoise, or a whale, or the tail of a fish)⁴⁶, but is even configured differently, as being part of a larger constellation⁴⁷.

Consider the following tabulated lexical data, from p. 177 in a chapter by Meredith Osmond in *The Lexicon of Proto Oceanic*⁴⁸:

5.2.12. Dolphin constellation (including Cassiopeia)

PMic **kua* ‘Dolphin constellation including Cassiopeia’ (approximately equivalent to Aries)

Mic: Kiribati	<i>kua</i>	‘constellation incl. Andromeda, Perseus and Cassiopeia’ (<i>kua</i> ‘whale, porpoise’)
Mic: Mortlockese	<i>ku</i>	‘Aries’
Mic: Puluwatese	<i>kūw</i>	‘Cassiopeia, plus some other stars; porpoise’
Mic: Woleaian	<i>xu</i>	‘huge constellation including Cassiopeia and Cetus; porpoise’
Mic: Carolinian	<i>xūw</i>	‘constellation Aries’

⁴⁶ In Oceania, “[t]he Rennellese term for the constellation Scorpio is *tugā-gupe*, literally ‘flock of pigeons’”. The quotation is from p. 176 in MEREDITH OSMOND, “Navigation and the Heavens”, being Chapter 6 in *The Lexicon of Proto Oceanic: The Culture and Environment of Ancestral Oceanic Society*, Vol. 2: *The Physical Environment*, by MALCOLM ROSS, ANDREW PAWLEY and MEREDITH OSMOND. ANU Press, Canberra: Australian National University, 2007, pp. 155–191. Chapter accessible at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt24hfkc.13>

On that same p. 176, OSMOND states: “Antares, in the western constellation of Scorpio, ranks with the Pleiades as the most important of the calendar stars throughout the whole Pacific area (Makemson 1941: 98)”, citing MAUD M. MAKEMSON, *The Morning Star Rises: An Account of Polynesian Astronomy*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1941.

⁴⁷ Cf. how in western Eurasia, the Pleiades have been perceived as being a constellation which is itself part of the Zodiac constellation of Taurus. As Meredith Osmond points out (supra, p. 168), Oceania people have the Bird constellation (Manu) consist of Sirius (Manu’s body), Canopus (east wing), Procyon (north wing) and a few stars in between (including Betelgeuze and Rigel).

⁴⁸ MEREDITH OSMOND, “Navigation and the Heavens”.

Mic: Satawalese *xu* ‘Dolphin constellation, whose tail is marked by Cassiopeia’

PChk **ukulik* ‘Cassiopeia (lit. ‘tail of fish’) (POc **ikuR* ‘tail’, **ikan* ‘fish’)

Mic: Puluwatese *wikinlik* ‘Cassiopeia’ (lit. ‘fish tail’)

Mic: Woleaian *ixirix* ‘Cassiopeia’

Mic: Carolinian *ikkinix* ‘star or stars in constellation of Cassiopeia’

Mic: Satawalese *exulix* ‘Cassiopeia’

cf. also:

Mic: Marshallese *l^wɔk^wanl^wakeke* ‘Cassiopeia (lit. ‘tail of porpoise’. *Lakeke* is a constellation shaped like a porpoise)

Meredith Osmond stated:

For as far back as the four or five thousand years that we can trace them culturally, Austronesian speakers have preferred to live close to the sea. They have typically been sailors and fishermen. For as long as their settlements were confined to southeast Asia and northwest Melanesia, virtually all their sailing would have been between intervisible or near-intervisible islands. However, in the late second millennium BC, Austronesian speakers living somewhere in the region of the Bismarck Archipelago — speakers of the language now known as Proto Oceanic — began to move out eastwards, to the Solomons and beyond. Over the next few hundred years their descendants explored and settled many of the major island groups of the southwestern and central Pacific. [...]

Building on the experience of their Austronesian ancestors in island southeast Asia, and aided by an increasingly sophisticated canoe-building technology [...] these ocean navigators accumulated a body of knowledge that enabled them to sail freely beyond sight of land while retaining their orientation of home. [...]

More complex navigation skills had to be brought to bear once new and distant island groups were settled, a development which typically involved some regular trafficking between the old homeland and the new. These skills lay in recognising the regular patterning of naturally occurring phenomena such as star movements, wind systems, currents and swells as they applied to each new sea route, and in developing strategies that could be used in the committing to memory of these features⁴⁹.

The purpose of Osmond’s study was

to reconstruct the earliest possible Oceanic words from which are descended existing terms and meanings associated with the field of navigation. For the most part they are terms of the physical world, of the night sky and the ocean seascape.

⁴⁹ OSMOND, “Navigation and the Heavens”, p. 155. Mic is Nuclear Micronesian. PMic is Proto-Micronesian. POc is Proto-Oceanic.

Also explored are terms such as the Polynesian *kaveya* (star or other object for which one steers) and the Micronesian *etak* (a ‘moving’ reference point) which refer to concepts incompatible with Western navigation theory. For some of these we may be able to offer a Proto Oceanic (POc) origin. Undoubtedly, as navigation skills developed and were refined in the Pacific, new terms would have been required, or old meanings extended. There is a further complication in that we are not dealing with one homogeneous environment. Take just one example — the night sky. There is no change to the night sky as one travels east or west apart from changes to the times of star rise and star set. But the sky visible from the northern hemisphere is a different sky from that of the southern hemisphere. That part of the globe which we are chiefly concerned with here extends from roughly 15°N (Saipan) to 20°S (Tonga), with the presumed POc homeland in the Bismarck Archipelago lying just a few degrees south of the Equator. Similarly, the patterning of winds, currents and swells varies with latitude and with distance from land mass, ocean depth etc., as well as with the seasons⁵⁰.

Let us turn now to prehistoric Denmark, where Cassiopeia appears in a celestial map. At any rate, this interpretation was proposed in 1920; it is time to celebrate the centennial of that scholarly insight.

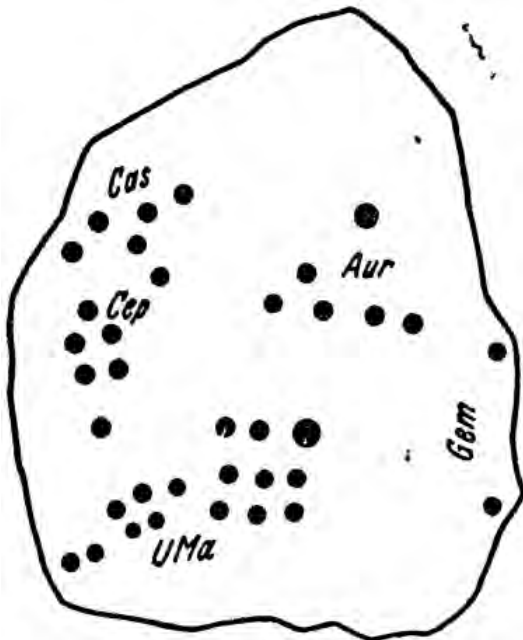


Fig. 5. The northern constellations Cassiopeia, Cepheus, Auriga, Ursa Major, and Gemini (Twins), with abbreviated labels added, as allegedly corresponding to clusters of carved dots, in stone engraving from Venslev, Denmark⁵¹.

⁵⁰ OSMOND, “Navigation and the Heavens”, p. 156.

⁵¹ Fig. 3 on p. 164 in MAUD W. MAKEMSON, “Astronomy in Primitive Religion”, *Journal of Bible and Religion*, 22(3) (1954) 163–171.

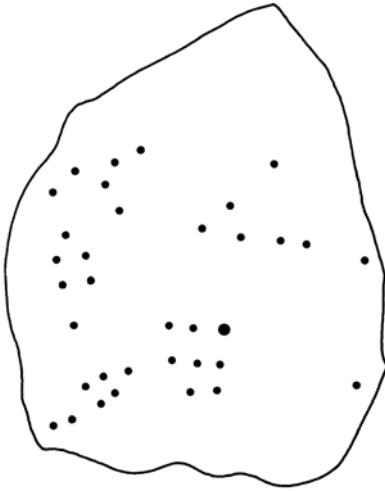


Fig. 6. Cup marks on stones at Venslev, Denmark. They have been interpreted one century ago by Gudmund Schütte as constellations, with Cassiopeia top left⁵².

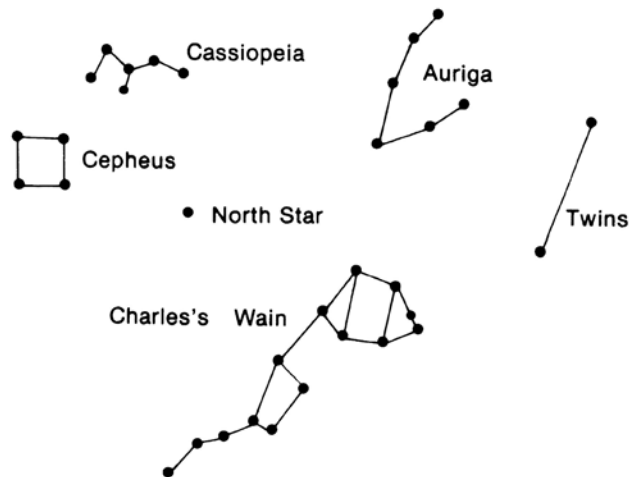


Fig. 7. Gudmund Schütte's interpretation of the marks on stones at Venslev, Denmark. Lines join the dots in this interpretation, and constellations result, with Cassiopeia top left⁵³.

⁵² GUDMUND SCHÜTTE, "Primaeval Astronomy in Scandinavia", *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 36(4), 1920, pp. 244–254, Fig. 13.

⁵³ GUDMUND SCHÜTTE, "Primaeval Astronomy in Scandinavia", Fig. 12. Both figures from Schütte's article also appear on p. 82 in Catherine Delano Smith, "Cartography in the Prehistoric Period in the Old World: Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa", being Chapter 4 in *The History of Cartography*, Vol. 1: *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, edited by J.B. [John Brian] Harley and David Woodward. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1987, pp. 54–101. The chapters can now be accessed at , and downloaded from, https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V1/Volume1.html



Fig. 8. The constellation comprising 13 stars, Cassiopeia, in Arabic *dhāt al-kursī*, “the one [seated] in the chair”, drawn (in a manuscript of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān aṣ-Ṣūfī’s *Kitāb al-kawākib ath-thābita muṣawwar* [The Book of the Fixed Stars, Illustrated]) as a woman seated on a cushioned chair. “The largest of the stars, in the cushion upon which one of Cassiopeia’s elbows rests, is called *al-kaff al-khaḍīb* (written *al-ḥaḍīb*), ‘the hand of the dyed one’, it is the star shown on the astrolabe”⁵⁴.

⁵⁴ Explanation on p.188, col.2, for Fig.17 on p.187 in Joseph M. Upton, “A Manuscript of *The Book of the Fixed Stars* by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān aṣ-Ṣūfī”, *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 4(2), 1933, pp. 179–197, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1522800>

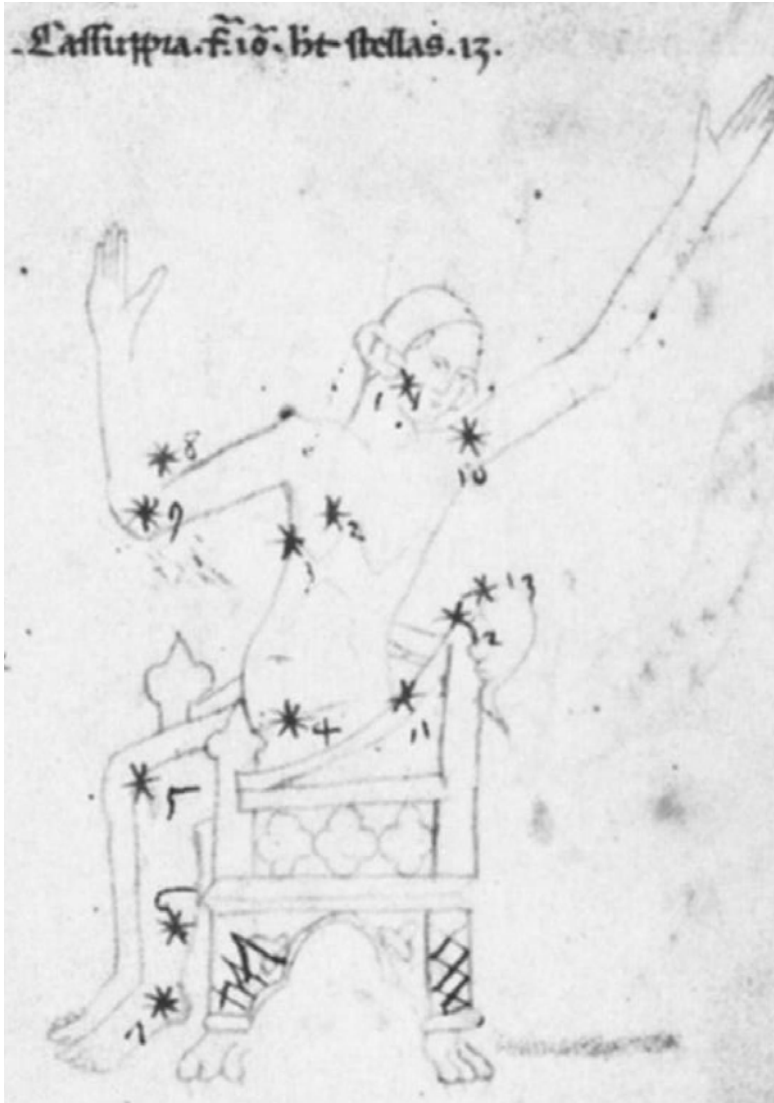


Fig. 9. Cassiopeia, from MS Urb.lat. 1399, fol. 36r, of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. This image displays the typological features of (a) naked Cassiopeia, (b) with raised arms, (c) looking back over her throne, (d) in three-quarter profile. Like Cassiopeia (one not looking back) in the 1458–1464 *Camera di Griselda* fresco (Castle of Roccabianca), “[t]he three-quarter profile categorizes her with the particular sub-set of this genre which is more closely allied to the Arabic illustrations than to the Western, more ‘classicizing’ attempts” (p. 51 in Kristen Lippincott, “The Astrological Vault of the Camera di Griselda from Roccabianca”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 48, 1985, pp. 42–70).



Fig. 11. Cassiopeia, as photographed on 28 July 2003 by Till Credner⁵⁵. “Cassiopeia is a constellation in the northern sky, named after the vain queen Cassiopeia in Greek mythology, who boasted about her unrivaled beauty. Cassiopeia was one of the 48 constellations listed by the 2nd-century Greek astronomer Ptolemy, and it remains one of the 88 modern constellations today. It is easily recognizable due to its distinctive ‘W’ shape, formed by five bright stars. It is opposite Ursa Major”⁵⁶.

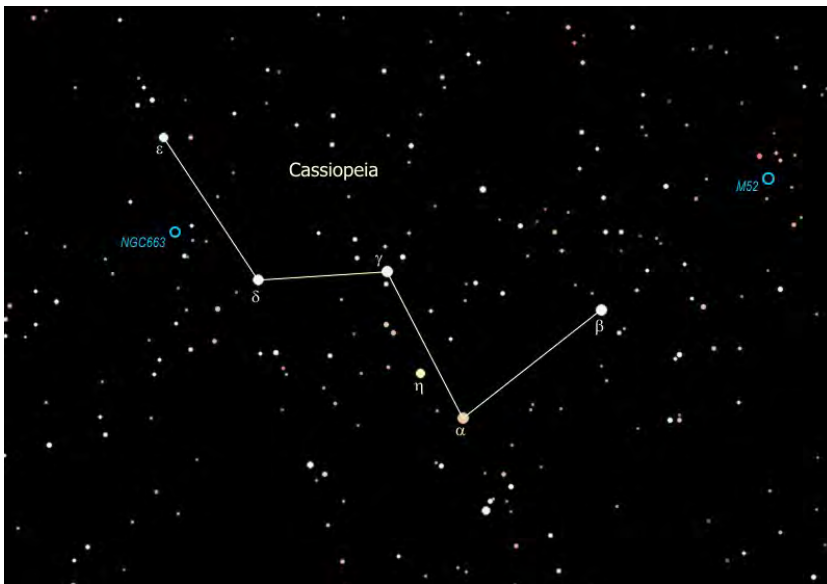


Fig. 12. The Constellation Cassiopeia

⁵⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_\(constellation\)#/media/File:CassiopeiaCC.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_(constellation)#/media/File:CassiopeiaCC.jpg)

⁵⁶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_\(constellation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_(constellation))



Fig. 13. Upside-down Cassiopeia on Mercator globe.

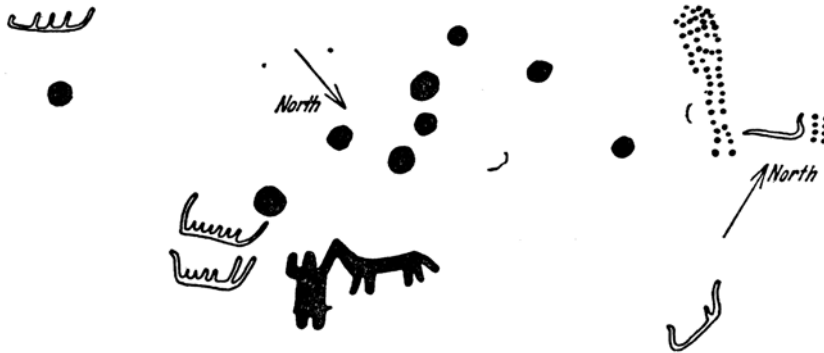


Fig. 14. Cassiopeia in stone engraving from Bohuslän, Sweden⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ From MAUD W. MAKEMSON, "Astronomy in Primitive Religion", *Journal of Bible and Religion*, 22(3) (1954) 163–171.

Concerning the stone-carving from Denmark, Catherine Delano Smith explains:

Enthusiasts like Browne and Baudouin were content to find single constellations in the stone markings. Others, notably Gudmund Schütte, who was well aware of the importance of what he called mythical astronomy in Scandinavia, sought to show that not only individual constellations were portrayed on the rocks but whole portions of the night sky as it would have been seen in the particular locality at a certain time of year. In 1920 Schütte produced a well-illustrated article in which he claimed to have identified at least three star “maps” among the rock carvings of Bohuslän (as illustrated by Baltzer) and in the cup marks of standing stones at Venslev [...] and at Dalby [...] in Denmark. He recounted how it suddenly struck him, as he put it, that one of Baltzer’s illustrations of petro glyphs from Tanum “contained an obvious representation of Charles’s Wain (Ursa Major) and the Milky Way in fairly correct juxtaposition”. Looking more closely he also discerned, to his satisfaction, signs of the zodiac among the other figures on the rock — Cancer, Little (Lesser) Dog, Bull, Foal beside Pegasus, and Capricorn — and he accompanied this interpretation with a figure showing the main constellations visible from Bohuslän on 19 October. One weakness in such interpretations is the inexactitude of the match between the number and positioning of cup marks present on a stone and those needed to make up the constellation example, where there are fifty-six cup marks for fifty-one stars, Schütte admits that the relationship between the two groups of constellations (Charles’s Wain and Lynx; Lion, Virgo, and Bootes) is not as correct as it should be⁵⁸.

At any rate, bear in mind a caveat pointed out by Göran Henriksson (from the Uppsala astronomical observatory) in the introduction of an article entitled “Prehistoric Constellations on Swedish Rock-Carvings”⁵⁹:

There have been several attempts to identify constellations among the patterns of cup marks that can be found in the rich material of Swedish rock-carvings. Both professional Swedish astronomers and amateurs with some knowledge of the constellations have for instance found the typical pattern of the Big Dipper and Cassiopeia but not in correct relation to each other. An isolated group of cup marks arranged like the Big Dipper cannot without any fur-

⁵⁸ CATHERINE DELANO SMITH, “Cartography in the Prehistoric Period in the Old World”, pp. 82–83.

⁵⁹ Published on pp. 155–173 in *Actes de la Vème Conférence Annuelle de la SEAC*, Gdansk, 5–8 septembre 1997, Département d’Anthropologie Historique, Institut d’Archéologie de l’Université de Varsovie, Musée Maritime Central, Warszawa – Gdansk 1999. The paper is accessible on the Web at <http://www.astro.uu.se/archast/SEAC97public.pdf>

ther information be identified as a depiction of this well known constellation. It is necessary to find some independent indication of an astronomical context.

In my work with the Swedish rock-carvings I have first tried to identify the way the total solar eclipses were depicted. I have found some common principles that resulted in the idea that the key to the understanding of the Swedish rock-carvings is a series of six calendar ships along the ecliptic, the path of the sun among the stars.

Those rock-carvings are dated to the Swedish Bronze Age (1800–1000 B.C.E.).

As for the Graeco-Roman and later European idea linking a myth to the constellation:

The constellation is named after Cassiopeia, the queen of Aethiopia. Cassiopeia was the wife of King Cepheus of Aethiopia and mother of Princess Andromeda. Cepheus and Cassiopeia were placed next to each other among the stars, along with Andromeda. She was placed in the sky as a punishment after enraging Poseidon with the boast that her daughter Andromeda was more beautiful than the Nereids or, alternatively, that she herself was more beautiful than the sea nymphs. She was forced to wheel around the North Celestial Pole on her throne, spending half of her time clinging to it so she does not fall off, and Poseidon decreed that Andromeda should be bound to a rock as prey for the monster Cetus. Andromeda was then rescued by the hero Perseus⁶⁰, whom she later married⁶¹.

⁶⁰ The ancient iconography of Andromeda's rescue by Perseus is the subject of an article by KYLE M. PHILLIPS, JR., "Perseus and Andromeda", *American Journal of Archaeology*, 72(1), 1968, pp. 1–23.

⁶¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_\(constellation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_(constellation)) However: "In the 1600s, various Biblical figures were depicted in the stars of Cassiopeia. These included Bathsheba, Solomon's mother; Deborah, an Old Testament prophet; and Mary Magdalene, a disciple of Jesus" (*ibid.*). Likewise, "Julius Schiller replaced the constellation Taurus with that of Saint Andrew. The V shape that makes up the horns and face of the bull in the traditional constellation constitutes half of the cross that Saint Andrew carries. The stars of the Pleiades are positioned in the figure's shoulder, transferring what had been in the shoulder of an animal to that of a man" (from the caption of Fig. 4.11 on p. 118 in Anna Friedman Herlihy, "Renaissance Star Charts", Ch. 4 in *The History of Cartography*, Vol. 3: *Cartography in the European Renaissance*, edited by David Woodward, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp. 99–122. That chapter can be accessed free of charge on the Web at https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V3_Pt1/HOC_VOLUME3_Part1_chapter4.pdf

"Parmi les constellations que nous n'expliquons pas, ou pas encore, par un modèle babylonien, plusieurs peuvent former un ensemble. Andromède est fille de Céphée, roi d'Éthiopie, et de Cassiopée. Celle-ci se prétendait plus belle que les filles de Nérée, lesquelles, jalouses, demandèrent à Poséidon, le dieu marin, de les venger. Il envoya un monstre, la Baleine, ravager le pays; et ce monstre ne pouvait être apaisé que par le sacrifice d'Andromède. Celle-ci fut enchaînée à un écueil. On la représentait debout, les bras écartés, attendant, en pleurs, le monstre qui allait la dévorer. Mais Persée la délivra. Ainsi s'expliquaient cinq constellations, voire six, car Pégase, même si Persée ne l'a pas chevauché, était né du cou de Méduse, tranché par Persée. D'autre part, une autre version de

Cassiopeia⁶² (in Greek, Κασσιόπεια or Κασσιέπεια) as being the wife of Cepheus, king of Aethiopia, and Andromeda's mother appears in Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, 2.4.3. In contrast, Cassiopeia is the wife of Phoenix, king of Phoenicia, according to the *Catalogue of Women*, fragment 138. In Hyginus' *Fabulae*, 149, one comes across Cassiopeia as being the wife of Epaphus, king of Egypt, himself son of Zeus and Io; by his account, this other Cassiopeia became the mother of Libya, and (according to Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca*, 2.5.11) of Lysianassa.

Cetus (Κῆτος: the Whale) is the sea monster about to devour Andromeda who is rescued by Perseus. In Islamic art, visual representations of the *Cetus* (*Qītus*) constellation come in a few types, of which the earliest (apparently of 960 C.E.) first appears in a manuscript of a work by aṣ-Ṣūfī, and shows the monster as a composite chimaera with the head of a dog, upright ears (thus far, we must say, this is something also found in Aegean art when portraying sea monsters: in particular, an example occurs on a Minoan clay sealing from Knossos), a goat's beard, with neither fins nor wings, a round shoulder, a long body (which could be that of a fish), and a two-pronged tail (which could be that of a fish or a bird). This is similar to how al-Bīrūnī described the same constellation, but specifically with a bird's tail. This was noted by Alessandro Bausani⁶³ (who disagrees with Eva Baer, who stated that according to al-Bīrūnī, *Cetus* is shaped like a human-headed bird, which in fact is a type representing *Cetus* in Safavid iconography from Persia, as shown by Bausani)⁶⁴:

Non è qui mio compito di fare una storia e tipologia completa delle immagini di *Qītus* nell'Islam. Vorrei solo accennare ai principali tipi, tentando una rozza cronologia. Forse la più antica iconografia di *Cetus* documentata in Islam (Wellesz, 1959, p. 18)⁶⁵ risalente probabilmente al 960 A.D. (e forse an-

la légende de Cassiopée faisait de celle-ci le symbole de la beauté de l'ordre universel, du cosmos. Il était donc juste de la placer dans le ciel. Elle y aura entraîné les autres personnages qui l'entourent désormais sur la voûte céleste". The latter quotation is from p. 238 in JACQUES DUCHESNE-GUILLEMIN, "Origines iraniennes et babyloniennes de la nomenclature astrale", in: *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 130(2), 1986, pp. 234–250; http://www.persee.fr/doc/crai_0065-0536_1986_num_130_2_14370

⁶² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_\(mythology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_(mythology))

⁶³ ALESSANDRO BAUSANI, "Κῆτος fra le stazioni lunari? Considerazioni iconografiche sulla «Balena» a proposito di alcuni mss. D'età safavide", *Oriente Moderno*, 58(7/8), 1978, pp. 275–283.

⁶⁴ BAUSANI, pp. 277–278, his brackets, our braces.

⁶⁵ EMMY WELLESZ, "An Early al-Ṣūfī Manuscript in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. A Study in Islamic Constellation Images", *Ars Orientalis*, 3, 1959, pp. 1–26.

che oltre) è quella del manoscritto dell'opera di aṣ-Ṣūfī studiato da E. Wellesz e che è praticamente contemporaneo all'autore [...] In esso *Qīṭus* si presenta come un mostro composito con testa di cane, orecchie ritte, una barbetta caprina, mancanza completa di ali o pinne, spalla arrotondata, corpo allungato che potrebbe essere di pesce, coda bifida che, come il corpo, a rigore potrebbe essere sia di uccello sia di pesce. A questo proposito, anche se non possediamo la corrispondente immagine, può essere interessante sentire come il grande astronomo al-Bīrūnī (m. 1048), pressoché contemporaneo di aṣ-Ṣūfī, descrive il *Qīṭus* nel suo *Kitāb at-Taḥfīm*: (Biruni, 1934, p. 72, no. 161):⁶⁶ «la prima [delle costellazioni meridionali] è la costellazione (*sūrah*)⁶⁷ di *Qīṭus*, che è un animale marino (*ḥayawān baḥrī*) con due zampe (*dhū 'r-rijlain*) e una coda come un uccello (*dhanab ka't-ṭayr*)». È quasi esattamente la descrizione della immagine dell'antico manoscritto di aṣ-Ṣūfī e non vedo traccia, in questa breve frase, di una testa umana, come vorrebbe la Baer, la quale sostiene che tale descrizione di al-Bīrūnī indicherebbe un al-Bīrūnī (Baer, 1956 {*recte*: 1965}, p. 79)⁶⁸. È solo la coda che Bīrūnī chiama «di uccello» e non accenna nemmeno, quindi, ad ali, che infatti in questa antica forma sembrano mancare. L'animale è del resto chiaramente detto «marino», e in quasi tutti i testi arabi la variante del nome, che spiega *Qīṭus*, è *sabu' al-baḥr*; «belva marina». La «barba» (*dhaqan, liḥyah*) cui si allude in varie descrizioni non dice nulla su una faccia umana, dato che ha una barba anche la figura animalesca. Tale tipo iconografico sembra restare, con poche varianti, sino all'epoca safavide. Safavide è infatti — come dicemmo — il manoscritto di Nāyin del 1606 usato da Schjellerup per la sua traduzione dell'opera di aṣ-Ṣūfī, dove la figura di *Qīṭus* è quasi del tutto identica a quella del più antico, salvo le orecchie lievemente più abbassate e la quasi assenza di barba; anche qui mancano del tutto le ali, e il corpo non è «convolutus» [...] Che la coda sia divisa in due risulta anche dalla descrizione, dove si parla (Schjellerup, 1874, p. 201)⁶⁹ di «due rami della

⁶⁶ Al-Biruni, *The Book of Instructions in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*, transl. R. RAMSAY WRIGHT, London: Luzac & Co., 1934.

⁶⁷ Arabic *sūrah* for 'constellation' literally denotes 'shape'.

⁶⁸ EVA BAER, *Sphinxes and Harpies in Medieval Islamic Art: An Iconographical Study* (Oriental Notes and Studies, 9), Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society, 1965.

⁶⁹ H.C.F.C. SCHJELLERUP, *Description des étoiles fixes: composée au milieu du dixième siècle de notre ère par l'astronome persan 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Ṣūfī; traduction littérale de deux manuscrits arabes de la Bibliothèque Royale de Copenhague et de la Bibliothèque Impériale de St. Pétersbourg; avec des notes par H.C.F.C. Schjellerup*. St.-Petersbourg: Commissionnaires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1874. The editor was Hans Karl Frederik Kristian Schjellerup (1827–1887). There also exists an edition by FUAT SEZGIN of Schjellerup's edition: *Description des étoiles fixes*:

coda», *shu'batay 'dh-dhanab*.

Attraverso una tradizione iconografica che risale a manoscritti timuridi e alla scuola di Samarcanda una immagine del *Qīṭus* di origine islamica penetrò anche in Europa. [...]

See the iconography in Bausani's paper. Cetus as a dog-headed fish was drawn by Albrecht Dürer in 1515. Concerning Ibn aṣ-Ṣūfī's poem *Urjūza fī'l-kawākib* (*Poem on the Stars*) — based upon aṣ-Ṣūfī's prose — and how the constellations were drawn in its manuscripts, see now a study by Moya Carey⁷⁰.

As could be expected, representations in the Far East are different, e.g. in Korea: “The astronomical chart of Yi Tai-Jo, founder of the last Korean dynasty in 1392, includes a star map which owes its origin to an engraved stone from China kept at Pyeng Yang, Korea, and lost in the Tai-tong River when Ko-gu-ryu fell in 672 A.D. Yi's astronomers revised the old chart, but incorporated the star map without change in the new stone engraving of 1395. The astrography of the Korean Star Map is therefore not later than the seventh century; but how much older it may be, we do not know”⁷¹. “The 28 constellations grouped by sevens form four unequal quadrants: the Blue Dragon of the East, 75 degrees; the Black Tortoise of the North, 98¼ degrees; the White Tiger of the West, 80 degrees; and the Red Bird of the South, 112 degrees; occupying positions on the map at the left, top, right, and bottom, respectively”⁷². One finds there, in the Central Division: “18. Ridge tile. Nine stars chiefly in Cassiopeia; the lower end a little to the left of the emperor, no. 5, and extending upward to the following”⁷³; “19. The beautiful palanquin, for the emperor in a royal procession. Seven stars of Cassiopeia, idealized”⁷⁴. “In Chinese astronomy, the stars forming the constellation Cassiopeia are found among three areas: the Purple Forbidden encl-

Übersetzung der ṣuwar al-kawākib von 'Abdarrahmān aṣ-Ṣūfī (gest. 986 A.D.) (Veröffentlichungen des Institutes für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften. Reihe B, Nachdrucke. Abteilung Astronomie, 1), Frankfurt am Main: Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1986.

⁷⁰ Moya Carey, “Al-Sufi And Son: Ibn Al-Sufi's Poem On The Stars And Its Prose Parent”, *Muqarnas*, 26, 2009, pp. 181–204.

⁷¹ Quoted from p. 316 in W. Carl Rufus and Celia Chao, “A Korean Star Map”, *Isis*, 35(4), pp. 316–326.

⁷² Rufus and Chao, p. 317.

⁷³ Rufus and Chao, p. 318.

⁷⁴ Rufus and Chao, p. 319.

sure⁷⁵ (紫微垣, *Zǐ Wēi Yuán*), the Black Tortoise of the North⁷⁶ (北方玄武, *Běi Fāng Xuán Wǔ*), and the White Tiger of the West⁷⁷ (西方白虎, *Xī Fāng Bái Hǔ*)”⁷⁸.

“The Chinese astronomers saw several figures in what is modern-day Cassiopeia. Kappa, Eta, and Mu Cassiopeiae formed a constellation called the Bridge of the Kings; when seen along with Alpha and Beta Cassiopeiae, they formed the great chariot *Wang-Liang*. The charioteer’s whip was represented by Gamma Cassiopeiae, sometimes called ‘Tsih’, the Chinese word for ‘whip’. Stephenson states: “[T]he well-known W formation of the bright stars of Cassiopeia is shown divided into two distinct groups on Chinese star maps: Wangliang (named for a famed charioteer of the Zhanguo period) and Gedao (Hanging Gallery)”⁷⁹.

Even when an ancient planisphere was found in Dendera, Egypt (on the ceiling of the chapel of Osiris, temple of Dendera, from the end of the Ptolemaic period, in the first century B.C.E.), there has been disagreement between modern scholars as for whether this represented Egyptian⁸⁰, Greek, or Babylonian astronomy⁸¹. In 1941,

⁷⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purple_Forbidden_enclosure

⁷⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Tortoise

⁷⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Tiger_\(Chinese_astronomy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Tiger_(Chinese_astronomy))

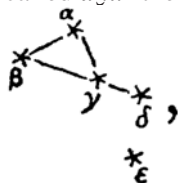
⁷⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_\(constellation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiopeia_(constellation)) It is the source of the next quotation, too.

⁷⁹ On p. 548 in F. RICHARD STEPHENSON, “Chinese and Korean Star Maps and Catalogs”, Ch. 13 in *The History of Cartography*, Vol. 2, Book 2: *Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, edited by J.B. [JOHN BRIAN] HARLEY and DAVID WOODWARD. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 511–578. The chapters can be downloaded from of charge from the Web at https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B2/Volume2_Book2.html

⁸⁰ An introduction to Egyptian astronomy can be found in R.A. PARKER, “Ancient Egyptian Astronomy” In *The Place of Astronomy in the Ancient World: A Discussion Organized Jointly for the Royal Society and the British Academy*, edited by F.R. HODSON [Papers presented December 7–8, 1972] (Philosophical Transactions, Series A: Mathematical, Physical, and Engineering Sciences, vol. 276, no. 1257), London: Royal Society, 1974, pp. 51–65.

⁸¹ Concerning Mesopotamian astronomy or divination, see e.g. A.L. OPPENHEIM, “Divination and Celestial Observation in the Last Assyrian Empire”, *Centaurus*, 14, 1969, pp. 97–135. Also see R.C. THOMPSON (ed.), *The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon in the British Museum. The Original Texts, Printed in Cuneiform Characters, Edited with Translations, Notes, Vocabulary, Index, and an Introduction*, 2 vols.; Vol. 1: *The Cuneiform Texts*; Vol. 2: *English Translations, Vocabulary, [etc.]* (Luzac’s Semitic Text and Translation Series, 6–7) London: Luzac, 1900; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1977. E.A. SPEISER, “Note on Amos 5:26”, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 108, 1947, pp. 5–6, claimed concerning Amos 5:26 that “its astral import is unmistakable” (*ibid.*, p. 5). Speiser (*ibid.*, pp. 5–6) drew attention to “to the [Hebrew] term *šalmē(y)kem* ‘your images’, which is followed by ‘the star of your god’. It is highly significant

Eisler, commenting on a paper by Chatley, claimed that what Chatley had claimed to be Greek, reflects Babylonian astronomy instead⁸² and that “what Dr. Chatley calls ‘the jackal on hoe’ is the Babylonian constellation of the ‘plough’ (Sumerian MUL-APIN, Accadian *kakkab epinnu*), one star of which is, curiously enough, called MUL-UR-BAR-RA = *kakkab ahû* ‘the wolf’, because the seed-drill, attached to the Babylonian plough — possibly because it seems to devour and ‘wolf down’⁸³ the seed — is called *ahû* ‘the wolf’. It is not by any means, as Dr. Chatley supposes, Ursa minor — the lines do not fit the configuration of its stars — but Cassiopeia,



€ being ‘the Wolf’ star’⁸⁴. Chatley’s reply began as follows:

(1) My reference to the “obviously Greek” elements in the Denderah planisphere related to the zodiac and planets and did not exclude an ultimate Babylonian origin for the zodiac.

(2) The “jackal on hoe” which appears on the Denderah ceiling is too near the pole to be satisfactorily identified with Cassiopeia⁸⁵.

that the term *šalmu* ‘figure’ — or precisely the same word that is employed in our passage — is familiar in Babylonian-Assyrian astronomy, where it is reserved, as pointed out by Ernst Weidner, for astral bodies which were pictured in human form. In such cases the name of the constellation (*kakkab X*) is followed in the text by the term *šalmu* introducing the particular image which the constellation is said to represent”.

⁸² Recent scholarship basically agrees. “A circular picture of the sky, dating to the end of the Ptolemaic period, which reproduces planets and constellations with some degree of accuracy in their relation to one another, occurs on the ceiling of the chapel of Osiris on the roof of the temple of Dendera, now in the Louvre. It depicts a synthetic image of the sky in which traditional Egyptian constellations and decans are mingled with the twelve signs of the zodiac, imported from Babylonia but Egyptianized in their forms”. On p. 121 in A.F. SHORE, “Egyptian Cartography”, Ch. 7 (on pp. 117–129) in *The History of Cartography*, Vol. 1: *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, edited by J.B. [JOHN BRIAN] HARLEY and DAVID WOODWARD. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1987. The chapters can now be accessed and downloaded free of charge, from https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V1/Volume1.html

⁸³ This, however, is an English phrasal verb; the metaphor was not necessarily also Babylonian.

⁸⁴ Quoted from p. 149 in “Egyptian Astronomy: Letters from Dr. Eisler and Dr. Chatley”, *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 27, Dec. 1941, pp. 149–152.

⁸⁵ Quoted from p. 151 in “Egyptian Astronomy”.

1.3. Non-Astronomical Medieval Jewish Glosses to *Isaiah* 49:16

Let us consider the context, in *Isaiah*, of the verse which as we have seen, E.J. Wiesenberg interpreted as a reference to the constellation Cassiopeia. We first give Nissan's translation from *Isaiah*'s Hebrew. We then turn to glosses by medieval rabbinic exegetes, in order to see how they interpreted the biblical text without resorting to astronomy⁸⁶. Let us begin with the translation of *Isaiah* 49:14–18:

49:14 Zion has said: The Lord has abandoned me, and my Master has forgotten me.

49:15 Would a woman forget her baby⁸⁷, so that she would not take pity⁸⁸ of [literally: from pitying] the son of her belly? Even those would forget, but I shall not forget thee⁸⁹.

49:16 Indeed, on the palms of [My] hands I have engraved thee; thy walls are in front of Me always.

(Cf. in the King James Bible: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.)

49:17 Thy sons are quickening [back]; thy destroyers and demolishers shall go out of thee⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ Concerning Jewish astronomy, see an introduction in MEIR BAR-ILAN, "Astronomy in Ancient Judaism; Astrology in Ancient Judaism", entries in *The Encyclopaedia of Judaism*, edited by J. NEUSNER, A. AVERY-PECK, and W. S. GREEN, Leiden: Brill, vol. 5, Supplement Two, 2004, pp. 2031–2044. As for astrology, see e.g. KOCKU VON STUCKRAD, "Jewish and Christian Astrology in Late Antiquity: A New Approach", *Numen*, 47(1) (2000) 1–40.

⁸⁷ Etymologically, possibly the word 'ulah for 'her baby' is 'the load she is/was carrying'.

⁸⁸ Importantly, the Hebrew verb for 'to pity' and the name for 'pity' transparently are corradicals of the noun for 'womb'.

⁸⁹ When Albino Luciani, during his month-long tenure as Pope John Paul I, quoted that verse from *Isaiah* in a public address, it was a sensation in the mass media in Italy, as the lay perception was that this introduced motherly features in the characterisation of God.

⁹⁰ Jewish medieval exegetes sometimes understand that by "destroyers", the sinners are meant who because of their sins, had brought about destruction in retribution. In modern proverbial usage among Jews, referents are such persons with Jewish ancestry who actively support enemies of the Jews, and the word for "shall go out of thee" is interpreted in the sense "shall descend from thee" by birth. (The defector syndrome is familiar from various contexts and identities, and sees an individual not just change identity, but also turn against former co-religionists or fellow nationals. Historically, the Jews' vulnerability in host societies made the use of vociferous defectors an effective tool against them).

49:18 Rise thy eyes around, and behold: they all gathered, and came to thee, [...]⁹¹

The Hebrew text of the two hemistichs that constitute *Isaiah* 49:16 is as follows (with diacritical marks for vowels and prosody or cantillation):

הֵן עַל-כַּפַּיִם חִקְתִּיךָ חוֹמֹתֶיךָ נִגְדִי תְּמִיד:

Let us consider the glosses to this verse by some rabbinic exegetes⁹² especially medieval ones. We begin with Rashi:

על כפיים - על כפי; רואה אני
כאילו את חקוקה על כפי
לראותך ולזכרך תמיד. [דבר
אחר על כפים - מעל ענני כבוד, כמו
[איוב לו, לב] "על כפים כסה אור".]

On handpalms. On My handpalms; I deem it as though thou (f., Zion) art engraved on My handpalms, so that I would always see thee and remember thee. [Another thing: **On handpalms.** Above the clouds of glory, like (*Job* 36:32): “On handpalms He covered light”.]

Rabbi Joseph Kara wrote this other gloss

⁹¹ In the King James Bible, the passage is as follows: “[13:] Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. [14:] But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. [15:] Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. [16:] Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. [17:] Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. [18:] Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. [19:] For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away”.

⁹² The synoptic glosses appear in MENAHEM COHEN (ed.) *Mikra'ot Gedolot "HaKeter": Isaiah* (in Hebrew), Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1996. Conveniently, the glosses from that edition have been put online in the *Maagar Hakketer*, and the glosses for the passage of *Isaiah* we are considering are accessible in Hebrew at www.mgketer.org/tanach/12/49/16 The English translation of the glosses as provided here is Nissan's.

התשכח אשה עולה מרחם בן בטנה - עולל שלה.
 מרחם - מלרחם. גם אלה תשכחנה - אפילו אם
 הדברים הללו תשכחנה לפעמים, ואנכי לא
 אשכחך. ומפרש והולך: ומפני מה אי אפשר
 שאשכחך? הן על כפים חקותיך, והיאך אני יכול
 שאשכחך! אילו חקותיך על אחד מאיברי
 שפעמים מגולה ופעמים מכוסה, היה הדבר איפשר
 שאשכחך, אבל מאחר שחקותיך על כפיי
 וחומותייך נגדי תמיד - ש"על חומותייך הפקדתי
 שומרים כל היום וכל הלילה תמיד לא יחשו
 המזכירים את יי" (יש' סב, ו), וציויתים: "אל
 תתנו דומי לו" עד אכונן ועד אשים "ירושלם תהלה
 בארץ" (שם, ז). ואפילו אילו היתה שכחה מצויה
 לפניי, הם מזכירים אותי ומתפללים לפניי בכל
 יום: "אתה תקום תרחם ציון" (תה' קב, יד), וציון
 אומרת: עזבני ושכחני!?

Would a woman forget 'ulah from pitying the son of her belly. Her 'olal [baby]. From *rahem* (pitying). From *lerahem* (to pity). Even these would forget. Even if they would sometimes forget these things. **But I shall not forget thee.** And it continues to explain: Why is it that it is impossible that I would forget thee? **Indeed, on the palms of [My] hands I have engraved thee,** so how could I forget thee?! Had I engraved thee on one of My members of Mine⁹³ that is sometimes uncovered and sometimes covered, it would have been possible that I would forget thee, but as I engraved thee on My hand-palms, and **thy walls are in front of Me always,** as "on thy walls I appointed watchmen the whole day and the whole night, they would never fall silent, those who mention God" (*Isaiah* 62:6), and I ordered them: "Do not fall silent for Him" until I shall make stand, and until I shall place "Jerusalem, a glory on Earth" (*ibid.*, v. 7). And even were I liable to forgetfulness, they remind Me and pray to Me every day: "Thou shall arise and take pity on Zion" (*Psalms* 102:14), and **Zion** says: He **has abandoned me and has forgotten me?!**

Joseph (ben Simeon) Kara (ca. 1065 – ca. 1135, or according to others, ca. 1050 – ca. 1125) was an important biblical exegete⁹⁴. He was born and lived in Troyes in

⁹³ An anthropomorphism for the sake of the simile.

⁹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Kara

Champagne, which was also Rashi's city. Concerning his period, consider that he heard⁹⁵ an interpretation of *Ezekiel* 10:9 from Isaac ben Asher of Speyer, who died before 1133.

The following is the gloss by Abraham Ibn Ezra:

הן - אמר הגאון (?) , כי על כפים - העבים. ולפי
דעתי , שהכתוב דבר על לשון בני אדם; כי על
כפים חקוטיך - שאראה אותך תמיד , והעד - חצי
פסוק כמשפט.

Indeed. The Gaon [Saadia?] has said that **On handpalms**, i.e. the clouds. And in my opinion, Scripture here is talking the ways humans would, as **on the palms of [My] hand I have engraved thee**, i.e. that I shall always see thee, and the witness is that a hemistich is like a sentence.

A Hebrew poet, grammarian⁹⁶, Biblical commentator, philosopher⁹⁷, translator, astronomer⁹⁸ and physician, Abraham Ibn Ezra was born in Tudela in Islamic Spain, in 1089. He lived in Spain and North Africa until he was nearly fifty. Then, from 1140 onwards, he wandered in Western Europe, especially in Italy (e.g., he was active in Lucca) and France, and died circa 1164, apparently in London.

The gloss by Eliezer by Beaugency is as follows:

⁹⁵ According to EPHRAIM ELIMELECH URBACH, *The Tosaphists: Their History, Writings and Methods* [Hebrew], 1st edition. Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1955, p. 148. By the way, In the writings of Joseph Kara, one even comes across “Kenaanic” or “Knaanic” (Old Czech) words: this has been discussed (in Czech) in Sec. 3.5.4, pp. 598–623, in O. BLÁHA, R. DITTMANN, K. KOMÁREC, D. POLAKOVIČ and U. LENKA, *Kenaanské glosy ve středověkých hebrejských rukopisech s vazbou na české země* (Judaica, 16), Prague: Academia, 2015.

⁹⁶ Abraham Ibn Ezra came after the great grammarians however. See L. CHARLAP, “Another View on Rabbi Abraham Ibn-Ezra’s Contribution to Medieval Hebrew Grammar”, *Hebrew Studies*, 42 (2001) 67–80; and W. BACHER, *Abraham Ibn-Ezra als Grammatiker*, Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1882.

⁹⁷ See TZVI LANGERMANN’S (2006 [rev. 2014]) entry “Abraham Ibn Ezra” in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ibn-ezra/>

⁹⁸ See e.g. B.R. GOLDSTEIN, “Astronomy and Astrology in the Works of Abraham ibn Ezra”, *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 6 (1996) 9–21; S. SELA, “Abraham ibn Ezra’s Scientific Corpus: Basic Constituents and General Characterization”, *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 11 (2001) 91–149.

הַתִּשְׁכַּח אִשָּׁה עוֹלָה אַחַר שִׁגִּידְלָתוֹ וְרוֹמַמְתּוֹ , שֶׁלֹּא
 לְרַחֵם בֶּן בִּטְנָהּ לְהַשְׁלִיכּוֹ מֵעַל פְּנֵיהָ לְעוֹלָם? גַּם
 אֱלֹהִים – אִשָּׁה – עוֹלָה , וְאִשָּׁה – בֶּן בִּטְנָהּ ,
 תִּשְׁכַּחנָּה בְּנֵיהַּ מְרַחֵם , וְאִנִּכִּי לֹא אֲשַׁכַּח – שְׂאִין
 כְּעֵסִי לְעוֹלָם בְּלֹא רַחֲמִים , שֶׁהֲרִי עַל כַּפַּיִם חֲקוּתֶיךָ
 – לְהִיּוֹת עֵינַי אֲלֶיךָ תָּמִיד , חוֹמוֹתֶיךָ הַנְּהַרְסוּ
 נִגְדֵי תָּמִיד – לְבִנּוֹתָם.

Would a woman forget her baby after she raised him and saw to it that he would grow, so that she would not pity the son of her belly and would reject him (literally: throw him from her face, i.e., presence) forever? **Even those**, a woman her baby, a woman the son of her belly, **would forget** their children **so that she would not pity, but I shall not forget thee**, as My anger is not forever [and] without pity, as indeed **on the palms of [My] hands I have engraved thee**, so that My eyes would always behold thee, **thy walls** which are in ruin **are in front of Me always**, in order to reconstruct them.

Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency (Belgançî⁹⁹, *blgn̄sy*, now usually pronounced *bel-gántsî* when that exegete is mentioned by scholars in Israel) belonged to the second generation of the Tosaphists (glossators of the *Babylonian Talmud*)¹⁰⁰, whose own first generation was the one after Rashi. Rather than being a Tosaphist himself, R. Eliezer of Beaugency is only known as a commentator¹⁰¹ on the Bible, not the Talmud. Only his commentaries¹⁰² to *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, and the *Twelve Minor Prophets* are

⁹⁹ The French adjective *beau* ‘cute’ derives from an older form *bel*.

¹⁰⁰ The Tosaphists were commentators about the *Babylonian Talmud*, other than Rashi’s *glossa ordinaria*, from northern France or from Germany. Their activity resembles that of the Christian glossators of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*. See EPHRAIM ELIMELECH URBACH, *The Tosaphists: Their History, Writings and Methods* [Hebrew], 1st edition. Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1955.

¹⁰¹ The commentaries considered in this section are in Hebrew. Nevertheless, data can be gleaned also for Old French; see CYRIL ASLANOV, “Le français de Rabbi Joseph Kara et de Rabbi Eliézer de Beaugency d’après leurs commentaires sur Ezéchiél”, *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 159 (2000) 425–446.

¹⁰² The exegesis of Eliezer of Beaugency is the subject of Y. BERGER, “The Contextual Exegesis of Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency and the Climax of the Northern French Peshat Tradition”, *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 15(2) (2008) 115–129; and R. HARRIS, “Contextual Reading: Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency’s Commentary on Jonah”, in *Bringing the Hidden to Light: Studies in Honor of Stephen A. Geller*, edited by D. SHARON and K. KRAVITS, Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, on behalf of New York: The Jewish Theological

extant, and this in only one manuscript (Oxford Bodleyan 1465, Opp. 625).

David Kimḥi wrote this gloss:

הן על כפיים - פירש רבינו סעדיה ז"ל: כמו
עננים, וכן "נשא לבבינו (בנוסחנו: לבבנו) אל
כפיים" (איכה ג, מא); והנכון כמשמעו, וכן תרגם
יונתן: "הא כיד על ידין את צירא קדמי", כאלו את
חקוקה לפני, שאזכרך תמיד. **חומותיך** - פירוש:
חומותיך ההרוסות.

Indeed, on the palms of [My] hands. Saadiah Gaon of blessed memory interpreted: like clouds, and likewise, "let us raise our heart to handpalms" (*Lamentations* 3:41); but the correct understanding is as per the plain sense, and [Pseudo-] Jonathan translated [into Aramaic] accordingly: "Indeed as though on hand[palms] thou (f.) art depicted in front of Me", as thou thou wert engraved in front of Me, so that I would always remember thee. **Thy walls**, e.e., thy walls in ruin.

The Provençal exegete and grammarian Rabbi David Kimḥi (or Radaḳ, b. 1160?, d. 1235?) is one the main Jewish medieval biblical exegetes; Christian Hebraists or apologetes, too, published sometimes his biblical commentaries¹⁰³. David Kimḥi's grammatical writings were analysed by the linguist William Chomsky (father of the more famous linguist Noam Chomsky), who nevertheless only translated its introduction verbatim, reorganizing the rest in a form accessible to readers used to modern grammars¹⁰⁴. David Kimḥi was the son of Joseph Kimḥi (b. ca. 1105, d. ca. 1170), a grammarian, exegete, apologete, and poet, who left Andalusia in the 1140s (as an effect of the Almohade conquest, which because of the intolerance of the new rulers was a disaster for the Jews of the region), and settled in Narbonne.

Seminary, 2007, pp. 79–101. The biblical exegesis by Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Eliezer of Beaugency are the subject of R. HARRIS, "Structure and Composition in Isaiah 1–12: A Twelfth Century Rabbinic Perspective", in *As Those Who are Taught: The Reception of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL*, edited by C. MATHEWS MCGINNIS and P. TULL (SBL Symposium Series), Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006, pp. 171–187; and R. HARRIS, "Twelfth-Century Biblical Exegetes and the Invention of Literature", in *The Multiple Meaning of Scripture: The Role of Exegesis in Early-Christian and Medieval Culture*, edited by I. VAN 'T SPIJKER (Commentaria, 2), Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 311–329.

¹⁰³ FRANK TALMAGE, *David Kimhi: The Man and the Commentaries* (Harvard Judaic Monographs, 1), Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975.

¹⁰⁴ WILLIAM CHOMSKY, *David Kimhi's Hebrew Grammar (Mikhlol) Systematically Presented and Critically Annotated*, New York: Bloch, 1952; repr. 2001, pbk.

The following is the gloss by Isaiah of Trani, which is brief:

הן על כפיים חקותיך , כדי שאזכרך תמיד .

Indeed, on the palms of [My] hands I have engraved thee, so that I would always remember thee.

Other than a supercommentary to Rashi's glosses on the Pentateuch, other biblical commentaries ascribed to Isaiah ben Mali, better known as Isaiah of Trani the Elder (c. 1180 – c. 1250), are, by a scholarly opinion yet not uncontroversially, by Isaiah di Trani the Younger (Isaiah ben Elijah di Trani, who was active in the 13th and 14th centuries). Isaiah of Trani the Elder¹⁰⁵ was a prolific author, and the foremost rabbinic scholar in Italy in the Middle Ages; as a Talmudic scholar and a rabbinic decisor, in Hebrew he is famous by the acronym *Rid*. His background was in Trani, in Apulia, in southeastern Italy, but he lived probably in Venice, and he also apparently stayed for a while in the Orient. Isaiah (ben Elijah) di Trani the Younger¹⁰⁶ was his daughter's son, and was a ritualist as well as the author of commentaries to *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel*, *Kings*, and *Job*¹⁰⁷.

Let us turn to the gloss by Malbim¹⁰⁸, i.e., Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser (b. Volochysk, Volhynia, 1809, d. Kiev, 1879):

הן על כפיים חקותיך אנכי חקותי את שמך על כפי ידי, אשר מדי
 אשתמש בידי אזכור את שמך (והנמשל שכל פעולותיו ומעשיו הם
 אמצעיים מובילים אל התכלית הגדול שהיא התשועה המובטחת), וגם
 את חומתיך (חקתי) נגדי תמיד, הם חקוקים נגד פני לאות ולטוטפות,
 ולא לבד עתה רק תמיד, ר"ל מה שחקתי אותך על כפיים, ואת חומתיך
 נגד פני זה היה תמיד מעת הגלות עד עתה ומה שעזבתי אותך עגונה
 אלמנה זה ימים רבים, לא היה זה מחמת שכחה, ולא אני אשם בדבר,
 רק בניך בעצמם הם סבבו זאת, כי אם.

¹⁰⁵ For whom, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaiah_di_Trani

¹⁰⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaiah_di_Trani_the_Younger

¹⁰⁷ See ELAZAR HURVITZ, *The Commentary of the "Rid" (Rabbi Isaiah of Trani the Elder) on the Book of Jeremiah*, New York: Yeshiva University, 1986. Concerning Isaiah of Trani the Elder other than as a biblical exegete, see AZRIEL ROSENFELD, *The Life and Works of Isaiah of Trani the Elder: with special emphasis on his Sepher ha-Makhria'*, D.H.L. thesis, New York: Yeshiva University, 1955.

¹⁰⁸ See on him <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malbim>

Indeed, on the palms of [My] hands I have engraved thee. I engraved thy name on the palms of My hands, so that whenever I use My hands I shall remember thy name (which is an simile in the sense that all His actions and deeds are means conducive to the great goal, this being the promised redemption), and also **thy walls (I engraved) in front of Me always**, they are engraved in front of Me like a sign and phylacteries on the front, not only now but **always**, i.e., My having engraved thee on the palms of [My] hands, as well as thy walls in front of Me, has always been since [the inception] of the exile until now, and My having abandoned thee like a deserted wife or a widow during such a long time, this was not because of forgetfulness, and I am not to blame for this, but thy own children have caused this.

1.4. Shalem (Salem) as Jerusalem, vs. Shechem (the Samaritans and the LXX)

For the author of *Isaiah* 49, *Shalem* would refer to Jerusalem, as an older name for the city he knew as *Yerushalayim*. It is important to realise however that Shalem as mentioned in *Genesis* 14:18 was identified with Shechem (i.e., Nablus) — or rather with Mount Gerizim, the nearby sacred mountain of the Samaritans — by the Samaritans themselves (and this for obvious reasons, as they extolled their own city, in rivalry with Jerusalem), as well as in a Greek fragment by Pseudo-Eupolemus (and this motivated a hypothesis that the author may have been a Samaritan: see below), and surprisingly, even by the Septuagint (the Hellenistic Jewish translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek): in the Septuagint (the LXX), this was because when faced with the Hebrew word *shalem* (actually as an adjective), a homograph and homophone in *Genesis* 33:18, the translator assumed that it referred to the *city* of Shalem (see below).

Abraham, upon learning that four invading kings raided Sodom and the other four cities of the Dead Sea Pentapolis, and carried away the inhabitants (including Lot, his nephew) as prisoners, pursues them with *ad hoc* warriors, and near Damascus is able to recover both the prisoners and the booty. He is lionised by the kings of the city-states in southern Canaan. Offered the booty by the King of Sodom, Abraham refuses (rather despondently, which given the situation, he can afford), except the part of the booty that his allies could expect. On the other hand, Abraham, with his peculiar belief system, is apparently able (which he can afford at that moment of glory)¹⁰⁹ to

¹⁰⁹ In contrast, in a difficult moment when he is being reproached by Abimelech, Abraham cannot afford to indulge in displaying his belief system, and therefore in *Genesis* 20:13 syntactically his usage there of *Elohim* agrees with the plural, “the Gods made me wander”, vis-à-vis the retention in *Genesis*, including in Abraham’s direct speech, of the morphological plural *Elohim* as a *plurale majestatis*, with the syntactic context showing agreement with the singular.

convey the idea that his only God is the same as El ‘Elyon, a god known in the region: Abraham can do that, because of the literal sense of the theonym being a descriptor, “God Most High”. *Genesis* 14:18 states: “And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine; he was priest of El ‘Elyon (God Most High)”. Abraham in turn gives tithes to Melchizedek, precisely because the latter is priest of El ‘Elyon.

Further to *Genesis* 14:18, “[i]n the later readings of this figure [Melchizedek] and of Salem, three interpretations can be found”¹¹⁰. Namely: “First, in the HB [Hebrew Bible] and Jewish sources, Salem is identified with Jerusalem. Psalm 76:2 identifies Salem with Zion: ‘His (God’s) abode has been established in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion’, and the same can be found in Josephus, *Ant[iquities of the Jews]* 1:180”. One also finds the same identification in a *Genesis* apocryphon¹¹¹ written on a scroll from the wilderness of Judaea: “1QapGen^{ar} XXII 12–17, from around the turn of the eras (while the original may be older), makes the same equation”. What is more: “The identification of Salem with Jerusalem is also found in Targum Onkelos (‘Melchizedek, king of Jerusalem’) and Targum Jonathan¹¹². There is thus a consistent identification of Salem with Jerusalem in the Jewish sources, probably presupposed also in Ps[alms] 110:4”. Secondly: in the New Testament, “the letter to the Hebrews shows considerable interest in Melchizedek of Salem (Heb 7:1–2), but there is no attempt to localize Salem in the entire passage Heb 5:1–7:28. This letter considers Melchizedek to be a heavenly figure, whom Jesus equalled. The lack of localization is understandable from the point of view that the earthly Jerusalem is in this letter only an image of the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 11:10.16)”.

The third interpretation is in the Septuagint, i.e., the LXX, the Seventy, the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. *Genesis* 33:18 states (such is the usual understanding) that “Jacob arrived whole (*shalem*) [i.e., safely] to the city of Shechem”, but the authors of the Septuagint translated this into Greek in such a manner, that their rendering means “Jacob came to Salem [*Shalem*], the city of the Shechemites”, and the Hebrew for “the city of Shechem” was taken to be an apposition. Thus, in the Septuagint “Shechem received

¹¹⁰ All quotations in the same paragraph are from p. 67 in MAGNAR KARTVEIT, “Abraham and Joseph in Samaritan Tradition”, in *Abraham’s Family: A Network of Meaning in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by LUKAS BORMANN (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 415), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, pp. 59–80.

¹¹¹ On p. 47 in NAHMAN AVIGAD and YIGAEEL YADIN, *A Genesis Apocryphon: A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea. Description and Contents of the Scroll. Facsimiles, Transcription and Translation of Columns II, XIX–XXII*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1956.

¹¹² Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan are late antique Jewish translations of Scripture into Aramaic.

the second name ‘Salem’ (cf. the identification of ‘Salem’ with ‘Sychem’ and ‘Sikima’ in Eusebius’s *Onomasticon* and in Jerome’s Latin edition of it, and the localization of Shechem in the Madaba map”. “One may also think of a place called Salem in the Jordan valley”¹¹³, near a place used for baptism by John the Baptist (*John* 3:23).

Concerning Abraham’s encounter with Melchizedek, King of Salem, the identification of that city in Pseudo-Eupolemus gave rise to the claim that that author was a Samaritan¹¹⁴. “Pseudo-Eupolemus is an artificial name for two text fragments [in Greek] whose author is believed by some scholars to have been a Samaritan¹¹⁵. The two fragments are among seven that come from the first half of the 2nd century B.C.E., and were conserved by Alexander Polyhistor (ca. 110–40 B.C.E.), and from there they found their way into Clement of Alexandria’s *Stromata* and Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9”¹¹⁶. Magnar Kartveit claimed: “Rather than considering Pseudo-Eupolemus a Samaritan, we are induced to see in him a hellenizing Jew, perhaps in the vein described in 1 Macc[abees] 1:11–15 and 2 Macc 4:10–17”¹¹⁷. Kartveit also stated¹¹⁸: “Of the two localizations of Salem and the celestial understanding of Melchizedek, the supposed addition to Pseudo-Eupolemus comes closest to the localization of Salem in or around Shechem: Melchizedek belonged with Mount Gerizim. The focus on Shechem in the supposed original text¹¹⁹ opened

¹¹³ Both quotations are from KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, p. 68.

¹¹⁴ Starting with JAKOB FREUDENTHAL, on pp. 87 and 96–97 in his “Hellenistische Studien. Heft I: Alexander Polyhistor und die von ihm erhaltenen Reste jüdischer und samaritanischer Geschichtswerke”, *Jahresbericht des jüdischen-theologischen Seminars “Fraenkel’scher Stiftung”* (Breslau: Grass, 1874), pp. 82–103.

¹¹⁵ See a discussion of the different opinions concerning whether Pseudo-Eupolemus was a Samaritan, in MAGNAR KARTVEIT, *The Origin of the Samaritans* (Vetus Testamentum Supplement 128), Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 243–256. More briefly, see KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, pp. 62–64, about the reception of the hypothesis about Pseudo-Eupolemus having been a Samaritan.

¹¹⁶ KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, p. 62.

¹¹⁷ KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, p. 66. On p. 69, he states: “If the two fragments were written by a hellenizing Jew, the superscription of Alexander to fragment 1 would be partly correct. Eusebius introduces the fragment thus: ‘Eupolemos on Abraham, from the book ‘On the Jews’ by Alexander Polyhistor’”.

¹¹⁸ KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, p. 68.

¹¹⁹ “The original text of Pseudo-Eupolemus was most likely created by a hellenizing Jew, extolling Abraham by telling a story based on the LXX, with elements of Greek and Babylonian myths. [...] This text perhaps received an addition created by a Samaritan, who included the Samaritan name for Mount Gerizim as the place where Abraham met with Melchizedek and added a translation of the first part of the name. In this way the whole text was ‘Samaritanized’” KARTVEIT, “Abraham”, p. 69).

the way for this. The choice of location for the Abraham-Melchizedek encounter had no better option than Mount Gerizim, which could add to the glorification of Abraham his reception at a renowned temple mount”¹²⁰.

1.5. The Jewish and Christian Motif of the Heavenly Jerusalem

Ideas about an idealised, future Jerusalem are found in the Hebrew Bible¹²¹. In Roman-age Judaism, we come across the idea of a heavenly Jerusalem. In Hebrew, since late antiquity, *Yerushaláyim shel má‘la* (‘Jerusalem up there’, ‘the Jerusalem above’) is the heavenly Jerusalem, as opposed to *Yerushálayim shel máṭṭa* (‘Jerusalem down here’, ‘the Jerusalem below’), the earthly Jerusalem. In the *Babylonian Talmud*, tractate *Ta’anít*, 5a, one comes across this passage (given here as per the

¹²⁰ While reviewing EMMANOUELA GRYPEOU and HELEN SPURLING, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives, 24. Leiden: Brill, 2013), CARSON BAY in *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies*, 2, pp. 132–134 (<https://booksc.xyz/book/70521304/1e87da>) pointed out on p. 133: “Chapter 4, ‘Abraham and Melchizedek’, traces traditions equating Melchizedek with Shem, debating Melchizedek’s and Abraham’s priesthood, locating Salem and Jerusalem, explaining Melchizedek’s proffer of bread and wine, and positing Melchizedek’s (un)circumcision. Particularly interesting is the tradition as early as Targum Neofiti that Melchizedek was Noah’s son Shem, present also in Ephraem and paralleled in the Cave of Treasures but rejected by Ishodad of Merv and explicitly linked to Jewish (Jerome) or Samaritan (Epiphanius) traditions by others. Here again is a stronger case of encounter” between Jewish and Christian traditions concerning *Genesis*. The *Cave of Treasures* or *Book of the Cave Treasures* is a Syriac work. Also note that in Jewish early rabbinic tradition, the Temple Mount in Jerusalem is where Adam was created and buried, and where Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac almost took place. The Christian *Cave of Treasures* claims that “Golgotha was the center of the world, the summit of the cosmic mountain, and the culmination of salvation history. It was there that Adam was created and buried, in the same place in which the blood of Christ was shed to redeem the world. The image of the cosmic mountain immediately introduces us to the concept of *axis mundi*, the ‘hub of the world’ which symbolizes the communication between cosmic realms” (p. 1502 in MIRCEA ELIADE and LAWRENCE E. SULLIVAN, “Center of the World”, in LINDSAY JONES (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion, Second Edition*. Detroit, Michigan: Macmillan reference USA (Thomson/Gale), 2005, Vol. 3, pp. 1501–1505 [originally in the 1987 first edition]).

¹²¹ “To some extent these ideas [the Prophets of the Hebrew Bible about the idealised future Jerusalem] were nourished by the ancient Near Eastern concept of a sacred city on a high mountain, an almost heavenly city. In this respect Mt. Zion is understood to replace such mountain cities and to be the true center of the universe. Further, this notion contributed to the later idea of a heavenly Jerusalem found in Judaism in the Greco-Roman period and beyond. ¶ We must remember, however, that in the Hebrew Bible Jerusalem is not spiritualized. It is a concrete entity, a real city”, as stated by LAWRENCE H. SCHIFFMAN on pp. 33–34 in “Jerusalem: Twice Destroyed, Twice Rebuilt”, *The Classical World*, 97(1), 2003, pp. 31–40.

Soncino English translation¹²²; their brackets, our braces):

Further, R. Nahman said to R. Isaac: What is the meaning of the scriptural verse, The Holy One in the midst of thee and I will not come in to the city? {(Hosea 11:9)} [Surely it cannot be that] because the Holy One is in the midst of thee I shall not come into the city! He replied: Thus said R. Johanan: The Holy One, blessed be He, said, ‘I will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem until I can enter the earthly Jerusalem’. Is there then a heavenly Jerusalem? — Yes; for it is written, Jerusalem thou art builded as a city that is compact together {(Psalms 122:3)}.

A note to the Soncino English translation states (their brackets; our braces glossing a word they gave in the Hebrew script):

Stressing the word שְׁחֻבְרָה {⟨šḥwbrh⟩ with a *mater lectionis*, but in the biblical text the word is spelled in *scriptio defectiva*: ⟨šḥbrh⟩, pronounced *sheḥubbērā* ‘which (⟨š⟩) is composed’} R. Johanan adduces from the verse that Jerusalem has a חֶבְרָה {⟨ḥbrh⟩, *haverá*, f.} a companion (or prototype) in heaven. Both are said to be situated exactly opposite each other. [The verse in Hosea is thus taken to mean: There is a holy (city) in thy midst (referring to the earthly Jerusalem) and I (i.e., God) will not enter the city (the heavenly Jerusalem)].

This idea of a heavenly Jerusalem corresponding to the earthly Jerusalem is also found in Christian traditions. In Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy*, the mountain of Purgatory (on an island in the hemisphere of waters) is at the antipodes of the earthly Jerusalem, and Paradise is above the top of the mountain of Purgatory. Whereas this is convenient for Dante’s narrative, it is quite possible that that position is ultimately underpinned by a polemic against the earthly Jerusalem (which surmounts Hell, according to Dante (see below, fig. 15), because the valley of Gehinnom, the Gehenna, is near Jerusalem).

¹²² ISIDORE EPSTEIN (ed.), *The Babylonian Talmud*, translated into English with Notes, Glossary and Indices. London: The Soncino Press, 1935–1948. 35 volume edition: *Seder Nezikin* (8 vols., 1st edn, 1935, repr. 1952, 1956); *Seder Nashim* (8 vols., 1st edn. 1937, repr. 1956); *Seder Mo’ed* (8 vols., 1st edn., 1938; repr. 1956); *Seder Tohoroth* (2 vols., 1st edn. 1948, repr. 1960); *Seder Zera’im* (2 vols., 1st edn., 1948, repr. 1959); *Seder Kodashim* (6 vols., 1st edn. 1948, repr. 1960); *Index Volume* (1952). 18 volume edition: *Seder Nezikin* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Nashim* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Mo’ed* (4 vols., 1961); *Seder Tohoroth* (1 vol., 1961); *Seder Zera’im* (1 vol., 1961); *Seder Kodashim* (3 vols., 1961); *Index Volume* (1961).

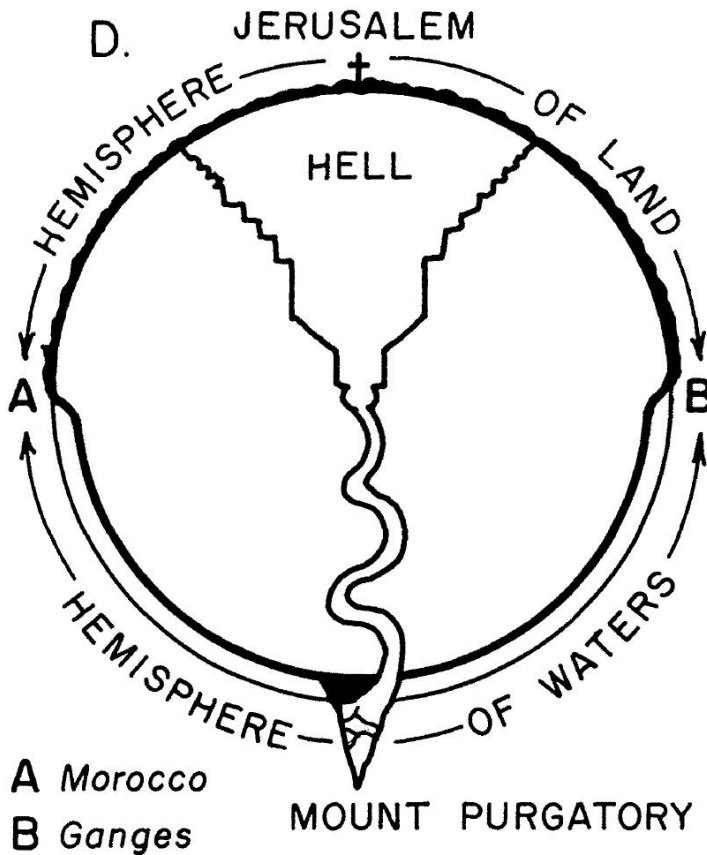


Fig. 15. A model of the Earth according to Dante, from an article by David Alexander¹²³. But does Dante really hold that the tunnel from the centre of the Earth to the Island of Purgatory is meandering?

At any rate, bear in mind that in relatively old age, in his *Quaestio de aqua et terra* (*The Question of the Water and the Earth*)¹²⁴, Dante reasoned about the Earth the way

¹²³ On p. 40 in DAVID ALEXANDER, “Dante and the Form of the Land”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 76(1), 1986, 38–49.

¹²⁴ Incidentally, note that Dante’s engagement with the problem is mentioned on pp. 26–27 in a study mainly concerned with Hebrew sources concerning the trichotomy (into deserts, settled lands, and sea) or dichotomy of Earth’s surface, or cosmographic theories, namely: SOLOMON GANDZ, “The

a scholastic physicist would do¹²⁵.

Theodore Silverstein signalled¹²⁶ an Ethiopian parallel of the heavenly Rose in Dante's Paradise:

The figure of the rose with which Dante tops the soaring structure of his Paradise may seem to have stimulated comment enough by now, and the present note, pointing out yet another possible analogue, serve[s] merely to expand the raw bulk of such materials, which, though interesting in themselves, add little essential to our knowledge of the poem. But no *Stoffkritik* has yet explained entirely happily to the student of the popular otherworld traditions, the origin of this figure in the Divine Comedy or the peculiar fitness of its use there. And the present parallel has the virtue that it is really a parallel, and not confined to the rose alone, whose figure and symbolic significance are common property in the Middle Ages. On the contrary, it describes at the supernal heights of heaven a city which is shaped like a rose, is also special paradise of the Virgin, and con-

Distribution of Land and Sea on the Earth's Surface According to Hebrew Sources", *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 22, 1953, pp. 23–53.

¹²⁵ AS ALAIN CAMPBELL WHITE pointed out ("A Translation of the Quaestio de Aqua et Terra", *Annual Reports of the Dante Society*, 21 (1902) i–ix, 1–59, on pp. 6–7), the Italian text of the Old French *Book of Sidrac*, 237, "Lo re domanda: quale è più alto o la terra o lo mare? Sidrac risponde: La terra è assai più alta che 'l mare" ["The king asks: which is higher, the earth or the sea? Sidrac answers: the earth is considerably higher than the sea"]. Dante's *De aqua et terra* — which purports to be a scientific discussion held by Dante in Verona on 30 January 1320, and the authenticity of whose ascription to Dante was still controversial in the early 20th century — has to first respond to five arguments against that view, and the assumption is that the Earth is spherical.

Five arguments, originally in Latin, appear in facing English translation in White's 1902 booklet, on pp. 7, 9, 11, 13. The fifth argument involves the Moon: "§VII. Further it was argued fifthly: Water seems in the main to follow the course of the moon, as is seen in the ebb and flow of the sea; therefore since the orbit of the moon is excentric is seems reasonable that water in its sphere should imitate the excentricity of the moon's orbit, and consequently be excentric: and — since this could not be unless it were higher than the earth as was shown in the first reason — the same follows as before" ("Item arguebatur quinto: Aqua videtur maxime sequi motum lune, ut patet in accessu et recessu maris; cum igitur orbis lune sit ecentrica; rationabile videtur quod aqua in sua spera ecentricitatem imitetur orbis lune, et per consequens sit ecentrica; et cum hoc esse non possit nisi sit altior terra, ut in prima ratione ostensum est, sequitur idem quod prius"). Dante refuted all five arguments. He resorted to geometrical and physical counterargument of some complexity.

¹²⁶ On pp. 149–150 in T. SILVERSTEIN, "Dante's Heavenly Rose: An Analogue or a Borrowing?", *The Harvard Theological Review*, 42(2), 1949, 149–154.

NISSAN has first been concerned with that study by Silverstein while preparing a bulky book now almost completed, *The Jews and Dante: Dante's Receptions in the Belles Lettres, Scholarship, or Visual Art Produced by Jews, from the Middle Ages, Throughout Italy's Ottocento, to the Present*.

tains traces of another *motif* — the empty thrones and the waiting crowns and vestments reserved until the Time shall come for the just and the poor in spirit —, which Dante also places for the elect within the limits of this heavenly city. All this, moreover, appears in a work belonging to that body of otherworld lore from which the *Divine Comedy*, itself the most elaborate literary example of this *genre*, frequently borrows.

The text in which the parallel survives is an Ethiopic version of the Apocalypse of the Virgin, incorporated in a homily ascribed to John the son of Zebedee, and the passage in question is here quoted from the Latin translation of Marius Chaîne [*recte* Chaîne¹²⁷, *Apocrypha de B[eata] Maria virgine*, in *Scriptores aethiopici*, series 1, volume 7, of the *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*, a volume which had appeared in Rome in 1909]. The whole gives an account Mary's visit to Heaven and Hell under the guidance of her Son, during which she witnesses the going-out of a righteous and a wicked soul at death, passes through the Garden and City of the Earthly Paradise, where are the habitations of the meek, crosses the river to the dwellings of the virgins, sees the couches and crowns of the martyrs and the shining houses of the heads of the Church, and is carried up to the Heavenly Jerusalem. At the climax of her journey through the realms of the blessed, the Apocalypse describes how the Lord

fecit me adscendere in regionem illius fluminis et introduxit me in civitatem Domini, et ostendit mihi civitatem sicut rosa constructam, cuius nec fines usque ad terminos suos revelatae sunt, nec foundationes cognoscuntur; eius claritas magis quam sol septuplo resplendescebat, et in ea congregabantur vestimenta et monilia aurea cum coronis aureis. [...]

[made me ascend into the region of that river and introduced me into the

¹²⁷ Marius Chaîne (1873–1960) also published grammars of Ethiopic (Chaîne 1907) and of the dialects of Coptic (Chaîne 1933), a book of Christian chronology with tables of the Egyptian Coptic and Ethiopic calendars (Chaîne 1925), and so forth. See: M. CHAÎNE, *Grammaire éthiopienne*. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1907. Id. (ed., trans.), *Apocrypha de B[eata] Maria virgine* [comprising the *Protoevangelium Jacobi* and *Transitus Mariae = Apocalypse of Mary*, in Ethiopic with a Latin translation.] In *Scriptores aethiopici*, series 1, volume 7, of the *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*. Romae [= Rome]: K. De Luigi, 1909; repr. Lovanii [= Louvain, Belgium]: Peeters, 1962. M. CHAÎNE, *La chronologie des temps chrétiens de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie: historique et exposé du calendrier et du comput de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie depuis les débuts de l'ère chrétienne à nous jours, accompagnés de tables donnant pour chaque année, avec les caractéristiques astronomiques du comput alexandrin, les années correspondantes des principales ères orientales, suivis d'une concordance des années juliennes, grégoriennes, coptes et éthiopiennes avec les années musulmanes, et de plusieurs appendices, pour servir à la chronologie*, Paris: Libr[airie] orientaliste P. Geuthner, 1925. M. CHAÎNE, *Éléments de grammaire dialectale copte: bohairique, sahidique, achmimique, fayoumique*, Paris: Libr[airie] orientaliste P. Geuthner, 1933.

city of the Lord, and showed me a city constructed like a rose. Its borders are not revealed up to where it ends, nor are its foundations known. Its brightness was shining more than seven times the sun, and gathered in it, there were vestments and golden jewellery with golden crowns. ...]¹²⁸

¹²⁸ SILVERSTEIN indicated two alternative aetiologies for the occurrence of a heavenly city structured like a rose, in both the Divine Comedy and the Ethiopic text, of whose extant manuscripts none is older than the 17th century. Whereas it may be that such a tradition was much older, indeed a tradition that was separately transmitted to both Dante, and Ethiopia, it is possible that an early modern Italian painter who had come to Ethiopia with the Portuguese influenced local perceptions of Heaven. Silverstein wrote (pp. 150–151): “The relevance of this material to Dante is clear enough, but what is the nature of their actual relationship? Is the Ethiopic an accidental parallel, the clue to an apocryphal tradition which was accessible also to the author of the Divine Comedy, or — to suggest that the stream may have run the other way — an Ethiopian borrowing from the Comedy itself, whether direct or indirect? These questions are particularly tantalizing because, while the parallel is so unmistakable, the evidence on which an answer must be based is at present unsatisfactory. With respect to the last possibility suggested — that it is the Ethiopic which is the borrower —, it should be observed that none of the extant manuscripts of the Apocalypse is older than the seventeenth century and that there is evidence elsewhere of Italian influence in Ethiopia from the fifteenth century onward, especially in the field of religious art and ideas, following the sojourn there of the Venetian painter Niccolò Brancalione. This possibility is further enhanced, moreover, by the unique character of the Ethiopic book among the examples of the Apocalypse of the Virgin traditionally associated with the *Transitus*, or *Dormitio*, *Mariae* and surviving still in Greek, Syriac, and Arabic. Not all the forms of the *Transitus* contain the apocalyptic section (for example, the Armenian and the two abbreviated Latin versions), though there is every indication that it may have appeared originally even so; for its wide occurrence otherwise shows that it became a regular feature of this literature, and the Syriac proves that the association was fairly old, since Agnes Smith Lewis [according to her *Apocrypha Syriaca* (A.S. LEWIS, ed., trans., *Apocrypha Syriaca: The Protevangelium Jacobi and Transitus Mariae. With texts from the Septuagint, the Corān, the Peshiṭta, and from a Syriac hymn in a Syro-Arabic Palimpsest of the fifth and other centuries. With an appendix of Palestinian Syriac texts from the Taylor-Schechter collection* [with facsimiles. Syriac with an English translation], *Studia Sinaitica*, 11, London: C.J. Clay and Son, 1902, p. x)] found it occurring in a palimpsest of the late fifth or early sixth century. However, none of the apocalypses in these various versions of the *Transitus*, among the texts so far discovered, contains any trace of the Rose City as it appears in the Ethiopic. In them regularly the climax of the journey to the realms of the righteous is the visit to the Heavenly Jerusalem, where Mary is received by her Son. Later, after viewing the torments of the wicked, she is conducted down to the City of the Earthly Paradise, where she had earlier been — a stage, as it were, on her return to earth, but with the implication that this city is to be her abode after death. At least, here is where she does appear after death in such another early work as the ‘Apocalypse of St. Paul’, whose origin is probably to be found as far back as the third century”.

SILVERSTEIN, in that 1949 paper, did not feel the evidence was conclusive either way. In the Ethiopic text, instead of part of Mary’s vision and her return to the Earthly Paradise there is the description of the Rose City, and Silverstein conceded “that the passage may be merely a late addition, unsupported by precursors of genuine antiquity. Taken with the known Italian influence in Ethiopia, it suggests that we may indeed have here a trace of contact with an essentially Dantesque tradition” (SILVERSTEIN, p. 152). And yet (*ibid.*): “On the other hand, there are some small circumstances that

The relative distaste for the earthly Jerusalem sits well with the supersessionist stance of Christianity, especially after the (Judenfrei) Byzantine Jerusalem fell first to the Persians, and then to Omar leading the Muslim conquest. The Crusader kingdoms (until the Latin kingdom was destroyed by Saladin) are unlikely to have undone attitudes that had evolved in the intervening centuries. It is therefore apt and poignant that whereas Moses, in a painting of 1482–1483 by Luca Signorelli, is shown by an angel the Promised Land (which in the context of the Old Testament), in another visual representation, based on the same prototype used by Signorelli, Albrecht Dürer in a woodcut of 1498 (see fig. 16) has an angel showing St. John the heavenly Jerusalem (the context being the New Testament). “[I]n most illustrated manuscripts of the Apocalypse, of which a great number are still extant and of which copies would obviously have been available to Dürer as well as to Signorelli, this vision [of St. John] is depicted on a separate miniature and in an arrangement very similar to Signorelli’s and Dürer’s”¹²⁹. Generally speaking, for the medieval clergy the role of Moses is expressed “in a verse written by the Abbot Suger for a stained glass medallion in a window of the twelfth-century Cathedral of St. Denis — ‘Quod Moyses velat Christi doctrina revelat’”¹³⁰. At any rate, the distaste for Moses’ Law is paralleled (notwithstanding the parenthesis of there having been a Byzantine, Christian Jerusalem) by the already mentioned relative distaste for the earthly Jerusalem¹³¹.

seem to point to an opposite conclusion: that the Ethiopic is a clue to a wider spread and older body of lore, the analogue, in short, of material that may have been available to Dante independently. But this evidence is indirect and must be derived from other features of the Ethiopic book in relation to their sources and parallels, especially from the details of the *motif* of the empty thrones and waiting crowns and vestments, which, as we have seen, is connected with the Rose City in both the Divine Comedy and our apocalypse. The Ethiopic text as a whole is not a new production of undiscovered provenience, but probably a derivative, by way of the Arabic, of older works originating among the Copts, whose Christianity had produced a flourishing corpus of Mary legends. Coptic writings of this sort typically enrich their sources with imaginative interpolation, but also sometimes preserve very old features that have disappeared or been drastically abbreviated in apocryphal works circulating in other languages. The Ethiopic Apocalypse of the Virgin, when examined carefully, discloses just these qualities of a Coptic text. [...]

¹²⁹ Quoted on p. 323 in ADELHEID HEIMANN, “Moses Shown the Promised Land”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 34 (1971) 321–324.

¹³⁰ Quoted from p. 186 in DENISE HEILBRONN, “Dante’s Gate of Dis and the Heavenly Jerusalem”, *Studies in Philology*, 72(2) (1975) 167–192.

¹³¹ Eusebius, *The Church History*, 4:5, states that when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans, the Christians did not take part in its defence, but left for the city of Pella in Transjordan. For them, the *loca sancta* only were the places of Jesus’ birth and burial. “The first to call Palestine the Holy Land, Terra Sancta, was Pope Urban II, who, in addressing the Council of Clermont (in the year



Fig. 16. Detail of Dürer's last woodcut from the Apocalypse. An angel shows St. John the heavenly Jerusalem.

The Heavenly Jerusalem is also a theme in recent art (fig. 17): “At the beginning of 1990s, the Dutch stained-glass artisan Eugène Laudy (1921–1995) realized a window representing the Heavenly Jerusalem for the Dominicus Church in Nijmegen”¹³². Laurence Hull Stooke began an article published in 1969 by stating¹³³:

1095), said: ‘*Quam terram merito Sanctam diximus, in qua non est etiam passus pedis quem non illustraverit et sanctificaverit vel corpus vel umbra Salvatoris, vel gloriosa praesentia Sanctae Dei genitricis, vel amplectendus Apostolorum commeatus, vel martyrum ebibendus sanguis effuses*’]. The name, Holy Land, applied to Palestine, thus was for the first time emphasized by Pope Urban II and has been frequently used down to our own time. However, neither in the New Testament nor in the writings of the Church Fathers, was the term Holy Land ever applied to Palestine” (fn. 11, p. 122 in SOLOMON ZEITLIN, “Jewish Rights in Palestine”, *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 38(2), October 1947, pp. 119–134 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1453037>). “Indeed, St. Jerome wrote in one of his letters: ‘The court of heaven is equally open from Jerusalem and Britain. [...] The blessed Hilarion, though he was a native of Palestine, and lived in Palestine, only saw Jerusalem on a single day; that he might not appear to despise the holy places on account of their nearness, nor, on the other hand, to confine God to place’” (Zeitlin, p. 122, citing Jerome, *Epistulae*, 58:3).

ERICA CAROTENUTO, in her paper “Five Egyptians Coming from Jerusalem: Some Remarks on Eusebius, *De martyribus Palaestinae* 11.6–13”, *The Classical Quarterly*, 52(2), 2002, pp. 500–506, begins on p. 500 by stating: “In *MP* 11.6–13 Eusebius refers to the trial of five Egyptians, whom he says were martyred with Pamphilus and his companions in the seventh year of the Great Persecution (winter A.D. 309/310). In this paper I shall argue that the story, taking its content from Orig. *Princ.* 4.3.6–8 and making up the context for it from two other accounts contained in the long version of *MP* (*MPSyr.* 28–30, 36–7). The aim of the historian could have been to work out his own view of the heavenly Jerusalem, so as to build up the theological framework for Pamphilus’ martyrdom. Considered from this point of view, the episode of the Egyptians provides a useful key to understanding Eusebius’ attitude and purpose”.

On p. 501, in the *précis* of the narrative, CAROTENUTO writes: “When Firmilianus, who had not understood the meaning of the name Israel, asked them what was their native land, the chief of the Egyptians replied that it was Jerusalem. He meant — Eusebius explains — the Jerusalem about which Paul had said ‘the Jerusalem above, which is our mother, is free’ (Gal. 4.26), and ‘you have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, Jerusalem in the heaven’ (Heb. 12.22). Although the martyr was thinking about that Jerusalem, Firmilianus, whose thought was fixed on the earth, became concerned that the Christians had built a city for themselves against the Romans, and persisted in trying to find out where this city was. Since after many tortures he had not obtained any answer, he ordered the Egyptians to be beheaded (*MP* 11.6–13)”.

¹³² On p. 237 in DAAN VAN SPEYBROECK, “The Overdetermination of the Heavenly Jerusalem Contemporary Windows by Gérard Garouste and Jean-Michel Alberola”, being Chapter 10 in *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art and Architecture*, edited by JEROEN GOUDEAU, MARIËTTE VERHOEVEN, WOUTER WEIJERS. Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 237–253.

¹³³ On p. 35 in LAURENCE HULL STOOKEY, “The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources”, *Gesta*, 8(1), 1969, pp. 35–41.

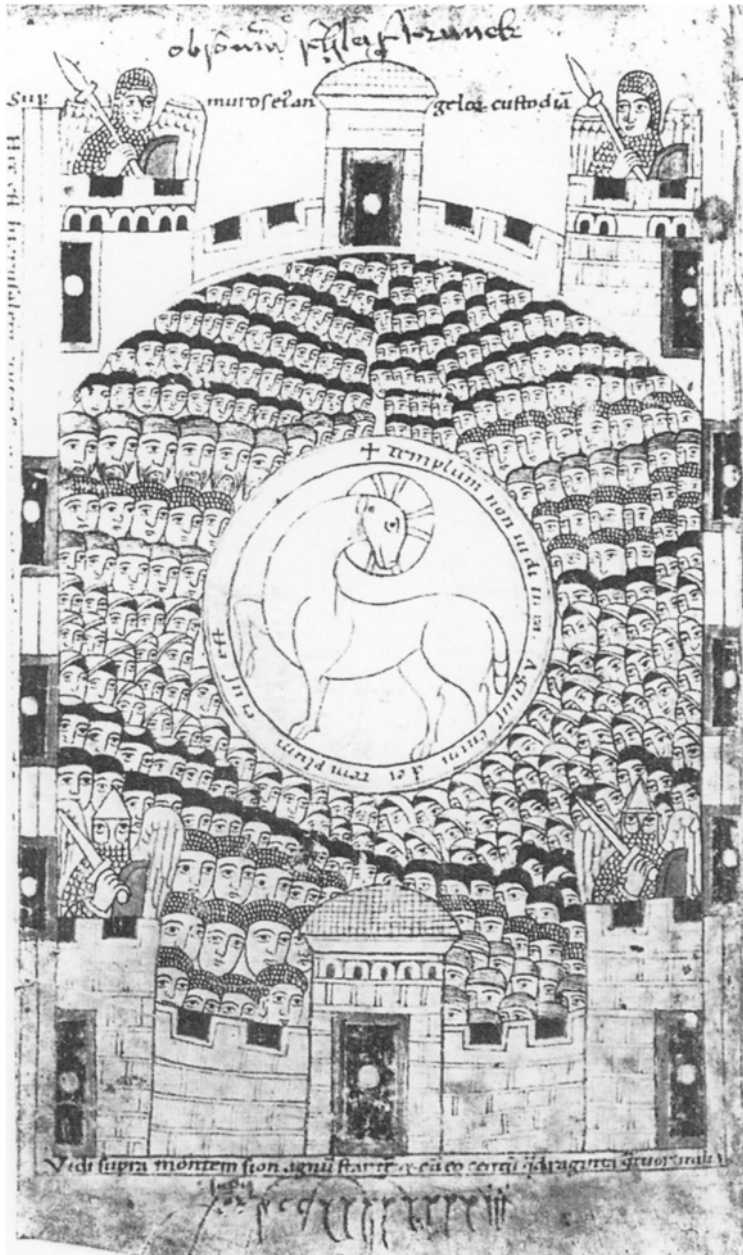


Fig. 17. A 12th-century depiction of the Heavenly Jerusalem (with the Lamb in the middle), from MS Brev. 100, praelig., Württembergische Landesbibliothek.

The relationship of the Gothic Cathedral to the concept of the Church as the Heavenly Jerusalem has been of particular interest during the nearly two decades since Hans Sedlmayr [(1896–1984)], in his book on the development of the Gothic Cathedral¹³⁴, sought to make a close identification between the architecture and the theological understanding of the heavenly kingdom. More recently, Otto von Simson has stated: “We have been reminded that the Christian sanctuary is, liturgically and mystically, an image of the heavenly Jerusalem, the eschatological vision described by the Book of Revelation. The medieval dedication rite establishes this relationship in explicit terms and the twelfth and thirteenth centuries appear singularly preoccupied with this symbolic significance of sacred architecture”¹³⁵.

It is unfortunate that the liturgical and theological sources frequently referred to are rarely examined. It is the purpose of this article to look into these sources and their bearing upon the possible relationship of medieval architecture to theology.

The theological concept of the heavenly Jerusalem is set forth in the New Testament Apocalypse, but the roots are found in the Old Testament prophets who dream of the renewal of the Davidic kingdom. Psalms and other poetic passages which referred originally to the earthly city of Jerusalem or Zion came to have an eschatological reference. Ezekiel’s vision of the ideal temple is heavily dependent upon the temple of Solomon. The New Jerusalem of The Revelation is “new” with reference to the historic city with which the writer was so familiar. Within this tradition, the Gothic churchman could apply Biblical references to the reality of his own buildings; and this he seems to have done quite freely.

“The art historians have traditionally considered St. Wenceslas Chapel of St. Vitus’s Cathedral in Prague Castle the image of Heavenly Jerusalem. This theory proved legitimate also in the study discussing the symbolism of the precious stones incrustation adorning the cycle of paintings of the Redemption story in the lower part

¹³⁴ HANS SEDLMAYR, *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale*, Zurich: Atlantis Verlag, 1950; repr. Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1976; 2nd edition (foreworded by Bernhard Rupprecht), Graz, 1988; repr. Freiburg: Herder, 1993.

¹³⁵ On p. 169 in OTTO GEORG VON SIMSON, “The Gothic Cathedral: Design and Meaning”, in *Change in Medieval Society: Europe North of the Alps, 1050–1500*, edited by SYLVIA LETTICE THRUPP, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964 (the volume also appeared as London: *Owen, 1965*). Repr., in THRUPP, *Change*, Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1988, pp. 168–186. Originally, von Simson’s article appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 11(3), 1952, pp. 6–16, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/987608>

of all the chapel walls”¹³⁶. Whereas on the breastplate of the high priest, beginning with Aaron, there were twelve precious stones each inscribed with the name of one of the tribes of Israel, the illuminations of the commentary to *Revelation* by Beatus of Liébana place the twelve precious stones of the heavenly Jerusalem, each “in the shape of a coloured circle placed over the head or at the feet of each of the twelve apostles, together with the name of the apostle and the stone”¹³⁷. In the copies of the *Liber Floridus*¹³⁸, consider “the illumination from a 13th century manuscript held nowadays in Paris where Heavenly Jerusalem is in the shape of a disc divided not into twelve concentric circles, but into twelve identical triangular pieces. The angel and St. John are again drawn in the lower plan of the illumination; the main motif of the illumination being, however, the throne in front of which the water of life springs and the tree of life grows (cf. *Rev.* 22, 1–2)”¹³⁹.

Jewellery is involved in another sense in a poem in English from medieval England, *Pearl*, opening with the description of a landscape and featuring a dialogue between the Dreamer and the Pearl Maiden; Rosalind Field claims that in *Pearl*, “the vision of the New Jerusalem is the culmination of the poem, the peak of the Dreamer’s experience for which the earlier landscapes and dialogue are preparatory. It is at the very least a bold stroke on the part of the *Pearl* poet to combine the vision of St John the Divine with that of his own not-very-sanctified narrator. I would suggest that in so doing he has provided a fitting climax to his poem, and one which has been underestimated”¹⁴⁰.

¹³⁶ Quoted from the very beginning of HANA ŠEDINOVÁ, “The Precious Stones of Heavenly Jerusalem in the Medieval Book Illustration and Their Comparison with the Wall Incrustation in St. Wenceslas Chapel”, *Artibus et Historiae*, 21(41) (2000) 31–47.

¹³⁷ Quoted from p. 33, col. 2, in ŠEDINOVÁ, “The Precious Stones of Heavenly Jerusalem”.

¹³⁸ Concerning the *Liber Floridus*, see E. NISSAN, review of ALBERT DEROLEZ, *The Making and Meaning of the Liber Floridus: A Study of the Original Manuscript*, Ghent, University Library MS 92 (Studies in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art History, 76, London & Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, an imprint of Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), in *Philology: An International Journal on the Evolution of Languages, Cultures and Texts* [Bern: Peter Lang], 2 (2016 [2017]) 339–357. The book review is also at http://www.ingentaopen.com/content/journals/10.3726/PHIL2016_339

¹³⁹ ŠEDINOVÁ, p. 33, col. 1. “[T]he twelve towers (gates) in the illumination in the Parisian copy of the *Liber floridus* are laid out regularly round the circle, not three at each world side as in the Oxford manuscript; the Lamb inside the inner circle is also missing” (*ibid.*).

¹⁴⁰ On p. 7 in ROSALIND FIELD, “The Heavenly Jerusalem in *Pearl*”, *The Modern Language Review*, 81(1), 1986, pp. 7–17, “Material drawn from the Apocalypse was well suited to the taste of a late medieval courtly audience. Commentators and artists had changed the awesome and rather

1.6. Rome, the Eternal City in Imperial Propaganda, and the Early Christian Critique of the Concept in *Hebrews* 13:14: The Denial of the μένουσα πόλις (“city that remains”), Which Likewise the Earthly Jerusalem is Not

Quite importantly for our present concerns in our study, in early Christian notions of the heavenly Jerusalem there appears to be not only a contrast to the destroyed earthly Jerusalem, but also (in *Hebrews* 13:14) a critique of imperial Rome, conceived in imperial propaganda as the Eternal City. Jason Whitlark writes:

For the most part, interpreters of Heb 13:14 are content not to venture a guess about the city that does not remain. The reason for this is likely the belief that this oblique reference is generalizable to any city. The figured reference, “here we do not have a city that remains”, if it is taken as critique, however, implies that there was such a present earthly city for which claims were being made about its enduring existence and the hopes connected to that reality. That “remaining city” (ἡένουσα πόλις) in 13:14 suggests “eternal city” is implied not only by the notion of ἡένουσα (the author has already used ἡένουσα to describe the eternal possession for which the audience hopes in 10:34 [cf. John 6:27]) but also by denying to the present city what the coming city with which it is contrasted possesses, that is, true eternity, as will be discussed below. Was there then any city at the time *Hebrews* was written that claimed to be eternally abiding as the foundation of the hopes associated with that city? If so, for the first audience of *Hebrews*, the exhortation not to identify with a present earthly city (v. 13, “Let us go to [Jesus] outside the camp”) and its claims (namely, that it was eternal or abiding) would have suggested to their minds a very particular city. There was one city for which a claim to eternity was paramount in the first and second centuries C.E. — Rome¹⁴¹.

In fact, Whitlark points out¹⁴²:

The present-day popular epithet for Rome, “the eternal city”, goes back as far as the first century B.C.E. Among the textual evidence, Tibullus is the

grotesque nature of the Apocalypse into one of romance and beauty with a spiritual message of hope and joy, and it is such elements that are emphasized in the *Pearl* poet’s highly selective use of his source. Illustrated Apocalypse manuscripts, notable for their quantity and quality in England for two centuries preceding the poem, may have provided the poet with an additional source of inspiration, [...]” (*ibid.*). See MURIEL A. WHITAKER, “*Pearl* and Some Illustrated Apocalypse Manuscripts”, *Viator*, 12 (1981) 183–196.

¹⁴¹ Quoted from p. 171 in JASON A. WHITLARK, “‘Here We Do Not Have a City That Remains’: A Figured Critique of Roman Imperial Propaganda in *Hebrews* 13:14”, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 131(1) (2012) 161–179.

¹⁴² WHITLARK, pp. 172–173.

first to mention this phrase. In *Elegies* 2.5.23, he writes, “Not yet had Romulus traced the walls of the eternal city” (*Romulus aeternae nondum formaverat urbis moenia*). Ovid also refers to Rome as the eternal city (*aeternae urbis*; *Fast.* 3.72). In Livy’s history of Rome, we find the phrases “the city having been established forever” (*in aeternum urbe condita*; 4.4.4; 25.28.11) and “the blessed city of Rome, unconquerable and eternal” (*beatam urbem Romanam et invictam et aeternam*; 5.7.10). At a time when the confidence of the Roman people needed restoration, ROMA PERPETVA and AETERNITAS P R appear on the coin legends of Vespasian. Also from the Flavian period, a decree from Acmonia in Phrygia is validated by the formula “by the eternity of Rome”.

With the building of the temple in Rome to Roma Aeternitas and Venus Felix by Hadrian, *aeterna* becomes an increasingly fixed modifier of Roma and *urbs*. At this point Rome as the *urbs aeterna* becomes an official formula in imperial parlance. Consequently, from Hadrian on, the legend ROMA AETERNA is regularly stamped on imperial coins.

Rome is impermanent, nor is its enjoyment eternal, unlike the spiritual enjoyment the faithful are to expect:

[...] For the author and his audience, Rome, its city and its rule, belong to this shakable realm. It will not survive the final shaking. In typical Jewish apocalyptic fashion, Hebrews’ hope in a coming, heavenly Jerusalem thwarts the triumph of Rome and its imperial victories, even over the earthly Jerusalem — a victory used to substantiate its own imperial claims to rule the nations.

Additionally, although the imperial discourse touted an eternal capital and ongoing imperial state, it did not boast of the imperial citizens’ eternal enjoyment of its kingdom. The author of Hebrews, however, boasts of the abiding enjoyment of the heavenly Jerusalem by God’s people (12:22–24) — something Rome could not offer.

2. More on Cassiopeia and the Andromeda Myth

2.1. Andromeda: Even in Greek Comedy

As a “woman play”, Eva Stehle¹⁴³ pointed out concerning Aristophanes’ comedy *Thesmophoriazousai*, originally produced in 411 B.C.E., “seems less satisfactory than *Lysistrata* or *Ekklesiazousai* because it has no female lead character and Euripi-

¹⁴³ EVA STEHLE, “The Body and Its Representations in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazousai*: Where Does the Costume End?”, *The American Journal of Philology*, 123(3), in the special issue “Performing / Transforming Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazousai*” (Autumn 2002) 369–406.

des' nameless kinsman ([Greek *kēdestēs*] whom I [i.e., Stehle] call 'Inlaw') upstages the women and their concerns"¹⁴⁴. *Thesmophoriazousai* — Stehle remarks — “is the only one of Aristophanes' surviving plays in which the principal male characters exit the stage before the end of the play. Here they flee, in female dress to boot, leaving the chorus to play out the final scene with the Scythian slave. Euripides and Inlaw do not share in the fun of sending the slave running in one wrong direction then another. And the play ends as it began, on Nesteia, the day of fasting for the women performing the Thesmophoria"¹⁴⁵. Stehle also states¹⁴⁶:

Euripides' plot fit for a “barbarian nature” (1129) is rather a farcical version of his own rescue-play plot: like *Helen* and *Andromeda* it involves deceiving the blocking figure, which allows the principals to escape while leaving others (chorus or a god) to thwart the chase. But its success is based on abandoning pure representation and giving the “real” (within the world of the play) woman away to the internal audience in order to rescue a pseudo-woman.

“After he is exposed as a man, Inlaw plays two small segments of male theatrical roles from Euripides' plays”¹⁴⁷. Echoing *Telephos*, Inlaw “grabs a baby as hostage and climbs an altar à la Telephos, threatening to sacrifice the child unless he is released. But he bungles this ploy when he discovers that the baby is a wineskin: he insists on ‘sacrificing’ it, even though the ‘mother’ offers to do anything in return for getting it back. He probably drinks the wine himself”¹⁴⁸. After taking a cue from Euripides' *Palamedes*, Inlaw turns to playing Helen from Euripides' *Helen*.

Inlaw has been playing the woman since he arrived at the Thesmophoria, but by taking on a female tragic role he moves closer to Agathon's mode of purely theatrical existence. His persona connected to the Trojan War is reminiscent of Agathon's role as a chorus of Trojan maidens.

A magistrate breaks up the first parody by bringing on a Scythian archer, who ties Inlaw to a board and stays to guard him. In this interlude between parodies, Inlaw initiates a countermove to his “Agathonification” by admitting a more unpretentious male identity. He begs the magistrate to divest him of his female dress and expose him naked (939–42) so that, old man that he is, he not

¹⁴⁴ STEHLE, p. 369.

¹⁴⁵ STEHLE, p. 370.

¹⁴⁶ STEHLE, p. 371.

¹⁴⁷ STEHLE, p. 389.

¹⁴⁸ STEHLE, p. 390.

be an object of mockery to the ravens as they eat him. Despite his change of tone, the magistrate refuses and leaves Inlaw in the theatrical position of an immobilized virgin. A little later (1021), at the beginning of the second parody, Inlaw prays to be allowed to go home to his wife. This is the first we hear that Inlaw has a wife¹⁴⁹.

Then Andromeda, as a role in a play inside a play, comes into the picture:

The second parody completes Inlaw's transformation into a duplicate of Agathon. Inlaw does not choose his role this time; he sees Euripides flash out as Perseus and realizes that the role of Andromeda from Euripides' *Andromeda* has been assigned to him. This parody operates in a different mode from the first one. Whereas the first was a simple dialogue between "Helen" and "Menelaus", now theater takes over the scene more thoroughly. Stage effects and characters required by the tragedy duly appear, without explanation or motivation. Inlaw melds himself with Andromeda and her situation so deeply that the two cannot be disentangled. [...] Inlaw replaces Andromeda's desire to lament in peace (probably to lament the loss of the marriage for which this fate substitutes)¹⁵⁰ with his own desire to recover his marriage. In the lines that follow, Inlaw alter-

¹⁴⁹ STEHLE, p. 391.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. the lament of Jephthah's daughter, in the biblical Book of Judges. In rabbinic homiletics, there is a tradition that plugs the character of Phineas into the Jephthah narrative (this being an instance of the late antique device of ascribing exceeding longevity to a biblical character, beyond Scripture's narrated time of his or her appearance there, with this making it possible to make that character also appear in the expanded version of a biblical narrative at different temporal intervals of sacred history). Jephthah is blamed because, having made a foolish vow and considering himself to be bound to apply the consequences to his own daughter, nevertheless he did not seek exoneration from it. Out of pride, he did not consult the religious authority of his days, identified as Phineas; and Phineas in turn, out of pride, did not take the initiative of disabusing Jephthah of his error. Because of the pride of both, Jephthah's daughter was the loser. Phineas was punished with the loss of prophecy, and Jephthah, by losing his own body parts one by one, which is taken to explain out why he was buried (*Judges* 12:7) "in the towns of Gilead" (as though this means he was not buried in just one of them). Sources for the legend of Jephthah losing, while still alive, body parts — which were buried in different towns of Gilead — include *Genesis Rabbah* 60:4 and *Leviticus Rabbah* 37:4. In the medieval Hebrew *Tales of Ben Sira*, in which the child prodigy Ben Sira is faced with Nebuchadnezzar (like the smart boor Marcolf with King Solomon, according to a European Christian humorous tradition), the behaviour of Jephthah is explained without resorting to mentioning Phineas, and Jephthah being buried "in the towns of Gilead" is still aetiologised as having been a punishment for what he did to his daughter, but it is not like his members fell off while he was alive. Rather: "Once he died, they buried him. Right away, they found his bones dispersed in the towns of Gilead. And wherever the Israelites would recognise his bones, they would bury them". How the scattered bones would be recognised as being Jephthah's is not explained. Perhaps, within the economy of the tale, it was assumed that on finding a limb on bone above the ground without the rest of the body or of the skeleton would lend weight to the hypothesis that it was Jephthah's.

nates runs of masculine and feminine self-references as he describes his plight and hers. To add to the intermingling of identities, he sometimes attributes his Inlaw character's experience to Andromeda and vice versa. Many of his lines of laments apply to either, like 1022: "Pitiless is he who bound me"¹⁵¹.

2.2. Further Receptions of Andromeda: Heliodorus' Queen Persinna, the Theory of Maternal Imagination, and the Late Antique Rabbinic Parallel of the Black-Skinned Couple (*Genesis Rabbah* 73:7) or Royal Couple (*Numbers Rabbah* 9:43)

In the homiletic work *Genesis Rabbah*, authored in the Land of Israel in late Roman imperial times¹⁵² and whose language is a mix of Aramaic and Hebrew, one comes across the following brief narrative in Hebrew (*Genesis Rabbah* 73:7)¹⁵³: "It came to pass, concerning a Cushite (Black) man, who wed a Cushite (Black) woman and generated from her a white son. The father grasped this son and came to R[abbi] [i.e., Judah the Patriarch¹⁵⁴, d. ca. 219 C.E.] and told him: 'Perhaps he is not my son'. He told him: 'Had thou [painted human] images at thy home?' He told him: 'Yes'. He told him: 'Black or white?' He told him: 'White'. He told him: 'This is why you have a white son'". (The context is homiletics about how the patriarch Jacob, as a shepherd, had the ewes stare at sticks whose outward appearance suggested the skin pattern he wanted their future lambs to display. The notion in folk-genetics is the same in both narratives.) A longer variant is found in *Numbers Rabbah* 9:43: "A king of the Arabs asked Rabbi Akiva: 'I am a Cushite and my wife is a Cushite, and she has given birth to a white son. Am I to kill her, as she committed adultery?' He told him: 'Are the images in thy house black or white (f.pl.)?' He told him: 'White (f.pl.)'. He told him: 'When thou wert busy with her [i.e., during sexual intercourse], she beheld

¹⁵¹ STEHLE, p. 392.

¹⁵² "It is generally agreed that the earliest extant work of aggadic midrash is *Genesis Rabba*. [In 1832, Leopold] Zunz, the pioneering scholar of midrashic literature, opined that this work, which is basically written in classical Palestinian Aramaic, was composed during the sixth century. However, [Chanokh] Albeck has adduced cogent proofs for an even earlier date: 425–500 CE". Quoted from p. 149 in MYRON BIALIK LERNER, "The Works of Aggadic Midrash and the Esther Midrashim", Chapter 3 in *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part*, edited by S. SAFRAI, Z. SAFRAI, J. SCHWARTZ, and P.J. TOMSON, Assen, The Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, and Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006, pp. 133–229 [the cumulative bibliography is on pp. 645–710].

¹⁵³ The passage is in Nissan's translation, There exists an English translation (we did not use) by JACOB ISRAELSTAM, *Midrash Rabbah*, Vol. 1: *Genesis Rabbah*, London: Soncino Press, 1961, repr. 1983.

¹⁵⁴ See on him AHARON OPPENHEIMER, *Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi: Statesman, Reformer, and Redactor of the Mishnah*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

the white images, and gave birth accordingly”¹⁵⁵. This is followed with reference to Jacob and his manipulation of the ewes in *Genesis* 30. “And the king of the Arabs thanked Rabbi Akiva”. The context in *Numbers Rabbah* is the precept of the ritual intended to give a jealous husband peace of mind (through a conditional curse to come into effect if the wife was guilty).

Attilio Mastrocinque points out a Gnostic occurrence of the idea¹⁵⁶:

In the context of Gnostic traditions, as they are described by Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius, and according to the Gnostic Nag Hammadi library, we learn that these supposed “heretics” conceived the supreme god’s first manifestation in human form, the Anthropos.¹⁵⁷ According to Gnostic ideas [*Gospel of Philip* 78], women who thought of their lovers during sexual intercourse with their husbands would conceive children similar to the lovers. Pagan thinkers were of the same opinion [Heliodorus, *Ethiopicae* IV. 8]. Some Gnostic theologians maintained that the divine Wisdom — called Achamot — created while contemplating the Savior’s angels [Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I.4.5 and 5.6]. Valentinus said that the divine Mother produced Jesus by thinking of the most sublime things [Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I.11.1]. The devotees of Barbelo said that Ialdabaoth contemplated the material substance and created Nous, a

¹⁵⁵ That theory underlies one of two anecdotes in the Babylonian Talmud, tractate *Berakhot* 20a. One sage, R. Giddal, used to sit at the gates of a ritual bath and give women instructions; he told colleagues who objected lest he be tempted, that to him, those women were like white geese (exciting no sexual desire). R. Johanan used to sit at the gates a bath; he said that he wanted the women going there to see him, so they would conceive children as handsome as he was. In a review NISSAN published in *Fabula*, 52(3/4), 2011, pp. 316–320, of: STEPHEN BELCHER, *African Myths of Origin* (Penguin Classics), London: Penguin Books, 2005, Nissan pointed out the following. *Bagirmi* is the name of a kingdom to the south-east of Lake Chad (also spelt *Baguirmi*, for a region in Chad east of the Cameroon northern panhandle’s border). It is folk-etymologised as follows. The birth, in Yemen, of a black child into the white family of ‘Abd el Tukuru, of Muhammad’s line, is unjustly ascribed to adultery (BELCHER, *African Myths of Origin*, p. 357). The woman and the baby survive unscathed an attempted execution by burning, and the man’s sister tells him: *Bággar myya!* (colloquial Arabic for “One hundred heads of cattle!”), but Belcher has “a hundred cows”), requesting compensation for his wife. Later the father orders his black son to travel to Africa. Belcher relates this based on information in Viviana Pâques, *Le Roi pêcheur et le roi chasseur* [BELCHER, *African Myths of Origin*, p. 483, omits the circumflex] (Strasbourg, France: Travaux de l’Institut d’anthropologie de Strasbourg, 1977).

¹⁵⁶ On p. 77 in A. MASTROCINQUE, *Kronos, Shiva, & Asklepios: Studies in Magical Gems and Religions of the Roman Empire* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, Vol. 101, No. 5), Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2011.

¹⁵⁷ G. QUISPÉL, “Der gnostische Anthropos und die Jüdische Tradition”, *Eranos Jahrbuch*, 22 (1953) 195–234, reprinted in *Gnostic Studies*, I (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut in het Nabije Oosten, 1974).

snake-like divine being, and then he listened to his mother's voice and created Man [Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I.30.5–6.]. According to other traditions, the Archons once saw a bright image in the sky and created Man [Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I.24.17.]; and again, Divine Providence (Pronoia) saw the perfect angel in the sky, the heavenly Adam, and let flow toward the earth a few rays of her own light, from which Adam was born¹⁵⁸; or, according to other authors, Adam was born from the fallen semen of Archons¹⁵⁹. The doctrine of the Peratae speculated a lot about contemplation and generation through the body's different organs¹⁶⁰.

The motif of a white woman giving birth to a black baby son because of what she had been looking at when she conceived, was a conspicuous one in the early modern history of printing in the English language, as Mary Fissell showed in a study¹⁶¹.

¹⁵⁸ *Origin of the World* 108, 113, and 115 (*Coptic Gnostic Library*, H.2, 52-3, 61–62, and 65).

¹⁵⁹ *Origin of the World* 114 (*Coptic Gnostic Library*, II.2, p. 63).

¹⁶⁰ Hippolytus, *Refutatio haeresium* V.17.11–12; cf. F. MICHELINI TOCCI, “La cosmogonia dei Perati e il gregge di Giacobbe (e Dante)” in *Omaggio a Piero Treves*, edited by A. MASTROCINQUE (Padova: Antenore, 1983), pp. 249–260. For other passages on the same theme of contemplation and generation, see Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1.2, 3; 29.4; *Nature of the Archontes* 94 and 99; Pseudo-Clemens, *Homilia* VIII.18.2.

¹⁶¹ MARY E. FISSELL, “Hairy Women and Naked Truths: Gender and the Politics of Knowledge in *Aristotle's Masterpiece*”, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 60(1), thematic issue on “Sexuality in Early America” (Jan. 2003), pp. 43–74, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3491495> Nissan is grateful to Jeb McLeish of Edinburgh for bringing Fissell's article to his attention in 2010.

“Midwifery books of the 1670s and 1680s [...] devoted much more attention to resemblance between all parents and their children than did previous midwifery texts. This crisis in paternity had multiple roots. [...] Some of the crisis may be due to longer-term intellectual changes that gradually made similitude a happenstance rather than an indicator of profound connection” (Fissell, p. 65). From antiquity to the mid 18th century, the theory of maternal imagination had currency. It claimed that white parents could have a black child (or vice versa) if the mother, at the time of conception, saw or imagined a man with the other skin colour. A pregnant woman seeing an image of St. John the Baptist wearing hairy skins (or himself hairy) was believed to have given birth to a hairy daughter, who was depicted on the frontispiece of several 17th and early 18th century midwifery books, along with a black child: “Similarly, the black baby was born to a white couple who had a picture of a black man hanging in their bedroom. At the moment of conception, the woman looked at the painting, and the image supposedly imprinted itself on the child-to-be” (Fissell, p. 44). Books sometimes even suggested, Fissell points out, that a woman could deceive her husband by imagining her husband while having intercourse with her lover, so her illegitimate child would resemble her husband rather than her lover. In his 1560 *Histoires Prodigieuses*, translated into English in 1569, Pierre Boistuaun “detailed how this unfortunate woman had been presented to Charles IV, king and emperor of Bohemia”, and then “turned to the black baby, saying that Hippocrates saved a white princess falsely accused of adultery when she gave birth to a black child by explaining that the

Andromeda comes into the picture as, quite literally, a picture referred to by a narrative inside Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, from the third century C.E.¹⁶²

Central both to the work [*Aethiopica*] and its conclusion is the story told by the Ethiopian queen, Persinna, about the conception of her daughter Charikleia. As the white daughter of black Ethiopian parents, Charikleia will inevitably expose her mother to the suspicion (indeed, the virtual certainty) of adultery. To avoid what Mentz calls this "misinterpretation" [...], Persinna hands over her infant daughter for exposure. She does, however, endow the infant with a stock of jewels, including the magical "Pantarbe", and a sash on which the story of Charikleia's parentage is embroidered in the "Ethiopian hieratic script"¹⁶³.

Aethiopica has Persinna tell her story in her own words:

I, Persinna, Queen of the Ethiopians, inscribe this record of woe as a final gift to my daughter, mine only in the pain of her birth, by whatever name she may be called. That it was not from guilt, my child, that I exposed you at birth as I did and concealed you from all sight of your father, Hydaspes, I swear as the Sun, the founder of our race, is my witness. Nevertheless, I now one day plead my cause before you, my daughter, if you live, if heaven vouchsafe you a deliverer, and before the whole human race, by revealing my reason for abandoning you.

[An artist] made use of the romance of Perseus and Andromeda to adorn [our] bedchamber. It was there one day that your father and I happened to be taking a siesta in the drowsy heat of summer. Ten years had passed since Hydaspes made me his wife, and still no child had been born to us. But that day your father made love to me, swearing that he was commanded to do so by a dream, and I knew instantly that the act of love had made me pregnant¹⁶⁴.

child's color was owing to the maternal imagination" (FISSELL, p. 48). "Both the black baby and the hairy woman pointed to the instability of paternity: a mother's imagination might erase marks of the father. Appearance could not be a sure guide to blood relationship" (FISSELL, p. 64).

¹⁶² "The *Aethiopika* is the ancient world's narratological *summa*, a self-consciously encyclopaedic synthesis of a thousand years of accumulated pagan plot techniques, and of the game of story as a way of understanding the world. For the next millennium and more, it remained the final word". Quoted from N.H. LOWE, *The Classical Plot and the Invention of Western Narrative* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 258. The quotation appears in the opening paragraph of JONATHAN CREWE, "Believing the Impossible: *Aethiopika* and Critical Romance", *Modern Philology*, 106(4) (2009) 601–616.

¹⁶³ CREWE, p. 606.

¹⁶⁴ CREWE, p. 606, his brackets. We omit the continuation of Persinna's narration. Crowe quoted it in Morgan's translation: Heliodorus, *An Ethiopian Story*, trans. J.R. MORGAN, in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, edited by BRYAN P. REARDON, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, pp. 433–434.

Jonathan Crewe remarked¹⁶⁵:

¹⁶⁵ CREWE, pp. 607–608. The story of Persinna’s daughter somewhat resembles one version of Jewish tales about the background of the biblical Asenath, Joseph’s Egyptian wife. The tale claims that Dinah, Jacob’s daughter who was raped by Shechem, gave birth to a baby girl (Asenath), who then was abandoned in Egypt. A golden lamina was dangling from her neck, inscribed with her story, so she is found by Potiphara who, understanding she is of noble birth, raises her as his daughter.

This and other tale variants about Asenath are listed, and their appearance in rabbinic texts briefly discussed, in the chapter “Asenath bat Dinah, ve-ta’am shmah” (in Hebrew), on pp. 128–129 in Vol. 1 of *Alfa beta tinyena di-Shmu’el Ze’era* by R. SHMUEL ASHKENAZI, edited and published in two volumes in Jerusalem by R. YAAKOV STAHL, 2011 (S. ASHKENAZI, *Alfa beta tinyena di Shmu’el Ze’era* = A Second Lexicon by Samuel Minor [in Hebrew], 2 vols., edited by Y. STAHL. Jerusalem: Y. Stahl [28C Hayye Adam Street], 2011.). Arguably, within the cluster of variants of tales about Asenath (Asenath) and Joseph), this particular variant used a motif made popular by Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, from the third century C.E., in particular by the story it contains of Persinna and Charikleia, who is abandoned with a sash on which the story of Charikleia’s parentage is embroidered.

The versions of the Jewish tales about Asenath were discussed at length by VICTOR (AVIGDOR) APTOWITZER (b. Ternopil, Ukraine, 1871, d. Tel-Aviv, 1942), in his article “The Wife of Joseph: A Haggadic Literary-Historical Study”, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 1, 1924, pp. 239–306 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43301987>). Aptowitz listed three strands of Jewish tales about Asenath: “1. Asenath, the wife of Joseph, was actually of the tribe and family of Jacob and was one of his descendants. 2. Asenath was the deliverer of Joseph. 3. Asenath was a *pious* and *upright* woman, a Ruth. Hence there are three legends regarding Asenath: the *legend of her descent*, the *legend of her deliverance of Joseph*, and the *legend of her piety*. The law of cause and effect was applied to the explanation of these three legends, and resulted in the early combining of the legend of Asenath’s descent with that of her piety. Why was Asenath, who was brought up in Egyptian idol-worship, pious and upright? Because she was of the family of Jacob” (APTOWITZER, pp. 242–243).

Let us focus on how Aptowitz dealt with the legend of Asenath’s descent (APTOWITZER, pp. 243–256). He gave the *précis* of five versions, plus of variants of two of them. Let us begin with the first version, which appears in chapter 38 of *Pirqa de-Rabbi Eliezer*: “I. Dinah was the mother of Asenath. Her brothers wished to put her to death, because if this were not done, it would be said that a daughter of illicit intercourse was tolerated in the house of Jacob. Jacob, however, suspended around her neck a golden lozenge on which he had engraved the Holy Name and sent her (Dinah) away. Michael brought her to Egypt, where she (Asenath) was brought up in the house of the childless Potiphara” (APTOWITZER, pp. 243–244). The second version appears in the *Midrash Agadah*, edited by SALOMON BUBER [b. 1827, d. 1906], I.97: “II. When Jacob left Shechem, he wrote down the story of the violation of Dinah by Shechem on a golden tablet. When Dinah subsequently gave birth to Asenath, Jacob hung this tablet about her neck and exposed her near the wall of Egypt. On the same day Potiphara was taking a walk, accompanied by his retinue, and approached the wall. He heard the child weeping and commanded his followers to bring it to him. When he noticed the tablet and read the inscription, he said to his followers, ‘This child is the daughter of eminent people. Carry it into my house and procure a nurse for it’ Thus she was brought up in his house” (APTOWITZER, p. 244). Clearly, this version was shaped in part after the *Exodus* narrative about the baby Moses being rescued from the Nile by Pharaoh’s daughter and her maidservants. This is also the version that comes closer to the narrative of Persinna and Charikleia.

As for the third version, which appears in the Pentateuch’s *Tosafot* (additions) in *Hadar-Zeqenim*, 19c, Aptowitz wrote: “III. Asenath was the daughter of Dinah. They wanted to kill her, but Jacob had compassion on her. He suspended an amulet around her neck, and exposed her in a thornbush. Potiphara found the child and had it brought up in his house. When Joseph rode through

the streets of Egypt in royal pomp, the women crowded around in order to behold his beauty, and threw ornaments to him as presents. Asenath, however, used her amulet for this purpose. Joseph examined it and learned therefrom that Asenath belonged to his family” (APTOWITZER, pp. 244–245).

Aptowitz remarked: “The amulet was to be Asenath’s birth certificate, as it were, so that Joseph, for whom Asenath had long previously been destined, might ascertain her descent. Without this knowledge, the tendency of the legend to the effect that Joseph did not marry a woman of a non-Israelitish tribe would have been wasted. It is, therefore, absolutely essential to regard the story of the handing of the amulet to Joseph as having formed an original part of the *Pirke*” (APTOWITZER, pp. 245–246), even though it is missing from the text of *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* we have.

Moreover, there is a variant of the third version, which occurs in a medieval text, Bachya’s commentary to *Genesis* 41:45 (Bachya was ascribing this to a midrashic source): “III. Asenath was the daughter of Dinah bt [= daughter of] Shechem. Jacob drove her out of his house and exposed her in a thornbush, the derivation of the name [*Asēnath*] being from [*sēneh* ‘thornbush’]. He bound around the neck of the child a document which contained the following words: ‘whoso joins himself unto thee joins himself unto the seed of Jacob’. When, therefore, Joseph married Asenath, he noticed the writing, preserved it, and subsequently showed it to his father” (APTOWITZER, p. 246). According to Bachya, this is what Joseph was referring to in *Genesis* 48:9, concerning the two sons he was given by God “here” (i.e., in Egypt; “They are my sons, whom God hath given me here”; see APTOWITZER, p. 252).

A fourth variant is found in *Kodex Sachau*, no. 70 of the Berlin Library. Aptowitz, who has copious footnotes to this version, gave this *précis* in the main text: “IV. When Jacob and his sons, Simeon and Levi, had found out that Dinah was with child by Shechem, they threatened her with death if the seed of Shechem would be born; when the day approached on which Dinah was to give birth, she went out into the wilderness. There she gave birth to a girl. She laid the child down and stationed herself weeping behind a thorn-bush. An eagle, whose nest was in Egypt, where it received its sustenance from the sacrifices of On, the deity of the Egyptians, carried off the child and brought it to the altar of On. On the following morning, when Potiphar, the priest of On, ascended the altar for the purpose of burning incense, he noticed the girl. He rushed back to his house in great haste, and related the miracle to his wife. Both of them hastened forthwith to the temple of On, where they found the child protected by the outspread wings of the eagle. Potiphar’s wife adopted the child, secured a nurse for it, and both rejoiced exceedingly, for they were childless. When the girl grew up, Potiphar had a sumptuous house built and presented it to her for residence, and in addition he procured maidens to serve as her attendants. Many sons of princes courted Asenath, but she was not favorably disposed towards any of them. However, when Pharaoh conferred royal powers upon Joseph, and equipped him in splendid fashion, he took the daughter of the highpriest [*sic*] Potiphar, i.e. the daughter of Dinah, as his wife. When Jacob subsequently came down to Egypt with his family, and Dinah was greeting her brother and his wife, she ascertained the manner in which Asenath had come to the house of Potiphar, examined the swaddling-clothes in which the foundling child had been wrapped up, and in this way she realized that Asenath was her daughter” (APTOWITZER, pp. 246–247). “The editor characterizes this narration as a Jewish tale, which passed over into Syrian literature” (APTOWITZER, p. 249). However, Aptowitz remarked, the fact that “the salient features of this narrative are mentioned in many works in the name of the Jews, does not prove anything with regard to its origin, because it is quite possible that it may have been adopted by the Jews *at a later period*” (APTOWITZER, p. 250). In the 15th century, a Jewish author, Aaron ben Gerson Alrabi of Sicily, in his Commentary to the Pentateuch and to Rashi’s commentary to *Genesis* 46:6, “quotes features of our narration in the name of ‘our teachers’: ‘I found it written in the sayings

of our teachers that Asenath, the daughter of Potiphar, was the daughter of (Shechem, the son of) Chamor, who violated Dinah. When Dinah gave birth to a girl, she exposed it in the open field. The eagle came, carried the child away, and laid it upon the altar of Potiphar, who had her brought up in his house, and then gave her in marriage to Joseph” (APTOWITZER, p. 250).

A variant for the fourth version, IVA, is found in the writings of an 11th-century Muslim author, Ibn Ḥazm, who attacked the legend he was reporting, in the context of “a severe polemic against several assertions and claims of the Jewish scholars, which he quotes from their books” (APTOWITZER, p. 251). Ibn Ḥazm stated: “Then they say, furthermore, in several of their books that, after Shechem, the son of Chamor, had violated Dinah and had acted unchastely towards her, Dinah became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter, and that an eagle carried off this bastard child and brought her to Egypt, where she was placed in the chamber of Joseph, who brought her up and subsequently took her as his wife. This story resembles the lying gossip which the women utter as they sit spinning in the night” (APTOWITZER, p. 251).

A fifth variant has it that “V. Dinah gave birth to her child in the house of her parents. However, the child either was born partially blind, or lost one eye subsequently as a result of her exposure, for which Jacob himself was responsible” (APTOWITZER, p. 253). There is a statement to the effect that Asenath was blind in one eye, in *Genesis Rabbah* 97, in a context such that Jacob (also known as Israel), faced with Joseph’s children, asks Joseph who they are, because of his displeasure with the future king Jeroboam, who would lead the people astray, being descended from them. Aptowitz wrote: “In my opinion, there is reason to believe that in the following remarkable passage in *Genesis Rabah*, i.e. to Gen. 48. 8–9, an allusion is made to our legend: ‘When, however, Israel perceived the sons of Joseph, he asked, ‘who are these’. Said Rabbi Ammi, ‘who is that one who is destined one day to lead Israel astray to idol-worship, and will cause fifty myriads of them to fall on one day’. And Joseph answered his father and said, ‘They are my sons, whom God hath given me [*bazze*, ‘here’, literally ‘in this’, but also, punningly, ‘in way of disparagement’]. He brought Asenath, *who was blind in one eye, near to him*’. This passage makes sense and is intelligible only if we understand it in the following manner: Jacob perceived unworthy descendants of the sons of Joseph in the spirit, and that this had its basis in the unworthiness of Joseph’s wife, since, as he thought, she was one of the daughters of Egypt. Hereupon, Joseph had his wife brought before him, and Jacob recognized that she was one of his family. The sign of recognition was the fact that she was half-blind” (APTOWITZER, pp. 252–253), and Aptowitz followed this with the text we quoted earlier, of version V.

Midrash Abkir, in *Yalqut Shim‘oni to Genesis*, §146, relates (in APTOWITZER’s words on p. 256): “When the wife of Potiphar complained of Joseph to her husband and slanderously accused him of wrong-doing, Potiphar wished to kill him. But his wife said to him, ‘If you have him killed, you will suffer pecuniary loss. Have him rather thrown into prison, until you are able to sell him’. Potiphar, however, insisted upon killing Joseph. *Thereupon Asenath came to Potiphar secretly and related to him under oath the true state affairs*. Then God spoke to her as follows, ‘By thy life, because thou hast defended him, the tribes which I wish to have originate from him will descend from thee’”. *Midrash Abkir* is not extant other than as fragments quoted elsewhere, but SALOMON BUBER edited and published *collectanea* from *Midrash Abkir*, in Vienna in 1883.

As for the versions collected by ASHKENAZI (supra, note 165, 2nd paragraph), a few of them also explain Asenath’s name, as though it was from Hebrew *sne* ‘bush’, as once she was sent away, she hid in thorny bushes. This appears in the commentary to *Genesis* 41:45 by Ḥazzaqūnī (literally, the imperative plural for ‘strengthen me’), i.e., Hezekiah ben R. Manoah, active in the second half of the 13th century. He cited an unknown midrash. That account also appears in a similar form in *Da‘at*

Zezenim and *Hadar Zezenim* (written in the circle of Franco-Germany's Tosaphists, the glossators of the Babylonian Talmud). In Ḥazzəqūnī's version, when the Vice-Roy Joseph travels in Egypt and the women come out to admire his beauty, they throw jewels at him, but Aseneth throws the lamina hanging from her neck. Joseph reads what is carved on it, realises they are relatives, and weds her.

As for *Joseph and Aseneth* from the *Apocrypha*, that book, presumably written within Egyptian Jewry, is dated to between the first century B.C.E. and the second century C.E. See the English translation with an introduction and critical notes by C. BURCHARD, on pp. 177–248 in Vol. 2 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. CHARLESWORTH, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1985. "Joseph and Aseneth is extant in sixteen Greek manuscripts, falling into at least four groups, and eight versions translated from the Greek, running to a rough total of seventy manuscripts" (BURCHARD, p. 178). In all likelihood, the book was originally written in Greek. Its plot is peculiar, and must have originated within Hellenistic Jewish literature in Egypt. Jewish literature in Hebrew or Aramaic is unaware of that plot. Burchard (following Philonenko and others) suggests that Hellenistic romance provided inspiration, "especially the erotic variety as represented by the Great Five: Chariton's *Chaereas and Calirrhoe*, Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesiaca*, Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, Achilles Tatius' *Clitophon and Leucippe*, and Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* [which is what interests us here]; or by Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* and *Cupid and Psyche*. Much like these stories, Joseph and Aseneth relates a love that is achieved with difficulty only to find itself exposed to dangerous adventures to which a happy end is wrought by the hand of a benign Fate (although adventure which makes up the bulk of the novels is represented by just one episode in *JosAsen*). In particular, as an utterly conceited heroine who is swept off her feet by a handsome male and then thrown into the blackest despair, from which she disentangles herself by self-abasement and supernatural assistance, Aseneth is a worthy companion of Xenophon's *Habrocomes* and *Anthia* or Apuleius' *Psyche*. The historian's touch which is discernible in *Joseph and Aseneth*, although in the biblical vein rather than the Greek, does not militate against this suggestion. This is characteristic of the hellenistic novel also, especially of Chariton" (BURCHARD, p. 183).

In *Joseph and Aseneth*, Aseneth is actually the daughter of an Egyptian priest, and she renounces idolatry and converts: "Aseneth is a beautiful virgin of eighteen years and the daughter of Pentephres, priest of Heliopolis and Pharaoh's chief counselor. Many princes, including Pharaoh's firstborn son, ask for her hand in marriage. She despises them all and prefers to live in her ornate penthouse above Pentephres' palace, where she worships countless idols. One day Joseph, touring Egypt to collect corn, announces his visit to her father. Pentephres tells Aseneth he is going to give her to Joseph in marriage. She refuses flatly, only to fall in love with Joseph when she sees him entering her father's house in royal attire. Now it is her time to be repudiated. A Jew who worships God and lives on the bread of life will not kiss a heathen woman who eats food offered to idols. Still Joseph is charitable enough to say a prayer for her conversion, then boards his chariot in order to gather more corn, promising to be back a week later. Utterly shaken, Aseneth destroys her idols, engages in a week of fasting and crying, and repents for both her conceit and idolatry. On the morning of the eighth day, the chief of God's angels comes to see her, declares her reborn, tells her that she is to be a mother city for all who would repent like her, feeds her a piece of honeycomb, which he says is the bread of life, and promises her that Joseph will come to marry her. He does; and the wedding ensues, performed and presided over by Pharaoh himself" (BURCHARD, p. 177).

Eight years later, according to *Joseph and Aseneth*, Pharaoh's firstborn becomes infatuated again with Aseneth, and manages to convince Dan and Gad (unlike Joseph's other brothers: this is because Dan and Gad were the sons of Jacob and the two maidservants of Leah and Rachel) to ambush and

One can hardly doubt that Persinna arranged Charikleia's exposure to avoid the suspicion of adultery, yet Persinna still has the thankless task of writing a loving but also self-justifying letter to a daughter she does not know and, to save her own skin, has abandoned to the mercies of fortune. In a rhetorical tour de force, written by Heliodorus in imitation of real or fictional letters written in antiquity, Persinna seeks to repair the damage while also defending herself against any accusations should the missing daughter somehow reappear. In addition to savoring Persinna's resourceful performance in this difficult rhetorical predicament, we may also savor the quick-wittedness with which she spins a tale of imprinting out of the Andromeda portrait on her bedroom wall. Romance indeed.

The theme of Andromeda being rescued by Perseus has been used in modern times as well. A coeval Romantic perception of Giuseppe Garibaldi cast him in the role of Perseus, and the Italian nation in the role of Andromeda, in line with the trend to personify a nation as a woman, according to the archetype of the goddess Rome.

Medusa belonged in Romantic and Victorian literary iconology, appropriations discussed by McGann (1972)¹⁶⁶. In Section 3, "The Medusa of Revolution", of his article "Melville, Garibaldi, and the Medusa of Revolution", Dennis Berthold writes¹⁶⁷ (1997: 449): "When [Herman Melville's] 'At the Hostelry' introduces Garibaldi as a 'Red-shirt Perseus' rescuing Andromeda, it implicates him in the slaying of Medusa, one of the most powerful emblems of revolution and emergent feminism in the nineteenth century". Cf. Hertz (1983)¹⁶⁸, Judson (2001)¹⁶⁹. "Although Melville could have seen Leonardo's painting at the Uffizi in 1857, his immediate source was probably Shelley's poem" (Berthold 1997: 456, note 10). "Melville employed Medusan iconogra-

kidnap Aseneth. They fail in this. "Levi, being a prophet, divines what is going on and comes running with his brothers — Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon — to slay Dan and Gad's men. These two attempt to kill Aseneth, but miraculously their swords fall from their hands. Aseneth pardons them and intercedes for them with her in-laws. Three days later Pharaoh's son dies, closely followed by his grief-stricken father. Joseph then reigns over Egypt for forty-eight years" (BURCHARD, p. 177).

¹⁶⁶ JEROME J. MCGANN, "The Beauty of the Medusa: A Study in Romantic Literary Iconology", *Studies in Romanticism*, 11 (1972) 3–25.

¹⁶⁷ DENNIS BERTHOLD, "Melville, Garibaldi, and the Medusa of Revolution", *American Literary History*, 9(3) (1997) 425–459.

¹⁶⁸ NEIL HERTZ, "Medusa's Head: Male Hysteria under Political Pressure", *Representations*, 4 (1983) 27–54. Reprinted in *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, pp. 161–192.

¹⁶⁹ BARBARA JUDSON, "The Politics of Medusa: Shelley's Physiognomy of Revolution", *ELH: A Journal of English Literary History*, 68(1) (2001) 135–154.

phy throughout his career, as Gail H. Coffier's¹⁷⁰ compendium of Melville's classical allusions indicate" (ibid.)¹⁷¹.

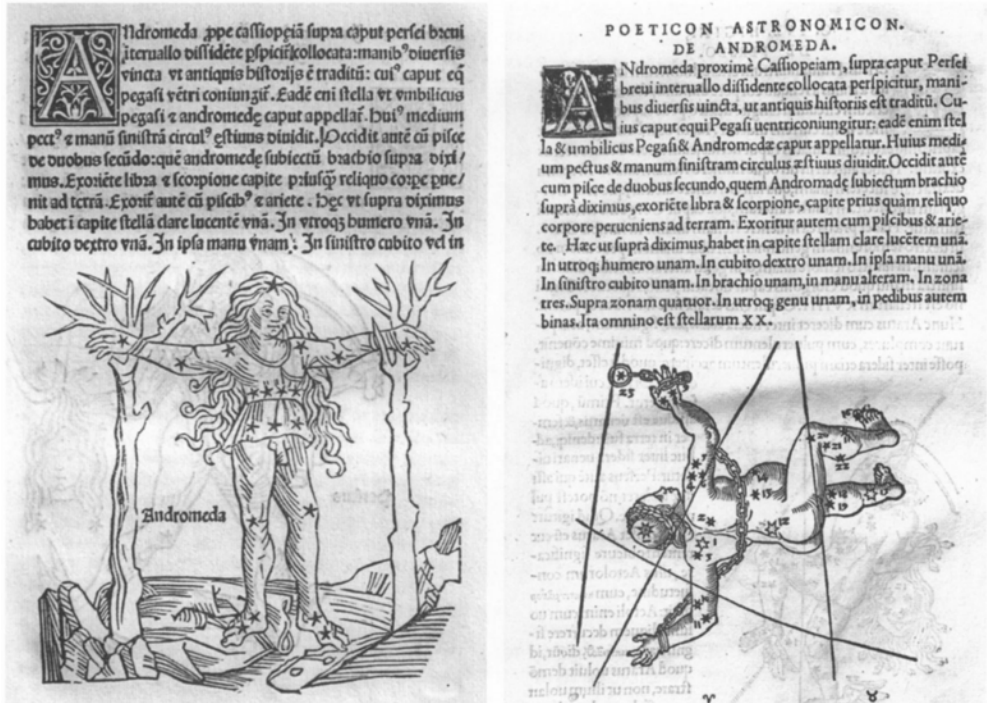


Fig. 18. “Andromeda from two editions of Hyginus, *Poeticon Astronomicon*. Left, the edition by Erhard Ratdolt, printed in Venice in 1482, with woodcut illustrations based on a medieval manuscript tradition connected with Michael Scot (*fl.* c. 1235), court astrologer to Emperor Frederick II. Right, Johannes Soter’s edition, printed in Cologne in 1534, with woodcut illustrations by Caspar Vopel”, p. 165 in ELLY DEKKER, “Caspar Vopel’s Ventures in Sixteenth-Century Celestial Cartography”, *Imago Mundi*, 62(2) (2010) 161–190.

¹⁷⁰ GAIL H. COFFLER, *Melville’s Classical Allusions: A Comprehensive Index and Glossary*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985.

¹⁷¹ On p. 115 in E. NISSAN, “Monsters from Myth, and Quests for a Scientific Rationale, Or, a Science Journalist’s Take on Mythological Animals. An Exploration of Matt Kaplan’s *The Science of Monsters*, with a Foray into Aetiologies and Cultural Uses of Medusa”, *Amaltea. Revista de mitocrítica* (Madrid), 10 (2018) 103–125.



Fig. 19. Detail of an Archaic-period Corinthian black-figure amphora (from Cerveteri, dated to the second quarter of the sixth century B.C.E.), depicting Perseus rescuing Andromeda from the ketos (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, F 1652. Fig. 19 on p. 207 in JOHN K. PAPADOPOULOS and DEBORAH RUSCILLO, “A Ketos in Early Athens: An Archaeology of Whales and Sea Monsters in the Greek World”, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 106(2) (2002) 187–227, after Fig. 190 in E. PFUHL, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, Vol. 3, Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1923). Note the shape of the head of the monster.



Fig. 20. Drawing of a Minoan clay sealing from Knossos depicting a creature of the water pitted against a man on a boat. (After SPYRIDON NIKOLAU MARINATOS, “Απαξ ἔτι περὶ μυθικῆς Σκύλας”, *Archaiologikon Deltion*, 11 (1927–1928) 53–54. Note the dog-like head of the monster.



Fig. 21. Perseus shows Andromeda the reflection in water of the head of Medusa, in the bodycolour painting *The Baleful Head* made by Edward Burne-Jones between 1875 and 1888, now at Southampton City Art Gallery in England. In that period, he also painted this in oil on canvas, and that other painting is at the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart.

In his paintings from the second half of the 19th century, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, a Pre-Raphaelite, painted some mythological paintings. One theme was the story of Perseus and Medusa, “which he illustrates between 1875 and 1878”, in the words of Liana De Girolami Cheney¹⁷², but what he depicted is the head of Medusa and the use Perseus and Athena make of it, not the living Medusa. “The Medusa-Andromeda story attracted Burne-Jones the most in the Perseus cycle. He felt bewitched by the imagery [...]”¹⁷³. “[H]e rejects the depiction of Medusa as a monster, which was popular in Archaic art, for a more idealized classical conception”¹⁷⁴. “In *The Doom Fulfilled* [...], Burne-Jones represents Andromeda liberated from her chains. Perseus uses Andromeda as bait for the sea-monster, rather than flying away with her and exhibiting the Medusa’s head. This would have brought the wrath of Poseidon down on the innocent people of Joppa (Java). He prefers instead to fight the sea-monster”¹⁷⁵. Of course, Joppa is the Mediterranean city of Jaffa, not the island of Java. In another painting, *The Baleful Head*, Perseus shows the now free (and finally dressed rather than naked) Andromeda the reflection in water of Medusa’s head.

2.3. The Queen of Sheba, Demonology, and the Shaping of her Early Life as a Version of the Bound, then Rescued Andromeda

The receptions of the Queen of Sheba across cultures have received rather sustained attention from scholars in the last half century¹⁷⁶. There are Islamic and medieval Jewish claims about the Queen of Sheba having hairy legs, and King Solomon noticing this and having her depilated. Why did the Queen of Sheba have hairy legs? Consider that this is, in folklore, a feature of demons. The demonic nature of the Queen of Sheba has been discussed in the scholarly literature¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷² On pp. 203–204 in LIANA DE GIROLAMI CHENEY, “Edward Burne-Jones’ *Andromeda*: Transformation of Historical and Mythological Sources”, *Artibus et Historiae*, 25(49) (2004) 197–227.

¹⁷³ CHENEY, p. 217.

¹⁷⁴ CHENEY, p. 218.

¹⁷⁵ CHENEY, p. 221.

¹⁷⁶ E.g., see the papers in *Solomon and Sheba*, edited by JAMES BENNETT PRITCHARD, London: Phaidon, 1974. In the main, the present subsection reworks Sections 7 and 8 in E. NISSAN, “The Importance of Being Hairy: A Few Remarks on the Queen of Sheba, Esau, and the Andromeda Myth”, *La Ricerca Folklorica*, 70 (2015 [2016]) 273–283.

¹⁷⁷ See JACOB LASSNER, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam*, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1993. Also see, e.g., FABRIZIO PENNACCHIETTI, “Da Onokolis (Empusa) a Bilqīs (la Regina di Saba)”, presentation given at the Convegno Linceo su *La Persia e Bisanzio* (Roma, 14–18 October 2002).

Demons have hairy legs, because their legs are like those of animals. Albrile (2006), having discussed the association of bronze with the Hades, turns then to Pennacchietti's insight that whereas for the ancient Greeks, Empusa (the demoness threatening babies) was described as having a bronze leg, for the Byzantines the demoness Onoskelis had the leg of a donkey¹⁷⁸ (Nissan's translation from Ezio Albrile, 2006):

The kinship of the Gorgons and the netherworld is not merely confined to their horrific appearance (their heads surrounded by dragon scales, their having boar fangs, their golden wings), but also encompasses their body substance. It is not by chance that their hands are of bronze, χεῖρες χάλκεαι. This is a somatic feature they share with the fearsome netherworld character, Empusa, a demoness from amongst Hekate's followers who was represented (in Aristophanes' verisimilar parody) with a leg of bronze (σκεῖλος χαλκοῦν).

Again not by chance, Empusa was known to Byzantine demonology as Onoskelis, "the donkey-legged". Elsewhere¹⁷⁹ I have shown that in ancient cosmology, the image of the Donkey is used in order to represent the southern hemisphere, i.e., the Hades. "Axial" symbols such as the hand of Medusa the Gorgon or the leg of Empusa-Onoskelis all express the very same concept of the infernal pole as shaped in its metal, namely, bronze¹⁸⁰.

That presentation's handout (a diagram) was then published in his *Three Mirrors for two Biblical Ladies: Susanna and the Queen of Sheba in the Eyes of Jews, Christians, and Muslims*. Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2006. See as well ID., "The Queen of Sheba, the Glass Floor and the Floating Tree-Trunk", *Henoch* (Turin), 22(2/3) (2000) 223–246; ID., "Legends of the Queen of Sheba", Chapter 2 in: ST. JOHN SIMPSON (ed.), *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen* (Catalogue of the exposition, 9 June –13 October 2002). London: The British Museum Press, 2002, pp. 31–38. It appeared in French as "La Reine de Saba, le pavé de cristal et le tronc flottant", *Arabica*, 49(1), 2002, pp. 1–26. Cf. SARIT SHALEV-EYNI, "Solomon, his Demons and Jongleurs: The Meeting of Islamic, Judaic and Christian Culture", *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* (London: Routledge), 18(2), 2006, pp. 145–160.

¹⁷⁸ Nissan's translation of a passage from EZIO ALBRILE, "Oltre le soglie di Ade: Un excursus mitografico", *Laurentianum*, 47 (2006) 337–348.

¹⁷⁹ EZIO ALBRILE, "La liturgia dell'Asino. Elementi di una transizione simbolica", *Atti del Convegno Linceo su La Persia e Bisanzio* (Roma, 14–18 ottobre 2002), still in press when consulted. Cf. ID., "Asellus Unicornis. Aspetti rituali di un mitologhema 'gnostico'. *Henoch* (Turin), 25 (2003) 59–77.

¹⁸⁰ "La consanguineità tra le Gorgoni ed il mondo infero non è limitata al sembiante orrido e terrificante (teste avvolte da squame di drago, zanne di cinghiale, ali dorate), ma si estende alla sostanzialità corporea; le mani non a caso sono foggiate in bronzo, χεῖρες χάλκεαι. Una specificità somatica condivisa da una temibile figura infernale di nome Empusa, una demonessa al seguito di Hekate rappresentata — nella verisimile parodia di Aristofane — con uno σκεῖλος χαλκοῦν, una «gamba di bronzo». Non è poi a caso che Empusa sia nota nella demonologia bizantina sotto il nome di Onoskelis, cioè «dalla gamba asinina». Altrove ho infatti dimostrato come nella cosmologia antica

Pennacchietti, in an unpublished presentation¹⁸¹ cited by Albrile¹⁸², related the donkey-legged Onoskelis to the Queen of Sheba. In one of his works on the latter character, Pennacchietti stated¹⁸³:

[T]he Queen [of Sheba], unnamed in the Koran, is universally known in the Muslim world by the name of *Bilqīs*. Now this name, which to date has defied all attempts at etymological explanation, is seen in a new light if compared with *Nikaule* or *Nikaulis*, as Josephus Flavius (1st c. AD) calls the Queen of Sheba in his *Jewish Antiquities* (VIII,2). This Greek proper name too is unrecorded elsewhere, but it might represent a reinterpretation of, respectively, *NQWLH and *NQWLYS. This is how one can reconstruct the rendering in Hebrew or Aramaic script of one of the nicknames the Greeks gave to Empusa, the female demon mentioned in Aristophanes' comedy *The Frogs* and famous for having the legs of a donkey. This nickname was *Onokole* or *Onokolis*, 'the donkey-legged woman'. In the light of this hypothesis the Arabic name *Bilqīs* would be neither more nor less than a reinterpretation of *NQWLYS in a written form of Arabic which as yet lacked diacritics:

[Onokolis] *NQWLYS [Nikaulis] > *BQWLYS > *BQLYS > BLQYS [Bilqīs]

One may wonder what this terrifying female demon had to do with the Queen of Sheba and Solomon. Yet the *Testament of Solomon*, a Judaeo-Christian work dated between the first and third centuries AD, mentions this very Empusa in connection with our two distinguished [characters]. The name given her in the *Testament* is [...] *Onoskelis*; but [...] this nickname too means 'donkey-legged woman'.

The same Judaeo-Christian text tells us that Onoskelis took an active part in the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem by producing hempen ropes. We also know that Onoskelis had a very close relationship with Solomon. In fact, when Solomon asked her which angel had the power to 'withhold' her, she answered that it was the King's own guardian angel. On the other hand Onokolis/Onoskelis is portrayed in Palestinian amulets of the Roman era as a supine female devil pierced with a spear by Solomon himself depicted as a knight. This is actually the prototype of the iconography of St George and the dragon.

Pennacchietti proposed that the relation to the Queen of Sheba depends upon the following link: the demons controlled by Solomon's magic seal believed that the

l'immagine dell'Asino sia utilizzata per rappresentare l'emisfero australe, cioè l'Ade. Simboli «assiali» quali la mano della Gorgone Medusa o la gamba di Empusa-Onoskelis esprimono tutti il medesimo concetto di polo infero effigiato nel suo metallo, il bronzo."

¹⁸¹ PENNACCHIETTI, "Da Onokolis (Empusa) a Bilqīs (la Regina di Saba)", 2006.

¹⁸² Nissan thanks both Fabrizio Pennacchietti and Ezio Albrile for making their papers available to him.

¹⁸³ PENNACCHIETTI, "Legends of the Queen of Sheba", 2002, Sec. 3.

beatiful Queen of Sheba, who was arriving into Jerusalem, was a rival of theirs, and one of their own demonic ilk indeed. Out of fear that she would manage to subjugate Solomon and to obtain from him his seal, which would have made her into their own master, they tried to make Solomon believe that her legs were those of a donkey. This is why Solomon tried to see her legs, and why to that purpose he resorted to a trick so that she would raise her skirts. Moreover, Pennacchiotti remarks¹⁸⁴:

As we all know, malicious rumour dies hard. Although Solomon had satisfied himself that the Queen was not a devil, but on the contrary a woman with the most gorgeous legs, the rumour nevertheless spread that she was excessively hairy and she was even unkindly labelled with the epithet of ‘the donkey-legged woman’ (Onokolis > Bilqîs), which properly belonged to the female devil for whom she had been mistaken.

There are various such traditions about the Queen of Sheba, which endow her with various kinds of an animal leg¹⁸⁵,

‘borrowed’ from various members of the animal kingdom: donkey, goat or goose. The last of these attributions is the origin of the so-called ‘reine Pédauque’ of 15th- and 16th-century paintings in Central European countries, in which the Queen of Sheba is shown as she crosses the stream that separates her from Solomon with the webbed feet of a goose. The Queen of Sheba has a goat’s leg in a Coptic tale [...]

There exists as well a tradition, according to which the future Queen of Sheba had her leg transformed into an animal leg because of her encounter, as a victim, with a monster. Let us turn indeed to an Ethiopian tradition¹⁸⁶. It is well-known that the myth of Perseus was transformed, in Christian hagiography, into the legend about St. George saving a maiden from a dragon¹⁸⁷. Consider, moreover, a version of the myth of Andromeda from northern Ethiopia, in which the maiden to be saved from the dragon is the Queen of Sheba before she reigned, and her saviours are a group of saints who kill the dragon by hitting it with a cross, even though that narrated time

¹⁸⁴ PENNACCHIOTTI, “Legends of the Queen of Sheba”, 2002, Sec. 3.

¹⁸⁵ PENNACCHIOTTI, “Legends of the Queen of Sheba”, 2002, Sec. 4.

¹⁸⁶ A point of entry into the Ethiopian tradition about the Queen of Sheba is: GIANFRANCO FIACCADORI, “Makedda”, in S. UHLIG (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol. 3: *He–N*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007, pp. 672–679.

¹⁸⁷ But, then, knights saving maidens from dragons are a commonplace in medieval lore, and in particular in present-day vulgate perceptions of what tales of knightly deeds of old are about.

supposedly was in the generation of King Solomon¹⁸⁸.

A curious and interesting legend of the way in which King SOLOMON became the father of MENYELEK is found in a number of slightly varying versions among many of [p. lxvii:] the tribes of Northern ABYSSINIA. According to this the mother of MENYELEK was a Tigrê girl called ĔTĔYĔ AZĔB (i.e. Queen of the South), and her people worshipped a dragon or serpent, to which each man in turn had to present as an offering his eldest daughter, and large quantities of sweet beer and milk. When the turn of her parents came they tied her to a tree where the dragon used to come for his food, and soon after this seven saints came and seated themselves under the tree for the sake of the shade it gave. As they sat a tear dropped from the maiden above them, and when they looked up and saw her bound to the tree they asked her if she was a human being or a spirit, and she told them that she was a human being and, in answer to a further question, she told them that she was bound to the tree so that she might become food for the dragon. When the seven saints saw the dragon, one of them, Abbâ TCHĔĤAMĀ, plucked at his own beard, another, Abbâ GARĪMĀ exclaimed “He hath frightened me”, and a third, Abbâ MENĤELĪT, cried out, “Let us seize him”; and he forthwith attacked the monster, and aided by his companions they killed him by smiting him with a cross. As they were killing him some blood spurted out from him and fell on the heel of ĔTĔYĔ AZĔB, and from that moment her heel became like the heel of an ass. The saints untied her fetters and sent her to her village, but the people drove her away, thinking that she had escaped from the dragon, and she climbed up into a tree and passed the night there. On the following day she fetched some people from the village and showed them the dead dragon, and they straightway made her their chieftainess, and she chose for her chief

¹⁸⁸ Wallis Budge (1932), who related this legend on p. xlxvii, and from whom we quote here, found this legend in Littmann (1904) and in Conti Rossini (1903). See CARLO CONTI ROSSINI, *Ricordi di un soggiorno in Eritrea*. Fasc. 1: I. *La lista reale di Enda Yohannes II. Il Gadla Sâdqân*. III. *Gadla Libânos*. IV. *L'ambasciata francese a Negusé*. V. *Leggi tigrâi*. VI. *Tradizioni Beni Amer, Alghedén e Sabderât*. Asmara, Eritrea: Tip[ografia] della Missione svedese, 1903; ENNO LITTMANN (trans., ed.), *The Legend of the Queen of Sheba in the Tradition of Axum* (Bibliotheca Abessinica, 1), Leiden: Brill & Princeton, New Jersey: University Library, 1904.

And see A. WALLIS BUDGE (trans.), [*The Kebra Nagast*:] *The Queen of Sheba and her Only Son Menyelek (I). being the 'Book of the Glory of Kings' (Kebra Nagast), a Work Which is Alike the Traditional History of The Establishment of the Religion of the Hebrews in Ethiopia, and the Patent of Sovereignty Which is Now Universally Accepted in Abyssinia as the Symbol of the Divine Authority to Rule Which the Kings of the Solomonian Line Claimed to Have Received Through Their Descent from the House of David*, London: Humphrey Milford, for the Oxford University Press, 1932 (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/kn/kn000-0.htm>).

officer a maiden like herself. Soon after this ǼTǼYĚ AZĚB heard a report of the medical skill of King SOLOMON, and she determined [p. lxviii:] to go to him so that he might restore her deformed heel to its original shape. She and her chief officer dressed their hair after the manner of men, and girded on swords, and departed to the Court of SOLOMON at JERUSALEM. Her arrival was announced to SOLOMON, who ordered his servants to bring the King of ABYSSINIA into his presence, and as soon as her deformed foot touched the threshold it recovered its natural form. [...]

3. Concluding Remarks of Part One

This article is Part One of a study published here in two instalments. As we are going to see in Part Two, the general unifying idea of the two parts of this study is a particular class within the principle, expressed in §2 of the Hermetic *Tabula Smaragdina*, “Quod est inferius, est sicut quod est superius”. There used to be an ancient (and medieval) idea which maintained that what is sacred on earth is a reflection of something found in the vault of Heaven. The particular class of instances, within that principle, comprises Jerusalem and Rome, two eternal cities which, as we show, were believed to correspond in heaven each to a constellation: Jerusalem to Cassiopeia, and Rome to the Pleiades (of which Maia in particular was bearing the secret name of Rome).

There is an additional argument to be made, concerning “eternal cities” being related to some constellation. Concerning the duration of the divine covenant with Israel, the wording in *Deuteronomy* 11:21 is that it is to be “like the days of the sky (*haššamáyim*) over the earth”. Different *loci* in the Hebrew Bible display nuances of attitude to the duration of the sky (heaven as materially intended). Also, when *Psalms* 89:30 states “and His throne [is] like the days of [the] sky”, the image is evocative, yet the notion is not rigorous (because of the assumed ideological underpinning that the Creator preceded Creation, unless by ‘throne’, a concept was meant that now eludes us, and it was involved in the Psalmist’s thinking, through the metaphor of the site of sitting).

In the Book of *Isaiah*, one comes across *loci* that seem to challenge the expectation that the firmament is anything else than permanent. And yet, considering them case by case, one finds them to be daring metaphors, in contexts that promise more fairness in future, because oppressors would no longer have the supremacy.

Isaiah 65:17 announces: “as I am going to create a new sky” (but the Hebrew word for ‘sky’ is in the plural), whatever he meant by that. That “new sky” is mentioned again in *Isaiah* 66:22. The context of the passage is about woes the righteous have experienced going to be a thing of the past; as one would say at present: “Tomorrow is another day”.

Isaiah 51:6 claims: “as [the] heavens (sky) like smoke *nimlāhu*”. The latter is a passive verbal form in the past tense, in the third person plural. In Biblical Hebrew, tense reversal is possible. The sense is: “as the heavens (sky) shall waste away like smoke”, but in particular, a likely sense of the difficult verbal form (one already detected by Rashi in his gloss to this verse) is “shall be spoiled” into tatters or into rags (cf. *Jeremiah* 38:12, *melaḥim* ‘rags’). The verse in *Isaiah* 34:4 continues: “and the earth, like a garment, shall be wasted, and (but) My relief forever (*lē’olam*, literally: ‘to world’)¹⁸⁹ shall be, and My justice shall

¹⁸⁹ The Hebrew (and Biblical Hebrew) word for ‘forever’, *lē’olam*, literally means ‘to world’ (cf. Biblical Hebrew *me’olam*, for ‘since the remotest past’, which literally means ‘from world’. Italian has *da che mondo è mondo*, and English has *since the world began*, or, which is not the same, *since time immemorial*). In the Hebrew Bible, one finds (*Exodus* 15:18) “the Lord shall reign forever (*lē’olam va’ed*, literally: ‘to world and witness’), which is not to be taken to literally mean that the Deity would only last as long as the world would last. Cf. in *Psalms* 9:8, “and the Lord forever (*lē’olam*) shall sit (i.e., stay, exist)”; and in *Psalms* 146:10, “the Lord shall reign forever (*lē’olam*)”. However, ‘in perpetuity’ in some contexts may be limited to the rest of a person’s lifespan; in *Exodus* 21:6, there is a procedure by which a slave who refuses to be freed when the seventh year (the mandatory fallow year) arrives, is made into a slave for life: “*va’avadó lē’olam*”, “and he shall serve him forever”, but even that requires that perpetual slave to be freed once the jubilee year arrives (at the end of a cycle of 49 years); likewise, in the present-day justice system, a *life sentence* may actually be a quarter of century or less, as opposed to a *whole life sentence* (which may or may not be actually for life).

Also consider, in *Judges* 2:1, “I shall never (*lo ... lē’olam*) undo My covenant with you (pl.)”; and, in *Daniel* 12:3, “And the wise ones shall shine (*yaz-híru*) like the brightness (*zóhar*) of the sky (*raqía’*), and those who make the many into righteous people, [shall shine/sparkle] like stars forever (*lē’olam va’ed*, literally: ‘to world and witness’).” Note that Biblical Hebrew *yaz-híru* as a verbal form is a corradical of the noun *zóhar*. The latter is also the Hebrew name by which the Book of Splendour, since the Middle Ages a central book in the canon of Jewish mysticism, is known.

The abundance of terms for shining or sparkling in Latvian is related to the centrality of the Sun (*Saule*) in pre-Christian Latvian or Baltic religion, and also in extant Latvian folklore. Consider especially the sentence with our added boldface, in the following: “Evidence of a cult of the *saule* (‘sun’; pron. *sow-leh*) as part of an archaic nature religion, as well as prehistoric cosmogonic concepts linked to the sun may be found in Latvian folk legends, magical formulae, traditions, and beliefs, but most of all in the hundreds of thousands of variants of lyrical folk-song, or *daina*, texts. ¶ Within the most recent and complete collection of over 4,000 *daina* texts (VĪĶE-FREIBERGA and FREIBERGS, 1988) containing words with the root form for ‘sun’, around 2,500 texts refer literally to the sun as a celestial body or physical phenomenon, either in its chronological or its meteorological aspect (VĪĶE-FREIBERGA, 1999; 2002). But even this physical sun — which shimmers, glitters, glimmers, glares, blazes, shines forth, and conveys its presence in a dozen more ways for which there are Latvian words but no English equivalent — has a profoundly magical and beneficial influence on all aspects of human life”. This quotation is from p. 8131 in the entry “*Saule*” by VAIRA VĪĶE-FREIBERGA, on pp. 8131–8135 in Vol. 12 in the *Encyclopedia of Religion, Second Edition*, edited by LINDSAY JONES (Detroit, Michigan: Macmillan reference USA, an imprint of Thomson/Gale, 2005). The passage quoted cites VAIRA VĪĶE-FREIBERGA and IMANTS FREIBERGS, *Saules dainas: Latvian Sun Songs* [in Latvian with an introductory summary in English, a comprehensive collection of the ancient songs, 3 columns to the page], illustrated by INESE JANSONS (Grāmata series), Montreal,

not fail”. The clear intention is to give reassurance that God’s help will be steadier, in the long run, than even the endurance of both the earth and the sky.

Relevantly for our present purposes, Rashi’s gloss to *Isaiah* 51:6 offers both an allegorical and a detailed interpretation. According to the former, “[the] heavens ... *nimlāhu*” stands for “the commanders of the armies of the nations that are in the sky (firmament)” (i.e., the respective nation’s own custodian angel)¹⁹⁰, whereas one of the understandings that Rashi offered for *nimlāhu* is “became confused”, in a far-fetched relation to “the sea-going mariners” (*mallehei-hayyam* as in *Jonah* 1:5), “who mix/confuse the waters” (making the water turbulent) “by means of the tools for directing the ship”, by which here he meant mariners rowing with the rows. The denotation of *nimlāhu* being in the semantic domain of confusion is also how *Isaiah* of Trani understood the word; in fact, he stated: “as it is the way of smoke to become mixed”, as a turbulent fluid.

Now consider *Isaiah* 34:4, “and the entire army/host of the sky (i.e., the firmament) shall decay, and the heavens (sky) shall be rolled up like a *sefer* (book)”: a roll with written text in it. That verse continues: “and their entire army/host shall wither, like the withering of a leaf of a vine, and like the wrinkling of a fig”. Rashi’s gloss to *Isaiah* 34:4 interpreted: the *šarei ha’ummot*, the angels in command of the individual nations¹⁹¹, will be in disarray, even thrown down, frightening the remainder of

Quebec, Canada: Helios, 1988; VAIRA VĪĶE-FREIBERGA, *Trejādās saules: II, Hronoloģiskā saule*, Riga, Latvia: Karogs, 1999; as well as her *Trejādās saules: III, Meteoroloģiskā saule, Siltā saule*, Riga: Karogs, 2002. The first volume was VAIRA VĪĶE-FREIBERGA, *Trejādās saules: I, Kosmoloģiskā saule*, Riga: Karogs, 1997. By 2016, the publisher was Riga: Pētergailis.

¹⁹⁰ The angel traditionally considered by Jews to be an advocate for the Jewish people is Michael, who in fact is called *Mikha’el šar Yisra’el* (“Michael, appointed head [representative angel] of Israel”) in the popular hymn *El nora ‘alilah*, which is sung at the beginning of the *Ne’ilah* (*Closure*) prayer that concludes the liturgy of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). That hymn belongs to the liturgy in Italy, the Middle East, and Sephardic communities.

¹⁹¹ The other sense, in Hebrew, of *šarei ha’ummot* is ‘the aristocrats of the nations’. The singular form of the noun, *šar*; at present denotes ‘[government] minister’, but historically, it was also used to stand for English *Sir* by phono-semantic matching, especially in the phrase *haššar Montefiore* (‘the *šar* Montefiore’) referring to the Victorian-age notable Sir Moses Montefiore.

Interestingly, a somewhat similar adaptation is found in another Semitic language, Maltese, a “peripheral” dialect of Arabic. Maltese has much loosened grammatical constraints of word-formation; its speaking community being Catholic, so not impelled by *noblesse oblige* to abide by the prestigious linguistic model of the *Qur’ān*, the Maltese speaking community finds it easy (in contrast to Arabic and Hebrew) to form verbs out of Romance or English words. On one occasion, a teacher in Malta was irked with a pupil who kept addressing him as *Sir*, so he rebuked the boy for his invading manners. Where Cicero addressed Catilina with *Usque tandem*, the teacher instead said: “Int se ddom isserser?”, i.e., “How long will you call out: *Sir! Sir!?*” (MANWEL MIFSUD, *Loan Verbs*

the sky. Rashi went on to explain that once present-day prosperity and light (a bright prospect) will be over, it will be as though daylight was replaced with darkness. David Kimḥi's gloss to *Isaiah* 34:4 states that it is a metaphor, as one who experiences dire straits is as though the sky and the earth were crumbling down on him, and the world were upside down, and as though there was no host of stars in the sky, as there is no light. Isaiah of Trani's gloss to *Isaiah* 34:4 states: "When the Lord exacts vengeance on the (particular) nation, He does likewise to the demons (*šedim*) appointed over them from the sky above". We can see then that in the Middle Ages (even without a technically explicit astrological framework) there definitely was in glosses to *Isaiah* by some rabbinic exegetes the expression of a conception such that the fate of nations was linked to the respective custodian angel (or demon) situated in the firmament. This is a powerful argument in support of our understanding of how a nation's metropolis in antiquity could have been considered by that nation to be linked to a constellation.

The structure of both Part One and Part Two of our present study is given below.

Reflected in Heaven: Biblical and Roman Evidence for a Motif, Shared in Antiquity, about Material Features of the Metropolis of the Chosen People Being Reflected in a Constellation in Heaven. **Part One:** Cassiopeia in *Isaiah* 49:16; the Heavenly Jerusalem; the μένουσα πόλις of Hebrews; and Andromeda, Onoskelis, Persinna, and the Rabbinic Sages

Abstract

1. *Isaiah's Jerusalem and the Cassiopeia Constellation*

- 1.1. Medieval Astronomy-Related Jewish Understanding of *Isaiah* 49:16, and E.J. Wisenberg's Insights
- 1.2. Culturally Variable Simile of a Constellation, and Its variable Delimitation: The Case of Cassiopeia as a Sitting Lady (Graeco-Roman, Europe, Islam), a Hand (Arabic), an Initial Letter (*Isaiah*), a Fish Tail or Tail of a Porpoise (Micronesia), and in Prehistoric Denmark
- 1.3. Non-Astronomical Medieval Jewish Glosses to *Isaiah* 49:16
- 1.4. Shalem (Salem) as Jerusalem, vs. Shechem (the Samaritans and the LXX)
- 1.5. The Jewish and Christian Motif of the Heavenly Jerusalem

in Maltese: A Descriptive and Comparative Study, Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, 21, Leiden: Brill, 1994, p. 77), which we interpret word by word as: "Thou hour/now/in-future shalt-persist *Sir!Sir!-ing*?" He was reduplicating in the *ad hoc* coinage the English vocative *Sir!* May we add that that Maltese coinage reduplicating *Sir!* — a verbal form that in Arabic would be *tasársir* (dialectally *tsársar*) — adds a new lexeme to such an extant Arabic verb, which denotes 'to behave like a cad', and whose etymon is *sársari* 'cad' (Persian *sarsari*). In Hebrew, *sarsúr* denotes 'middleman' (cf. Arabic *simsar*, both from Middle Persian *sapsar*. Cf. Hebrew *safsár* 'broker' or 'speculator'. And cf., from Arabic *simsar*; Italian *sensale* 'middleman', whence Maltese derived a verb *sánsal*). But in Hebrew, "a *sarsúr* for sin", *sarsur li-dvar* 'averah' ("a middleman for some matter of transgression") in rabbinic Hebrew denotes a pimp.

- 1.6. Rome, the Eternal City in Imperial Propaganda, and the Early Christian Critique of the Concept in *Hebrews* 13:14: The Denial of the *ἡένουσα πόλις* (“city that remains”), Which Likewise the Earthly Jerusalem is Not
2. *More on Cassiopeia and the Andromeda Myth*
 - 2.1. Andromeda: Even in Greek Comedy
 - 2.2. Further Receptions of Andromeda: Heliodorus’ Queen Persinna, the Theory of Maternal Imagination, and the Late Antique Rabbinic Parallel of the Black-Skinned Couple (*Genesis Rabbah* 73:7) or Royal Couple (*Numbers Rabbah* 9:43)
 - 2.3. The Queen of Sheba, Demonology, and the Shaping of her Early Life as a Version of the Bound, then Rescued Andromeda
3. *Concluding Remarks of Part One*

Reflected in Heaven, **Part Two:** (a) Ovid’s Evidence for a Motif, Shared by Rome and Jerusalem, of material Features of the Metropolis of the Respective People Being Reflected in a Constellation in Heaven; (b) the Belief that Features of the Face of the Moon Are a Mirrored Reflection of the Contour of Earth’s Continents; (c) Divinatory Livers

Abstract

1. *Introduction of Part Two: Quod est inferius, est sicut quod est superius*
2. *Divinatory Livers Used by Rome’s Etruscan Soothsayers, and Regions of Heaven*
3. *The Constellations and Celestial Mapping in Eudoxus, Aratus, and Hipparchus*
4. *Vinci and Maiuri’s Interpretation of Rome’s Seven Hills Within the Servian Wall in Relation to the Pleiades, and Why Ovid Was Exiled from Rome*
 - 4.1. Rome’s Seven Hills, in Relation to the Pleiades, the Constellation Most Obvious to the Naked Eye in the Night Sky
 - 4.2. Maia, Unnameable in Connection to the Founding of Rome, and Ovid’s Sin
 - 4.3. The Date of the Founding of Rome, April the 21st, the First Day of the Zodiac Sign of Taurus, the Constellation Comprising the Pleiades
5. *The Motif of a City’s Seven Hills: Not Rome’s Alone*
 - 5.1. Jonah’s Underwater Sightseeing, and Jerusalem Standing on Seven Hills
 - 5.2. The International Spread of the Motif of a City’s Seven Hills
6. *Plutarch’s Correct Explanation, in De facie quae in orbe lunae apparet, of the Spots on the Moon: “Thus the reflection occasioned by the pattern of lunar relief is the true explanation of the ‘face’ which appears in the moon”*
7. *The Belief That the Spots on the Moon Are Reflections of Earth’s Lands and Seas: Philip Stooke’s Hypothesis about the Bifurcated Contour of Southern Africa as Occurring in Medieval Mappaemundi*
8. *Concluding Remarks*

The very idea of correspondence between a class of entities on Earth (here, capital cities) to respective entities in heaven, is somewhat akin to a theme — that terrestrial

quadrupeds have equivalents in the sea — explored in a previous article in this journal¹⁹², and occurring from antiquity to the early modern period (and, in folklore, even until much more recently). This time, astronomy and magic are conspicuous.

¹⁹² Concerning the supposed correspondence of sea and terrestrial animals, see EPHRAIM NISSAN and JEB MCLEISH, “Marine Equivalents of Land-Animals: Tracing the Idea from Antiquity to the Modern Period”, *MHNH*, 16 (2016 [2018]) 53–135. As for the connection between animals and heaven, in an Egyptian context (as there were deities in animal shape: theriomorph deities), consider E. NISSAN, “Animals Calling Out to Heaven: In Support of the Hypothesis of an Alexandrian Egyptian Precedent of the Animals Praising Heaven in *Pereq Shirah* (A Chapter of Hymns), Some Evidence from Egypt’s Greek Magical Papyri”, *MHNH*, 14 (2014 [2016]) 167–196.

Quite importantly, see ZOFIA AMEISENOWA, “Animal-Headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints and Righteous Men”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (London), 12, 1949, pp. 21–45. “On the zodiacs of Dendera, which are the point of departure for all research into the history of astrology, we find remarkable representations. Between Taurus and Gemini, there is a lion-headed man; between Gemini and Cancer, the planet Jupiter bearing the head of a sparrow-hawk; between Virgo and Libra, Saturn with a bull’s head; above Capricorn, Mars with the head of a sparrow-hawk” (AMEISENOWA, p. 21). “But the most diverse shapes and the most fertile fantasies were reserved for the lore of the thirty six Dekans, that is, the divine rulers of every ten degrees of the ecliptic, the period which corresponds to the ten days of the Egyptian week” (AMEISENOWA, p. 22). “Their most important characteristic was and has always remained their heads, their ‘faces’. Instead of Dekans, they were often called in Greek texts simply *prosopa*, and in Latin, *facies*, their faces being, for the most part, those of animals” (AMEISENOWA, p. 22). Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 6.30, “describes a diagram belonging to the Gnostic sect of the Ophites, and gives in detail the names and the salient characteristics of the seven Archons of the Ophites, which names they had borrowed from the Jews [not quite, only a few of them]: Michael with the head of a lion; Suriel resembling a bull; Raphael like a reptile; Gabriel with an eagle’s head; Tautabaoth resembling a bear; Erathaoth with a dog’s head; Onoel with an ass’s head. This text has been used and explained by a number of scholars. But this passage is followed by another of even greater importance [Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 6.33] which leads to a fuller understanding of several mysterious representations and which until now has been left out of account at least by archaeologists and art historians. In it Celsus mentioned other fables according to which there were ‘men who (after death) assumed the shapes of these spirits and were called lions, bulls, dragons, eagles, bears or dogs’” (AMEISENOWA, pp. 23–24).