From Judah to Judaea

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Socio-economic Structures and Processes in the Persian Period

Edited by

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Abbreviations

ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AncB	Anchor Bible
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AThD	Acta theologica Danica
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
Bib	*Biblica*
BK	*Bibel und Kirche*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAT	The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
FolOr	*Folia orientalia*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FzB	Forschung zur Bibel
GAT	Grundrisse zum Alten Testament
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HTS	*Hervormde Teologiese Studies*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IES	Israel Exploration Society
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, Supplement Series
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KTU	Keilschrift Texte aus Ugarit
NEBAT	Neue Echter Bibel, Kommentar zum Alten Testament
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OEANEA	*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RdQ	*Revue de Qumran*
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
ThA	Theologische Arbeiten
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*

TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*
ZKTh	*Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*
ZThK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

Introduction

Johannes Unsok Ro

This volume is the fruit of an international conference held at the International Christian University (ICU) in Tokyo, Japan, February 17–19, 2011, on *Socio-economic Structures of Judah and its Neighbors in the Persian Period*. It has long been recognized that the Persian and early Hellenistic periods are crucial to the history of the formation of the biblical corpora. Therefore, a critically important task for biblical scholars is to reconstruct the socio-economic structure of Judean communities in Persian Era Palestine in order to trace a more detailed and exact history of Torah formation. However, the third and fourth centuries BCE still remain 'Lost Ages' in ancient Judean history because the historical narratives of the Hebrew Bible do not provide us with enough historical information related to this time period.

The organizers of the ICU conference were convinced that biblical studies need to carry on more intensive dialogues with a wide ranging spectrum of academia including archaeology, history, literature and sociology to come up with more clearly articulated solutions to issues which biblical texts alone cannot clarify. Sociological models for postexilic Judean society, together with other available archaeological evidence and historical data on local economic conditions could be of help in examining the socio-economic situation of Judean communities in Persian era Palestine in more detail than is currently known. Thus, the contributors to this volume have come from various academic fields including biblical study, archaeology, literature and history. Furthermore, this volume is witness to the scholarly exchanges between Asian and Israeli scholars which rarely occur and are thus even more precious and comprehensive.

Dr Yigal Levin's article, 'Judea, Samaria and Idumea: Three Models of Ethnicity and Administration in the Persian Period' is the powerful prologue of this collaboration. It illuminates the progress of three neighboring geoethnic units existing in the southern Levant during and after the Persian period. All three groups are successors of Iron Age states destroyed by the great Mesopotamian empires. Each group underwent some form of exile and/or displacement of population, importation of foreign inhabitants, destruction of urban centers and of rural settlements, extreme social and economic changes, and ultimately, disbanding of their former political

structures. Each of the groups was reconstituted during the Persian period, and by the early Hellenistic period recognized as three specific *ethne*, with an autonomous government within the Ptolemaic and then the Seleucid realms.

The editor contributed two articles, 'The Piety of the Poor in the Community of Qumran and its Historical Origins' and 'The Theological Concept of Yhwh's Punitive Justice in the Hebrew Bible: Historical Development in the Context of the Judean Community in the Persian Period.' The starting point regarding 'The Piety of the Poor in the Community of Qumran and its Historical Origins' is the fact that the meaning and connotation of some terms related to poverty in postexilic Israel have not yet been successfully and persuasively deciphered. The self-depictions of being 'poor' in the Hodayot and also in 1QpHab and 4Q171 are closely related to those texts of the Hebrew Bible composed in the Persian and the Hellenistic period (e.g. Pss. 12; 25; 34; 35; 37; 40; 62; 69; 73; 76; 102; 109; 140; 149). From this author's analysis, the biblical texts of the Persian-Hellenistic period could shed light upon the historical origins of the Qumran community. The editor's monograph, *Die sogenannte 'Armenfrömmigkeit' im nachexilischen Israel*, is in part incorporated and developed more fully in his article on the piety of the poor.

'The Theological Concept of Yhwh's Punitive Justice in the Hebrew Bible: Historical Development in the Context of the Judean Community in the Persian Period' is an elaboration of an article previously published in *Vetus Testamentum* 61 (2011), pp. 406-25, which focused on the issue of the relationship between individual and community, and guilt and punishment arising therefrom. Based upon the focus in Genesis 18, the analysis positions that inquiry within a larger context arising from the ancient Israelite tradition. Gen. 18.22b-33a mirrors the idea that God tolerates or forgives the guilt of a community because of the righteous individuals within that community. The concept of Yhwh's punitive justice in the Hebrew Bible indicates historical progress reflecting the socio-economic as well as demographic context.

Dr Avraham Faust contributed the article 'Social, Cultural and Demographic Changes in Judah during the Transition from the Iron Age to the Persian Period and the Nature of the Society during the Persian Period.' The situation in Judah after the Babylonian conquest has been and still is passionately discussed. In the article, Dr Faust articulates two major issues concerning the transition from the Iron Age to the Persian period: socio-cultural continuity and change, and demographic and settlement continuity and change. An examination of both sets of data reveals the drastic changes experienced by Judean society following the Babylonian destructions. According to Dr Faust, those destructions caused the collapse of Judahite society along with its values and ideology. Thus, the Judean society after the Babylonian exile should be considered as a 'post-collapse society.'

After reading two separate papers at the ICU conference, Drs. Alexander Fantalkin and Oren Tal wrote collaboratively an article entitled 'Judah and Its Neighbors in the Fourth Century BCE: A Time of Major Transformations.' It discusses Achaemenid imperial policy in the southern Levant in the fourth century BCE. Following the Egyptian rebellion of 404–400 BCE, southern Palestine experienced drastic shifts as a consequence of becoming the southwestern frontier of the Persian Empire. The article endeavors to reconstruct the socio-political history as well as its economic manifestation. The authors conclude that the canonization of the Torah derived from this new geopolitical reality. Therefore, the canonization of the Torah is not an outcome of inner-societal negotiations among various Judean groups, but rather an intentional reaction of Jerusalem's priestly circles to the early fourth century BCE *Zeitgeist* of the southern Levant.

Through his article, 'The Representation of the Persian Empire by Greek Authors, with Special Reference to Aeschylus and Herodotus,' Dr Yoshinori Sano gives a fitting epilogue for this volume in surveying images of the Persian Empire and its rulers as seen by Greek authors in the 5th century BCE, viewed with special focus on Aeschylus' *Persians* and Herodotus' *Histories*. The contrast between Persians and Greeks is emphasized in various respects. Dr Sano asserts that the contrast was generated from the awakened Greek consciousness of the differences between themselves and the Persians following their victory in the Persian Wars. The pattern of overconfidence and hubris in action leading to destruction is shared by Aeschylus and Herodotus. Aeschylus' and Herodotus' similarities may be related to the fact that these two authors perceived in the Persians, who were different from themselves, the common human condition. In Dr Sano's view, this perception is closely connected with the fact that Aeschylus and Herodotus did not overtly show a trace of the sense of cultural and ethical superiority of Greeks over Persians, even though a sense of this superiority began to emerge in the 5th century BCE.

Sincere gratitude to all contributors must be expressed as well as to Dr David Clines, Director of Sheffield Phoenix Press, who collaborated actively in publishing this volume. These collaborations represent enormously important contributions to study and scholarship on this significant period and compelling issue.

Last but by no means least, deep appreciation is also expressed to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for the generous KAKENHI research grant (21820038) which made both the ICU conference and this volume possible.

Judea, Samaria and Idumea: Three Models of Ethnicity and Administration in the Persian Period

Yigal Levin

Abstract

This paper traces the development of three neighboring geo-ethnic units that existed in the southern Levant during and after the Persian Period: Judea, Samaria and Idumea. All three groups are the successors of Iron-Age states that were conquered and destroyed by the great Mesopotamian empires. All three groups underwent some form and measure of exile/displacement of population, of importation of foreign inhabitants, of destruction of urban centers and of rural settlements, of extreme social and economic changes, and of the disbandment of their former political structures. All three groups were reconstituted and re-formed during the Persian Period, and at least by the early Hellenistic Period were recognized as three specific *ethne*, each with its own autonomous self-governance within the Ptolemaic and then the Seleucid realms. There were, however, also significant differences between the three. Their specific histories, the time and manner in which the original Iron-Age states were terminated, imperial policy at the time, the fate of their inhabitants and of their land and many additional factors, all contributed to the formation of three very different groups, that emerged from the Persian Period into the Hellenistic world in different ways, and ultimately set out for very different destinies.

Keywords: Yehud, Judah, Judea, Persian Period, Samaria, Samarian, Samaritan, Edom, Idumea.

The purpose of this paper is to trace the development of three neighboring geo-ethnic units that existed in the southern Levant during and after the Persian Period: Judea, Samaria and Idumea.[1] The three had a lot in common.

1. I use the term 'geo-ethnic' to refer to an ethnic group that was defined in relationship to a specific geographical area: Judahites in Judah, Samarians in Samaria and Edomites in Idumea. This, of course, does not mean that there were not Judahites living outside of Judah or Edomites outside of Idumea; there most certainly were, but

All three groups may and often are considered to be the successors of Iron-Age states that were conquered and destroyed by the great Mesopotamian empires. All three groups underwent some form and measure of exile/displacement of population, of importation of foreign inhabitants, of destruction of urban centers and of rural settlements, of extreme social and economic changes, and of the disbandment of their former political structures. All three groups were reconstituted and re-formed during the Persian Period, and at least by the early Hellenistic Period were recognized as three specific *ethne*, each with its own autonomous self-governance within the Ptolemaic and then the Seleucid realms.

There were, however, also significant differences between the three. Their specific histories, the time and manner in which the original Iron-Age states were terminated, imperial policy at the time, the fate of their inhabitants and of their land and many additional factors, all contributed to the formation of three very different groups, that emerged from the Persian Period into the Hellenistic world in different ways, and ultimately set out for very different destinies.

One of the more obvious differences between the three groups is the source material from which we can attempt to trace their histories during this period. For the general history of the Levant in the late Iron Age and the Persian and early Hellenistic periods, we of course have the royal inscriptions of Assyria, Babylon, Persia and the Hellenistic kingdoms, together with such Greek sources as the histories of Herodotus and his successors. We also have a limited number of inscriptions, mostly administrative and economic in nature, written on stone, pottery and papyrus, that have been discovered over the years in the Levant and in neighboring lands. Seals, stamp impressions and coins are a priceless source of administrative and other data. And of course, the ever-growing body of archaeological information, which allows us to reconstruct settlement patterns, material culture and influence, and to refine our understanding of chronological issues, and serves in itself as a source of new written material. However, there is also a large corpus of material that is specifically Judean in origin and in outlook—the biblical and extra-biblical texts that were either written in or tell about the Babylonian, Persian and Hellenistic periods: Kings, Chronicles, Ezra–Nehemiah, parts of the prophetic corpus, Maccabees, Josephus and so on. These writings, while presenting us with their own specific problems, are an invaluable source of information about the political, social and religious history of Judah, with reference to its neighbors as well. All of this will have to be dealt with when tracing the histories of these three neighboring peoples.

they are outside the scope of this article. Also outside the scope of this paper is the questions of the administrative boundaries of the units in question. These have been addressed elsewhere, by myself and by others.

1. *From Judah to Yehud to Judea.*

Our treatment of the 'middle realm' of Judah will be brief. So much has been written about this period in Jewish history in recent years, that it would be impossible to summarize all of the information and the different views within the confines of this paper. Instead, we shall make do with a summary of what we hope is the consensus, emphasizing certain points along the way.

According to the usual reconstruction of events, the kingdom of Judah, ruled by a king traditionally descended from the House of David and residing in Jerusalem, was destroyed by the Neo-Babylonian Empire in the summer of 586 BCE. In the century and a half prior to its destruction, Judah had been a vassal of Assyria, showing loyalty to all successive Assyrian kings from Tiglath-pileser III through Assurbanipal, with the exception of Hezekiah's brief rebellion against Sennacherib in 705–701 BCE.

After the death of Assurbanipal in 627 BCE the Assyrian Empire declined and gradually withdrew from the Levant. This weakening and withdrawal of Assyria occurred during the reign of Josiah, who had become king of Judah in 640 BCE. According to the biblical account, Josiah enjoyed a brief time of independence and prosperity, which also enabled him to carry out a series of cultic and economic reforms which influenced not only Judah, but the remnants of northern Israel as well.

The actual extent of Josiah's kingdom and the real degree of independence that it enjoyed have been debated for years. Alt (1925), Noth (1953: 91-92), Aharoni (1979: 401-404), and others have taken such information as the extent of his reforms in 2 Kings 22–23 and 2 Chronicles 34, the fact of his death at Megiddo and the finds at 'Metsad Ḥashavyahu' as indicating that Josiah actually ruled 'as far as Naphtali' (2 Chron. 34.6) as well as in Gilead. Cross (1998: 175-76) considered this expansion to have been Josiah's 'program', which was perhaps not carried out in full. Others have been more conservative. Mazar (1941), and following him Kallai (1960: 75-78), considered the area mentioned in 2 Kgs 23.8 'from Geba to Beer-sheba' to be the actual limits of his kingdom (and identifying 'Geba' here with an alleged 'Geba-Ephraim'), with the more expansive descriptions referring to his cultic influence. Lipschits (2004) rejects this view, claiming that the northern limit of Josiah's kingdom was in the area of Bethel. Miller and Hayes (1986: 388-341) and Na'aman (1991: 53) are of the opinion that Josiah had in reality become a vassal of Psammetichus I of Egypt, who had taken over the Assyrian possessions in the Levant, and interpreted Josiah's arrival at Megiddo as compliance with a demand of fealty by Psammetichus's son and successor Necho II. According to Na'aman's hypothesis, Josiah was actually executed by Necho because his loyalty was under suspicion. In any case this period of Egyptian rule was brief, and after

605 Judah, together with the rest of the Levant, came under Babylonian rule. An initial rebellion was suppressed with the deportation of Jehoiachin and some of the urban elite. A further rebellion by Zedekiah ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and the abolition of the kingdom of Judah. The brief governorship of Gedaliah at Mizpah ended in tragedy, and here the biblical record of events in Judah comes to an end.

What the biblical record does emphasize is that most of the population of the kingdom was exiled to Babylon and surrounding areas. This would seem to be a continuation of the Neo-Assyrian practice of deporting the populations of conquered countries (as will be discussed below), albeit with differences. The Judahite royal family, Jehoiachin and his sons, were allowed to retain a sort of 'government in exile' status, and the deported Judahites retained some sort of cohesion as a community (for which see Avishur 2007). Other Judahites preferred Egypt over Babylon, and a second Diaspora began to develop there (for which see Porten 2003; Rosenberg 2004).

The archaeological record in Judah supports biblical and other accounts of near-total destruction. Jerusalem, Lachish and practically every city and fortress in the kingdom were destroyed (E. Stern 2001: 323-26). Taking into account villages as well as towns, Lipschits (2003) Faust (2007) and others have calculated that the total population of Judah dropped by as much as 80%, although there were differences between different parts of the country (Lipschits 1999; E. Stern 2001: 321-23).

We have little direct evidence of the administrative status of Judah during the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian Periods. In fact, based mostly on intuitive guesswork, Alt (1953, originally published in 1934) hypothesized that after the conquest of Jerusalem in 586, the entire depleted kingdom of Judah was simply annexed to the existing province of Samaria, and interpreted the mid-fifth-century altercation between Nehemiah and Sanballat (as recounted in the book of Nehemiah) as the latter's attempt to block the former's establishment of a new province of Judah. However, since Avigad's publication (1976) of several stamp impressions that featured the names of men with the title *pḥw'* (governor, the Aramaic equivalent to the Akkadian *bēl-piḫati* and the Hebrew *peḥah*) scholarly opinion began to shift and today this view finds little support (for a summary see Williamson 1987: 48-51, I. Stern 2007: 229; for a typology of Yehud stamp impressions see Vanderhooft and Lipschits 2007). Especially, the finds of recent years at Ramat Raḥel seem to indicate a sort of administrative continuity from the late Iron Age through the Neo-Babylonian and into the Persian Period (Lipschits, Gadot, Arubas and Oeming 2011: 34).

Our reconstruction of the initial phases of the Restoration depends almost entirely on our analysis of the biblical texts and a small number of epigraphic finds, and 'fitting them in' to the greater picture of the history of

the Persian Empire. According to this picture, Cyrus the Great, following his conquest of Babylon in 539 BCE, issued his famous 'edict' allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1.1-4; for the question of the edict's historicity see Grabbe 1998: 126-29). In the following years a certain number did return, led by Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel, probably members of the Davidic line. They were accompanied by Joshua the priest, apparently the son of the last pre-exilic high priest, now considered a descendant of Zadok, high priest to David and Solomon. However attempts at reconstruction were blocked by various 'adversaries', which included, according to Ezra 4–6, descendents of those whom the Assyrian kings had settled in the land, Persian officials, and a group called *'am ha'areṣ* (Ezra 4.4; see below). Intervention by Darius I led to the dedication of the Temple in 516/515 BCE, after which we have little information until the reign of Artaxerxes I (465–424 BCE). In this period come the 'reforms' of Ezra and Nehemiah, the latter firmly dated by cross-referencing with the sons of Sanballat mentioned in the Elephantine papyri, the date of the former, and thus the relationship between the two, still debated (see Williamson 1987: 55-68; Demsky 1994).

The role of Nehemiah is usually assumed to have been that of a Persian-appointed governor or *peḥah*, who held office from 445 through 433, with perhaps a second term as well. He is credited with rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and re-establishing the city as the capital of the province of Judea, or Yehud, as it was called in Aramaic.[2] He is also credited with various social and religious reforms, including a forced separation between Judahite men and their non-Judahite wives and children. Among his enemies are Sanballat 'the Horonite', known from Josephus and from the Elephantine papyri to have been governor of Samaria, Tobiah 'the Ammonite servant', whose official position is not known, and 'Geshem the Arab', now known to have been head of the Qedarite tribes of the southern deserts. At least the first two of these seem to have had connections in Jerusalem and interests in the Temple itself (Neh. 13.4-5, 28).[3]

2. In modern scholarly English, it has become common to refer to the pre-exilic tribe, land and kingdom by the Anglicized 'Hebrew' form 'Judah', and their inhabitants as 'Judahites'. The Second Temple period province and then kingdom is called by its Anglicized 'Latin' form 'Judea' (or 'Judaea'), and its inhabitants are 'Judeans'. The term 'Jews' is used mainly to signify the religious aspects of the identity of this group. For the Persian Period, which is considered to be a transitionary period, the Aramaic 'Yehud', as found on the stamp impressions and coins of the period, has become commonly accepted, although the inhabitants are rarely called 'Yehudites' or 'Yehudeans'. In Hebrew, of course, no such distinctions exist, and the terms 'Yehudah' and 'Yehudi' are used for all of the above.

3. Eshel and Zissu (2006: 828-31) noted that a significant part of the names mentioned in the Persian-Period ostraca at Arad were Judahite, and speculated that this

The precise function of Ezra is slightly harder to pin down and has thus caused more controversy among scholars. Ezra 7.1-5 lists him as a Zadokite priest, although the following narrative does not tell of his carrying out priestly functions. He is labeled 'a scribe skilled in the law of Moses' and according to the letter that he supposedly received from Artaxerxes, his mission was to promulgate and to enforce that law among all Jews. And indeed, he too executes religious and social reforms, teaches the Torah to the people and supposedly forces them to remove their foreign wives. As such, he has often been assumed to have actually composed, edited or redacted the Pentateuch or large parts of it, although this view is less popular today. His actual role remains elusive (see Williamson 1987: 69-76; Grabbe 1998: 138-53; Fried 2004; Karasszon 2009; Leuchter 2010 and references there).

Most of our information about Yehud during the late fifth and most of the fourth centuries comes from archaeological and epigraphic finds, although Josephus seems to have some information as well. The archaeological evidence shows that settlement in Judea gradually increased, though it remained well behind late Iron Age levels (Faust 2007). Stamp impressions, some ostraca, the Elephantine documents and eventually coins give us a list of priests and governors of the Yehud province and their approximate order (see Lemaire 2007a; Lipschits 2007). Our sources, most specifically Josephus and much later the rabbis, pick up again when reporting on the various meetings between Alexander the Great and the Jews (for which see Hjelm 2000: 202-206; Amitay 2010; Kasher 2011), heralding the dawn of a new era.

What, then, can we say about the population of Persian-Period Yehud? The biblical narrative seems fairly straightforward: the various waves of returnees were the direct descendants of those exiled by the Babylonians, and it was they who preserved the true 'seed of Israel' and Torah of Yhwh. Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, each in turn, prevented the returnees from mixing with the 'people of the land', and thus kept the 'seed of Israel' pure. However, a cursory glance at the 'list of returnees' in Ezra 2, paralleled in Nehemiah 7, shows that, whatever its sources and composition history, it includes a very large number of non-Judahite names: Babylonian, Persian, Arabian, Egyptian, Edomite and others (see Blenkinsopp 1988: 79-93; Grabbe 1998: 13-16). And while the adoption of a Babylonian name by a Judahite living in Babylon does not mean that he had lost his Judahite identity, many of the names on this list were taken from other conquered peoples, a sure sign of intermixing of exiled groups. Towards the end of the chapter, in fact, is specific mention of priests who could not prove their

might have been the reason for Geshem's interest in the affairs of the Jerusalem Temple. One should note, however, that the relevant ostraca are dated about a century after the time of Nehemiah and Sanballat.

pedigree (Ezra 2.62 = Neh. 7.64). So the returning exiles were, in themselves, a mixed group.

On the other hand, assuming a historical foundation to the whole story, all of these sundry groups were united in their worship of Yhwh and their willingness to make the journey to a far corner of the empire in order to rebuild a destroyed Temple in a ravaged city within a depopulated minor province. Surly this is a sign of their sincerity in worship of the God of Israel! More than that, it is a sign that it was that very worship of Yhwh that became the central vessel of identification for the returnees.

But was the land to which they came truly depopulated? Despite some recent claims that only a minority of the people of Judah had been deported, while most of the population continued to live in the land (for which see Carroll 1992; Grabbe 1998: 138; Barstad 2003), the archaeological evidence, presented above, is quite clear: the vast majority of the people of Judah were deported (besides Lipschits 2003 and Faust 2007 cited above, see also Oded 2003). Faust (2004) has pointed to some of the cultural changes seen in the archaeological record, such as the disappearance of the typical Judahite rock-cut tomb and of the so-called 'four-room house'. Both of these were central features of Judahite material culture, and their disappearance can only mean significant social changes, caused by the collapse of many social norms.

On the other hand, 2 Kings 24 and 25, as well as Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others, do admit that the Babylonians left some 'of the poorest in the land' behind as 'vinedressers and tillers of the land', not to mention the provincial administration under Gedaliah at Mizpah. If 80% were deported, then 20% remained, and since there is no evidence that the Neo-Babylonians 'imported' other people into the land, those that remained must have carried on some sort of Judahite identity. Much of this population may have been concentrated in the main, apparently undestroyed, towns of Benjamin, such as Gibeon, Mizpah and Bethel (for which see Edelman 2003; Zorn 2003 and Blenkinsopp 2003 respectively). And thus, though unadmitted by the biblical author, when the returnees arrived, they must have met some 'natives', who may or may not have been happy at their 'lost brethren's' return.

Ezra 4–6 tells us of the initial opposition to the returnees and their plan to rebuild the Temple. However these chapters are composite pieces of writing. In 4.1-3, it is 'the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin' who wish to *join* the building, claiming to be descended from those whom Esarhaddon had brought to the land. In vv. 4-5, it is 'the people of the land' (*'am ha'areṣ*) who *discouraged* the people of Judah and made them afraid to build, and even bribed officials to frustrate their plans. This, the verses tell us, continued 'throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia'. The chapter then goes on to recall similar events in the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes, finally returning in the last verse to the reign of Darius and the resumption of work on the Temple.

The question of the identity of 'the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin' in v. 1, the *'am ha'areṣ* in v. 4, and 'the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria' in v. 10 has been widely debated. According to some interpretations, all three groups refer to the 'Samaritans'. According to others, those mentioned in vv. 1-4 are actually non-exiled Judahites, perhaps even landed gentry, while those in v. 10 are Samaritans (for summaries and references see Fried 2006: 123-24; Thames 2011: 110-16). Some, such as Grabbe (1998: 138) see the struggle between returnees and non-exiles as historical, while others (Williamson 1985: 45) consider it an anachronistic reflection of later Jewish–Samaritan tensions. Fried (2006) has suggested that all three groups are actually Persian satrapal officials. Thames (2011) has criticized Fried's interpretation and has suggested that the phrase *'am ha'areṣ*, in the Bible in general and in Ezra 4 specifically, does *not* refer to any well-defined group, but simply means 'everyone'. While this reading may even be correct, it does not solve our problem.

I would tend to agree with Grabbe in content, though not in quantity. While the non-exiles certainly could not have been the direct descendants of the majority of the populace of pre-exilic Judah, they surely did exist. So I am inclined to accept Ezra 4.4 as reflecting a historical situation, in which the 'people of the land' tried to stop the building of the Temple. As to their reasons for doing so, we can only speculate.

By the time we reach the Ezra and Nehemiah narratives, we find no such conflict. It is also missing in Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Nehemiah's adversaries are members of the ruling classes, traders, priests and governors, with no mention of any distinction between descendants of those who had been exiled and those who had not been. It is possible that the biblical writers simply chose to ignore the 'non-exiles', but in my opinion the 'melting-pot' had worked: in the two generations that had passed, the two groups of Judahites had melded. The 'foreign' elements among the returnees had been assimilated, as had the 'non-exiles'. The people of Judah were now simply 'Jews'.

The objection of Ezra and Nehemiah to marriages between Judahite men and non-Judahite women has been interpreted in many ways (for a sampling see Smith-Christopher 1994; Eskenazi 2006; Japhet 2007; Becking 2009), but in any case there is no mention of the 'non-exiles'. The objects of Ezra's objections were 'the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites' (Ezra 9.1). Intermarriage with all of the above peoples is forbidden by Torah law, specifically Deuteronomy (7.1-3; 23.4-5).[4] And since 'Canaanites, Hittites,

4. With the exception of Egyptians, of whom Deut. 23.8 actually says: 'You shall not abhor any of the Egyptians, because you were an alien residing in their land'. While it is

Perizzites, Jebusites and Amorites' did not actually exist in the fifth century BCE, it is clear that the list is more literary than historical. In Nehemiah they were 'women of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab' (Neh. 13.23)—at least in theory more 'up-to-date'. But since the following verse complains that their children 'half speak Ashdodite and do not know to speak Judahite', it is often suggested that the reference to Ammon and Moab is secondary, added to the 'Nehemiah Memoir' by the redactor who wrote vv. 1-3 (Williamson 1985: 397; Blenkinsopp 1988: 363; Fried 2007: 193). In any case the very specific reference to Ashdod and its language (Aramaic? Phoenician? a 'Philistine' dialect?) seems strange. Were there no men of Judah who married Askelonites or Gazites? Edomites? Sidonians? The daughters of Tyrian fishmongers? I would posit that these verses are based on a very specific episode concerning Ashdodites that was recorded in the 'Nehemiah Memoir' and was expanded by the redactor, juxtaposed with the Tobiah and Sanballat episodes, which seem more personal or political than 'ethnic', and inserted in the chapter to make it seem as if this was a major issue in Nehemiah's policy. All we can really say is that it was a major issue in the ideology of the redactor.

It should be noted that none of the various peoples that Ezra 4 had identified as 'the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin' or 'the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria' are mentioned as those with whom Ezra and Nehemiah opposed intermarriage. Nor are the Edomites, although they are mentioned, together with the Egyptians, in Deut. 23.8-9 (as peoples who are not to be abhorred but can be married after three generations). Did Ezra and Nehemiah, or the redactor of Ezra–Nehemiah, feel an affinity to those peoples? Given the text as we have it, it is impossible to know.

We have very little information about the internal history of Yehud during the final century of the Persian Period. From the lists in Nehemiah and in Chronicles, from the Elephantine papyri and from stamps and coins of the province we have a list of high priests and governors. Most of these have Judahite names, and even those, like Bagohi/Bagoas, who have non-Judahite names, are not necessarily non-Judahites. The same is true or the fourth-century list of names found in a cave near Jericho (Eshel and Misgav 1988). It would seem that Yehud continued to preserve its internal autonomy as a 'temple community' and a province within the satrapy of 'Across the River', with no major changes in its borders or population, until the end of Persian rule.

true that 'not abhorring' is not the same as marrying, which, according to 23.9 is allowed after three generations, Ezra (or the author of Ezra 9) seems to be taking the prohibition one stage further. See further Japhet 2007: 143.

One literary source that does reflect the late Persian Period is the book of Chronicles. While the narrative of the book deals with the pre-exilic period, its audience and outlook are those of the late Persian or early Hellenistic eras (for the date and composition of Chronicles see any modern commentary, such as Knoppers 2003: 47-137; as well as Levin 2003: 229-30 and references there). Moreover, the nine-chapter genealogical 'introduction' to Chronicles seems to include quite a bit of material that actually reflects the Chronicler's own time. The genealogies of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh and Asher seem to stretch all the way to the postexilic period (Levin 2004). Within these lists, there is no distinction between the (entire) nation of Israel as it was in the pre-exilic period and the nation in the Chronicler's own time. As realized by Japhet (1997: 369), the Chronicler makes no mention of the exile of the northern tribes or their 'replacement' by foreign deportees as told in 2 Kings 17, and even his account of the exile of Judah emphasizes the destruction of the Temple and the city and the exile of its inhabitants, not that of the nation at large. To him, there is no ideological distinction between the Israelites who had been exiled and returned and those who had never left, within the borders of Yehud and beyond them (for more on this see Levin 2003).

2. *From Israel to Shamrayn to Samaria.*

The second of the three groups that we shall survey is that known to us as the Samaritans. The origin and development of the Samaritans has been a subject of debate since the beginnings of modern research. For the purposes of this paper, we will use the early eighth century BCE as a baseline. At this time, there was a kingdom called Israel, whose capital was the city of Samaria, which, at the time, was one of the largest cities in the region. Several of the kings of Israel from the ninth and eighth centuries are mentioned in contemporary sources. From both inscriptions and material remains, it is clear that at its height this kingdom stretched roughly from the Benjamin region and the northern Shephelah in the south to the sources of the Jordan in the north, and included such urban centers as Shechem, Tirzah, Megiddo, Beth-shean, Rehob, Hazor, Dan, as well as the sites surrounding the Sea of Galilee such as Tel Hadar, et-Tell/Bethsaida, Tel Kinnerot and others. The biblical texts claim that in the early eighth century, under Jeroboam II, the kingdom of Israel extended 'from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah' (2 Kgs 14.25) and temporarily ruled over Damascus (14.28), but we lack corroboration for this. In any case this conquest of Damascus must have been brief, since soon afterwards we find Damascus once again operating as an independent kingdom (2 Kgs 16.5-6; Pitard 1987: 177-79). And while there is a debate among scholars about the origin and early history of the Israelite kingdom, there can be no doubt that by the early

eighth century, this kingdom controlled the central hills from about Bethel northward, the coast from Jaffa to the Carmel ridge, the Jezreel, Bethshean and Jordan valleys, the hills of Galilee and at least parts of Gilead. This was the (northern) kingdom of Israel at its height.[5]

According to biblical tradition, the core population of this kingdom was made up of ten of the original 'twelve tribes of Israel', although the same tradition does not deny the presence of 'foreign' elements as well. In epigraphic sources, the term 'Israel' appears for the first time in the victory stele of Merneptah from the late thirteenth century BCE, apparently referring to a tribal group living somewhere in the area (for which see Rainey 2001), next appearing in the ninth century on the Mesha Inscription, in the annals of Shalmaneser III and in the Tel Dan inscription (for analyses of these and other sources see Lemaire 2007b; Younger 2007). In all of these later sources, the reference is to a king of Israel, specifically to kings known from the Bible to be members of the Omride dynasty and its successors. Later Assyrian inscriptions refer to Israel and its kings as 'the land of Omri' and 'sons of Omri', even after the actual demise of the Omride line. From an archaeological perspective, the specific 'Israelite' material culture that emerged in the central hills in the Iron I period spread into the valleys and the Galilee in Iron II, eventually becoming the dominant material culture in those areas as well (see also Levin 2007a). From the little epigraphic material available and especially from the Bible, we know that Hebrew was the main language of the land and that Yhwh was its main deity (although neither the language nor the god had the privilege of exclusivity). These features were shared by Israel and by its southern neighbor Judah.[6]

The Galilee, Gilead and the valleys came under direct Assyrian control in the campaigns of Tiglath-pileser III in 734–733. Urban centers and villages alike were destroyed, the population was reduced by well over 50% (Gal 1992: 109 in fact indicates over 75%, at least in the lower Galilee) and the areas became provinces of the Assyrian empire (see also Becking 1992: 1-20; Na'aman 1993: 104-106; E. Stern 2001: 6-7; Dever 2007). The remaining states of the Levant, such as Judah, Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Phoenician and Philistine cities and what was left of the kingdom of Israel became Assyrian vassals.

Israel rebelled against Assyria in 723/2, apparently depending on Egyptian aid which never materialized, and although the precise chronology is unclear, it would seem that the siege of Samaria was begun by Shalmaneser V and completed by Sargon II, who came to power in 722 (for a more

5. For a recent archaeological and historical survey of the material see Finkelstein 2011.

6. Although there were most certainly differences in certain aspects of material culture, dialect (see Rendsburg 1999) and in the way in which Yhwh was worshipped.

complete discussion see Becking 1992; Na'aman 1993: 106-108; Younger 1999; Tetley 2002; Tappy 2007 and references there).[7]

Within the Bible, these final events are recounted in 2 Kings 17. Appropriately enough, most of the chapter is devoted to theological issues: the 'reasons' for the fall of Samaria (unfaithfulness to Yhwh and his laws, vv. 7-23) and the incomplete 'lions' conversion' of the newcomers and their descendants 'until this day' (vv. 25-41). However, framing these two sections are the 'bare bones' of the events: the reign of Hosea, his servitude to Shalmaneser, his rebellion and arrest, and finally the siege and conquest of Samaria by 'the king of Assyria',[8] the exile of the Israelites, the importation of foreigners and their settling in 'the towns of Samaria' (17.1-6, 24; repeated briefly in 18.9-11). We should note that neither the biblical account nor the Assyrian sources actually mention the destruction of the city of Samaria or the other major towns of the region. The archaeological record seems to concur, at least in the case of the city of Samaria. Despite the claims made by Kenyon (1942: 108), the Assyrian takeover of Samaria actually seems to have been accomplished with very little physical damage to the city itself (Tappy 2001: 562-63; 2007: 266-76).[9] This would have significant repercussions on the future of the area and its people.

But what was that future? From the extant sources, it is obvious that shortly after its conquest the former kingdom of Israel was incorporated into the Assyrian imperial administration as a province, with the city of Samaria as its capital.[10] There seems to be some question as to the initial name of this province, since in some of his inscriptions Sargon II seems to still use the term *Bīt-Ḫumri* ('House of Omri'), the old term for the Israelite kingdom, while in others he uses ^{URU}*Samerina*, 'the city of Samaria' (Tappy 2001: 564), but eventually Samerina seems to have won out. 'Israel' and 'House of Omri' were gone, at least as political units. As in the Bible, the

7. The 'two conquest' theory publicized by Tadmor (1958) is significantly discussed in these studies, making it unnecessary for us to discuss it as well.

8. Whose name the chapter does not mention. We can only guess whether the author assumed that the conquest and the ensuing events were carried out by Shalmaneser as well, or whether he knew that they were actually completed by Sargon and preferred not to mention his name. The only place in the Bible in which Sargon is mentioned is Isa. 20.1, in connection with his campaign to Ashdod in 712 BCE

9. Although the situation at Shechem seems to have been different. Campbell (2002: 276-95) reports that the late eighth century Stratum VII shows widespread destruction, while seventh century Stratum VI has Mesopotamian-style pottery. Also at Tell el-Far'ah (north), presumably the biblical Tirzah, the transition from period VIId to VIIe is accompanied by the appearance of 'Assyrian' pottery (Chambon 1984: 12).

10. As the fate of the more northern and eastern parts of the kingdom are outside the purview of this paper, we will focus only on the region of Samaria. We will thus not be dealing with the fate or even with the existence of the 'provinces' of Megiddo, Dor and Gilead. For more on these see Na'aman 2009; Eph'al 2010 and references there.

region came to be known by the name of its chief (and only real?) city. Eventually, provincial governors bearing the titles of *bēl-piḫati* or *šaknu* were appointed, as well as district and city governors (*rāb alani*; *ḫazannu*; see Zertal 2003: 381-82 and references there).

However, the organization of the new province took time. As we know from Assyrian sources, from 719 to 716 Sargon was busy in the northeast of the empire, and while the king would not have necessarily overseen every stage in the process personally, the empire's attention was pointed at a different front for a few years. We have no specific documentation of governors of Samerina until the mention of two such men in the eponym lists for 690 and either 646 or 645 (Falkner 1954–1956: 104, 118; Eph'al 2010: 40 n. 31). And while we do have some knowledge of the way in which the Assyrians managed their western provinces (see Eph'al 2010), we do not have any specific information about the province of Samerina in the empire's declining years. As mentioned above, some scholars assume that at some time after 627 the region of Samaria was taken over by Josiah of Judah, while others disagree, seeing his influence as more cultic that political. In any case, Samaria presumably remained a province under the short interval of Egyptian rule (609–605) and kept this status under the Neo-Babylonians. Unfortunately, we have practically no documentation available, and the archaeological record shows very little change as well (Zertal 2003: 404-406).

The picture changes dramatically under Persian rule. Beginning with the late sixth century, the number of sources that relate to the province of Samaria, now called by its Aramaic name *Shamrayn medinta*, expands exponentially. In the biblical books of Ezra–Nehemiah Samaria is actually mentioned by name only three times, twice in Aramaic in Ezra 4.10, 17 and once in Hebrew in Neh. 3.34, as the home of 'Sanballat the Horonite', Nehemiah's enemy. We should note, however, that the text of Ezra–Nehemiah never actually says that Sanballat was 'governor' of Samaria. We know this from Josephus, who in his version of the 'schism' between Samaritans and Jews, tells us that Manasseh, son of the Jerusalem high priest, married Nicaso, daughter of Sanballat 'who had been sent to Samaria as satrap by Darius that last king, and was of the Cuthean race from whom the Samaritans also are descended' (*Antiquities* 11.302-303). This Sanballat, according to Josephus, built a temple on Mount Gerizim which was an exact copy of the Jerusalem Temple (11.310-312). Additionally, multiple epigraphic sources that have come to light since the early twentieth century—the Elephentine documents (the first of which was actually discovered between 1815 and 1819, but only published in 1960!; see Porten 2003: 452-53), the Wadi Daliyeh bullae and papyri found by Bedouin in 1962 (also known as the 'Samaria Papyri'; Cross 1963; Dušek 2007: 5-62), and literally hundreds of additional bullae, coins and other material—all show that *Shamrayn medinta* was indeed an

important administrative unit during the Persian Period, and that its capital was at *Shamrayn qiryta*/*byrta* (Samaria the city/fortress; see Cross 1985: 11*). On the basis of all of these sources, it has even been possible to reconstruct a list of the governors of *Shamrayn medinta* from the 'original' Sanballat in the mid-fifth century down to the Macedonian conquest of 333 (see H. Eshel 2007a and his debate with Cross's earlier reconstruction; for a full discussion see Dušek 2007: 508-48).

The important question, at least to us, is that of the population and its self-identification. As mentioned above, 2 Kgs 17.6 claims that 'in the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes'. The chapter then tells us that 'the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns' (2 Kgs 17.24). While 'the king of Assyria' mentioned in v. 4 is Shalmaneser, Sargon, in two separate inscriptions, mentions deporting 27, 280 and 27, 290 people.[11] And while the biblical account makes the two events seem to have been part of a single 'population swap', both inscriptional and archaeological evidence show that it was actually a gradual process, the bulk of which took place during the reign of Sargon II, and more specifically between 716 and 708 BCE (Na'aman and Zadok 1988; 2000; Tappy 2001: 574). As Younger (2004: 278-80) has pointed out, 2 Kgs 17.24 is in any case a partial summary, since it does not include the Arabs whom Sargon himself claims to have settled in Samerina, and of course it ignores the Persians, Erechites and Elamites whom Ezra 4.2, 9-10 states were brought in the reigns of Esarhaddon and 'Osnappar' (presumably Assurbanipal). So, it would seem that only some of the deportations that actually occurred are mentioned in the existing sources.

In an essay published in 2004, Knoppers analyzed what he saw as two diametrically opposed positions on the problem of these two-way deportations. On one hand was what he called the 'Maximalist' position, which claimed that the Assyrian destruction of the northern kingdom was so devastating, its repopulation so widespread, that even if one is to assume that a certain percentage of the people did remain, the cumulative damage was so great as to 'buttress their claim for fundamental discontinuity' between Iron Age Israel and what came after. Among the proponents of the 'Maximalist' position, Knoppers counts Tadmor, Oded, Mazar, E. Stern, Na'aman and Zadok, Gal, Younger, Eph'al and many others (Knoppers 2004: 153-58 and the many references therein). The opposing 'Minimalist' case, exemplified

11. For the relevant texts see Becking 1992: 25-33.

by Coggins (1975) and by Schur (1992[12]), claims that only a small number of urban elite were actually deported, to be replaced by a small group of imported urbanites. These scholars point to the various biblical passages, mostly in the prophets and in Chronicles, which consider a wider 'Israel' to still exist, and claim that while the government of the province may have been comprised of foreigners, the Yahwistic population remained basically untouched (Knoppers 2004: 158-60). Knoppers's own position, which he presents as 'a *via media*', is that while there can be no doubt about the large numbers of people deported by the Assyrians, it can be demonstrated that in Samaria, unlike in Galilee, the Assyrians neither destroyed the urban infrastructure nor depleted the population. Knoppers cites archaeological data based on excavations and surveys conducted up to the beginning of the present century, which show that while there is evidence of some destruction, there was also both a large measure of continuity of settlement and, eventually, of population growth.[13] He emphasizes that while we do at least have the number of people that Sargon claimed that he exiled, we have no idea how many people he and his successors brought into the province. In Knoppers's view, the remaining of a significant Israelite population, together with the importation of a fairly small number of foreigners, gave rise to the Yahwistic nature of the Persian-Period Samaritans.

While in general we agree with Knoppers's assessment, we believe that we can take his arguments at least one step forward.

Even before the partial publication of the results of his 'Manasseh Hill Country' archaeological survey, Zertal (1989) reported finding what he called 'wedge-shaped decorated bowls', dated to the seventh century BCE, mostly in the eastern valleys of the Samarian hills. He identified these bowls as being Mesopotamian in style, and thus connected them to those deportees brought into the area by the Assyrian kings. He also mentioned that such vessels had been found in the early excavations at Samaria itself, although neither Reisner and Fisher nor Crowfoot and Kenyon recognized their significance. In his more recent (2003) summary of what he calls the Iron Age III (722–535 BCE) in the province of Samaria, Zertal also emphasized the basic continuity in material culture from the late Iron Age into the following periods. Specifically Mesopotamian-style material culture, according to Zertal, was limited to a small group of what he defines as administrative and military complexes. Zertal (2003: 387-95) listed altogether five such complexes, mostly in the less-populated eastern part of the region. It is exactly in this area that Zertal found both the largest percentage of site abandonment and the majority of the 'wedge-shaped

12. Actually Knoppers cites the 1989 edition of Schur's book.

13. Many of the same data are also cited in Knoppers 2006. In order to avoid repetition, we refer readers to the many references cited by Knoppers in both essays.

decorated bowls' and of 'Mesopotamian' architecture. On this basis, Zertal concluded that the 'newcomers', those people whom the Assyrians brought into the province, were settled separately from the remaining Israelites. In his estimate, this situation continued through the short period of Neo-Babylonian rule as well.

When turning to the Persian Period, Zertal (1999: 75*-80*) first emphasizes the large measure of continuity in both material culture and settlement patterns from the late Iron Age, through the Neo-Babylonian and into the Persian Period. He then cites the changes that did take place, especially the rise in the number of new sites and their concentration in the vicinity of Samaria and of the Dothan Valley, with the gradual abandonment of the eastern areas and the region of Shechem (which, after a short period of commercial prosperity was in fact all but abandoned by the early fifth century and only resettled in the Hellenistic Period; see Wright 1965: 166-67; Campbell 2002: 299-309). Zertal specifically attributes this increase in population, at least in the western and northern part of the region, to two factors: economic prosperity due to the region's situation near the main routes leading to and along the coast, and to wide-scale immigration, beginning with the Assyrian deportees and continuing with others who were drawn to the economic opportunities and to the 'cosmopolitan character' of the region's inhabitants (Zertal 1999: 84*).[14] He also cites the existence of Mesopotamian, Phoenician, Ammonite, Edomite and other names in the various documents found in order to reconstruct a very mixed population, with a base made up of both Israelites and Assyrian deportees (Zertal 1999: 83*-84*).

As recognized by many scholars, the biblical record for the population of Samaria in this period is rather ambiguous. On one hand, not only does 2 Kings 17 claim that the people of Samaria were deported and replaced by foreigners, but the area seems to all but disappear from the book's purview from this time on. This of course is also reflected in Ezra 4.2, 9-10, in which the inhabitants of Samaria are considered to be 'foreigners' who were brought in by Esarhaddon and 'Osnappar', and eventually became the basis for rabbinic attitudes towards the '*Kutim*'/'Cuthites' (for which see Hjelm 2000: 104-15 and more recently Friedheim 2010; Lavee 2010). On the other hand, there are references to remnant Israelites still living in the land, most famous of which is Jer. 41.5, in which, sometime after the destruction of

14. In fact, Zertal considers the increased population of the Dothan Valley to reflect a Persian-Period 'Jewish' resettlement, which was the historical background of the story told in the book of Judith (Zertal 1999: 80*-82*). The date and historical background of Judith has long been debated on literary and historical grounds. For a partial summary of the issue see Nickelsburg 2005: 101 and references there. Actually, the tell of Dothan itself was abandoned throughout the Persian Period, only to be resettled in the Hellenistic Period, lending some support to a later date (Master, Monson, Lass and Pierce 2005: 138).

Jerusalem, 'eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn and their bodies gashed, bringing grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the Lord'. Despite the obvious ideological significance of this pericope, quite a few scholars have understood it as indicating that, even as late as 586, there were still loyal Yahwists in the cities of Samaria (and perhaps as evidence of some sort of cultic activity at the site of the Jerusalem temple even after its destruction; see Lipschits 2001: 135-42).[15] Even within Kings, the story of Josiah's reforms extending to Bethel and to 'the cities of Samaria' (2 Kgs 23.15-20) seems to assume that there was some remaining Israelite population there (see also Cogan 2004).

The Chronicler, writing in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period, seems to assume that at least some of the people of Samaria were indeed true Israelites. As shown by Japhet (1997: 325-34), far from being the anti-Samaritan polemic assumed by previous scholars, the Chronicler makes no specific mention of the importation of foreigners into Samaria. In his account of Hezekiah's reign, messengers go 'to the land of Ephraim and Manasseh and as far as Zebulun' (2 Chron. 30.10), to invite the people to celebrate the Passover. The same is true of Josiah: he purified 'the towns of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon and Naphtali' (2 Chron. 34.6). In both 34.21 and 35.18, the Chronicler emphasizes that Josiah's Passover was attended by 'those remaining in Israel'. And while Japhet does wonder if 'the *gerim* who came from the land of Israel' mentioned in 30.25 might be a reference to those foreign elements, she points out that as far as the Chronicler was concerned, they were welcome participants in the Passover celebration.[16]

That a significant portion of both the population and the leadership of late Persian-Period Samaria was Yahwistic is attested by many sources: the predominance of Yahwistic names in the Wadi Daliyeh documents (Cross 1996: 86 counts 44 'Israelite or Hebrew' names comapred with 25 'non-Hebrew' names, and points out that some of the bearers of the later may be 'Israelites' as well),[17] in Samarian bullae and coins (for which see H. Eshel 1997a; Dušek 2007: 495-506 and references there) and in the Elephantine letters addressed to Delaiah and Shelemiah, sons of Sanballat governor

15. For more radical interpretations see Nevins 2006: 8-10, who suggests that the Temple was in fact still standing, and Blenkinsopp 2003: 98-99 who proposes that the mourners were actually en route to worship at Bethel or Mizpah and not at Jerusalem at all.

16. We should add, that even if these references in Chronicles to Israelites in the days of Hezekiah and Josiah are not historical, they still reflect the Chronicler's view of these areas in his own time, that is to say, the late Persian Period.

17. These figures are similar to those cited by Zadok 1998a: 784 for all of the sources giving names for Samaria in the 5th and 4th centuries: 50–54.42% Israelites, 10.86% 'Common Western Semitic' (some of whom may have been Israelites as well), 15.2% Aramaic and Akkadian and about 18% others.

of Samaria, who, in addition to their Yahwistic names, were apparently considered to be close enough to the Elephantine Jews' Yahwistic faith to address in the matter of the Passover ritual. Beyond this, there are multiple attestations in Jewish literature to the 'Samaritans' professing a form of Yahwism which the Jerusalem leadership saw as a threat: the stories in Ezra–Nehemiah, Josephus's version of the 'schism' being caused by internal rivalry within the high-priestly family,[18] the various versions in Josephus and then in rabbinic writings of the Jews' and Samaritans' meetings with Alexander and various views of the Samaritans in later Jewish and Christian writings (for which see Hjelm 2000: 104-82), and of course the very need to create the story of 2 Kgs 17.24-41 (for which see Knoppers 2007a; Rösel 2009). On the other hand, as we have seen, the biblical account of two-way deportations, to and from Samaria, rests on very solid ground. Besides the general Assyrian policy of mass deportation (for which see Oded 1979), Sargon II actually boasts of deporting over 27,000 people from Samaria, and we do have evidence of Israelites living in the cities of Assyria in the following generations (Oded 2000). Sargon also writes of bringing foreigners into Samaria, and Zertal has identified what would seem to be material evidence of these deportees in the form of Mesopotamian-type pottery and architecture. The evidence, then, seems to point both ways: on one hand to a certain measure of cultural and ethnic continuity, on the other to real large-scale deportations, both of Israelites from Samaria and of foreigners into Samaria. What was the relationship between these two groups, and how did it develop?

In his study of the use of mass deportations as a policy in the Neo-Assyrian Empire at large, Oded (1979) made the following points: mass deportations were employed by many Assyrian kings, but they became a basic tool of policy under Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II and Sennacherib, with Sargon perfecting the two-way method. The deportations were carried out both as punishment of rebellious vassal-kingdoms and provinces, but also as a preventive measure, in order to weaken centers of resistance (1979: 41-45). In most cases in which the deportees are characterized in the inscriptions, they are described as either members of the royal families and royal courts of the conquered lands or as soldiers, in other cases they are listed as craftsmen. In only two cases are they listed as slaves (1979: 19-22). They were often conscripted into the army, and in fact we know of entire units that were composed of deportees (1979: 48-54). Others served as scribes, craftsmen and laborers (1979: 54-58). Most were brought to the major cities of Assyria, but many to conquered lands as well (1979: 27-32), where they were used to populate under-populated areas and to work the

18. *Antiquities* 11.297-312, about which see at length Kartveit 2009: 17-108; for an innovative reading of this story see Albertz 2011.

land (1979: 59-74). They were more often than not deported as families and communities, enabling them to function as such in their new lands (1979: 24-25). And finally, they tended to be loyal to the empire (1979: 46-48).

In other words, by taking the priests, scribes, administrators, military men and craftsmen from a conquered country and dispersing them in other conquered lands, and bringing in their place people of similar skills from other places, the Assyrians metaphorically 'killed two birds with one stone'. The leadership of a rebellious or potentially rebellious province was deported, leaving the local population with no royal family or priesthood around which to rally and no military to fight. Craftsmen, scribes and soldiers all became part of the Assyrian military, bureaucracy and economy, as each individual seized the opportunities available to improve his lot and that of his family. On the other hand, such individuals brought together in a conquered province could provide just the sort of 'upper class' through which the Assyrians could ensure the continued functioning of that province as a revenue-earning economy, with a leadership that, bereft as it was of local ties, would have no reason to rebel and every reason to remain loyal.

This is exactly the type of process that we see happening in Assyian-ruled Samerina. The Assyrians, mostly under Sargon II, deported the royal family, court, scribes, priests, craftsmen, military, some of the village farmers and anyone else who could either be considered a threat to the stability of the new province, or of use to the empire in other areas. As noted, we have epigraphic evidence of the dispersion of these Israelites over a wide area in the empire. In their place, the Assyrians, in a process that seems to have taken several decades, brought in similar functionaries from other parts of the empire. These were settled both in the provincial capital and, as shown by Zertal, in military and administrative complexes, mostly in the eastern parts of the province. However as happened in other conquered lands, a large portion of the local population, mostly villagers and the urban poor, were left behind to work the land and to produce revenue. The two groups did not generally mix. While we have no specific documentation, we can certainly assume that the 'locals' considered the deportees to be a part of the foreign conquering regime, brought in to take their lands and their produce, while the new administrators had little in common with the local villagers. The story of their 'partial conversion' recounted in 2 Kgs 17.25-41, if indeed based on fact, would reflect just the sort of 'acclimatization' that one would expect of Iron-Age deportees—to adopt worship of the local deity in addition to those worshipped in their own lands. All this while the 'natives' also continued to worship their god, Yhwh, in whatever form they were accustomed to, also adapting to the new reality.

As mentioned above, we have no specific knowledge of events in Samaria during the late seventh and early sixth centuries. If the biblical accounts are to be taken as historical, it would seem that the 'Josianic reform' made

some headway into Samaria, but this is debated and in any case would have been limited to the 'local' elements. Since we do not know of any Samarian rebellions against the Neo-Babylonians or against the Persians, these would have presumably left the provincial government as they found it, perhaps appointing new provincial governors, perhaps even retaining the existing ones. However, the descendants of the 'importees' no longer enjoyed a special status. By the beginning of Persian rule in 538 BCE, almost two centuries, five to eight generations, had passed since their arrival. Their political and economic situation would have changed. The 'locals' would have in the meanwhile produced their own leadership, some would have improved their economic status, some would have acquired the skills of government. For a while, there might still be animosity between the two groups. The descendants of the 'importees' might have tried to hold on to their privileged status. If Ezra 4 is to be considered historical, even as late as the reigns of Darius I and Artaxerxes I there were still people in Samaria who claimed to be the descendants of those 'importees', now also claiming to be loyal Yahwists. By the time of Nehemiah and Ezra, and certainly by the time of Alexander, no such claims were to be heard. The people of Samaria and their leadership were Yahwists born and bred, Judah and Samaria were two small rival provinces within the hill-country of southern 'Across-the-River', and the dispute over which specific form of Yahwism was the 'correct' one became a part of the struggle between them.[19]

In 332 BCE the people of *Shamrayn qiryta* rebelled against Alexander, burning alive the Macedonian governor Andromachus. In retaliation, Alexander razed the city and repopulated it with Greek-speaking veterans of his own army, making Samaria, as they called it, one of the first 'Greek' cities of the new Hellenistic east.[20] The above-mentioned Wadi Daliyeh documents are usually assumed to belong to the refugees of that attack (Cross 1963; Schur 1992: 36-38; Kartveit 2009: 60-62). Shechem, after being abandoned for nearly two centuries, was rebuilt and became the new center of the Yahwistic 'Samaritans'. This would be the beginning of a new age, in more ways than one.[21]

19. Knoppers (2007b) discusses the issue of identity of Judeans and Samaritans, as seen in the struggle between Nehemiah, Tobiah and Sanballat.

20. Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander* 4.7.9.

21. This article will not deal with the development of Samaritanism and its relationship with Judaism during the Hellenistic Period, nor with the debate about the date and identity of the temple on Mount Gerizim. Much has been written on these issues, but they are beyond the scope of this article. For a small sampling see Becking 2007; Magen 2007.

3. *From Edom to Idumea.*

We now turn to Judah's southern neighbors, usually referred to by the Greek form 'Idumeans', used to differentiate them from the Iron-Age 'Edomites' whose homeland was centered east of the Wadi 'Arabah. The distinction, however, as useful as it may be, is a totally modern one, existing in neither ancient Hebrew nor Greek. Hebrew uses 'Edom' for both groups, while in Greek, the Septuagint, followed by Josephus, uses *Idoumaia* to refer to the Iron-Age kingdom as well.[22] The very first attestations of 'Edom' as a specific group go back to Egyptian sources of the late thirteenth century BCE (for surveys see Bartlett 1989: 67-82; Levy 2009: 252; Lemaire 2010: 226). Based on the few Iron-Age inscriptions found on both sides of the 'Arabah, Vanderhooft has concluded that the Edomite dialect was Northwest Semitic, 'in the Canaanite linguistic group' (Vanderhooft 1995: 137).[23] This of course matches the biblical view of the Edomites as Israel's 'brothers' (on which see Bartlett 1977). There is a debate on the precise date and process by which a full-fledged Edomite kingdom arose (for which see Bartlett 1989: 115-28; Finkelstein 2005; Levy 2005 and references there), but the existence of such a kingdom by the seventh century BCE is clearly attested in contemporary Assyrian inscriptions, in a small number of seal impressions mentioning kings of Edom, in a few of the Arad ostraca and by what seems to be a distinctive Edomite material culture, on both sides of the 'Arabah valley.[24] Like its northwestern neighbor Judah, Edom managed to survive the Neo-Assyrian Period as a vassal kingdom, and several kings of Edom are mentioned in Neo-Assyrian sources (Bartlett 1989: 128-45). Edom actually out-lived Judah within the Neo-Babylonian realm, becoming the last Levantine kingdom to fall. But fall it finally did, apparently as part of Nabunidus's 553/552 campaign to Tema in Arabia, as seen by mention of *[U]dummu* in the Neo-Babylonian chronicle, by the cliff-side relief discovered at Sela' in southern Jordan in 1994 (Dalley and Goguel 1997; Lemaire 2010: 240-42), and especially by the fact that no such state as Edom is known to exist in later periods.[25] Bienkowski

22. As in the case of 'Jew', 'Judean' and 'Judahite' or 'Samarian' and 'Samaritan', modern English has more forms to choose from. In this paper, we shall also use the form 'Edomite' to refer to ethnic Edomites residing in Persian-Period Idumea.

23. And not, as claimed by Avi-Yonah (1977: 26), 'of Arabian stock'. For a rather forced recent return to this view of Edomites as Arabs see Shahîd 2009.

24. For which see Bartlett 1989: 67-145; Bienkowski 1995; Beit Arieh 1995a. For a more recent short history of the Edomite kingdom see Lemaire 2010. For a recent analysis of the distinctive 'Edomite pottery' see Thareani 2010.

25. Aharoni (1979: 408) thought that Edom had 'collapsed under pressure from the Nabataeans who had penetrated the southern regions of Transjordan', while Bartlett (1999: 105) attributed the 'collapse and subsequent decay' of Edom to the disruption of trade following the destruction of Judah, rather than to a purposeful move by the

(1995: 60-61) shows that there is almost no evidence of direct continuity of Edomite settlement east of the 'Arabah through the sixth century and into the Persian Period.[26] The area that had been Iron-Age Edom was now a part of 'Arabia'. In fact, though we have no specific evidence of wide-scale deportations from Edom, the collapse of Edomite society was so complete that unlike the persistence of the names Moabitis and Ammonitis into the Hellenistic Period and later, the name Edom totally disappeared from the area east of the Wadi 'Arabah. In the Persian Period this area was controlled by the Arab tribes known as Qedar (see below), later to be replaced by the Nabateans (for a survey of relevant sources see Bartlett 1989: 168-72). Iron-Age Edom was gone.

However by the early Hellenistic Period, there existed an administrative unit (an *eparchia* or *hyparchia*; different sources use different terms) called 'Idumea', which included the Arad and Beer-sheba valleys, the southern Shephelah and the southern Judean Hills. This unit is first mentioned in Diodorus Siculus's description of the events that occurred in the area in the year 312 BCE (*Bibliotheca historica* 19.94-95, 98),[27] although we should note that this reference is geographical, meant to elucidate the position of the 'Asphaltic Lake' (the Dead Sea), and cannot be taken as proof that Idumea was already organized as a political unit by this time. The earliest reference to Idumea as an administrative unit can be found in papyri from Cairo that record the journey of a Ptolemaic tax-collector named Zenon; he traveled from the port of Gaza through Marisa (Maeshah) to Adoreon (Adora, southwest of Hebron) in 259 BCE (Bartlett 1999: 106). From further references in 1 Maccabees and in various quotations from Josephus, it is clear that in the second century BCE the region south of Beth-zur was known as Idumea, and was considered to be separate from Judea, at least until it was taken over by John Hyrcanus sometime after the death of Antiochus VII in 129 BCE (*Antiquities* 13.257; *War* 1.63). In fact, according to Josephus, a contingent of 'Idumeans' was active inside Jerusalem during the war of 66–73 CE (for which see Appelbaum 2009).

So what, if any, is the connection between the Iron-Age kingdom of Edom east of the 'Arabah, and the Hellenistic-Period hyparchy of Idumea,

Neo-Babylonians'. The Sela' carving seems to prove that the Edomite kingdom was purposely disbanded by Nabunidus, perhaps even after an armed struggle.

26. Although in a later article (Bienkowski 2001), he cites some evidence of both Neo-Babylonian and Persian-Period re-building and occupation at Busayra (biblical Bozrah, the apparent capital of the Iron Age kingdom of Edom) at Tawilan and at Tell el-Kheleifah near Eilat. He then speculates that there could have been 'some sort of political entity called Edom' throughout the Persian Period, while at the same time admitting that 'at present there is no evidence' of this. In light of the data collected here, we consider this to be very unlikely.

27. Actually quoting the third century Hieronymus of Cardia.

west of the Dead Sea? There is ample evidence of Edomite settlement in the Negev as early as the seventh century (see Beit Arieh 1995a; 2009). It would seem that a sizable Edomite population lived within southern Judah by this time (see Eph'al 2003: 77), perhaps worshipping at the shrine at Qitmit, southwest of Arad (for which Beit-Arieh 1995b) as well as that at 'En Ḥaṣeva (for which see R. Cohen and Y. Yisrael 1995). At some point, the Judahites came to view these Edomites as 'invaders' and their country of origin as 'the enemy'.

The 'classic' view is that during the very late stages of the Iron Age, the Edomites 'invaded' the territory of southern Judah, establishing a presence in the eastern Negev. As the kingdom of Judah fell, the Edomites took over its southern regions. This explains, among other things, the extreme anger evident in some of the later biblical texts relating to Edom (such as Ps. 137.7; Obadiah;[28] Mal. 1.2-4; and others), and of course the famous Arad ostraca nos. 24 ('lest Edom should come there') and 40 ('the evil which Edo[m has done])' (Aharoni 1981: 46-49, 70-74).[29] This is also the explanation given by Beit Arieh and Cresson (1991: 134) of their find of an Edomite ostracon among 34 Hebrew inscriptions in the Judahite fortress at Ḥorvat 'Uza: 'the fort was captured by the Edomites shortly before the Babylonian conquest… the eastern part of the Judean Negev was occupied by the Edomites…'. To what extent the Edomite kingdom, as a vassal of Babylon, took an active part in the destruction of the towns and fortresses of southern Judah has been debated (see Na'aman 2011 and references there), as has the extent of actual political and military control that Edom achieved in the area,[30] but the evidence seems to support the notion that by the time Judah fell in 586 BCE, there was already a substantial Edomite population in southern Judah, and when the Edomite kingdom fell as well, it was these people who continued to carry on the Edomite language, cult and identity.[31] It is to these 'western' Edomites that we now turn.

In many past treatments of the Persian-Period Levant, it has been assumed that 'south of Judah was the province of Idumaea, inhabited by Edomite Arabs who moved there after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. It included

28. For which see recently Farisani 2010.

29. Although over the years there have been several other suggestions on the precise reading of no. 40. See most recently Na'aman 2011 and references there.

30. Lemaire (2010: 240) believes that from 587 or 582 to 552 Edom actually did control 'the whole Negev, as well as the southern Shephelah and Judean mountains'. He considers this period, just prior to its destruction by Nabunidus, to be 'the zenith of the Edomite Kingdom'.

31. Contrary to the rather innovative idea put forth by Bartlett (1999: 112-13), according to which there was no ethnic or linguistic connection between the Iron Age Edomites and the later Idumeans, except their similar name, which in both cases was derived from the Hebrew 'adamah', meaning red, 'terra rosa' soil.

all southern Judah, from Beth-zur to Beersheba, except for the coastal plain. Its capital may have been Lachish… Mareshah… or even Hebron, the ancient capital of Judah' (Avi-Yonah 1977: 25-26). That the Edomites were not 'Arabs' we have already stated. In a paper published in 2007 we challenged the view that there was, in fact, a province of Idumea at all in the Persian Period (Levin 2007b). Such a province is not mentioned in any of our sources for the period, literary or epigraphic. Within the Bible, Nehemiah's southern neighbor and enemy is 'Geshem the Arab' (Neh. 2.6), who, as we now know, was a Qedarite (see below), not an Edomite. We know of no stamps or coins issued by such a province, at a time when they were being issued by Samaria, Yehud, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod and the various Phoenician cities (Mildenberg 2000; Gerson 2001; Tal 2007; 2011).[32] And as Eph'al and Naveh have pointed out in their study of the ostraca said to have been found at Khirbet el-Kôm, situated near the Mareshah–Hebron road and identified as the biblical Makkedah (Dorsey 1980), 'our ostraca do not contain any administrative or professional titles, and indicate nothing about state or regional administration' (Eph'al and Naveh 1996: 15).

As most scholars now recognize, the area south of Beth-zur, rather than being ruled by Edomites/Idumeans, was actually ruled by an Arabic-speaking group known as the Qedarites. The eponym of this group (spelled 'Kedar' in most English translations) appears in the Bible as Ishmael's second son, after Nebaioth (Gen. 25.13).[33] The Qedarites are well attested in the Bible and in Assyrian inscriptions from the late eighth century onward (for which see Eph'al 1982: 223-27; Bartlett 1989: 168-72). It would seem that by the mid-fifth century at the latest, these Qedarite Arabs had established their control over the Negev and Sinai, as well as the old land of Edom. As already stated, 'Geshem the Arab' is mentioned as Nehemiah's southern neighbor and enemy in Neh. 2.6. His name and that of his son *Qynw*, designated 'king of Qedar', have been found on inscriptions from Tell el-Maskhutah in the eastern Nile delta and at Dedan (Rabinowitz 1956; Dumbrell 1971). Arabic names have been found on ostraca at Tell el-Kheleifeh, Arad, Beer-sheba, Sheikh Zuweid and Tell el-Far'ah (south), at Lachish (which Lemaire 1974 has reconstructed as a previously unknown 'Iyaš son of Maḥalai the king')

32. This despite the suggestion by Gitler, Tal and van Alfen (2007) to identify a group of imageless-obverse coins found in the area as 'Edomite', precisely *because* they have no inscriptions or mint-marks. They may indeed have been produced by someone in the area, but for them *not* to bear the mark of their minting authority would indicate that they were *not* minted by an official government body.

33. The connection between Nebaioth and the later Nabateans is often assumed but is problematic; see Eph'al 1982: 221-23, who rejects it on both historical and linguistic grounds.

and at Mareshah (E. Eshel 2007a)[34] as well as in the 'Makkedah' ostraca (Zadok 1998a: 785-822).

At what stage, then, was this area detached from Judah and 'handed over', either by design or by default, to the Qedarites? There have been various suggestions. Aharoni (1979: 410) assumed that the 'Negev district' was detached from Judah by the Babylonians in 597 BCE Lemaire (2003: 290-91) believes that the area was detached from Judah during Nabunidus's conquest of Edom and in turn became part of 'Arabia'. In our view, despite the Edomite presence in southern Judah, the Neo-Babylonians would have had no reason to transfer control of the area to such a vassal kingdom as Edom. But since, as pointed out by Avi-Yonah and many others, by the mid-fifth century governorship of Nehemiah, the southern Shephelah and the hill country south of Beth-zur seem to have been outside of his jurisdiction,[35] it must have been detached from the province of Judah at some time between 586 and 445.

In our view, this occurred in the wake of Cambyses' campaign to Egypt in the summer of 525. According to Herodotus, Cambyses employed the aid of 'the king of the Arabs' who supplied water for the Persian troops and guided them through the desert to the borders of Egypt (Herodotus, *Histories* 3.1-9).[36] In doing so, Cambyses emulated, knowingly or not, the deeds of Esarhaddon during his invasion of Egypt in 671 BCE (Luckenbill 1927: 220; see also Eph'al 1982: 137-42). Cambyses' innovation, however, was in establishing a permanent relationship with the Arabs. In his description of the 'fifth satrapy' as it was during the days of Darius I, Herodotus notes that 'the part belonging to the Arabians paid no tribute' (3.91). According to our analysis, the city of Gaza and its environs, as well as the trade routes from Gaza inland towards Mareshah, Hebron and En-gedi and towards Beer-sheva, Arad and Arabia, were actually given by Cambyses to the Arabs, chief among whom were the Qedarites, in return for their aid during his Egyptian campaign (Levin 2007b: 247-49).[37] Gaza became the terminus

34. One of which might even include the ethnonyms *qdryn* ('Qedarites') and *'rbyn* ('Arabs') although E. Eshel (2010: 62) admits that the readings are problematic.

35. Assuming, as do most scholars, that 'the list of the wall builders' in Nehemiah 3 is, in fact, authentic and does indeed reflect the extent of the province during the governorship of Nehemiah (445–433 BCE), the southernmost towns mentioned are Beth-zur, Keilah and Tekoa. This would seem to reflect a Judahite 'withdrawal' from the Negev and the southern Shephelah and hill-country, including towns as far north as Hebron and Mareshah. The southern limit of finds of 'Yehud' stamp-impressions and later of coins more or less corresponds with this limit (E. Stern 2001: 246), although one should exercise caution, since small objects such as coins and small vessels with stamp-impressions may have also 'wandered' outside the limits of the province through trade. For a different view on the subject see Finkelstein 2010.

36. See also Cruz-Uribe 2003 and references there.

37. This, too, is not without precedent. From the Eshmunazar inscription, for example,

port of the Arabian trade. Its mint was probably the most prolific in the area (Mildenberg 2000: 95-96), and many of the so-called 'Philisto-Arabian' coins were found in the Hebron area as well, showing Gaza's ties to this area (Mildenberg 1994: 7).

This situation continued, in our opinion, through the end of the Persian Period (for other views see Lemaire 1996: 148; 2001: 111; Sapin 2004; Edelman 2005: 271-75). The change came in 333 BCE when Alexander, after a two-month siege, razed Gaza to the ground because its ruler Batis, apparently an Arab, insisted on remaining loyal to the Persian king.[38] Gaza lost its status as the major port of the southern coast and the Qedarites lost their control of the trade routes. This is reflected in the total cessation of use of the 'Philisto-Arabian' coins after 332 (Mildenberg 2000: 96). In the following years the area was contested by Alexander's heirs, Ptolemy son of Lagos (later Ptolemy I Soter, king of Egypt) and Antigonus Monophthalmos. In 312, Ptolemy, aided by Seleucus, defeated Antigonus at 'Old Gaza' and continued up the coast as far as Sidon (Diodorus, 19.80-86). Antigonus, in reaction, mounted an expedition 'from the *eparchia* of Idumea' to the land of the 'Arabs who are called Nabataeans'. Since the Qedarites had disappeared from the area, the southern hills and the Shephelah were now re-organized as an *eparchia* or *hyparchia*. As recognized by Eph'al (2003: 79), the new district was now named after its main inhabitants and the province of Idumea was created.

What of the Idumeans themselves, living for over two centuries in what had been southern Judah, without any known political, cultural or religious organization? Unfortunately, we have no direct knowledge of their society, culture or religion. This is as true for the Persian-Period Idumeans as it is for the Iron-Age Edomites. As we have said, they go unmentioned in contemporary biblical records, except Mal. 1.2-4, which describes the land of Edom as 'a desolation, and his heritage a desert for jackals'. But this seems to refer to the old 'land of Edom', not the land of the contemporary Idumeans, thus still adding nothing to our knowledge.[39]

Besides continuity of settlement and the reappearance of the name Idumea in the Hellenistic Period, the strongest indication we have of continued Edomite presence in southern Judah is in the use of the divine name 'QWS'

we learn that 'the Lord of Kings' (presumably the king of Persia) granted the areas of 'Dor and Jaffa, great lands of grain that are in the field of Sharon' to the ruler of Sidon, 'because of the great deeds which I have done', apparently in aiding Persian naval operations (see Galling 1963; Aharoni 1979: 415).

38. Diodorus 17.48; Arrian, *Anabasis* 2.25-26; Quintius Curtius 4.6; Strabo, 16.2.30, says that 'the city was razed to the ground by Alexander and remains uninhabited'; see also Devine 1984.

39. For a discussion of the historical background of this passage see Hill 1998: 162-70. For its theological significance see Redditt 2000.

(vocalized by various scholars as either 'Qaus' or 'Qôs'),[40] especially as a theophoric element in personal names. As such, this element has been widely recognized as particularly (although perhaps not exclusively) Edomite. However, Qaus has turned out to be a rather elusive deity.

According to Knauf (1999: 674-75), various names with the theophoric *qś* appear as early as the thirteenth century BCE in Egyptian renderings of Shasu clans in Seir. However, there is then a 500-year gap before the appearance of a *Qausmalaka* king of Edom in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III and a *Qausgabari* in those of Esarhadon and Assurbanipal, making the case for continuity rather problematic. Beginning in the seventh century we find more and more such names on both sides of the 'Arabah (for which see Bartlett 1989: 204-205). Of particular significance is a late seventh or early sixth-century ostracon from Ḥorvat 'Uza (Beit Arieh and Cresson 1985), in which the writer wished the addressee well with the words *whtbrktk lqws*, 'and I bless you by Qaus'. This is apparently the earliest known inscription in which Qaus is mentioned independently as a divine name, not as a theophoric element in a person's name.[41] Basing their analysis on Naveh (1966), Beit Arieh and Cresson consider both the script and the use of the hiphil (rather than the expected piel) as being particularly Edomite (see also Misgav 1990: 215-16). This is significant, because all of the other 34 ostraca found at the site are specifically Hebrew, showing once again the beginnings of Edomite settlement in the area prior to the Babylonian conquest.[42] A more or less contemporary ostracon from Tell el-Kheleifeh near Eilat shows the same type of script, and includes at least five names with the element *qws* (Naveh 1966: 28-30).

There is a debate on the origin of the god Qaus and the process by which he was adopted as the chief god of Edom. It has often been pointed out that, unlike fairly frequent mention by name of the gods of Ammon, Moab, Canaan and others, the Bible makes no mention of the Edomite deity. This, together with the well-attested tradition of Esau/Edom's fraternity with Jacob/Israel and along with the several poetic references to Yhwh's 'coming up from' Edom/Seir/Sinai/Teman/Paran (Deut. 33.2; Judg. 5.4; Hab. 3.3; Ps. 86.8-9, 18—as well as the mention of 'Yhwh of Teman' at Kuntillet Ajrud—for all of which see Axelsson 1987: 48-80), has led many scholars to conclude that the Edomites were originally worshippers of Yhwh, and

40. See, for example, Knauf 1984 in which 'Qaus' is used, while in Knauf 1999 the spelling is 'Qôs'. This probably has as much to do with editorial policy as it does with Knauf's own preferences.

41. For the next such mentions, all from the first century and later, see Bartlett 1989: 200.

42. Although in their recent interpretation of the ostracon, Becking and Dijkstra (2011) seem to assume that the site was under the authority of the king of Edom at the time.

only 'adopted' Qaus after the establishment of their monarchy, perhaps as a counter-balance to the now-rival Israelite and Judahite Yhwh (see Rose 1977; Knauf 1999: 677).

It is also widely accepted that Qaus was an originally Arabian deity, whose name is to be derived from the word for 'bow', and that he was originally seen as a god of hunting (perhaps reflected in the Genesis tradition of Esau's being a hunter, Gen. 25.27; 27.3-4). This idea was developed by Vriezen (1965); although he rejected Wellhausen's equation of Qaus with the Arabian storm-god Quzaḥ, whose bow was called *qaus-Quzaḥ*. Knauf (1984; 1999: 676-77), for both linguistic and historical reasons, suggested a contrary scheme, according to which Qaus was a 'Southern Edomite' manifestation of the Western Semitic storm god Haddu/Hadad, as were Milcom, Chemosh, Baal and Yhwh. An even more radical approach has been taken by Zalcman (2005), who, addressing the apparent absence of the Edomite god in the Bible, suggested tying QWS to the Hebrew QWṢ, which he defines as 'feel a sickening dread', in his view equivalent to the Hebrew PḤD, 'fear', also an epithet for the deity (as in *pḥd yṣḥq*, 'dread of Isaac' in Gen. 31.42, 53). And while this hypothesis has not been widely accepted, it does contribute, along with its predecessors, to our appreciation of just how close Edomite and Israelite religion might have been.

Qaus-names all but disappear from southern Transjordan after the fall of the Edomite kingdom (this despite Knauf's attempt to establish continuity between Edomite Qaus and the Nabatean deity Dushara; see Knauf 1999: 676). A few such names also appear in Babylon, attesting to Edomite exiles there, but by the Persian Period the vast majority of such names are found in a large number of sites in what had been southern Judah and would become Idumea.[43]

However, since we have absolutely no literary descriptions of Idumean society, religion or identity during the Persian Period, and even the archaeological record from the area is rather scanty,[44] most of our information comes from epigraphic material. Fortunately, the past several decades have uncovered quite a lot of such material, from Lachish, Arad, Beer-sheba, Mareshah, Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkedah and several other sites in the area. Since at present there are nearly 2000 such items, mostly Aramaic-language ostraca, some of which have been found in archaeological excavations but most of which are unprovenanced,[45] and not nearly all of which have been

43. However, a word of caution is in order. As pointed out by Naveh (1979: 195), on the basis of Qaus-theophoric names with Arabic elements found at Beer-sheba, it is possible that some worshippers of Qaus were ethnic Arabs.

44. See E. Stern 2001: 443-54, and further summaries in Fantalkin and Tal 2006: 181-85; I. Stern 2007: 206-208 and references therein.

45. For a recollection of the original 'discovery' and publication of the latter, see Porten

published, it would be impossible to attempt a systematic survey. We do feel that we are able, however, to make some useful comments on this material.

The first comment that we can make is chronological. The vast majority of the ostraca, both those few that were found in dated archaeological contexts, and the vast majority that are unprovenanced, are from the very final decades of Persian rule and from the first few decades after Alexander's conquest of the area. The first group includes, among others, the Beer-sheba and Arad ostraca published by Naveh which he dated on paleographical grounds to the fourth century BCE (Naveh 1979: 182; 1981: 153) and most of those from Mareshah (E. Eshel 2007b: 171). The great majority of the 'unprovenanced' group, those attributed to Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkedah, are commercial and administrative documents, many of which are dated according to the Babylonian calendar, typically giving the date, the month and the regnal year of the reigning king, sometimes specifying the king's name, other times not. Thus, in Eph'al and Naveh's no. 13, 'On the 16th of Tammuz, year 4 of Artaxerxes the king…', while in no. 11, 'On the 25th of Second Adar, year 2…' with no king named (Eph'al and Naveh 1996: 26).[46] According to their calculations, the dates of the entire corpus range from the 42nd year of Artaxerxes II (362 BCE), the only king of this name whose reign was so long, until the 5th year of Alexander IV (311 BCE).[47] Aḥituv and Yardeni also published one ostracon dated to 'Talmaios the king' (2004: 19), presumably Ptolemy I, who assumed kingship of Egypt and the southern Levant in 306. Unfortunately, the specific year of his reign was not preserved. What all of this seems to indicate is an increased amount of administrative activity in the area in this period, which included an increased use of writing. This seems to fit well with Fantalkin and Tal's reassessment of the archaeological data from the area and especially its chronology. In their view, most of the Persian-Period finds in the various sites of the Negev and the Shephelah (Arad, Beer-sheba, Tell el-Far'ah [south], Lachish and others) should be dated to the fourth century BCE and show heightened imperial involvement

and Yardeni 2006: 457-59; 2007a: 73-75. The publication of unprovenanced artifacts, including inscriptions, has been seen as problematic by the scholarly community, on both scientific (problems of authenticity and context) and moral (encouraging theft and illegal sale) grounds (see Rollston 2003; 2005; Vaughn 2005). However see Porten 2007a for his reasons for treating this as a special case.

46. Two of the ostraca in Eph'al and Naveh's corpus (nos. 11 and 28) refer to 'Second Adar' (*'dr 'ḥry*) and an additional one was published by Porten and Yardeni (2004: 172*), while no other intercalated month is mentioned. This of course reflects the late Babylonian custom (about which see Cohen 1993: 5-6), which survives in the Jewish ritual calendar to this day.

47. Lemaire (2006: 414) argued that the 'Alexander' referred to is Alexander III (the Great) and not his short-reigning son, an argument that was refuted by Porten and Yardeni (2008).

in the area. They suggest that such heightened involvement was caused by the Persian Empire's loss and subsequent reconquest of Egypt (Fantalkin and Tal 2006: 181-90). While this may be correct, the renewal of administrative activity in the area also means that there was more to administer: more sedentary population, more agriculture,[48] more trade, more taxes. And so it would seem that the south of Judah, ravaged by war and invasion in the early sixth century BCE, was now being resettled.

Our next comment is on the identity of the population. We have already made our case for the area's being administered by the Qedarite Arabs, at least from 526 BCE. From the various analyses of the epigraphic material undertaken by Zadok, Naveh, Porten, Lemaire, E. Eshel and others, we find a very high percentage (about 30%) of names that could be characterized linguistically as 'Arabian', 'Edomite' names at about 25%, with the next largest specific groups being Aramaic and Judahite/Hebrew. At the bottom of the list are Egyptians, Phoenicians and 'possibly Old Iranian' (this from Zadok 1998a: 814). When theophoric elements are listed, we find that Qaus is the most common (sometimes appearing in names that are linguistically Arabic), followed by El, Baal, Yhw(h) and a handful of others. Assuming that there is some correspondence (although not one to one) between language, worship of 'national' deities, and identity,[49] we can see that a large segment of the population was of Arabian descent, almost as many were Edomites, a minority were Judahites and others. Since Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the time, Aramaic names do not necessarily mean anything. Thus, while most (but not all!) worshippers of Qaus would probably identify themselves as 'Edomite/Idumean', and most worshipers of Yhwh would be considered 'Judahites/Jews', use of such divine titles as 'Baal', 'El' and so on would be meaningless. As such, at least by the fourth century BCE, worshippers of Qaus were almost in the majority, with Yhwh-worshippers at under 4%.

The distribution of these names, however, is not even. As emphasized by Naveh (1981: 167), at Arad, most of the 'officers' of the fortress seem to have had Hebrew or Yahwistic names, while most of the people to whom the supplies were given had Arabic names. Qaus-names were a minority here. Following this, Eshel and Zissu (2006: 828-31) speculated that Jews made up a significant part of the troops commanded by the Qedarites in the area, perhaps explaining the interest of 'Geshem the Arab' in the affairs of

48. A nice example of which is the ostracon found at Tell el-Far'ah (south), originally published by Cowley and then re-read by Naveh (1985: 114-16) as referring to sowing barley in a field.

49. For a short discussion of the theoretical aspects of this assumption see Porten 2005: 105*-108* and references there.

the Jerusalem Temple, as recounted in Nehemiah 4 and 6.[50] Furthermore, in his reading of one of the 'Makkedah' ostraca, Lemaire (2004a) suggested that the *byt yhw* mentioned after *byt 'z'* ('Uzza being a known Arabian goddess) was none other than a temple of Yhwh, situated somewhere in Idumea, perhaps at Makkedah (see also Lemaire 2006: 416-17).

The onomasticon of the ostraca found at Beer-sheba, on the other hand, is different. Of the tax-paying farmers listed there, about a third have clearly Arabic names, another third include the element Qaus, and most of the rest are of a general nature. Naveh lists one Iranian name (*bgn*; Naveh 1979: 194) and one 'apparently Jewish' name (*dlwy*; Naveh 1981: 176). Naveh, in emphasizing the many names that have Qaus as their theophoric element and Arabic-language verbal or nominal elements, concluded that the inhabitants of at least southern Idumea could be considered 'Edomite Arabs' (1979: 195). On the other hand Porten (2005), in his analysis of the wider corpus of 'Qaus' names, concludes that the verbal and nominal elements have basically the same meaning as those of Hebrew names, showing just how much the two traditions had in common. Porten writes of 'a modest penetration of Arabian' (Porten 2005: 112*), and concludes that 'given the geographical proximity, we are not unjustified in speaking of a Judeo-Idumean piety' (Porten 2005: 118*). At Mareshah as well, we find that most of the names are Arabic and Edomite (E. Eshel 2007a), some even traceable to Transjordan (E. Eshel 2007b). In her full publication of the ostraca found at Mareshah through the 2000 excavation season, Eshel records 12 'Qaus' names, 7 'Baal' names, 4 with 'El' and 3 with Yw or Yh.[51] Also present are a large number of 'Arabian' and 'Nabatean' names, the Egyptian *Ḥwr* and Babylonian *Mnky*. *Nbwr'y* is seen as including the Babylonian deity Nabu with the Western Semitic *r'y*, 'Nabu is my shepherd'. Three less clear readings are *'św*—'Esau', which, if correct could hint at the Idumeans' self-identification—and the ethnonyms *qdryn* ('Qedarites') and *'rbyn* ('Arabs'), perhaps listing their ethnic origins (although Eshel admits that all three of these readings are problematic; see E. Eshel 2010: 44, 62).

In a table summarizing 'the ethnic breakdown of the Idumean ostraca', I. Stern compares the names found at Arad, Beer-sheba, Mareshah and 'Unknown Provenance', the vast majority of which are attributed to Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkedah. He notes the 'striking similarity' between the Mareshah names and those of 'unknown provenance': in both groups, Arab names

50. Although if one follows the traditional dates for Nehemiah, this would have been about a century earlier than the Arad Aramaic ostrac.

51. Interestingly enough, only one of the four, *Šmryh*, has the expected postexilic Yh. The other three, *Yw'[b]* (or *Yw'[š]*), *'bdyw* and *Ṭbyw*, have the typically pre-exilic Israelean Yw, as in the Samaria Ostraca or Kuntillet Ajrud. E. Eshel (2010: 61) takes note of this but does not offer an explanation.

make up just over 30%, Idumeans around 25%, Judahites under 10% (actually, 9.09% and 5.60%), and 'Western Semitic' just under 30%. In Arad, on the other hand, 61.22% are Judahites, 14.30% Idumean and 12.24% Arab, while in Beer-sheba 42.62% are Arabs, 24.59% Idumeans and less than 20% Judahites (I. Stern 2007: 212-213).

An additional point that must be mentioned is the clan-based structure of the society of Idumea. Since most of the epigraphic material that we have from the Land of Israel is fragmentary and singular in nature, with the vast majority of the finds listing no more than single names, sometimes with patronymics or epithets, but with no way to connect the different finds over generations,[52] the 'Makkedah' material gives us a very rare opportunity to understand the internal structure of this society. Porten, in many of his studies of the ostraca, has traced several clans' 'dossiers' over several generations: the clans of Qosḥanan, of Yehokal, of Qoṣi, of Gur, of Ḥori, of Rawi, of Alba'al and of Ba'alrim (each of which has variable spellings; see, Porten and Yardeni 2003; 2007b and more). He then used the interconnections within and between the clans to resolve chronological issues, including the identity of several of the rulers mentioned (Porten and Yardeni 2004; 2008; 2009).

Of the eight 'clans' mentioned above, the first would seem to be Idumean, the second Judahite, and the last two 'Canaanite' or 'Phoenician'. However in his own study of the ostraca, I. Stern has shown that there was a substantial amount of flexibility and intermixing between the different 'ethnic groups'. For example, of the members of the 'Gur' clan, 31% had Arabic names, while another 31% had Edomite (Qaus) names. Fully half the members of the 'Phoenician' Ba'alrim family had Arabic names, almost 25% had Edomite names, one was Egyptian and only one was actually 'Phoenician'. Of the seemingly 'Judahite' Yehokal family, over half had Edomite names, almost 30% were Arabic, two were Egyptian and *none* were Judahite or Yahwistic.

While Porten and Yardeni (2003: 212) pondered the significance of this phenomenon, to Stern the meaning is clear: in the 'post-collapse' conditions of Persian-Period Idumea, people of various ethnic origins did not maintain ethnic boundaries and intermixed readily. In the case of the Yehokal clan, a family that may have been descended from the pre-exilic Judahites now found itself in the minority and adapted its identity to that of what had become the majority (I. Stern 2007: 216-21).

The 'Makkedah' material also supplies information on such daily matters as the boundaries of fields or properties, perhaps as part of deeds of sale.

52. As an example, the late Iron-Age corpus that Aharoni published from Arad (1981) includes over 100 ostraca from over four centuries, with dozens of names. However, because of the military/administrative nature of the site and of its inhabitants, we are not able to establish familial ties between any of them.

Aḥituv (1999) published one such exemplar, delineating the boundaries of an olive grove: 'below the wall of Qosdayyana and our white field and the vault of Qoslu'at and the hill of the cave… from the boundary of Ḥaniel till the upper boundary of Ḥazir…'.[53] A similar piece was published by Lemaire (2004a; 2006: 416-617), defining the boundaries or territories of a 'house of 'Uzza' and a 'house of Yhw'. Also mentioned are three places named '*kpr*…' with the name of a clan: *kpr ynqm*, *kpr glgwl*, *kpr b'lrym*. Porten and Yardeni (2007b) discuss the possibility of these being 'villages' named for their resident clans, but pointed out that *kpr* seems not to have this meaning in biblical Hebrew, and suggested understanding the term as meaning 'tomb', as in later Nabatean. What we have, then, are three family burial plots.

And finally, the 'Makkedah' corpus, so far as it has been published, affords us a unique glance into the workings of the economy and administration of Idumea. Assuming that these ostraca do in fact come from Khirbet el el-Kôm/Makkedah, this insufficiently explored site near the boundary between the southern Judean hills, the southern Shephelah and the Negev and right on the major route from Gaza via Mareshah to Hebron (and perhaps on to En-Gedi and south towards Arad and southern Transjordan) was apparently a major administrative center for the southern regions of the land. Many of the ostraca mention a *mśknt'*, apparently a 'storehouse', perhaps specifically for grain, at *mnqdh* (the Aramaic spelling of 'Makkedah', although the shortened Hebrew form *mqdh* also appears).[54] The precise function of this 'storehouse' is not clear (see Aḥituv and Yardeni 2004); Lemaire (2004b) understood it to be a tax collection center, while Porten and Yardeni (2007c: 142-43) emphasized that the ostraca totally lack royal or other official terminology, preferring to understand the *mśknt'* as a commercial venture. They also raised the question of whether the *mśknt'*, 'the storehouse' mentioned in some of the ostraca, is identical to the *mśknt mnqdh*, 'the storehouse of Makkedah' mentioned in others, and admit that there is not as of yet enough information to provide a definite answer (Porten and Yardeni 2007c: 131-32, 154).

The area that had been southern Judah was apparently ravaged by the Babylonian conquest, with or without active participation of the Edomites. All of the major cities and fortresses such as Lachish, Beer-sheba and Arad were destroyed and, like their brethren from the more northern parts of

53. Which I. Stern (2007: 215-16) then used as further evidence of Idumeans (Qosdayyana and Qoslu'at) and Judahites (Ḥaniel, Kinyo and perhaps Ḥazir) living side by side, in what he called 'a microcosm of inter-ethnic relationships in Idumea'.

54. Actually Eph'al and Naveh (1996: 15) originally read the word as *mnqrh*/*mqrh*, which they understood as 'cistern, cavity or pit', but later recognized it as the toponym *mnqdh*/Makkedah.

Judah, a large percentage of the population was exiled. But not all of them; some Judahites, as well as some Arabs and some Edomites, remained. It is even possible that when the Edomite kingdom fell to Nabonidus, groups of refugees migrated into the Negev. In any case, as the Persian Empire organized its southern frontier, the area became part of 'Arabia', specifically the kingdom of Qedar. Under the Qedarites, trade increased, as did military activity. By the end of the fifth century BCE, some of the fortresses had been rebuilt, taxes were being collected and commodities were being traded. Soon afterwards, coins minted at Gaza were being used throughout the area. It is possible that Mareshah, on the main route connecting Gaza and the southern hills, became the administrative center of the region, while Makkedah, just a few kilometers to the east along the same road, became its commercial hub. However only further excavations at both sites will enable us to understand their precise roles.

Although the region that would become Idumea goes almost unmentioned in the literary sources of the period, we are fortunate in that a very large number of epigraphic documents, mostly ostraca, have survived and been found, both in controlled excavations at Arad, Beer-sheba, Makkedah, Mareshah, Lachish and other sites, and on the antiquities market, especially those associated with the site of Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkedah. From these documents we can learn quite a lot about the geography and economy of the region, but they also provide us with incomparable information on the ethnic makeup of the area's population. The picture that emerges is that of a mixed population: about half of the names are Arabic in form, most of the rest are Edomite, Hebrew or Phoenician, with a smattering of Persian and Egyptian. Of the divine names used as theophoric elements, the most popular is the Edomite Qaus, with El, Baal, Yhw(h) and others trailing behind. However the various 'clan dossiers' that have been compiled show that these Arabs, Edomites, Judahites, Phoenicians and others did not just live as neighbors. They intermarried readily, gradually forming what in the modern world would be called 'a melting pot'. Eventually, perhaps as a counter-balance to the Arab identity of the nomads and traders to the south and to the increasingly exclusive Judahites to the north,[55] it was the Edomite identity that came to the forefront, as seen not only in the continued use of the Qaus-theophoric (presumably indicating worship of this deity),[56] but also in the continued use of the Edomite ethnonym, to such an extent that when the region was once again reorganized under the Ptolemies, it was officially recognized as a hyparchy of Idumea.

55. For one of many essays that deal with this phenomenon of increasing exclusivity in the Jews' relationship with their neighbors see Fried 2007.

56. As Knauf (1999: 677) has commented, 'loyalty to the national deity probably compensated for the loss of national independence'.

Unlike the radical changes that occurred in Samaria with the destruction and subsequent Hellenization of the city and the re-grouping of what we now call the 'Samaritan' community around Mt Gerizim, the Hellenization of Idumea was more gradual. The 'Makkedah' ostraca show that the economic system, including the Babylonian dating system, were still in use as late as the reign of Ptolemy I. Aramaic remained the language of internal commerce. The bilingual ostracon found in the 1971 salvage excavation by John S. Holladay at Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkedah in a Hellenistic rebuild of an Iron Age house is a good example of the transitional period. According to the Aramaic text, on the 12th of Tammuz of year 6, Qôs-yada' ben Hanna' the moneylender loaned to Niqeratos 32 *zuzin*. In the Greek text, in year 6, 12th of the month of Panēmos, Nikēratos son of Sobbathos, received from Kosidē the moneylender 32 drachmas. The 'year 6' in question is probably the sixth year of Ptolemy II, 279 BCE. Presumably, the lender was an Aramaic-speaking Idumean, while the borrower was Greek, necessitating that the 'contract' be in both languages. Of the five additional ostraca found in the same house, four were in Aramaic and one was in Greek (Geraty 1975).

This shift is further seen at Mareshah, which was apparently the 'capital' of Hellenistic Idumea until its destruction in 112/111 BCE. Of the 300 or so ostraca found there, not all of which have yet been published, about 50 are in Aramaic and the rest in Greek (H. Eshel 2007b: 123). In an Aramaic marriage contract found at Mareshah and dated to 176 BCE, the name of the groom is *qwsrm* son of *qwsyd*, while the bride is *'rsnh* (Arsinoe, a Greek name that was common in Ptolemaic Egypt), daughter of *qwsyd* son of *qwsyhb* (Eshel and Kloner 1996). The groom and his father have 'pure' Edomite names, but the bride's name is Greek, her father's is Edomite, and her grandfather is 'Edomite-Arab'. A similar series of intergenerational relationships and name changes can be found in the famous 'Sidonian' burial caves, also at Mareshah. The best known of the inscriptions found there mentions an Apollophanes son of Sesmaios. Apollophanes, which is Greek in form, was common among Hellenized Phoenicians. The same is true for Sesmaios. Sesmaios' daughter, also there, is Sabo, apparently an Arabic name, perhaps Nabatean. An additional epitaph is that of 'Qosnatanos son of Ammoios son of Sesmaios', and finally there is also 'Babas, son of Qosnatanos son of Ammoios son of Sesmaios'. So, it would seem, that the Phoenician Sesmaios gave one son a Greek name, the second an Idumean name, the third an Egyptian name and his daughter an Arabic one. Nearby lies Demetrios son of Meerbal (which would be Maher-ba'al in Phoenician), another Greek-named son of a Phoenician father (I. Stern 2007: 221-21).

In 112 BCE the Hasmonean ruler of Judea, John Hyrcanus I, conquered Idumea, subduing its main cities of Adora in the hills and Mareshah in the Shephelah (*Antiquities* 12.353; 13.396) and, at least according to Josephus, forcibly converting the inhabitants to Judaism (*Antiquities* 13.257). However

this episode is to be understood, Idumea did indeed become integrated into the Jewish state, to such an extent that it remained so even after Pompey and Gabinius detached the non-Jewish areas from it after the Roman conquest of Judea in 63 BCE. And while Antipater, father of Herod, who was appointed governor of the district, is identified as 'an Idumean', he seems to have considered himself to be at least partially Jewish, and named one of his sons Joseph and his daughter Salome, both Jewish names. On the other hand, at least some Idumeans seem to have preserved their identity even under Hasmonean rule. Kloner (2011) discusses Qos theophoric names, purification installations similar to Jewish *miqva'ot*, evidence of circumcision, 'aniconic (nonfigurative) and schematic representations of divinity' and burial in *kokhim* with practice of bone collection as signs of Idumean identity. In *Antiquities* 15.253 Josephus notes that Costobarus (presumably a Greek form of *qwsgbr*), appointed by Herod to be governor of Idumea and Gaza, was descended from the priests of 'Koze, whom the Idumeans believed to be a god'.

4. *Summary: Common Backgrounds, Different Paths.*

The histories of small nations under great empires often seem to be pre-determined. As the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian and then Hellenistic empires grew, they swallowed up the small nations that lay in their path. Israel, Judah and Edom were but tiny kingdoms that did little to threaten the great powers, but when those great powers decided that the time had come, there seems to have been little that those nations could do to avoid their ultimate fate. They had a lot in common. Israel and Judah shared a national deity, who was perhaps worshipped in Edom as well. They shared a common language, or at least very similar dialects. By their very proximity, they had a long shared history. And, to whatever extent the biblical narratives do reflect a historical tradition, the three nations may have actually been 'related', stemming from a common ancestral group. In the end, each in turn was subjugated, at first reduced to vassalage but eventually destroyed, their leadership exiled and their cities ruined. For most nations, that would have been the end. But when the fate of Israel, Judah and Edom is examined in detail, we learn that each took its own special path.

The history of Israel as a conquered nation is the longest. From the evidence that we have, most of its towns and villages were destroyed by the Assyrians, and a large percentage of its population was deported. In their place, the Assyrians brought in new colonists, who became the administrators and perhaps the land-owners of the province. These people perhaps did adopt the God of the land, although it is impossible to know exactly what reality the biblical story of their 'conversion' is based on. In any case, Assyria soon departed, and the colonists lost their privileged status. Whatever influence

Josiah and his Judahite renaissance may have had could have strengthened the Israelite identity of the descendants of those who had not been deported. It took several generations, but eventually the descendants of the 'colonists' mixed with those of the 'natives', forming the group that we call 'Samarians' or 'Samaritans'—a group that arose from the particular situation of the province of Samaria, and whose very existence was tied to the fortunes of that province. During the Persian Period the division between 'Samarians' and 'Jews' was more geographic, administrative and political that anything else. By the time of Alexander's destruction of the city of Samaria and its refoundation as a Hellenistic *polis*, Samaritan identity, now centered on Mt Gerizim, was ready to continue on its independent path.

The destruction of Judah by the Babylonians was by all accounts harsher than that of Samaria. But there were several important differences as well. First, it would seem that Judah's long survival in the face of subjugation to Assyria and then its short-lived renaissance under Josiah produced a Judahite nation (or at least elite) that was better prepared to survive exile as a community, with a significant core retaining its identity over time. This ensured the survival of a Judahite Diaspora, which would be crucial in the formation of Jewish identity in the postexilic period. Second, the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell less than half a century after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the new regime was favorable to the Judahites' repatriation. Third, since the Babylonians did not 'colonize' or 'resettle' the heartland of Judah, the land was, to an extent, 'empty'. Of course this 'emptiness' is a relative term; there were some 'unexiled' Judahites who may have opposed the returnees, but this opposition was brief, and by the fifth century, the Jews of Yehud seem to have been a fairly homogeneous group, living in a province that was defined by its Temple, and sustaining an ongoing relationship with their co-religionists in Babylon, Egypt and even in Samaria. To an extent, if the Samarians were the people of Samaria, Yehud was the province of the Jews.

The Idumeans were a people in the process of formation, or 'ethnogenesis'. The old kingdom of Edom had been annihilated. We have no specific knowledge of the fate of its people, but some may have been exiled, others may have remained. Within a few years, the area that had been Edom was taken over by the Arab Qedarites. However Edom also had a sort of 'diaspora'—the Edomites that had been living in southern Judah, perhaps now joined by refugees from the homeland. In their new land, the Edomites met Judahites, Arabs (who came to control the area), Phoenicians and others, and in the aftermath of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, quickly joined in a process of intermingling and intermarriage. Perhaps, like the Jews, the Edomites' loyalty to their god Qaus was a factor in the preservation of their identity. The *ethnos* that emerged had its roots in old Edom, but was well established in the new Idumea.

This, of course, is not the end of the story. In the Hellenistic Period we find three *ethne*, each with its own religious and political identity, each recognized as such by the new rulers of the region. Each of the three reacted differently to the onslaught of Hellenism. Eventually, the Jews rebelled, turning from subjects to conquerors. The Idumeans, conquered by John Hyrcanus I, were eventually assimilated into the larger Judea and lost their identity. The Samaritans, subjugated by the same Hasmonean ruler, remained distinct from the Jews, were 'liberated' from them by Pompey and Gabinius, and continued to develop their own distinctive culture.

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Piety of the Poor in the Community of Qumran and Its Historical Origins

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Abstract

The self depictions of being 'poor' in the *Hodayot* and also in 1QpHab and 4Q171 are closely related to those texts of the Hebrew Bible composed in the Persian and the Hellenistic period (e.g. Pss. 12; 25; 34; 35; 37; 40; 62; 69; 73; 76; 102; 109; 140 and 149). The self depictions of being 'poor' in the *Hodayot* as well as in the psalms of the poor are inseparably linked to the triadic constellation of 'the redemptive God—the oppressed supplicant—the adversaries intimidating the supplicant'. Towards God, the terminology relating to the poor serves as a self-depiction to indicate one's own sinful nature and lowness; in regard to the adversaries, it emphasizes the contrast between one's own baseness and the threatening superiority of the godless adversaries in order to stress one's own need for help from God. Nowhere in the texts are there statements objectively defining or explaining the nature of this 'poverty'. As to how the terminology relating to the 'poor' is used, we can clearly see that it is not about addressing a particular state of economic impoverishment that threatens one's own existence. The supplicants and their communities of faith faced multiple hostile factors, especially a serious conflict with the temple leadership of Jerusalem. From the author's view, the relevant biblical texts of Persian-Hellenistic period could shed light upon the historical origins of piety of the poor articulated in the Qumran community.

Keywords: Piety of the Poor, Dead Sea Scrolls, Qumran Community, *Hodayot*, Psalms of the Poor, Persian and Hellenistic Period.

1. *Terminology of Poverty in the* Hodayot*: Defining the Problem*

No one has, of yet, succeeded in persuasively deciphering the exact meanings and connotations of some terms related to poverty in postexilic Israel that were used as self-designations by religious groups. These terms of poverty seem to have played a special role in the self-understanding of certain religious groups. It is also by no means clear which religious movement first used these terms of poverty for self-designation in the history of Israel.

However, since 1947 we at least have some clear texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which seem to be profoundly influenced by the so-called 'piety of the poor'. The Qumran community understood itself as a 'community of the poor' (עדת האביונים)[1]. From this fact, it might be possible to obtain a new viewpoint for clarifying the pre-history of the piety of the poor presented in the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as to illuminate specific criteria for evaluating relevant texts from the Hebrew Bible.

To this end, some texts related to the Dead Sea Scrolls will be presented and evaluated in the following chapters. For this purpose, the collection of thanksgiving songs called '*Hodayot*', in which the relevant terms of poverty are used significantly more frequently than in other texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls, must first be considered and researched. The terms for poverty in the *Hodayot* are the following.[2]

אביון	$1QH^a$ 10.32; 11.25; 13.16,18,22
ענו	$1QH^a$ 6.3; 13.21; 23.14
ענוה	$1QH^a$ 4.22
עני	$1QH^a$ 9.36; 10.34; 13.13f
רש	$1QH^a$ 10.34; 13.14,20
יתום	$1QH^a$ 13.20
פתיים	$1QH^a$ 10.9
נמהרים	$1QH^a$ 9.35; 10.9; 13.21

The above-mentioned passages will be examined by questioning whether or not the terms for poverty connote 'material poverty'. In other words, we should try to understand whether the author[3] of the relevant texts in each case addresses life-threatening circumstances related to lack of materials or other situations of socio-economic misery, or whether the terms for poverty should be understood as a religious attitude. This problem can be summarized in the following question: Were the relevant terms selected and used as words of self-description that reflected socio-economic marginalization (paupertas) or a certain religious piety or attitude (e.g. 'humility in front of God'; humilitas)?

If the relevant terms contain clearly negative connotations, then the first interpretation can be regarded as more accurate. A clearly positive connotation would be an indication that the author consciously and carefully selected the terms for self-description. If it turns out that the relevant terms connote both positive and negative attributes in their surrounding contexts,

1. 4Q171 2.10; 3.10; also 1QpHab 12.3.
2. Cf. Lohfink, 1990, p. 42.
3. The question of whether the text of Hodayot derived from one author or several authors should be left open here. For this issue, cf. Segal, p. 135; Schubert, p. 23; Molin, p. 103; among others.

then an examination is warranted of whether the negative meanings are connected with circumstances related with 'material' poverty, or whether the negative situations are rather associated with other disadvantages with which the author is confronted.

As an example, 1QH[a] 13.5-19 is examined and evaluated.[4]

> 1QH[a] 13.5-19[5]
> 5) I give you thanks, Lord, because you did not desert me when I stayed among a for[eign] people […and not] according to my guilt
> 6) did you judge me, nor did you abandon me to the plottings of my inclination but you saved my life from the pit. You gave […] among
> 7) lions, appointed for the sons of guilt, lions which grind the bones of strong men, and drink the bl[ood] of heroes. You made my
> 8) lodging with many fishermen, those who spread the net upon the surface of the water, those who go hunting the sons of injustice. And there you established me for the judgment,
> 9) and strengthened in my heart the foundation of truth. The covenant, therefore, for those searching for it. You closed the mouth of the lion cubs, whose
> 10) teeth are like a sword, whose fangs are like a sharpened spear. Vipers' venom is all their scheming to snatch away. They lay in wait, but did not
> 11) open their mouths against me. For you, my God, hid me from the sons of Adam, concealed your law in [me, un]til the moment of
> 12) revealing your salvation to me. For in the distress of my soul you did not desert me, you heard my call in the bitterness of my soul,
> 13) you paid attention to the outcry of my pain in my complaint and saved the soul of the poor man (נפש עני)[6] in the lair of lions, who sharpen their tongue like swords.
> 14) And you, my God, you closed their teeth[7] so they would not rip up {my} the soul of the poor and wretched (נפש עני ורש);[8] their tongue has been drawn in
> 15) like a sword into the scabbard, so that it would not [dest]roy the soul of your servant (עבדכה). And to show your greatness /through me/ before the sons of Adam, you did wonders
> 16) with the poor (באביון), you placed him [like g]old in the cruci[ble] to be worked by fire, and like purified silver in the furnace of the smiths to be refined seven times.
> 17) The wicked (רשעי) of the nations hustle me with their trials, and the whole day they crush my soul.
> 18) But you, my God, have changed the storm to a calm and have freed the

4. For the literal structure and theological interpretation cf. among others Morawe, pp. 111-35; Jeremias, pp. 218-226; Schultz, pp. 60-66; Lichtenberger, pp. 61-65; Kittel, 1981, pp. 80-97; Lohfink, 1990, pp. 63-77; Nitzan, p. 349; Martínez, 1997, p. 171.
5. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 171.
6. Martínez reads here {י}נפש (my soul) instead of נפש (soul) (p. 170).
7. Martínez reads here 'their tongue' (p. 172).
8. Martínez reads here {י}נפש (my soul) instead of נפש (soul) (p. 172).

soul of the poor (נפש אביון) like […] prey from the power of
19) lions.

In this segment of the text, the supplicant describes himself relatively frequently as 'a poor one'. He uses the terms עני, רש and אביון in lines 13, 14, 16, 18 and all are in masculine singular form. Therefore, the terms clearly refer to the one who composed this text.[9] Furthermore, terms for poverty like עניים 'the poor people',[10] נמהרים 'the trembled'[11] and פתיים 'the simple-minded'[12] always emerge in the plural form and must have accordingly meant the supplicant's addressees. From this fact one can assume that the terms characterize the supplicant's supporters who turn to his messages and teachings (see especially $1QH^a$ 9.35; 10.9).

Further examination reveals that the supplicant's typical self-designation אביון is also often used as a designation of the congregation.[13] Also the lexeme עני, with which the supplicant characterizes himself in $1QH^a$ 13.13-14, is utilized for the designation of the supporters in $1QH^a$ 9.36. This circumstance is most likely connected with the fact that the 'I' who expresses the prayer himself in the *Hodayot* is presented less as biographic, but more as typical or exemplary. Each member of the community could make the statements of the *Hodayot* valid for him or herself. The expressed religious experiences could be easily related to each member of the community. Despite the 'I-style', the songs might also reflect the self-understanding of the community.

Therefore, the following research is based on the presupposition that the 'I' in the *Hodayot* includes a collective sense, meaning that the self-consciousness of the whole Qumran community is reflected therein. We can subsequently conclude that the topic of poverty in the *Hodayot* is by no means a special idea or a particular thought of an individual, but a collective worldview, which the whole community shared. This methodological presupposition is also valid for the analysis of the other documents contained in the Dead Sea scrolls. Thus, the literary critical and redaction-critical questions related to the relevant documents contained in the Dead Sea scrolls will not be intensively examined in this analysis.

$1QH^a$ 13.5-19 can be divided into four parts.[14]

Lines 5-9a: the first report of crisis
Lines 9b-16a: the first report of salvation

9. The self-designation of the praying individual as poor is found also in $1QH^a$ 10.32; 11.25 (אביון); 10.34 (עני); 10.34; 13.20 (רש); 13.20 (יחום).
10. Cf. $1QH^a$ 6.3; 13.21; 23.14.
11. Cf. $1QH^a$ 9.35; 10.9; 13.21.
12. Cf. $1QH^a$ 10.9.
13. Cf. $1QH^a$ 13.22; 4Q171 2.10; 3.10; 1QpHab 12.3.
14. Cf. Lichtenberger, p. 61.

Lines 16b-17: the second report of crisis
Lines 18-19: the second report of salvation

The terms for poverty are mainly used in 1QH^a 13.5-19 in connection with statements about God's saving actions (ותצל in 1QH^a 13.13, סגרתה in 1QH^a 13.14, הגבירכה and הפלתה in 1QH^a 13.15f and פלטתה in 1QH^a 13.18) toward the supplicant (see lines 13, 14, 16, 18). The supplicant is located in a situation of distress. Thus, the terms for poverty stand in a three-point constellation: 'the saving actions of God—the supplicant in the situations of distress—the supplicant's enemy'. Whenever one of the poverty terms emerges as a self-designation of the supplicant, the oppressing actions of the enemies and the following actions of salvation of God are reported at the same time. The following are three examples of this from the text:

1QH^a 13.13
You have saved
(ותצל—1. the salvatory action of God)
the soul of the poor man
(נפש עני—2. the supplicant's distressful situation as 'poor one')
in the lair of lions, who sharpen their tongue like swords.
(אריות אשר שננו כחרב לשונם—3. the oppressing action of the enemy)

1QH^a 13.14
And you, my God, you closed their teeth,
(סגרתה בעד שניהם—1. the salvatory action of God)
so they would not rip up
(יטרפו—2. pursuit action of the adversaries)
the soul of the poor and wretched.
(נפש עני ורש—3. the supplicant as 'poor one')

1QH^a 13.18-19
And the soul of the poor
(נפש אביון—1. the supplicant as 'poor one')
you have freed
(פלטתה—2. the salvatory action of God),
like [...] prey from the power of lions.
(מכת אריות—3. pursuit action of the adversaries)

The main concern of the above-mentioned texts is not an objective description or illustration of concrete situations of poverty. It is not concerned with poor people or material poverty. In the core message, the relationship of the prayer to God and the relationship of the supplicant to his or her enemies are of central interest. The significance of terms like 'poor' and 'poverty', are therefore not to be understood without consideration of these double relationships.

The poor seem to be helpless and powerless over their adversaries; at the same time the supplicant describes himself as 'poor' because he experiences

divine salvation as one who is helpless and powerless. For this, one can refer to 1QH[a] 10.31-36, where the same three terms for 'poor' (עני, רש and אביון) appear as in 1QH[a] 13.5-19 and where they are used just as in 1QH[a] 13.5-19 always in connection with the verbs פדה (to redeem, see 1QH[a] 10.32) and עזר (to help, see 1QH[a] 10.34), which describe the rescuing actions of God.

1QH[a] 10.32[15]
… You have freed
(פדיתה—1. the rescuing action of God)
the life of the poor person
(נפש אביון—2. the supplicant as 'poor one'),
which they thought to finish off by pouring out his blood.
(חשבו להתם דמו לשפוך—3. pursuit action of the adversaries)

1QH[a] 10.34f[16]
… But you, my God, have freed
(עזרתה—1. the rescuing action of God)
the soul of the poor and needy
(נפש עני ורש—2. the supplicant as 'poor one')
from the hand of someone stronger than him…
(מיד הזק ממנו—3. pursuit action of the adversaries)

Therefore, the question arises, as to whether the self-designation 'poor' puts its priority on the relationship of the supplicant toward God and therefore expresses a special self-assessment in front of God. If there is such a priority, then it may be termed a status that derives from the will of God. It would then be an appropriate form of existence in front of God. On the other hand, the self-designation could result from the fact that the threat and pursuit by adversaries led the supplicant to a situation of poverty, so that the supplicant used the self-designation 'poor' as an appeal before God. In this case, the terms related with 'poor' would mean a form of existence which derives from economic suppression and material deficiency forced by the enemies.

In other words, it remains to be clarified whether the priority is the aspect of 'poor in relation to God' (see e.g. 1QH[a] 13.21f) or the aspect of 'poor in relation to the adversaries' (see e.g. 1QH[a] 11.25). For the clarification of this question, we have to take look at the anthropology[17] which is unique to the *Hodayot*.

1.1. *The Anthropology of the* Hodayot*—the Further Self Designations*

The basic anthropological concept of the supplicant can be recognized in the following texts:

15. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 163.
16. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 163.
17. Cf. Lichtenberger, pp. 176-230 and Maier, p. 67, among others.

1QH[a] 9.21-25[18]
… Although I am a creature of clay (יצר החמר), fashioned with water, a foundation of shame and a source of impurity, an oven of iniquity and a building of sin, a spirit of error and depravity without knowledge, terrified by your just judgments. What can I say which is not known? Or declare which has not been told? Everything has been engraved before you with the stylus of remembrance for all the incessant periods and the cycles of the number of everlasting years in all their predetermined times, and they will not be hidden, and will not be lacking from before you. How will a man count his sin? How will he defend his iniquities?

1QH[a] 11.23-25[19]
… But I, a creature of clay (יצר החמר), what am I? Mixed with water, as whom shall I be considered? What is my strength? For I find myself at the boundary of wickedness and share the lot of the scoundrels. The soul of a poor person (נפש אביון) lives amongst great turmoil, and the calamities of hardship are with my footsteps…

1QH[a] 12.29[20]
What is flesh compared to this? What creature of clay (יצר חמר) can do wonders?

1QH[a] 19.3[21]
I give you thanks, my God, because you have done wonders with dust; with the creature of mud (וביצר חמר) you have acted in a very, very powerful way…

1QH[a] 20.24-26[22]
And I, from dust [I] have been gathered, [and from clay (ומחמר)] I have been [fo]rmed to be a source of impurity, and of vile filth, a pile of dust, mixed with [water,…] a lodging of darkness.

The metaphorical self-depiction in these fragments of text, namely, of being a 'form made of clay' (יצר החמר)—which is characteristic of the pessimistic anthropology of the supplicant—has its origin in the potter's language.[23] Since Jeremiah[24] and Deutero-Isaiah[25] the noun and the verb יצר were readily used to signify the sovereignty of God. The noun יצר 'form' implies that man without God's discretion is nothing but clay or dust.[26] Therefore, the expression

18. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, pp. 159-61.
19. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 167.
20. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, pp. 169-71.
21. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 189.
22. For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 193.
23. Cf. Lichtenberger, p. 65 (on 1QH[a] 9.21).
24. Cf. Jer. 18.2-7.
25. Cf. Isa. 45.9; 64.7.
26. Cf. 1QS 11.22.

יצר החמר articulates the frailty and nothingness of human existence, inasmuch as God's power and glory is the measure.[27]

As the juxtaposition of יצר החמר, on the one hand, and of נפש אביון, on the other hand, clearly shows in the above cited references in 1QH[a] 11.23-25, the anthropological self depiction of the supplicant as a form of clay closely conforms with the self depiction of being 'poor'. Both of these are the outcome of a strangely pessimistic image of man as represented by the Qumran community: the supplicant in 1QH[a] 9.21ff considers himself to be 'a form of clay (יצר החמר) and one that is kneaded with water, an epitome of shame and source of impurity, a smelting furnace of guilt and an edifice of sin, an erring spirit and one that is distorted without discernment, and frightened by righteous courts'.

At the same time, the admission of one's own sinfulness is closely associated with the expressions of self evaluation of being a 'form made of clay' and 'poor'. By confessing to being 'poor' in their prayers to God, and also to being low, wretched and sinful creatures, the supplicant and his followers set themselves apart from their adversaries,[28] and thus justify their special religious status before God. Naturally, they may regard themselves as those especially favored and chosen by God, and as the 'true' Israel, chosen even from their mothers' wombs. For example, it is said in 1QH[a] 17.29-31:

> For you have recognized[29] me from my father and [sanctified me] from my mother's womb and, you have done good things for me since the days in my mother's [lap]. And your mercy has been with me from the day of feeding at my mother's breast, and at the bosom of my nurse [...] and since my youth you have appeared to me in my understanding of your court.

And in 1QH[a] 4.21f:

> But I have seen that you [prepare] the way for him that you choose (בחרתה), and restrain him in your wisdom [...] that he sin not against you […] for him his poverty (ענותו) in your rebuke [...] his heart.

According to Maier, the decisive reflections lead us to the conclusion that the poor leaves his legitimacy to God, knowing well at the same time that he, as a futile and sinful creature, has no claim on God's benevolence and, that his right may only be restored through the restoration of God's honor.[30] The poor one completely submits to the will of God, contrary to his adversaries, namely the wicked who boastfully control the law and wealth. This viewpoint, the

27. Cf. Maier, p. 66.

28. Cf. On this, Maier, p. 79, on 1QH[a] 11.21 ('formed of dust'); 'the chosen one was created by God as futile and susceptible, like the ungodly, but for a different purpose' (author's translation).

29. According to Jer. 1.4, recognized = chosen; cf. Maier, p. 102.

30. Cf. Maier, p. 84.

notion of 'poverty', readily became a religious conviction, regardless of the material condition of the individual, as also in the case of the rich where their attitude to God and their neighbor is condemned but not their possessions.[31]

If we wish to understand what is intended in the *Hodayot* by the terminology relating to the poor as the preferred expressions for self depiction, we must observe this paradoxical juxtaposition of radical nothingness or awareness of being low against the assured awareness of being chosen. Here, what is fundamental and characteristic is obviously the scheme of 'lowness—elevation',[32]—one who is most humble is most elevated. The mirror image of this is 'pride goes before a fall',[33] which is typical thinking of wisdom literature. This might account for a basic pattern of piety as articulated in the *Hodayot*.

In conclusion, we must note that the supplicant's perception of poverty and, furthermore, the piety of the poor in the Qumran community, is based on dialectics founded between clear consciousness of sinfulness and lowness on the one hand, and distinct awareness of being chosen on the other hand. From the manner in which the author responsible for the *Hodayot* in question describes his perception of poverty, we can unequivocally conclude that he is concerned with a basically existential question: namely, what type of existence is worthy before God?[34] This gives rise to the point that the evaluation of 'being poor before God' is superior to the evaluation of 'being poor before the adversaries'. Therefore, the terminology relating to the poor primarily emphasizes the supplicant's relationship to God. The point of view that 'poor' means a form of existence that is forced upon them by their adversaries and that, consequently, deprives them of material possessions, is not in the foreground.[35]

It is therefore methodologically inadmissible to limit the scope of the nuances of the terminology relating to the poor solely to the socio-economic meaning of poverty from a material point of view. If we wish to speak about the frequent usage of the terminology in the *Hodayot* concerning 'piety of the

31. Cf. Maier, p. 84.

32. Cf. Maier, p. 85.

33. Cf. e.g. Prov. 16.18; 17.19; 18.12; 29.23; on numerous notes on Yhwh's antipathy to all 'highly placed' and overbearing, cf. e.g. Gen. 11.1-9; Isa. 2.12-17; 10.33f; 14.12ff; Ezek. 17.24; 21.31; Job 22.29; Sir. 10.12-14; on 'Elevation and Humiliation' in Qumran cf. e.g. 1QM 14.11ff; in NT cf. e.g. Lk. 1.51ff; 14.11; 18.14; Mt. 23.12 and more; cf. also the topic 'The first and the last' Mt. 19.30 and more.

34. Cf. here also Lange, p. 226: 'The doxology of lowness contraposes the human, who is wretched and wicked from the beginning, to the almighty God, the creator before whom the order of being and history is determined on the heavenly tablets, in order to describe God's righteousness and greatness with praise' (author's translation).

35. Cf. also 1QM 11.7ff, where the poor are portrayed not as victims of their adversaries, but as God's troops battling against enemies.

poor', then we indicate a consciously assumed posture of humility, and not the piety of people threatened by material poverty. According to Maier, we cannot speak of 'one group of the "poor" in the sense of an organization, but, probably, of a religious movement that later clearly differs from Sadduceeism and Pharisaism, primarily due to the image of humanity (I, 26.35) and the eschatology'.[36]

1.2. *Terminology of Poverty Describing a Situation of Persecution and Crisis*

We have already considered above that the usage of the terminology relating to the poor is not restricted to explanations of man *vis a vis* God, but that we can also observe politico-social constellations where one side feels disadvantaged, oppressed and threatened by the other. Therefore, we should clarify to what extent the terminology relating to the poor can provide information about the type of existential needs or social disadvantages the supplicant might have experienced.

As is unequivocally evident from the Qumran-Essenic[37] texts, the supplicant and his followers or his community find themselves confronted with a hostile presence or atmosphere. Regardless of whichever views taken in respect of the origin of the Qumran-Essenic 'community',[38] it is indisputable that the relationship with the temple in Jerusalem was strained and essentially polemic.[39] Another hostile situation possibly exists with one who was a leader but was regarded as a 'man of lies'.[40] Probably, the real threat and situation of persecution might have emerged for the Essenic community mainly from the official temple leadership in Jerusalem. Space does not permit a full discussion of the contentions and tensions with other groups and orientations of piety.[41]

36. Maier, p. 85 (author's translation).

37. The almost generally accepted hypothesis is here presupposed that the Qumran community was identical with Essenes or at least with a branch group of Essenes . For the detailed arguments cf. H. Stegemann, 1999, pp. 116-21, 194-226; VanderKam, 1998, pp. 92-119.

38. On this, cf. e.g. Lichtenberger, p. 66; Lichtenberger assumes with regard to Stegemann's proofs 'that the teacher of righteousness did not appear as the founder of the community, but came as high priest driven by Jonathan into an existing community and claimed there the leadership (cf. CD I)'. On the next course of matters cf. e.g. the deliberations of Stegemann (H. Stegemann, 1999, p. 206).

39. Cf. Lichtenberger, p. 66.

40. The appearance of the teacher of righteousness led to a split in the community: some members of the original community followed him; those who did not were termed as 'liars'. (cf. Lichtenberger, p. 66); further notes cf. e.g. Hengel, p. 407.

41. On many of the distresses of the author and various names for the enemies in the Hodayot and in the Habakkuk commentaries cf. Ruppert, pp. 15-225 (passim); Brownlee, pp. 1-37; Davies, pp. 361-68; van der Woude, pp. 349-59; Lim, pp. 415-25.

In the various descriptions of situations of the persecution and crisis in which the speaker in the *Hodayot* found himself, the contrast between the supplicant and his adversaries regarding positions and attitudes is very striking. In 1QH[a] 10.31-36, the adversaries, with their attacks against the supplicant, are seen as the 'violent people' (1QH[a] 10.21; עריצים), the 'strong' and 'powerful' ones (1QH[a] 10.35),[42] from whose hands God has rescued 'the soul of the poor (אביון), the wretched (עני), and the needy (רש)'.[43]

In 1QH[a] 13.5ff, the supplicant compares his adversaries to lions,[44] from whom God rescued 'the soul of the poor and the needy' (= עני in line 13; רש in line 14), the 'soul of the poor' (= אביון in lines 16, 18), and his 'servant' (= עבדכה in line 15); for God is with the 'orphaned, the needy, the humble (ענוים)', and the 'poor seeking mercy' (in lines 20-22). Here too, 'there is no suggestion that the 'poverty of persecution' is equated with material poverty'.[45]

It is obvious that for the supplicant the emphasis is on the contrast between high and low, powerful and powerless. In sharp contrast to the humble supplicant, whom God supports, the adversaries' attitude and manner demonstrates arrogance towards God. The hostile situation is motivated by religion; it results from contradicting positions challenging each others' orthodoxy, but not from the constellation of 'here the rich upper class—there the poor, exploited lower class;' it does not seem to be about material possessions. So, we must completely agree with Lohfink: 'the material aspect is simply not the leading viewpoint'.[46]

This can also be understood from the fact that 'the described plight of the supplicant is often not a temporal distress', 'but a portrayal of the eschatological horror which occasionally also goes into describing the eschatological world catastrophe'.[47] The distress of the supplicant or his followers is regarded 'as part of the eschatological horror which needs to be overcome—which is possible through the power of God alone—and is an unavoidable transitional phase of the lowness that is followed by elevation. Also 'poverty' as a posture of faith is an attribute of lowness, confession of one's own futility and man's

42. In this everything is concentrated on the supplicant's 'pursuit pushing out of the community by others'; there is 'as good as no indication that things like economic low level, material misery and physical needs are so important for the supplicant' (Lohfink, 1990, p. 59).

43. The supplicant stands here, 'as presumed by many who find here a self statement of the 'teacher of righteousness', against the high priest and the high council' (Lohfink, 1990, p. 59).

44. On the enemy in the image of a lion cf. among others Ps. 17.12; 22.14; 35.17; 57.5; with the image of the lion, e.g. in Ezek. 22.25 and Zeph. 3.3 the debased and oppressive upper class is characterized.

45. Lohfink, 1990, p. 73 on 1QH[a] 13.5-19 (author's translation).

46. Lohfink, 1990, p. 73 on 1QHa 13.5-19 (author's translation).

47. Maier, p. 71 (author's translation).

powerlessness, associated with the confession of sins,…only to that extent positive as the confession of futility is the precondition for the mercy of God who forgives sins, gives power, succeeds in perfect transformation and, finally, brings about the eschatological redemption. Such 'poverty' is, in its character, not a condition, but rather an attitude'.[48]

In 1QH[a] 10.20-30,[49] in regard to the portrayal of the plight of the supplicant, it is 'clear how various eschatological and mythological archetypes emerge from the chaotic struggle'.[50] According to 1QH[a] 13.5-19, the supplicant's persecution is, after all, 'a persecution of world dimensions'.[51] 1QH[a] 11.19-36[52] contains in lines 24-36 'after repeated realization of the futility of man…a description of the eschatological horror which the pious one overcomes, not through one's own strength—"what is he then?"—but only by virtue of being chosen and strengthened by God'.[53]

2. *The Subject of the Poor in the Rest of the Qumran Texts*[54]

The terminology relating to the poor as a self depiction of the community, 'poverty' as an attribute of lowness, confession of one's own futility and powerlessness as an attitude of faith, and the eschatological scope of expectation which is characteristic of this attitude play an important role in other Qumran texts as well.[55]

In 1QpHab 12.2-6, the אביונים are portrayed as those oppressed by the godless priests;[56] that is to say, the former are identified implicitly with the

48. On 'piety of the poor' in Qumran cf. Maier, p. 86 (author's translation).
49. On this cf. Lohfink, 1990, p. 49.
50. Lohfink, 1990, p. 51 (author's translation).
51. Lohfink, 1990, p. 75.
52. On this cf. Lohfink, 1990, p. 92.
53. Maier, p. 79 (author's translation).
54. With the 'rest of the Qumran texts' the non-biblical manuscripts from the Qumran findings are meant with the exception of the Hodayot; this concerns mainly the relevant portions of the text in 1QS, 1Q28b, CD-A, 1QM, 1QpHab and 4Q171.
55. אביון and אביונים appear clearly in the Qumran texts at least 22 times (cf. Ro, p. 25). In CD-A 6.21 אביון (along with עני and גר) is not used in the sense of self depiction. In the context it concerns the instruction, 'to keep away from the sons of the wicked', to leave the 'unclean' and 'unlawful' possessions and to fulfill the social obligations to the socially weak. On the Qumran-Essenic notions of cult purity and on the associated outcome, e.g. the strict distinction between pure and impure possessions, cf. Paschen, pp. 85-109; also Lohfink, 1990, pp. 28-31. Cf. CD-A 6.16f the naming of the 'poor of his people', 'widows' and 'orphans' (clearly a reference to Isa. 10.2). Accordingly, possession itself is not wicked (cf. Maier, p. 51; also Paschen, pp. 106-109; Lohfink, 1990, pp. 30f). The same applies to CD-A 14.14 as to CD-A 6.16ff.
56. Probably the ruling high priests in Jerusalem are meant; for the latest argument

followers of the teacher of righteousness.[57] Here, אביונים as a self depiction of the Qumran–Essenes parallels the spiritual attributes like 'the council of the community' (עצת היחד), 'the simple ones of Judah' (פתאי יהודה) and 'the doers of the law' (עושה התורה).

In the context of obedience to the law, the term 'the simple one' is a positive label.[58] 'Doers of the law' is a fixed term which probably came about at the time of the Chasidim.[59] The expression was familiar among circles with eschatological orientation, possibly targeted against the Pharisees (cf. Mt. 23.3). 1QpHab 12.10 mentions that the 'iniquitous priest' in the 'cities of Judah' robbed the 'possessions of the poor (אביונים)'. Here it is uncertain if 'the poor' means the socio-economically weak or the 'doers of law' settled in the 'cleansed' cities.[60]

In 4Q171,[61] a Pescher-Midrash on Ps. 37, the 'community of the poor' is mentioned twice. In 4Q171 2.9, first Ps. 37.11 is quoted: 'But the poor (ענוים) shall inherit the land and rejoice in the abundance of the peace'. This is followed by the introduction to the commentary פשרו על with the appended interpretation of the quoted Psalm: 'Its interpretation refers to the community of the poor (עדת האביונים) who have entered the period of fasting, and who are rescued from all entrapments of Belial; thereafter all shall rejoice…of the land and shall delight themselves in all desires of the flesh'.[62] Here, as in 4Q171 3.10, עדת האביונים indicates undoubtedly the community of the Qumran-Essenes under the leadership of the 'teacher of righteousness'.[63] They find themselves persecuted by the 'godless priest' (4Q171 4.8f), but will witness in the end the 'judgment over godlessness' (משפט רשעה).

about the identification of the godless priests in 1QpHab cf. among others Brownlee, pp. 1-37; Davies, pp. 361-68; Martínez, 1988, pp. 113-28; van der Woude, pp. 349-59, 375-84; Lim, pp. 415-25.

57. Cf. Lohse, p. 296.

58. Maier, p. 150; 'The attitude of 'simplicity' is the uncompromised obedience which rejected the Pharisaic collection of laws (also possibilities of evasion! cf. Dam. I, 19). cf. the pious in 1. Macc. 2.37… which in their simplicity would rather let themselves…be slaughtered on a Sabbath day than break a Sabbath' (Maier, p. 50); on the other hand, we cannot overlook the fact that in 1Q28a 1.19 פותה and in CD-A 13.6; 15.15 פתי appears exceptionally in an explicitly negative connotation, i.e. in the sense of 'foolish' (cf. Lohse, pp. 49, 93, 99; cf. also Martínez, 1997, pp. 101, 563, 571, who translated the word as 'simpleton').

59. As assumed by Maier, p. 146.

60. As assumed by Maier, p. 151.

61. Cf. on this H. Stegemann, 1963, pp. 235-70.

62. Cf. on this, Levin, p. 379: 'After this Midrash the Qumran-Essenes have considered themselves to be the direct successors of Anawim and Hasideans' (author's translation).

63. Cf. 4Q171 3.15ff.

As in the *Hodayot*, in 1QpHab and 4Q171 the use of the terminology relating to the poor is closely linked to the above-mentioned three-point constellation of 'the redemptive God—the desperate supplicant—the adversaries intimidating the supplicant'. Moreover, for 4Q171, we must observe the unequivocally eschatological viewpoint (2.8ff).

In the so-called rule of the war[64] (1QM), the eschatological orientation of the 'poor' is more clearly explained.[65] In 1QM 13.13-14,[66] the terminology relating to the poor is seen in a specifically eschatological viewpoint that God's powerful hand is on the side of the poor. Evidence that the Qumranic terminology relating to the poor must indicate a qualification or distinction in the spiritual sense is the lexical connection עניי רוח which is repeatedly affirmed in the Qumran texts.[67] In 1QM 14.7, the sons of light are called עניי רוח (cf. Is 66.2):

> And he shall accord them a firm place whose knees tremble and stability of loins to the shattered nape. And through them, that are of poor spirit (עניי רוח) [...] the stubborn heart. And through them that are of complete way (תמימי דרך) all people of iniquity shall be destroyed.

The עניי רוח are regarded in this case as synonymous with the completely righteous (תמימי דרך). Material and economic aspects hardly play a role. In the word combination עניי רוח, the spiritual dimension of 'poverty' is obvious. Furthermore, here the spiritual dimension[68] of the 'poor' that is mostly suggested as a pious attitude only implicitly in the *Hodayot* is explicitly mentioned.[69]

64. Pre-Essenic work, transmitted, revised and extended by the Essenes, cf. on this H. Stegemann, 1999, pp. 145-47.

65. For example, 1QM 11.13-15: 'For you shall deliver the enemies of all lands into the hands of the poor (אביונים), and into the hand of those that are bent into the dust in order to humiliate the powerful ones of the peoples, to render recompense to the wicked on their heads to prove the court of your truth as just to all sons of men, and to make you an eternal name among the people of…the wars, and to reveal yourself great and holy before the eyes of the remainder of the peoples'.

66. 'Who is like you in power, O God of Israel? And your powerful hand is with the poor (אביונים)'.

67. Cf. on this e.g. Lohfink, 1990, p. 35.

68. The expression רוח in combination with a word for poor appears in a text of the *Hodayot* as a fragment: 1QH[a] 6.3f '[…those who l]ove compassion, the poor in spirit (ועניי רוח), those refined by poverty (עוני)…' (For translation, cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 153). The text is very mutilated, but the parallel expressions might be sufficient as evidence in order to assign a purely spiritual meaning to this doubtful expression without any attribute to economic poverty.

69. Lohfink, 1990, p. 35: 'The central meaning of the expressions is moved undoubtedly by the words 'spirit' and 'soul' into the area of inner attitude' (author's translation). Lohfink also states: 'With all the emphasis on the fact that "poor in spirit" are people, inwardly accepting that before God they are small, bent and broken, we must see in a semantic continuity that this attitude developed from the experience. For the sake

Similarly 1QS 3.8 states '… And through the spirit of righteousness and humility (וברוח יושר וענותה) shall his sin be atoned, and through the humility of his soul (ובענות נפשו), as for the commandments of God, shall his flesh be cleansed'. Moreover, it is remarkable here that for רוח the expression נפש i.e. 'soul', is also used. These expressions clearly indicate that it concerns a spiritual attitude.[70] Furthermore, in 1QS 4.3 רוח ענוה stands parallel to 'patience, generous compassion, and eternal goodness'.[71]

The eschatological and spiritual side of the perception of poverty is mentioned particularly in 1QM 11.7-11: 'And through your anointed, the seers of the rules, you have declared to us the times of the wars of your hands to glorify you (להכבד)[72] to our enemies, to fell the multitudes of Belial, the seven futile peoples, through the hand of the poor of your redemption (פדותכה ביד אביונו)…and the despondent heart (ולב נמס) comes to the gate of hope.… But those of shattered spirit (ונכאי רוח) you shall ignite like a torch of fire in straw that consumes the iniquity and stops not till the guilt is purged'.

The synonymous use of אביונו פדותכה, ולב נמס and ונכאי רוח proves that a spiritual attitude is meant; that this attitude is in the context of an eschatological viewpoint stems from the notion of active participation of the 'poor' in the eschatological drama.

With regard to the previous investigation of the use of terminology relating to the poor in the Qumran-Essenic literature, we can conclude that this pious community had not chosen the self-depicting labels of being 'poor' or a 'community of the poor' at all in respect to a status of material poverty. Lohfink concludes in his analysis of the *Hodayot*: 'It is very apparent that poverty never appears to be specifically the lack of earthly possessions, and that, as opposed to the 'poor', a group of the 'rich' never appears'.[73]

This corresponds also with what is otherwise quite well-known about the Qumran-Essenic community, namely, that its members could not have belonged to an impoverished, penniless, or even economically exploited lower class.

According to Stegemann, it is certain:

> that this type of a community of property placed the Essenes in an economically better position than can be said of the rest of the Jewish population of Palestine.

of the Torah, they actually do belong to the humiliated, outcast, robbed and insignificant' (Lohfink, 1990, p. 36, author's translation).

70. Against Maier, p. 62, whose opinion is that the lexical association in question עניי רוח as self-identification of the Qumran community means 'the willingness to be poor'. His opinion ignores the Qumran community's above-described pessimistic image of humankind which forms the important background of the Qumranic piety of the poor.

71. Cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 77.

72. However, Martínez considers the reading of להכבד as secondary. In his opinion, להלחם 'to fight' is the original reading at this point. cf. Martínez, 1997, p. 130f.

73. Lohfink, 1990, p. 99 (author's translation).

> The Essenes were materially not poor, but relatively rich! The reason for this relative wealth was the principle behind the domestic economy which the Essenic community of property followed, because the demands of ritual purity and holiness largely restricted importing goods. For example, the Essenic craftsman bought his bread from the Essenic baker, trusting that his flour came from the harvest of an Essenic farmer who, in turn, would have dutifully paid the tithe on his harvest to the Essenic community. What Pharisees and other Jews paid to the temple in Jerusalem, the Essenes were able to keep for their own needs.…The profits which the Essenes earned, thanks to their type of community property, were so large that they were the only Jewish organization of their time which was able to afford to include non-members in their system of charity. Therefore, this must be particularly emphasized here, because, in many writings, often the erroneous impression is created that the Essenes' renunciation of property had driven them into personal poverty and asceticism, if not even into deaths by starvation. Exactly the opposite is correct. Particularly because of their type of community of property, there was no organized group in ancient Judaism which would have been as wealthy as that of the Essenes.[74]

The archaeological evidence, including the highly developed water system and enormous library at Khirbet Qumran, clearly indicates the Qumran community's substantial economic capability.[75] The Qumran community's leading members derived from the upper stratum and their retainers, priests, and scribes of Jerusalem in the Hasmonean period.[76] The lack of decoration and ornamentation of the building complex in Khirbet Qumran was due to religious rather than to economic reasons.[77]

In the pertinent research, it has been long recognized that the 'piety of the poor' of the Qumran-Essenic community had not been generated from a vacuum,[78] but that it had a long previous history.[79] The clear references to the testimonies in the Qumran-Essenic scripts, on the one hand, and the testimonies in the Hebrew Bible, on the other hand, point in that direction. Isa. 66.1-5 and 1QM 11.8-10[80] would be an example of such references.[81]

> 'Thus says Yhwh: The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is a house that you build unto Me? Where is a place of My rest? For all

74. H. Stegemann, 1999, pp. 257f (author's translation).
75. E. Stegemann, p. 160.
76. E. Stegemann, p. 160.
77. E. Stegemann, p. 162.
78. 'The self depiction of the supplicant and the labeling the true community of God by the word for 'poor'…is nowhere introduced or even substantiated. It occurs rather as self-evident and seems to have been a spiritual inheritance' (Lohfink, 1990, p. 99, author's translation).
79. Cf. on this Maier, p. 83.
80. Cf. עני (Isa. 66.2, cf. אביוני פדותכה in 1QM 11.9), נכה־רוח (Isa. 66.2, cf. נכאי רוח in 1QM 11.10) and יכבד (Isa. 66.5, cf. 1QM 11.8).
81. Cf. on this also Maier's notes (see Maier, p. 86); cf. also Maier, p. 85, that based on Is 66.2 עני ונכה־רוח ' *`nyy rwh* in 1QM XIV,7…can be easily explained'.

> those things Mine hand has made, and all things have been, says Yhwh. But to this man I will look, even to him that is poor (עני) and of a contrite spirit (נכה־רוח), and trembles at My word (חרד על־דברי)…Hear the word of Yhwh, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers (אחיכם) who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake, have said, 'Let Yhwh be glorified (יכבד), that we may see your joy!' But they will be put to shame'. (Isa. 66.1f, 5)

Furthermore, the dependence on the book of Jeremiah is well established in some Qumran texts, especially in the *Hodayot*.[82] It is particularly notable that the *Hodayot* often follows the so-called 'confessions' in the book of Jeremiah.[83] Because the allusions can be proved predominantly for passages that are traced to the 'teacher of righteousness', Wolff infers even that 'the confessions of Jeremiah were familiar to this man who was from the Chassidic movement'.[84] The conspicuous tangency between Jer 12.3b ('consecrate them for the day of slaughter') and 1QH^a 7.20 ('…but you have created the godless for [the time] of your [wrath], and from the mother's womb you have consecrated for the day of slaughter') can only be explained by the speculation that the author of 1QH^a 7.20 had our quotation from Jeremiah in mind and takes up the cause of the Qumran community.[85]

3. *The Historical Root of the Qumran-Essenic Piety of the Poor*

At this point, one should refer to 'the very strong dependence of the *Hodayot* on some Psalms, the so-called Psalms of Poverty'.[86] In forty two out of hundred fifty psalms, supplicants confess themselves as poor (דל, עני, אביון) and praise God as Savior of the poor.[87]

In other words, the relevant texts of *Hodayot* indicate terminological, structural and theological analogies with some 'Psalms of Poverty' like Pss. 12; 25; 34; 35; 37; 40; 62; 69; 73; 76; 102; 109; 140 and 149.[88]

In the first place, these psalms converge[89] on the fact that in them the

82. Cf. e.g. 1QH^a 7.15f (cf. Jer. 10.23); 7.20 (cf. Jer. 12.3); 7.24 (cf. Jer. 10.23b); 10.14 (cf. Jer. 15.10); 10.29 (cf. Jer. 18.22); 10.32 (cf. Jer. 20.13); 13.7f (cf. Jer. 16.16); 13.22f (cf. Jer. 15.10); 16.24 (cf. Jer. 17.6); 16.30f (cf. Jer. 20.9); 17.30 (cf. Jer. 1.5); 1QS 2.8 (cf. Jer. 18.23).

83. Cf. so also Wolff, p. 124.

84. Wolff, p. 129, author's translation.

85. For the biblical texts that are used in the Hodayot, cf. Holm-Nielsen, pp. 354-59.

86. Lohfink, 1990, p. 99, author's translation.

87. Cf. Lohfink's list (Lohfink, 1986, p. 153): Psalms 9/10; 12; 14; 18; 22; 25; 31; 34; 35; 37; 40; 41; 44; 49; 52; 68; 69; 70; 72; 73; 74; 76; 82; 86; 88; 90; 94; 102; 103; 107; 109; 113; 116; 119; 129; 132; 140; 145; 146; 147; 149.

88. Many biblical scholars date the psalms in Persian or Hellenistic period. For details and further points cf. Ro, pp. 113-206.

89. Cf. here also Rahlfs (p. 29), who due to the lexematic and syntactic similarities

aspects of a salvation history-oriented theology are completely absent; there is nowhere a suggestion of salvation historical traditions or motifs. Obviously, references to a past salvation history are of no value for this piety; all the more, the common hope is focused on some future eschatological action of salvation by God[90] (Pss. 12.6; 35.9f; 40.18; 69.28-30, 33f; 76.9f; 102.14, 17; 109.22, 26f, 31; 140.8, 11-13; 149.4; furthermore, also Pss. 9.13, 17, 19; 10.12, 17f).[91] There appears to be textual evidence of the development of a piety orientation in situations where a theology regarding the God of Israel controlling and guiding history could not withstand the problems in the historical circumstances. It was more important that God as the eschatological agent would finally assert his order and bring the truly pious, namely the 'poor', to their well-earned destiny of the 'true' Israel.[92]

Thus, the eschatological concepts of pertinent psalms of the poor[93] coincide with the future expectations in late texts of the prophetic literature, in which no longer the entire community of Israel, but only the 'poor'[94] as the truly pious,[95] the virtuous,[96] the servants[97] etc. can survive the divine judgement.

Yhwh will arise for the suppressed righteous,[98] appear in glory[99] and intervene to save them.[100] He will at the same time make an end to the wicked

and their 'originality' concluded that the group of psalms he picked out (Psalms 22; 25; 31; 34; 35; 38; 40; 69; 102 and 109), which not completely but largely converged with the above-mentioned, originated from one and the same author; however, considering the interrelated, yet obviously changed situations and concerns of the respective psalms, one would expect that this group of psalms involved different authors albeit from similar orientation of piety, diachronically next to and following each other. Cf. Ro, pp. 129-88.

90. For example, characteristic are the predominantly eschatological traits in Pss. 12.6; 76.9f, which clearly allude to Zeph. 3.8, since here also the act of 'arising' (קום) of Yhwh explicitly refers to the salvation of the poor. However, what is also important is that in Psalms 25; 34; 37; 62 and 73 the future restoration of Yhwh's retributive justice is in the foreground.

91. On the eschatological character of these evidences cf. Gunkel, p. 330ff; Pohlmann, p. 54f; Albertz, p. 571f; Lohfink, 1990, p. 107. Due to the literary genre, the eschatological expressions and ideas in these texts normally remain unaccomplished. With regard to the literary forms of prayer and teaching of these psalms, the authors must avoid eschatological detailed explanations.

92. Cf. Michel, p. 75f.

93. Cf. Pss. 12.6; 35.9f; 40.18; 69.28-30, 33f; 76.9f; 102.14, 17; 109.22, 26f, 31; 140.8, 11-13; 149.4.

94. Cf. Isa. 66.2 and Zeph. 2.3; 3.12.

95. Cf. among others Pss. 12.2; 149.1, 5, 9; also Isa. 66.2.

96. Cf. among others Pss. 35.27; 69.29; 140.14; also Zeph. 3.13.

97. Cf. among others Pss. 35.27; 69.18, 37; 102.15, 29; also Isa. 66.14.

98. Cf. Pss. 12.6; 35.2; 76.10; 102.14; also Zeph. 3.8.

99. Cf. Ps. 102.17; also Isa. 66.5.

100. Cf. Pss. 35.3, 9; 40.6, 17f; 69.30; 109.26-31; 140.8; also Isa. 66.10f, 14; Zeph. 3.14f.

within the Judean community[101]; these and not the pious will be 'put to shame'.[102]

The respective supplicants or the speakers may hope for salvation by seeking Yhwh,[103] praising him,[104] fearing him[105] and waiting upon him,[106] while their enemies have disqualified themselves through lying, negative conversation[107] and acts of violence.[108]

The eschatological character of Psalm 149 cannot be ignored.[109] This psalm 'becomes as a whole the eschatological *Tehilla* in the assembly of the *ḥ[a]sîdîm* (v. 1b). Accordingly, v. 5 reads: 'Let the *ḥ[a]sîdîm* exult in glory, let them cry out for joy on their beds'. In v. 4 in the same sense the older term *[a]n*ā*wîm* is used, and *'ammô* 'his people', which refers here to the minority of the true Israel'.[110] What is remarkable is the statement concerning the poor in Psalm 149 as it 'appears again exactly where it always stands in the texts of Qumran, namely in the context of the statement of salvation'.[111]

In the second place, a common aspect of the psalms of the poor considered here is that matters concerning the Jerusalem cult, the temple itself and also the sacrifices, play hardly any role. In Ps. 73.17 מקדשי־אל could have meant areas of the sanctuary, but that is not entirely conclusive.[112] The fact

101. Above all, Pss. 12.4; 35.1, 4f; 40.15f; 69.28f; 109.28; 140.11; also Isa. 66.14; Zeph. 3.8, 11.

102. יבשו for example, as in Pss. 35.4, 26; 40.15f; 69.7; 109.28; also in Isa. 66.5 and Zeph. 3.11.

103. Cf. Ps. 69.33; also Zeph. 2.3.

104. Among others Pss. 35.27; 69.31; also Isa. 66.10; Zeph. 3.14.

105. Cf. Pss. 76.8; 102.16; also Isa. 66.2.

106. Cf. Pss. 40.2; 69.7; also Zeph. 3.8.

107. Among others Pss. 12.3f; 35.20; 69.11f; 140.4; also Isa. 66.5 and Zeph. 3.3.

108. Among others Pss. 12.2; 35.19; 69.5, 20; 102.9; 109.2f; 140.5, 9; also Isa. 66.5 and Zeph. 3.3.

109. Cf. on e.g. Levin, p. 378.

110. Levin, p. 377f (author's translation); cf. also Lohfink, 1990, p. 122; Herrmann, p. 77.

111. Lohfink, 1990, p. 122 (author's translation); the close parallelisms between Psalm 149 and Qumran-Essenic positions suggest the assumption that the theological and spiritual 'ancestors' of the Qumran-Essenes are in a closer relationship with the piety of the poor investigated in the texts of the Hebrew Bible.

112. Cf. e.g. the opinion of Kittel, 1929, p. 270f: 'By itself *miqdash* means the outer sanctuary, especially the place of worship. Then, the term would indicate the entrance into the temple here. But also it may not just refer to the act of entering. Rather, it could express the prayerful way of approaching God together with the innermost contemplation of divine counsel and the disclosure of one's own thoughts. With that, essentially those are right, who, based on the plural that otherwise does not occur, think of the same thing which Wis. 2.22 μυστήρια θεοῦ means: the secrets, the hidden counsel, the revelation of God…(author's translation)' There are also 'occasional traces that individual psalm

that דרש with Yhwh as an object in Ps. 34.5, 11 need not be the technical term of the visit to the sanctuary[113] can be proved unambiguously with the concordance.[114]

Also the reference to the 'hut' (סכו) and 'dwelling place' (מעונתו) of God in Ps. 76.2 cannot be seen as an indication for special interest in the Jerusalem temple; because the terms 'hut' (סך) and 'dwelling place' (מעון or מענה) can also be used to mean a 'den' or 'lair' (cf. for example Job 38.40).[115] With regard to the obviously unofficial character of the terms in question we can consider Zenger's viewpoint to translate both terms not with 'hut/tent' and 'home/dwelling' but as 'den (Versteck)' and 'lair (Lagerplatz)'.[116] The choice of words can be explained by the fact that reverence is denied not to Zion as an abode of Yhwh, but probably to the temple. This interpretation demonstrates a clear dissociation of certain circles towards the temple. For example, Albertz comments[117] that there are several references in the psalms of the poor indicating that during the postexilic times a religious group conducted its own acts of worship outside the temple in Jerusalem, perhaps in their houses or in synagogues. Zenger's views on Ps. 12 follow the same path; he recognizes therein a liturgy, which, apart from the temple in Jerusalem, took place 'as a community or group liturgy outside the temple in Jerusalem or somewhere in the countryside'.[118]

In Ps. 40.7 and 69.32 there is even a critical revaluation of the significance of sacrifices. Some seem to have gathered from Ps. 69.10 that the supplicant, who clearly acts as the representative of a group (cf. v. 7), is 'an enthusiast of the temple'.[119] However, we cannot infer definitely that the enmity etc. ascribed to him is associated with the fact that 'one has to seek' the 'enthusiast' in the group of those 'who rushed instantly to the temple construction after their homecoming from the exile'.[120] The self-characterization of the supplicant as an 'enthusiast' could also have meant that with regard to the temple and temple cult he had special demands and

writers know the idea of mystically contemplating God; therefore, here too this type of observation of the mysticism should be considered—the deepening into the 'holy', pious world of God, that is the respect to those sanctuaries' (Kittel, 1929, p. 270f, author's translation); cf. also Buber, p. 50: 'It is not the temple in Jerusalem that is meant…, but the holy mysteries of God' (author's translation); differed by Kraus, p. 670.

113. As opined by Kraus, p. 419.
114. Cf. e.g. Ezek. 20.1; also Ezek. 14.2f; see also Herrmann, p. 73.
115. Cf. Zenger, 2000, p. 385.
116. Cf. Zenger, 2000, p. 385.
117. Cf. Albertz, p. 572f.
118. Zenger, 1993, p. 93 (author's translation).
119. Cf. Kraus, p. 643.
120. As considered by Kraus, p. 643, with regard to v. 10.

claims, whereupon he was victimized by the opposing side.[121] In such a case the critical attitude in Ps. 69.32 would not be a contradiction to the supplicant's enthusiasm for the temple in Ps. 69.10. Otherwise, we would have to correlate the divergence between v. 10 and v. 32 with later editorial corrections in an older version of the psalm. In any case, in the present final version of the psalm with the clear statements of v. 32 a cult-critical[122] piety orientation is articulated, rather than a cult-fixed outlook.[123]

On the whole, therefore, we can observe in the psalms of the poor discussed here (cf. also Jer. 20.7-13) in their final version a reserved, if not even a critical attitude towards the temple in Jerusalem. From this it follows that one cannot assume the official temple cult of Jerusalem as 'Sitz im Leben' for these texts. Rather, the group of these psalms seems to be used for community liturgy of those who, as the 'poor', found themselves in a threatening conflict situation. At the same time, the existence of these psalms of the poor is a strong indication that their authors were in a critical confrontation with the contemporary temple leadership and, consequently, the enemies, opponents and persecutors, considered in their texts always menacing, were likely to have been found within the circles of the temple priesthood.

In this regard, a conspicuous convergence between these psalms of the poor and the above discussed texts (among others 1QpHab 8.8-11; 9.9-10) can be seen; because here too it is often the postexilic priesthood in Jerusalem from which the circles of the 'poor' distance themselves and whose sanctions they find themselves to be exposed to. The fact that in the psalms of the poor more concrete references to the opposing faction are absent is probably because traditional literary forms of speech and prayer are incorporated into the psalms of the poor, which had to be taken into account for supplemental formulations as well as rewordings.

121. Cf. as opined by Weiser, p. 336; cf. on Psalm 69 also Pohlmann, p. 54f.

122. It is also possible that the criticism is aimed at a particular understanding of cult and sacrifice.

123. According to Zenger, 2000, p. 273f, 'two postexilic contexts can be considered, depending on whether the psalm associated with the early postexilic dispute concerning the temple construction or with the protest by circles obviously occurring after establishing the temple and the sacrificial cult, who propagate the prophetic cult criticism against the temple cult… If we notice the parallelisms, which associate vv. 6-14ab with the Book of Jeremiah and with the temple criticism of Jeremiah, the description of the negative consequences that this criticism has for Jeremiah (cf. especially Jer. 7.1-11 and 26.1-19 as well as Jer. 12.6; 15.15), the second alternative is more probable… But then, our psalm belongs to the fierce confrontations between both competing positions in the postexilic community, which may be regarded—somewhat roughly—as a conflict between hierocratic and prophetic or salvation presentist and eschatological positions' (author's translation).

Third, not all mentioned psalms of the poor embody the wisdom character which is particularly manifest in Psalms 12[124]; 25; 34; 37; 62 and 73. However, we can observe that, as also in the case of the afore-mentioned psalms, for example in Pss. 35.27; 40.10f, the respective speakers or the supplicants are represented or identifiable as such that, as institutionally important persons, they are in a position to influence their group or community. Their actions are a cause for the opposing faction to act against them so as to subdue them (cf. among others Pss. 35.15f; 40.15f). This finding leads to the fact that these psalms of the poor must have their origin in a social background in which the material as well as religious resources were such that those belonging to it could dare at all to confront the opponents and also in such a manner that the opponents saw in the actions of these circles a serious threat to their own position. This makes the point clear that the piety of the poor cannot be seen as something that concerned only those that belonged to the impoverished, pauperized and, therefore, completely less influential lower class.

In the psalms of the poor, there is no reference to indicate that the respective supplicants and their audience perhaps were not in a position to gather necessary means to secure their existence or, they suffered from lack of basic material necessities, such as food, clothing, shelter etc. So also were there hardly any indications that anyone suffered from bondage, forced labour or likewise.

Apart from the terminology relating to the poor itself, there is otherwise not the slightest reason in these texts for the assumption that the supplicants and their like-minded circles had to suffer from material poverty; and that this might be also the reason for their lamentations. In principle, also Albertz observes in his attempt to explain this remarkable finding by assuming that the psalms of the poor do not originate from the affected people themselves: 'The portrayal of the poor pious is so vague, who are mostly depicted only as the victims of the wicked. This is probably due to the fact that a majority of these descriptions do not come from the affected themselves, but from the perspective of the pious upper class'.[125]

For the authors and supplicants of these psalms, what they regarded as their 'poverty' was not actually material poverty. Throughout the psalms of the poor discussed here, 'to be poor' is a characteristic attitude to Yhwh, a religious approach to life. The deficits they lament about are not of material nature. For example, the supplicant of Psalm 102 laments about the insult (v. 8), about God's furious anger (v. 10) and about the inner pain and sickness (v. 4, 5, 6) etc. But nowhere is the dearth of material goods mentioned.

124. Seybold speaks of Ps. 12 as a 'text influenced by wisdom doctrine' (cf. Seybold, p. 62).

125. Albertz, p. 545 (author's translation).

The findings in the remaining psalms is similar: the supplicants complain about their 'opponents' (e.g. Pss. 12.9; 25.2, 19; 34.22; 35.19; 69.5, 19; 102.9; 109.2; 140.5, 9), 'sins' (e.g. Pss. 25.7, 11, 18; 40.13), 'anxieties' (e.g. Pss. 25.17, 22; 34.7, 18; 37.39), but not about any lack of material goods.

Furthermore, we should consider that, unlike in the group of psalms of the poor where, for example, in Psalm 10 (v. 14 and v. 18) the supplicant confesses that God would be a helper of the orphans and the poor (cf. further Ps. 68.5 along with Ps. 68.11; cf. also Ps. 82.3), in the psalms of the poor explored here, the terminology relating to the poor is nowhere used in the context of undeniably socially disadvantaged groups like widows or orphans.

Fourth, the relevant authors of these psalms of the poor do not attempt anywhere to describe poverty concretely with references to objective circumstances. What is characteristic of the use of the terminology relating to the poor is that it normally occurs—as in the *Hodayot*—in the context of statements about volatile interpersonal constellations of conflict; in such constellations the terminology of poverty is especially significant, because it reveals the kinds of relationships those involved in the conflicts have not only with the other parties but God as well.

The terminology relating to the poor is closely connected with the triad constellation being presented, namely 'the oppressed supplicant—the opponents oppressing the supplicant—the rescuing God'. Every time when a term relating to the poor appears as a self-depiction of the supplicant or of his community,[126] the opponents' acts of persecution and the corresponding rescuing action of God are simultaneously described.[127]

Ps. 12.6
'Because of oppression of poor,
(משד עניים—1. the supplicant as a 'poor one')
Because of groaning of needy
(מאנקת אביונים—2. Situation of persecution by the opponents)
Now will I arise', says Yhwh,
'I will grant them the safety they sigh for'.
(עתה אקום יאמר יהוה—3. The rescuing act of God)

126. However, the terminology relating to the poor is used many times even without direct reference to the act of rescue by God or the persecution by the opponents (cf. among others ענוים in Pss. 34.3; 37.11; 69.33); here they indicate the followers of the supplicant.

127. Very often both aspects (threat or persecution action of the opponents and the act of rescue by God) in the psalms of the poor are inseparably fused into one sentence.

Ps. 25.16
Turn to me, take pity on me,
(פנה־אלי וחנני—1. The rescuing act of God)
alone and wretched as I am.
(כי־יחיד ועני אני—2. The supplicant as a 'poor one')

Ps. 34.7
This poor man, he cried,
(זה עני קרא—1. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
and Yhwh heard, and helped him
(ויהוה שמע … הושיעו —2. The rescuing act of God)
in all his troubles.
(ומכל־צרותיו—3. Crisis situation)

Ps. 35.10a[128]
in rescuing (מציל—1. The rescuing act of God)
the poor man (עני—2. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
from one who is stronger.
(ממחזק ממנו—3. Situation of persecution by the opponents)

Ps. 37.14-15
Though the wicked draw the sword, and bend their bow,
(חרב פתחו רשעים ודרכו קשתם—1. Situation of persecution by the opponents)
to fell the poor and needy…
(להפיל עני ואביון—2. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
their swords will only pierce their own hearts
and their bows will be broken.
(חרבם תבוא בלבם וקשתותם תשברנה—3. The rescuing act of God)

Ps. 40.18
Yet I am poor and needy,
(ואני עני ואביון—1. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
May the Lord think of me.
You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay!
(אדני יחשב לי עזרתי ומפלטי אתה אלהי אל־תאחר—2. The rescuing act of God)

Ps. 69.30
But I am poor and in pain.
(ואני עני—1. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high!
(ישועתך אלהים תשגבני—2. The rescuing act of God)

128. The fact that in Ps. 35.10b the 'poor one' is described as a 'robbed one' (cf. the expression עני ואביון מגזלו) need not mean that the word should be considered 'economically weak'. According to Gen. 21.25 Abraham was 'robbed' of a well (גזל), but nonetheless he is not regarded as a poor man. Furthermore, the lexeme גזל with the meaning of 'rob' or 'take forcibly' does not imply that the robbed then became poor, cf. e.g. Gen. 31.31; Judg. 21.23; Job 24.2; Mic. 2.2; Prov. 28.24. Moreover, the 'poor one' before us sees himself in Ps. 35.11-16 (v. 10) as once equal to his opponents; he claims to have shown solidarity with them in their hour of need.

Ps. 76.10
When God stands up to give judgement,
(בקום־למשפט אלהים—1. The rescuing act of God)
to save all the poor of the earth.
(להושיע כל־ענוי־ארץ—2. The supplicant and his followers as the 'poor ones')

Ps. 102.1
Prayer of the poor
(תפלה לעני—1. The supplicant as a 'poor one')
at a moment of distress
(כי־יעטף—2. Situation of crisis)
pouring out his complaint before Yhwh
(ולפני יהוה ישפך שיחו—3. God who will rescue)

Ps. 140.13
I know that Yhwh will maintain the cause of the poor,
(ידעת כי־יעשה יהוה דין עני—1. The rescuing act of God)
and the justice of the needy.
(משפט אביונים—2. The supplicant and his followers as the 'poor ones')

As these examples affirm, what is deemed to be 'poor', what is meant by the 'poor one' or 'poverty', depends on a complexity of relationships, and is understood within the framework of a certain combination which is normally a triad.

Here the poor one is, as once portrayed in the *Hodayot*, one who understands himself as being helpless and impotently delivered to his opponents; at the same time he considers himself also to be 'poor' because he totally depends on God and on him alone[129] and, in this regard, is different from the opponents. On the one hand, the terminology relating to the poor within the framework of such a triad constellation (supplicant, persecuting opponents and the rescuing God) highlights the qualitative difference between the supplicant(s) and the opponents and, on the other hand, at the same time, the contrast is emphasized between the respective relationships and attitudes of both groups to God. Thus, it is clear that the 'wicked' are 'wicked' not only because of their actions against the pious, but also because of their attitude towards God; this is in agreement with the fact that 'to be poor' is, in any case, a conscious and permanently cultivated attitude of piety before God regardless of whatever material inadequacies.

In the above, we have seen in the section concerning the 'Defining the Problem'[130] with regard to the pessimistic anthropology of the *Hodayot* that the terminology relating to the poor used within the framework of such anthropology includes some dynamic dialectics between 'lowness' and 'election' and therefore the status of 'being poor before God' is superior to

129. On the details cf. the chapter 1 above.
130. Cf. the chapter 1 above.

the status of 'being poor before the opponents'. This appears to be similar to some psalms of the poor (cf. Pss. 25 and 40). Of course, we cannot assume exactly the same lowness doxology and anthropology as that of the *Hodayot* for our group of psalms of the poor. The insightful confessions of sin (cf. Pss. 25.7, 11, 18; 40.13), which have parallels with the pessimistic anthropology of the *Hodayot*,[131] suggest the same orientation. The confessions of sin in Psalms 25 and 40 are not merely confessions of sin, but function concurrently as a characteristic of piety by which the righteous differ from their opponents, who cultivate violent acts without acknowledging their sin (cf. Pss. 25.18f; 40.13-16). The speakers can be identified as 'the suffering righteous'.[132] Here, too, we may assume that how the supplicant understands poverty is based on a kind of dialectic of a realized and admitted sinfulness and lowness as well as a distinct awareness of being the chosen.

However, we cannot disregard the fact that what is characteristic in other postexilic psalms of the poor, as against the *Hodayot*, is normally just the antithesis of 'righteous—wicked'.[133] On the other hand, we should not overvalue this difference. In both cases, the pattern of orientation, which is characteristic way of thinking in the wisdom literature, namely 'pride goes before a fall' and Yhwh's antipathy to everything 'high' and presumptuous,[134] was decisive; accordingly, the elevation of the humiliated and suffering righteous[135] should be seen as the central subject in the psalms of the poor[136] as well as in the 'confessions' of Jeremiah[137] and in the *Hodayot*.[138]

We can consequently arrive at the following conclusion concerning the question about the intended meaning of the terminology relating to the poor in the relevant psalms:

1. The terminology relating to the poor typically uses the earlier mentioned triad constellation, namely 'the rescuing God—the oppressed supplicant as the suffering righteous—the opponents oppressing the supplicant'.
2. The status of being 'poor before God' is placed above the status of being 'poor before the opponents'; before God, the terminology

131. On the details cf. the chapter 1 above.

132. On the motif of the suffering righteous since the postexilic times until the extrabiblical Qumran texts cf. e.g. Ruppert, pp. 39, 182-86.

133. Cf. among others Pss. 12.2; 34.16, 20, 22; 35.27; 37.6, 16f, 21, 29ff; 73.13; and also Jer. 12.1-3.

134. Cf. for example, Gen. 11.1-9; Isa. 2.12-17; 10.33f; 14.12ff; Ezek. 17.24; 21.31; Job 22.29.

135. Cf. among others Prov. 24.16. For the detailed explanation cf. among others Ruppert, pp. 184-88.

136. Cf. among others Pss. 12; 25; 34; 37; 40; 69; 73 and 104.

137. Cf. Jer. 12.1-3; 20.7-18.

138. Cf. $1QH^a$ 10.20-30; 11.37–12.4; 13.13-18.

relating to the poor serves as a self-depiction to indicate an acknowledgement of one's own lowness and sinfulness.

3. With regard to the opponents, the psalms underline the contrast between one's own lowness and the threatening superiority of the godless opponents so as to also emphasize before God the helplessness of the suffering righteous resulting from this constellation.
4. In the case of the motif 'suffering righteous', the aspect 'material poverty' does not play any role in the above-mentioned psalms of the poor, in the so-called 'confessions' of Jeremiah as well as in the pertinent *Hodayot*; the manner in which the terminology relating to the poor is used allows us to clearly understand that it is not referring to an economic situation of deficiency that may be threatening one's own existence.
5. Thus, the terminology relating to the poor serves as a key expression in a dialectic theology of humility and election, according to which these elected stand, because of their attitude to God and man, as those restored by God, while their opponents are rejected. This eschatologically oriented theology of humility and election is often critical of the temple and sacrifices.

Notwithstanding the above outlined main theological aspects characterizing the relevant psalms of the poor, we cannot infer that these psalms are traceable to one and the same author, but we may assume that the circle of authors behind the texts in question can be ascribed to one and same orientation or faction of piety during the postexilic period. A number of indicators point to the fact that the corresponding group of people, despite the self-depiction of being 'the poor', definitely cannot be equated with the socio-economically impoverished lower class. On the contrary, it comprises religious wisdom-interested and theologically well educated individuals. The attitude of the speaker is conspicuously pedagogical and inviting toward his community. The thought of the speaker is deeply anchored to the ethos of the theologized wisdom. We can assume that a particular theological circle in the postexilic period pursued this piety of the poor. The socio-economic as well as the religio-theological capacities of the circle were considerable. Therefore, this circle attracted the serious attention of their opponents and had to be confronted with the objection of their adversaries. At the same time, the opposite group regarded actions of the theological circle as a serious threat to its own position. Consequently, this implies a certain degree of socio-economic prosperity and power of the theological circle.[139] Material poverty was not the problem, but

139. Cf. Ps. 34.10.

rather alienation and persecution by the opponents,[140] the invalidity of God's retributive justice,[141] God's wrath,[142] own sin[143] and inner pain and sickness.[144]

In recent years, many scholars have examined the pre-history and origin of the Qumran community.[145] According to Murphy-O'Connor, the Qumran-Essenic sect originated among Babylonian Judeans.[146] Blenkinsopp argues that there is an historical linkage between the forerunner group of the Qumran community on the one hand, and the self-segregating Diaspora community of the Persian period on the other hand.[147] Sivertsev also indicates similarities between the social structure of the Ezra-Nehemiah movement and that of the Qumran community.[148] The social structure of the Qumran community is analogous to the social structure of the movement depicted by Nehemiah 8–10.[149] Based on the above-mentioned observations, it would not be implausible to suggest that the origin of the 'piety of the poor' in the Qumran-Essenic texts can be found in the context of the inner-Judean sectarianism movement throughout the Persian period.

4. *Conclusions*

The observations thus far can be summarized as follows:

First, the terms relating to the poor in the Qumran texts primarily function as a self-depiction of the Qumran community.[150] They refer either to the supplicant himself or to his followers and reflect finally the collective self awareness of the entire community.

Second, the self depictions of being 'poor' in the *Hodayot* and also in 1QpHab and 4Q171 are closely related to the earlier mentioned three-point constellation of 'the redemptive God—the oppressed supplicant—the adversaries intimidating the supplicant'. Towards God, the terminology relating to the poor serves as a self-depiction to indicate one's own sinful

140. Among others Pss. 34.22; 35.4, 7, 11, 12; 37.12, 14; 40.15f; 62.4, 5; 140.5, 9.

141. Among others Pss. 37.1, 7; 73.3, 12.

142. Among others Ps. 102.11.

143. Among others Pss. 25.7, 11, 18; 40.13.

144. Among others Ps. 102.4-6.

145. Cf. among others Blenkinsopp, pp. 388-93; Murphy-O'Connor, pp. 215-44; Campbell, pp. 143-56.

146. Murphy-O'Connor, pp. 215-44.

147. Blenkinsopp, p. 393; 'The *bene haggola* was a self-segregating group that constituted itself as a distinct *qahal*' (Blenkinsopp, p. 394).

148. Sivertsev, pp. 61-72.

149. Sivertsev, p. 77. The sectarian character of the Ezra-Nehemiah movement can be regarded as a forerunner of the sectarianism of Qumran-Essenic texts (Blenkinsopp, p. 395). For the Sectarianism of the Qumran community cf. also Jassen, pp. 12-44.

150. On the very rare usage in the material sense, cf. Ro, p. 25.

nature and lowness; in regard to the adversaries, it emphasizes the contrast between one's own baseness and the threatening superiority of the godless adversaries in order to stress one's own need for help from God. In this situation, the evaluation of 'the poor before God' is placed above the evaluation of 'the poor *vis-à-vis* the adversaries'.

Third, nowhere in the texts are there statements objectively defining or explaining the nature of this 'poverty'. As to how the terminology relating to the 'poor' is used, we can clearly see that it is not about addressing a particular state of economic impoverishment that threatens one's own existence. Added to this, in the Qumran texts, there is hardly any mention of economically-distressing situations such as hunger, forced labor or lack of material possessions.[151] The community faced multiple hostile factors, especially a serious conflict with the temple leadership of Jerusalem. From this aspect, we may conclude that a real threat to the Qumran-Essenic community might have been present.

Fourth, it is characteristic of the usages of the terms relating to the 'poor' that they are used with an eschatological viewpoint;[152] for example, 1QM 11.7ff presumes an active participation of the 'poor' in the eschatological drama. The deliberately assumed posture of humility that is prescribed in the terminology is the condition that the pious one overcomes the eschatological horror, not through his own strength—'what is he after all?'[153]—but only thanks to being the chosen one with the strength bestowed on the humble and the low by God. Therein a spiritual attitude is affirmed, for example, by the synonymous use of אביונו פדותכה, לב נמס and נכאי רוח in 1QM 11.7-10.

Fifth, the Essenes' obvious position as a wealthy religious group also underlines the fact that poverty in the material sense is not the essential element in the 'piety of the poor'.

Finally, the lexemic commonalities briefly mentioned above between 1QM 11.7ff and Isa. 66.1-5 could be indications that the 'piety of the poor', which *per se* characterizes the foundational spirit of Qumran-Essenes, has a long pre-history. Therefore, it is imperative to look into these commonalities and allusions more thoroughly and examine the corresponding texts in the Hebrew Bible. In particular, those texts composed in the Persian and the Hellenistic period (e.g. Ps. 12; 25; 34; 35; 37; 40; 62; 69; 73; 76; 102; 109; 140 and 149) would be most meaningful for determining the extent to which similar ideals of piety are articulated in the Qumran texts. Additionally, the texts of the Persian-Hellenistic period could be instrumental in clarifying whether and in what way the findings in Qumran texts regarding the 'community of the poor' can contribute to a better comprehension of the

151. On the exceptions cf. Ro, p. 25.
152. Cf. the chapter 1.2 and 2 above.
153. Maier, p. 79.

similar concepts in the Hebrew Bible, and in capturing the respective historical constellations more clearly.[154]

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154. Cf. Rofé, pp. 205-17; moreover, Hengel, p. 319, who assumes that the Essenes originated from the Chasidim (cf. Hengel, p. 320) and that the Chasidim have a long pre-history stretching from the time of crisis (c. between 175 and 170 BCE) well into the 3rd century, or perhaps until the time of Persians (cf. Hengel, p. 321). Cf. also Levin, pp. 372-74.

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The Theological Concept of Yhwh's Punitive Justice in the Hebrew Bible: Historical Development in the Context of the Judean Community in the Persian Period

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Abstract

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, the issue of the relationship between individual and community, and the guilt and punishment arising therefrom is one of the single most important topics. The biblical texts upon which this paper is based present sections that touch upon the question of sin and its consequences for the righteous, as well as for the wicked. Based upon the focus on the issue contained in Genesis 18, the analysis positions that inquiry within the larger context and related dialogue arising from the ancient Israelite tradition.

The dialogue between Yhwh and Abraham in Gen. 18.22b-33a, mirrors a theological point of view in the Judean community in Persian era Palestine. It provides a starting point to consider the idea that God tolerates or forgives the guilt of a community because of the righteous individuals within that same community. The clear implication is that Yhwh's tolerance for the sinful community based on the righteous individuals was a part of the theological development as well as an encouragement for religious Judeans confused by delays regarding divine punitive justice. It likewise meets the practical need of the socio-economically fragile Judean community in Persian period Palestine.

This theological concept of Yhwh's punitive justice in the Hebrew Bible indicates an historical progress which reflects both the socio-economic as well as demographic context. After careful and exhaustive analysis of Gen. 18.22b-33a, the author opines that the logical and credible implication can be drawn that the historical situation of the Judean community in Persian era Palestine required the protection of the righteous, not punishment of the sinner as has so frequently been maintained as the seminal message of these biblical sections.

Keywords: Genesis 18, Formation History of Pentateuch, Socio-economic Structure, Judean Community, Postexilic Period, Persian Era Palestine, Biblical Archaeology, Post-collapse Society

1. *Introduction*

In the poem of Erra, written in Akkadian, the topic of divine justice as the equivalent of destructive punishment that does not distinguish the righteous from the wicked is a topic of serious discussion. Isum, lieutenant of Erra in the poem, accuses Erra of cruelty:

IV 104 Hero Erra, you killed the righteous one (*kinamma*).
105 You killed the unrighteous one (*la kinamma*).
106 You killed the one who sinned against you.
107 You killed the one who did not sin against you.
108 You killed the priest eager to bring the offerings to the gods.
110 You killed the old men on the threshhold.
111 You killed the young girls in their chambers.

Accordingly, Erra admits that he was too cruel in the fifth tablet: 'Like one who ravages a country I made no distinction between good and bad: I slew them (alike)'.[1]

However, there is no place in the Hebrew Bible in which Yhwh recognizes his own cruelty as it appears in the poem of Erra. Instead, the issue of the relationship between the individual and the community, and the guilt and punishment arising from that relationship is one of the most important topics throughout the Hebrew Bible.[2] The texts considered in the following essay present contents that touch upon the question of sin and its consequences for the righteous (and the wicked). Further, this overview intends to place that inquiry, as it is focused in Genesis 18, within the larger dialogue of the ancient Israelite tradition.

The dialogue between Yhwh and Abraham in Genesis 18, and its reflection of a theological point of view, provides a starting point to consider the idea that God tolerates or endures the guilt of a community because of righteous individuals. This allusion to the theological goals of punitive justice will be discussed: to encourage religious Judeans who were confused by the delay of divine justice, and to meet the practical need of the socio-economically weak Judean community in Persian-period Palestine. This theological concept of Yhwh's punitive justice in the Hebrew Bible indicates a historical development which might reflect the socio-economic as well as the demographic context of the Judean community in the Persian period.

1. D. Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra* (OBO, 104; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 267.

2. G. Matties, *Ezekiel 18 and the Rhetoric of Moral Discourse* (SBLDS, 126; Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1990), p. 125.

2. *Genesis 18.22b-33a*

In this first example of the presentation of the dichotomy of guilt and punishment in the Hebrew Bible, the relevant text is located between the scene of Gen. 18.1-16a and Gen. 19.1ff, within a dialogue inserted between the departure of the men from Abraham's tent (18.16a) and their arrival at Sodom (19.1);[3] the dialogue takes place between Yhwh and Abraham. When the conversation is finished, Yhwh departs (33a) and Abraham returns (33b). Gunkel divides the text of 18.16-33 into three parts:

1. 16.20-22a.33b: Connecting Section (*Zwischenstück*)
2. 17-19: Yhwh's Soliloquy[4]
3. 22b-33a: Abraham's Intercession for Sodom

In the history of research, it has been recognized that the dialogue between Yhwh and Abraham in Gen. 18.23-32 reflects a theological point of view generated in the postexilic period. According to some biblical scholars, the theological horizon, the main concern and the literary style of the relevant text seem to be typically postexilic. Scholars including Wellhausen,[5] Gunkel,[6] Skinner,[7] Westermann,[8] Schmidt,[9] Blenkinsopp,[10] Blum,[11] Ben-Zvi[12] and

3. C. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36* (trans. J. Scullion; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992), p. 285.

4. According to Westermann, the text of 18.17-19 belongs to the dialogue between Yhwh and Abraham and the dialogue in 18.17-32 is self-contained, because Abraham's query (v. 23-32) presupposes Yhwh's reflection in vv. 17-21 (cf. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, p. 285). Westermann asserts that v. 22 divides the text into two scenes: it merely serves to remove the three men so that Abraham can now converse alone with one. The conversation consists of two parts: the announcement to Abraham of the destruction of Sodom (17-21) and Abraham's objection or query (23-32).

5. J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (3rd edn; Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1899), pp. 25-36.

6. H. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1922), p. 203.

7. J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1930), p. 303.

8. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, p. 286.

9. L. Schmidt, *De Deo: Studien zur Literarkritik und Theologie des Buches Jona, des Gesprächs zwischen Abraham und Jahwe in Gen. 18,22ff. und von Hi 1* (BZAW, 143; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976), p. 136.

10. J. Blenkinsopp, 'The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim', in O. Lipschits *et al.* (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century BCE* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), p. 120.

11. E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT, 57; Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), p. 400.

12. E. Ben-Zvi, 'The Dialogue between Abraham and YHWH in Genesis 18.23-32: A Historical-Critical Analysis', *JSOT* 53 (1992), pp. 27-46.

Soggin[13] assert that the relevant text of Genesis 18 (the dialogue between Yhwh and Abraham) is a secondary addition of the postexilic era. For example, Soggin argues that the theological horizon of the relevant text reflects a typically exilic or postexilic theme as in Jer. 31.29 or Ezra 18.2. According to Blenkinsopp, Gen. 18.23-32 is a midrashic comment on the account of the destruction of the city.[14] Ben-Zvi also claims that Gen. 18.23-32 is a theological text dealing with and reflecting the main concerns of the postmonarchic historical community in which it was written.[15] Schmidt argues that the pericope of Gen. 18.23ff reflects a postexilic milieu and was composed between 500 and 350 BCE.[16]

However, scholars have not been unanimous on the theory that the scene was generated in the postexilic period. For example, scholars including von Rad,[17] Noth,[18] Eissfeldt,[19] Kilian,[20] Sarna[21] and Wenham[22] allocated the pericope to the J source or one of its subgroups. Sarna claims that the Sodom narratives and the Noah's flood story ought to belong to the earliest traditions of Israel and derive from a time before the doctrine of repentance had been developed because, in sharp contrast to the theological outlook of the prophetic literature, the religious teaching of repentance is not found in this text.[23] Wenham also posits that the textblock of Gen. 18–19 constitutes a clear unit, which indicates many structural as well as verbal echoes of the Noah's flood story.[24]

13. J. Soggin, 'Abraham hadert mit Gott - Beobachtungen zu Genesis 18,16-32', in I. Kottsieper *et al.* (eds.), *Wer ist wie du, Herr, unter den Göttern?: FS O. Kaiser* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), pp. 214-17.

14. J. Blenkinsopp, 'Abraham and the Righteous of Sodom', *JJS* 33 (1982), p. 121.

15. Ben-Zvi, 'The Dialogue between Abraham and YHWH in Genesis 18.23-32', p. 33.

16. Schmidt, *De Deo*, p. 164.

17. G. von Rad, *Genesis* (trans. J. Marks; Philadelphia, PA: SCM, 1961), p. 199.

18. M. Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (trans. B. Anderson; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 238.

19. O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (trans. P. Ackroyd; Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), p. 194.

20. R. Kilian, *Die vorpriesterlichen Abrahamsüberlieferungen: Literarkritisch und traditionsgeschichtlich untersucht* (BBB, 24; Bonn: Hanstein, 1966), pp. 96-189.

21. N. Sarna, *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), p. 133.

22. G. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50* (WBC, 2; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994), p. 40.

23. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 133.

24. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, p. 40. Wenham regards chs. 18–19 as constituting a clear unit within Genesis with four main sections:

1. 18.1-15 Isaac's birth announced to Abraham and Sarah
2. 18.16-33 Abraham pleads for Sodom
3. 19.1-29 Lot and his family escape from Sodom

However, the secondary character of Gen. 18.22b-33a as a textual unit is clarified by several considerations. First, while there is no scene in which Yhwh reveals his true identity as God in 20f, Abraham already notices him as God in 23ff.[25] And in 20f, the fate of Sodom remains undecided, while in 23ff its destruction is regarded as already announced.[26] In 22a 'the men' (which mean all three) have moved away to Sodom. However, in 22b suddenly Yhwh remains behind with Abraham. That Yhwh was one of the three is certainly the view of the later editors.[27] Gunkel says: „Sie setzt demnach ein Stück voraus, das selber nicht zu einer selbstgewachsenen Sage, sondern zu einem künstlerisch gebildeten Rahmen gehört".[28] 33b would be equally appropriate after 22a. This observation leads us to the possibility that the text of 22b-33a is a secondary pericope, which was added between 1-22a and 33b. Furthermore, the point of view on the 'men' in 22b-33a is contradictory to that in 1-8. The men in 1-8 are so immanent that they eat cheese curds, milk and roasted meat, while the transcendental aspect is strongly emphasized in 25 i.e. Abraham calls one of the 'men' the judge of all the earth. In sharp contrast to older narratives in 1-16, the pericope does not describe any action of Abraham or God. In other words, while the older narratives explains occurrences, this text articulates thoughts in the form of detailed dialogue. This different style of narrating a story indicates that the pericope was generated in a later time period.[29] Yet, the text of 17-19 builds a self-contained unit whose compositional intention is opposite from the pericope of 22b-33a. The text of 17-19 is attempting to clarify the scope of 'effectiveness of divine blessing',[30]

4. 19.30-33 Lot's daughters commit incest with their father

According to Wenham, the unity of these stories is demonstrated by the fact that the same actors appear in most of the scenes, most obviously the angels in 18.1–19.23, Lot throughout ch. 19 and by implication in 18.20-32, and Abraham throughout ch. 18 and in 19.29. Wenham claims that the storyline in 19.1-22 also closely parallels that in 18.1-30, encouraging a comparison to be made between the righteous heroes of these chapters, Abraham and Lot. However, the author does not simply compare Lot with Abraham. He is also interested in comparing the destruction of Sodom with the flood (Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, p. 40). Clearly the theme is the same: the mass destruction of the world (cities of the plain) and the escape of one righteous man and his family. In both cases the stories of the hero's escape and the destruction of the wicked are followed by the hero's intoxication and shameful treatment by his children (9.20-27; 19.30-38).

25. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203.

26. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203; Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, p. 304.

27. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203; Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, p. 304.

28. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203.

29. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203.

30. R. Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (trans. J. Scullion; JSOTSup, 89; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), p. 59.

while the text of 22b-33a is seeking to define the scope of effectiveness of divine punishment. Moreover, the entire atmosphere of the passage indicates that it is a product of a more reflective age than that in which the ancient legends originated.[31] The text focuses on a very refined theological problem, which emerges in the postexilic period more often than in the pre-exilic period. The unique point of view here articulated seems very similar to such passages as Jn. 4.1-11; Jer. 31.29f; Ezek. 14.14ff etc. Gunkel properly argues: 'Auch die Fürbitte Abrahams für Sodom ist schwerlich aus der israelitischen Antike zu verstehen; antik würde es sein, wenn Abraham für seinen Verwandten Lot ein gutes Wort einlegen würde; aber wie ein frommer Israelit dazu kommen kann, für ein gottloses Volk zu beten, das ihn gar nichts angeht, würde dem antiken Israel kaum verständlich sein'.[32] Finally, the deeper issue of the text is the social function of the righteous few in the midst of a corrupt society. The theological reflection presented in 22b-33a contradicts some other pentateuchal traditions. We will examine the pentateuchal traditions in more detail in the next chapter.

At this point, based on the above-mentioned observations, we can conclude that the text of Gen. 18.22b-33a constitutes a consistent textual unit, which was secondarily added between Gen. 18.1-22a and 18.33b. In sum, although there are some signs of textual unity in Gen. 18–19, which is shown by Wenham among others, we can conclude that the chapters of Gen. 18–19 are not consistent and therefore, the textual unity is secondary.

3. *Additional Examples of Pentateuchal Traditions*

Ben-Zvi correctly asserts that the place of the dialogue in Gen. 18.22b-33a (i.e. preceded by Gen. 18.17-22, and between Gen. 18.1-10 and Gen. 19.1-29) indicates that the theological issues expressed in the dialogue contained significant community theological concerns reflected in the compositional level of the text.[33] Ben-Zvi says:

> Within such a community, the image of Sodom probably evoked the image of monarchic Jerusalem just before the divine punishment (i.e. the destruction of the city) fell upon it. Accordingly, the text could have suggested to the community an image of their archetypal pious ancestor asking God to spare their City, which is also the city in which their actual ancestors were dwelling at the time of the divine destruction.[34]

The text raises the theological question of how and whether divine justice can be realized in the midst of total destruction. After noticing the fate of

31. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, p. 304.
32. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 203.
33. Ben-Zvi, 'The Dialogue between Abraham and YHWH in Genesis 18.23-32', p. 30.
34. Ben-Zvi, 'The Dialogue between Abraham and YHWH in Genesis 18.23-32', p. 31.

Sodom, Abraham discusses with God the theological significance as well as the salvatory function of the righteous within a corrupt society and a wicked community. The main concern of the author of the dialogue is to assure his audience that God is righteous, which means that God will not punish the righteous with the wicked even in total destruction: In Gen. 18.25, Abraham challenges God asking: 'Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the righteous as well as the guilty, so that righteous and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' This dialogue articulates at least three theological presuppositions. First, it is unfair and illegitimate to let the righteous perish with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are equally dealt even if that kind of treatment is carried out by God. This concept can be interpreted as a phenomenon of 'individualization' in Israelite society.[35] Second, even though a social entity is corrupt and wicked, there is still a possibility that a small portion of the social entity is righteous. If this is the case, it is theologically a more desirable divine action to be patient with the whole entity on behalf of the righteous minority than to destroy it on behalf of the wicked majority. Third, Yhwh is not only the god of Israel, but the Judge of all the earth. The unique quality of these theological concepts expressed in the dialogue becomes more pronounced if we compare it with some other pentateuchal traditions.

In the Decalogue the question of divine punishment is clearly articulated:

> …for I, Yhwh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the guilt of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and upon the fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments (Exod. 20.5b-6).

According to the author of Exod. 20.5b-6, the concepts of sin and punishment are intergenerationally transmittable. It contradicts the 'individualistic' approach of texts like Gen. 18.25-26, Jer. 31.29f and Ezek. 14.12-20.

It is also worth mentioning the cultic laws concerning offerings in Num. 15. They belong to the atonement for unintentional transgression of

35. According to Lindars, the individuals in the relevant texts in the book of Ezekiel are an allegory for the collective (B. Lindars, 'Ezekiel and Individual Responsibility', *VT* 15 [1965], pp. 452-67). Robinson asserts the 'corporate personality in ancient Israel' which means that individuals in the Hebrew Bible are never regarded as isolated from the groups (H. Robinson, *Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel* [rev. edn; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1980], pp. 25-44). It would be safe to say that the individualism in ancient Israelite society is not exactly the same as the individualism of modern society. However, it is also correct that the theological or ethical significance of individuals within a community or collective is clearly receiving emphasis in some texts of the Hebrew Bible which seem to derive from the historical background of the exilic and the early postexilic period. Cf. Deut. 24.16; Jer. 31.29f; Ezek. 14.14; 18.1-24. For the dialectical relationship between the 'individual' and the 'collective' in the Hebrew Bible cf. K. Namiki, *Hebraizumuno ningenkankaku* (Tokyo: Shinkyo, 2001), pp. 170-75.

a community and of an individual. With regard to unintentional sin by a whole congregation:

> If this was done unintentionally, through the inadvertence of the community, the whole community shall present one bull of the herd as a burnt offering of pleasing odor to Yhwh, with its proper meal offering and libation, and one he-goat as a sin offering (Num. 15.24).

When an unintentional sin is committed by an individual: 'In case it is an individual who has sinned unwittingly, he shall offer a she-goat in its first year as a sin offering' (Num. 15.27). These two segments present differing ideas about how the community and the individual should engage in repentance, respectively. In the passages, it should also be noted that unintentional sins of a community or of an individual are restorable and forgivable if they are correctly addressed through rituals and sacrifices. In sharp contrast, the transgression 'with a high hand' (doing something intentionally or defiantly) has a prescribed consequence of excommunication from the community (Num. 15.30-31).

According to the perspectives represented in the above-mentioned texts, a community or an individual could be purified and restored through proper rituals, sacrifices and elimination of sin (or removal of the sinner in the case of community). The social order can be maintained by excluding evil things and wicked persons from the community, which are considered minor and peripheral. According to this older (pre-exilic) concept, the social 'cosmos' can be preserved when the sphere of guilt is repressed as a peripheral or minor phenomenon. In the pre-exilic period, the religious laws and ethical commands provided ancient Israelites the necessary criteria to verify the status of outsiders and insiders of this almost flawless 'cosmos'.[36] Furthermore, regulations regarding sacrifices and rituals offered the possibility of recovery of status and purification for the community as well as for individuals. Whosoever endangers the order of the 'cosmos' should accordingly be treated to repair the damaged order. This could be accomplished either through rituals

36. Eliade describes the 'cosmos' in the following way: 'One of the outstanding characteristics of traditional societies is the opposition that they assume between their inhabited territory and the unknown and indeterminate space that surrounds it. The former is the world (more precisely, our world), the cosmos; everything outside it is no longer a cosmos but a sort of "other world", a foreign, chaotic space, peopled by ghosts, demons, "foreigners" (who are assimilated to demons and the souls of the dead)… on one side there is a cosmos, on the other a chaos. But we shall see that if every inhabited territory is a cosmos, this is precisely because it was first consecrated, because, in one way or another, it is the work of the gods or is in communication with the world of the gods… The sacred reveals absolute reality and at the same time makes orientation possible; hence it founds the world in the sense that it fixes the limits and establishes the order of the world' (M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* [trans. Willard R. Trask; New York: Harcourt, 1959], pp. 29-30).

and sacrifices which would lead to the integration of the sinner, or through his or her excommunication from the community.[37] This pre-exilic concept of a flawless 'cosmos' interconnected with a cultic sacrificial system was by nature group oriented and transgenerational.[38] In cultic sacrificial systems, an individual in a family, a community, and a people was always regarded as a part of one living entity, not as a self-sustainable independent personality.

The story of Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16 is significant regarding the issue of the relationship between individual guilt and collective responsibility. The present text of Numbers 16 is mainly drawn from P source.[39] After Korah's rebellion, Yhwh appears and says to Moses and Aaron: 'Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may destroy them in a moment' (Num. 16.21). Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces crying out 'O God… Will you be angry with the entire congregation when only one man sins?' (16.22). Yhwh accepts their request, which is like that of Abraham in Genesis 18, with distinguishing the innocent from the guilty.[40] According to Blenkinsopp, this is in the form of a rhetorical question of the kind used by Abraham at Sodom.[41] Blenkinsopp argues herein that there is some link between Gen. 18.23-32 and Numbers 16.

However, according to Num. 16.32, the pre-exilic principle of group oriented and transgenerational punishment is still valid because 'the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, and all Korah's people and all their possessions'. In sharp contrast to, for example, Gen. 18.22b-33a; Jer. 31.29f; Ezek. 18.1-24, not only the sinner (Korah),

37. The text of Ezek. 14.1-11 reflects a similar theological concept in which the 'cosmos' was regarded as still valid.

38. 'Cult is by definition the religious expression of a group and not a feature of personal religion' (J. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986], p. 32).

39. At this point, it is worth mentioning that I am not attempting to argue that P source was composed in the pre-exilic period. As Nicholson properly articulated, '…dating the composition of P to the late exilic or early postexilic period…does not mean that its authors spun it out of thin air. That they took up traditions and cultic ordinances from earlier times need not be questioned' (E. Nicholson, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998], p. 219). According to Levine, the present text of Num. 16 is a combination of JE and P (B. Levine, *Numbers 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AncB, 4; New York: Doubleday, 1993], p. 405). The detailed literary analysis of the text units is beyond the scope of this article. It will suffice to say that the present text of Num. 16 went through a long process of transmission, and the text portion articulating the transgenerational and collective punishment of God reflects the pre-exilic spirit and environment.

40. Matties, *Ezekiel 18 and the Rhetoric of Moral Discourse*, p. 127.

41. Blenkinsopp, 'The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim', p. 126.

but also the men who are related with the sinner are destroyed in Numbers 16. In other words, the text of Numbers 16 is not 'individualistic' enough in comparison to Gen. 18.22-33; Jer. 31.29f; Ezek. 14.14ff. The concept of divine punishment in Numbers 16 is in some degree still transgenerational and collective. This significant difference seems to indicate that the theological concept concerning divine punitive justice found in Numbers 16 was generated earlier than that of Gen. 18.22b-33a.[42]

4. *Relevant Texts in the Prophetic Traditions*

As mentioned earlier, the pre-exilic concepts of sin and punishment were based on religious laws and ethical commands, which offered Israelites a vantage point to examine those who belong to the flawless 'cosmos' and those who do not. This cosmos could be maintained by purifying or eliminating sin, corruption, evil and wickedness by offering sacrifices or performing rituals. When a sin or act of corruption or evil was too serious to be forgiven through such religious means, the sinner who committed the serious transgression and those belonging to the sinner, could expect to be cut off from the community. This rule was valid also for an entire community, in the event that the community was corrupt and wicked (as Sodom was)—it was supposed to be destroyed by God to keep the divine 'cosmos'.

As Gunkel correctly states, it is not uncommon in the pre-exilic time period that death and catastrophe destroy an entire community for the purpose of punishing the sin and wickedness of its inhabitants.[43] A similar theological position is found frequently in prophetic texts. For example:

> This is what my LORD Yhwh showed me. There was a basket of figs. He said, 'What do you see, Amos?' I replied, 'A basket of figs'. Then Yhwh said to me, 'The end has come for my people Israel; I will not pass by them again'. (Amos 8.1f).

Here, we find that there is no distinction between the righteous and the wicked part of a people (Israel). A family, a community, a city and even a people were considered to be a homogenous unit. On the same note, the old

42. The story of Achan (Joshua 7) also reflects the transgenerational and collective concept of retribution. '…when Achan breaks the taboo on the spoil of Jericho, and involves the whole of Israel in defeat and, on discovery, the whole of his family in destruction' (Robinson, *Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel*, p. 26). From this point of view, Joshua 7 as well as Deut. 13.12-16 and 2 Samuel 21 can be regarded as earlier than Gen. 18.22b-33a.

43. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 204: 'Daß Tod und Verderben über ein ganzes Volk kommen, um seine Sünden zu strafen, ist ein Gedanke, welcher der alten Zeit in Israel ganz ohne Anstoß gewesen ist'.

layer of the Sodom narrative explains that the city was destroyed by God, because the people of Sodom were evil (Gen. 13.13).

Gunkel states: 'Dieser Epoche wäre der Gedanke, dass in dem gottverfluchten Sodom einzelne Bürger gerecht gewesen wären, ganz ungeheuerlich erschienen: wie sollte das möglich sein!'[44] However, as a consequence of the massive disasters of the early sixth century BCE, the widespread belief in the flawless 'cosmos' concept was eradicated once and for all. The surviving Israelites were completely shocked and fell into deep despair; God's temple was demolished and left them without a pure place in which to orient themselves, offer sacrifices, perform rituals, or communicate with divinity.[45] Thus, the foundational concern of exilic and early postexilic Israelites (until the establishment of the second temple) became that without performing those commandments, they were unsure how they should experience forgiveness and recovery given by God. The text of Ezek. 18.14-20 (together with the present text version of Ezek. 18.5-13), by challenging the traditional concept of totality regarding the principle of retribution, was directed to those who were driven to despair because of the annihilated divine 'cosmos' concept. The author of Ezek. 18.14-20 emphasized individual retribution because there was no longer a communal framework of religious rituals or a collective order of the divine 'cosmos' in which individuals felt embedded, and which was interrelated with the pre-exilic time period. After 587 BCE the possibility for the concept of total retribution had disappeared because there was no longer a communal basis or a collective foundation of Israelite religion for a family, a community, a city, a people and even a nation. Therefore, the only option that remained for the exilic/early postexilic community without cult was to individualize the religious principle of retribution so as to not to entirely lose their orientation.

Therefore, the text of Ezek. 18.14-20 clearly asserts that the old collective point of view has to be transformed.

> The person who sins, he alone shall die. A son shall not bear the father's guilt, nor shall a father bear the son's guilt; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him alone, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him alone (Ezek. 18.20).

44. Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, p. 204.

45. 'From all that has been said, it follows that the true world is always in the middle, at the Center, for it is here that there is a break in plane and hence communication among the three cosmic zones. Whatever the extent of the territory involved, the cosmos that it represents is always perfect. An entire country (e.g., Palestine), a city (Jerusalem), a sanctuary (the Temple in Jerusalem), all equally well present an *imago mundi*… Palestine, Jerusalem, and the Temple severally and concurrently represent the image of the universe and the Center of the World… it seems an inescapable conclusion that the religious man sought to live as near as possible to the Center of the World' (Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, pp. 42-43).

It obviously denies the principle of transgenerational and collective retribution which was so usual in the pre-exilic time period. These theological features of Ezekiel 18 are shared in Ezek. 14.12ff.

> The word of Yhwh came to me saying, 'Son of man, if a land were to sin against me and commit a trespass, and I stretched out my hand against it and destroyed its supply of bread, sent famine against it, and cut off from it both man and beast, even though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job should be in it, by their own righteousness they would only deliver themselves', declares my LORD Yhwh (Ezek. 14.12ff).

Matthews describes this development in the following manner:

> To the field of ethics, belongs his (Ezekiel's) contribution on individualism, which some have considered his chief message. While national solidarity had been the preaching of the earlier prophets, the query must often have arisen as to the justice of the saint suffering with the sinner. That the sins of the fathers should be visited on the children, to the fourth generation, was questionable justice. In national practice individuals, not families, had been condemned (cf. 2 Kgs 14.5, 6); and this had been written into the code of Deuteronomy as something new (Deut. 24.16). But it was the destruction of the city that shattered group life, thereby shattering national solidarity that furnished an incentive for the new philosophy, individualism.[46]

However, it should be more carefully examined whether or not the relevant texts out of the book of Ezekiel derived from the prophet himself. Blenkinsopp claims that there are some terminological, conceptual and theological connections between Gen. 18.23-32 and the book of Ezekiel, especially Ezekiel 18.[47]

It has long been recognized among scholars that the 'individual' concept of Gen. 18.23ff ('Will you destroy both innocent and guilty alike?') is similar to that of Ezek. 14.12ff or of Ezekiel 18. However, if we compare the texts carefully, there are some clear differences regarding the theological concept. First, according to Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18, if Noah, Daniel, and Job (or the righteous in Ezek. 18) were there, they would not be able to save the lives of others (even though the other people are their own children); only their own lives would be spared. They are the paradigmatic righteous ones and the text acknowledges the possibility that righteous persons might be saved. In other words, the pericope focuses on the issue of whether or not God will take care of the righteous few and save them in the midst of the total destruction of the land. In sharp contrast, Gen. 18.22b-33a deals more with the question of whether or not God would be patient with a corrupt

46. I. Matthews, *Ezekiel: An American Commentary on the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Judson, 1939), pp. xxiii-xxiv.

47. Blenkinsopp, 'The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim', p. 124.

community on behalf of the righteous. Do the righteous have a salvatory function for an evil society before God? That is the central question the pericope raises. In the pericope, God finally replies to Abraham's repeated questions: 'I will not destroy, for the sake of the ten'. The answer is yes. The few (ten) righteous have a salvatory function for the entire city. God prefers to protect the lives of the righteous few rather than to destroy the wicked city regardless of good and evil. God's justice is no more realized by bringing total destruction to a sinful society (as in Amos 8.1-2), or by assigning merely individual retribution (as in Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18), but by being patient with the sinful society to protect the lives of a righteous few. It is a dramatic change in the terms of the theological paradigm of divine justice. The main concern is shifted from the punishment of the sinner to the protection of the righteous. In sharp contrast to Gen. 18.22b-33a, the texts of Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18 say nothing on the concept that the existence of a righteous few can have a positive effect on a wicked community. It is important for the author of Ezekiel 18, that righteous as well as wicked persons receive appropriate consequences for their actions and attitudes. However, this correct retribution is no longer an essential question for the author of Gen. 18.22b-33a. The protection of a righteous and innocent few is much closer to the heart of the author.

Second, while in Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18 the three righteous do not form any subgroup within a community, the author of Gen. 18.22b-33a seems to regard the righteous few as a social entity.[48]

Third, both Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18 are profoundly influenced by the priestly style and theology in sharp contrast to the text of Gen. 18.22b-33a, which does not reflect any priestly characteristics.[49]

Furthermore, the phrase השפט כל־הארץ is found only in Gen. 18.25 in the Hebrew Bible. This expression obviously presupposes the universal monotheistic theology of Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 45.5-7 among others), while the texts of Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18 suppose only a local divinity (cf. ארץ in Ezek. 14.13; ישראל in Ezek. 18.2). At this point we can conclude that the text of Gen. 18.22b-33a reflects a later stage of theological development in comparison to the texts of Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18.[50]

As previously mentioned, the annihilation of the flawless 'cosmos' concept generated a new concept, one of individual retribution (i.e. Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18). However, the completion of the second temple led to the changed theological milieu and a recovery of the macro aspect of theology.

48. Cf. Schmidt, *De Deo*, pp. 150-59.

49. Cf. Schmidt, *De Deo*, p. 159.

50. Schmidt states correctly that the pericope of Gen. 18.22b-33a chronologically and theologically presupposes the text of Ezek. 14.12ff and Ezekiel 18 (Schmidt, *De Deo*, p. 158).

After the establishment of the second temple, the postexilic Judeans gradually realized the potential danger of the individualized retribution theology: this individualistic approach impedes the conceptual path to the God of History who controls and rules the destiny and fate of nations. God, in the individual concept, shrank in importance to one who cares for the petty troubles of individuals—he had lost the theological dimension of the magnificent history of salvation.

Therefore, it is no wonder that besides the P writers attempting to restore the pre-exilic concept of the flawless 'cosmos', there was a certain theological circle of late postexilic Israelites which generated a dualistic yet bipolar concept of eschatology, which is aimed at complementing the weak point of the concept of individual retribution. At the same time, this new dualistic eschatological concept distinguished itself from the pre-exilic point of view of total destruction (i.e. Amos 8.1f).

> 'Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to Yhwh, as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien, and do not fear Me', says Yhwh of hosts (Mal. 3.4f).
>
> Hear the word of Yhwh, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake, have said, 'Let Yhwh be glorified, that we may see your joy'. But they will be put to shame. A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, the voice of Yhwh who is rendering recompense to His enemies (Isa. 66.5f).

Through this dual eschatology, the circle of theologians tried to improve two theological issues in the traditional concepts. From the principle of individual retribution, the group attempted to recover the historical-collective dimension of Yhwh. As already mentioned, the building of the second temple was completed in this time period, so that the historical necessity of recovering the macro aspect of theology, namely Yhwh as the LORD of history, was fulfilled. Against the doctrine of total destruction, the group articulated that Yhwh would sharply discriminate between the righteous and the wicked when judging a community.

If this is so, the author of Gen. 18.22b-33a seems to take a theological position that opposes the expectation of bipolar and dualistic eschatological judgement represented, for example, in Malachi 3 and Isaiah 66, which was widespread in the late postexilic (late Persian) time period.[51] The text of

51. Cf. Blenkinsopp, 'The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim', pp. 398-402; C. Reeder, 'Malachi 3.24 and the Eschatological Restoration of the "Family"', *CBQ* 69.4 (2007), pp. 703-709; J. Oswalt, 'Recent Studies in Old Testament Eschatology and Apocalyptic', *JETS* 24.4 (1981), p. 299; H. Preuss,

Gen. 18.22b-33a assumes instead that a dramatic divine judgement to punish wicked people is not necessary insofar as a righteous few remained.[52] Moreover, the above-mentioned shift in focus could possibly be connected with the particular historical background of Persian Era Palestine. Through this new doctrine regarding the salvatory function of a righteous few for a social entity, the author of Gen. 18.22b-33a might be trying to explain the delay of divine judgement, which embarrassed many pious Israelites during this time period.

The Judean community in Persian era Palestine was a society torn apart by deep schisms. It was also severely affected by a shrunken population and material culture.[53] In other words, the province of Yehud was much smaller and poorer than Weinberg's theory called 'Bürger-Tempel-Gemeinde' asserts.[54] Not only was Jerusalem, but also many sites of settlements (about 65 percent) in the province were smaller than five dunams, with populations of less than 125.[55] According to Faust, 'The demographic and settlement peak

'Jahweglaube als Zukunftserwartung', in *idem* (ed.), *Eschatologie im Alten Testament* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978), p. 302. Blenkinsopp implies that the dualistic (sectarian) eschatological concept was decisively shaped in the late Persian period, especially during the fourth century BCE (cf. Blenkinsopp, 'The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim', pp. 398-402).

52. The author of Jn 4.11 even suggests that Yhwh is deeply concerned about the fates of the animals.

53. For the demographic and socio-economic situation of Persian era Palestine, cf. A. Faust, 'Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations in Judah from the Late Iron Age to the Hellenistic Period and the Archaeology of Persian-Period Yehud', in Y. Levin (ed.), *A Time of Change: Judah and Its Neighbours in the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), pp. 23-50; B. Becking, 'We All Returned as One: Critical Notes on the Myth of the Mass Return', in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), pp. 3-13; O. Lipschits, 'Achaemenid Imperial Policy, Settlement Processes in Palestine, and the Status of Jerusalem in the Middle of the Fifth Century BCE', in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), pp. 19-40; O. Lipschits and O. Tal, 'The Settlement Archaeology of the Province of Judah: a Case Study', in O. Lipschits *et al.* (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century BCE* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), pp. 33-48; M. Knowles, 'Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Persian Period', in J. Berquist (ed.), *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Study of the Persian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 23; R. Albertz, 'The Thwarted Restoration', in R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds.), *Yahwism after the Exile* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), pp. 1-17; *idem*, *Die Exilszeit: 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001), pp. 97-116. According to Lipschits, 'there are no architectural or other finds that attest to Jerusalem as an urban center during the Persian Period' (Lipschits, 'Achaemenid Imperial Policy, Settlement Processes in Palestine', p. 31).

54. C. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (JSOTSup, 294; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 295-300.

55. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, p. 246.

of the Persian period was (at most) about one-third of those of the late Iron Age and Hellenistic periods… The entire Persian period should be viewed as one of post-collapse. All of Judean/Jewish society of the Persian period existed in the shadow of this collapse'.[56] Throughout the Persian era, urban life flourished only in the coastal plain and the significant cities of the pre-exilic period played little part in the life of the Judean community.[57] The lack of significant architectural remains can be interpreted as indicating that the Judean community in Persian era Palestine was miserably poor throughout the Persian period.

Archaeological evidence related to coins also sheds light on the socio-economic situation of the Judean community in the Persian period. If we compare the number of coin-types in the coinage of the neighboring provinces (e.g. Philistia and Samaria) with that of Judah, the neighboring provinces had far more coin-types than Judah.[58] What can be said from a socio-economic point of view about these differences in terms of the variety and amount of coinage? For example, the diversity of types and of motifs depicted in the coins of Philistia derived mainly from many minting authorities (i.e. Gaza, Ashdod and Ashkelon).[59] However, one possible interpretation is that the Judean community in Persian era Palestine in general was economically both smaller and weaker than the surrounding regions. The small size of the community with its main concerns which were mere survival and restoring the socio-political system did not allow the Judean community in Persian era Palestine a thriving trade economy. Such an economic system in turn would have necessitated a more varied and abundant coinage. According to Carter, the major purpose of coinage in Judah was related to the maintenance of the Persian military.[60] The coins were mainly used for day wages to Persian soldiers in Yehud.[61]

Perhaps Abraham's Intercession for Sodom in Genesis 18 indicates that some members of the Judean community in Persian era Palestine felt that they were fragile and inadequate. For the author of Gen. 18.22b-33a, the focus is not on the punishment of the sinner but on the protection of the righteous, because the Judean community itself was struggling for survival at that time period. From the author's perspective, the bipolar eschatological concept was not an acceptable theology for two reasons. First, it was not able to explain the delay of eschatological judgement and/or salvation, which

56. Faust, 'Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations', p. 49.

57. Faust, 'Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations', p. 50.

58. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, pp. 268-80; E. Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), pp. 555-70.

59. Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, pp. 562-65.

60. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, p. 281.

61. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, p. 281.

discouraged many pious Judeans in Persian era Palestine. Second, it did not reflect the desperate need of the reduced and weak Judean community for survival at that time period. If the above-mentioned relevant texts were set in chronological order, it might yield further conclusions about the theological concept of Yhwh's punitive justice.

5. *Conclusion*

Since in Gen. 18.22b-33a the issue of justice initiated after a catastrophe that Yhwh controlled and operated is treated differently than in other biblical texts, e.g., in the book of Ezekiel (Ezek. 14.12-20; Ezekiel 18), it behooves us to examine the historical and other connections between these important theological concepts. In Genesis 18 Abraham tries to comprehend what value Yhwh might give the righteous in a fully corrupt place such as in the forthcoming fall of Sodom. The main focus in this text is primarily to emphasize that in divine justice Yhwh does not treat the righteous and the wicked in the same way while in the midst of such punitive judgment.

However, there seems to be a contrasting emphasis in Ezek. 14.12-20 and Ezekiel 18 in which the author concentrates solely on the problem of whether and how God can treat the righteous and the wicked differently. On the other hand, Gen. 18.22b-33a mainly focuses on whether and to what extent the fact that some righteous people inhabit an immoral society could prevent divine judgment for all (see vv. 24-26): whether Yhwh would be patient with the entire society in favor of the righteous, and suspend punitive destruction. In Gen. 18.22b-33a the righteous serve a special function for a community. The above-mentioned texts can be chronologically arranged.

First, the Pre-Exilic Era may be termed Stage I. It is represented by the texts of Exod. 20.5b-6; Numbers 15–16; Deut. 13.12-16; Joshua 7; 2 Samuel 21; Amos 8.1f in which the belief in the flawless 'cosmos' is valid. The pre-exilic thoughts regarding sin and punishment focused on the religious laws and regulations which provided Judeans with criteria to determine who are the insiders and outsiders of the flawless 'cosmos'. This cosmos could only be preserved by eliminating sins and flaws by offering sacrifices or performing rituals. If a sin or a flaw is too grave to be purified through such religious media, the person who committed the grave violation, and everything which belongs to the person are supposed to be eliminated from society. This principle was also effective for an entire community. If a society was completely degraded, it was supposed to be destroyed by God to maintain the divine 'cosmos'. In sum, the concept of divine punishment in this time period is basically collective and transgenerational.

Second, the Exilic/Early Postexilic Era may be titled Stage II, and examples of this stage may be found in Deut. 24.16; Jer. 31.29f; Ezek. 14.12-20; Ezekiel 18. In these texts, the faith in the divine 'cosmos' was decisively broken as

a result of the Babylonian conquest of 587 BCE. The surviving Judeans were shocked and disoriented. The eradication of the flawless 'cosmos' concept gradually generated the individualization of retribution theology in the exilic/early postexilic period. In this time period, individualized retribution theology was the mainstream concept related to human sin and divine punishment. This tendency was continued more or less until the establishment of the second temple which began to function as a focal point of communal cult and collective religion, and recovered the macro dimension of Yhwh-religion and therefore also to some degree, the concept of divine 'cosmos'. This recovery of the pre-exilic flawless 'cosmos' was mainly attempted by P writers, however, there was another theological direction which tried to overcome the limits of the traditional concepts regarding divine punitive justice in the late postexilic time period.

Third, Late Postexilic/Late Persian Era, which may be termed Stage III, is exemplified in Gen. 18.22b-33a; Malachi 3; Isaiah 66. In these passages, the completion of the second temple fulfilled the theological prerequisite to recover the macro aspect of theology, namely Yhwh as the LORD of history. At least some portion of the divine 'cosmos' was recuperated. According to P writers, this historical turning point enabled Judeans in Persian era Palestine to regain the criteria for determining the insiders and outsiders of this flawless 'cosmos'. However, because this recovery of the macro aspect of Yhwh-religion proceeded in the background of individualized retribution theology, the theological sensitivity of the Judean community regarding the relationship of Yhwh's punitive justice to the individual and the collective increased considerably. This general tendency facilitated the development of dualistic eschatology (Malachi 3; Isaiah 66), which gave birth to its theological complement or antithesis, namely the concept of the salvatory function of the righteous few (Gen. 18.22b-33a). This new concept in the text of Genesis 18 seems to reflect a late postexilic author's struggle. This author in the Persian period is trying to achieve two theological goals, namely (1) to encourage some religious Judeans who were severely confused by the delay of divine punitive justice, and (2) to meet the practical need of the Judean community in Persian period Palestine, which was numerically reduced and socio-economically weak. From the author's point of view, the historical situation of the Judean community in Persian era Palestine required the protection of the righteous rather than the punishment of the sinner. These two concepts both complemented and competed with each other in this time period.

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Social, Cultural and Demographic Changes in Judah during the Transition from the Iron Age to the Persian Period and the Nature of the Society during the Persian Period

Avraham Faust

Abstract

The situation in Judah after the Babylonian conquest is currently hotly debated. The traditional view have been recently challenged by several scholars, who claim that not much had changed in Judah after the fall of Jerusalem. While admitting that the Judahite cities were destroyed, this new school of thought argues that the rural sector, along with the majority of the population, was not affected by the Babylonian campaigns. Following a brief introduction, the paper will discuss two major issues concerning the transition from the Iron Age to the Persian period: Socio-cultural continuity and change, and demographic and settlement continuity and change. An examination of both sets of data reveals the drastic changes experienced by Judahite society following the Babylonian destructions. It appears that those destructions brought about the collapse of Judahite society, and its values and ideology disintegrated. Such great demographic decline and social disintegration is similar to processes experienced by other societies in comparable historical contexts. Judah after the Babylonian conquest, including during the Persian period, should therefore be viewed as a 'post-collapse society'. The recovery from the destruction lasted hundreds of years, and the process of revival encompassed the entire Persian period, maturing only in the late Hellenistic period.

Keywords: Judah, Iron Age, Persian Period, Demography, Settlement, Neo-Babylonian campaigns, Post-collapse.

The fate of Judah following the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE had received a great deal of discussion in recent years. Until recently the Neo-Babylonian period was viewed as an era of demographic and cultural decline (e.g., Noth 1960: 296; Bright 1972: 343-44; Aharoni 1979; Mazar 1990). This view has been severely criticized over the last decade.[1] Some scholars,

1. Note that contrary to the impression one might get from some of the recent

mainly following Barstad's (1996) *The Myth of the Empty Land* (also Carroll 1992), have accepted the notion that not much changed in Judah after the fall of Jerusalem (e.g., Lipshits 1997; 1998; 2003; Blenkinsopp 2002a; 2002b). According to these scholars only a small minority of Judeans were exiled, and for most of the population, who lived in the rural sector, life went on after 586 just as before. This population was, according to this view, unharmed by the war and the exiles that followed. This 'continuity school' had received much criticism (e.g., Stern 2000; 2004; Oded 2003; Vanderhooft 2003; Faust 2003b, etc.), concentrating on its interpretation of the biblical texts, which lies at the heart of the new school, as well as on its interpretation of Babylonian policies, about which the new school had made certain assumptions, and on its treatment of the archaeological evidence.

I have dealt with this issue in the past (Faust 2003b; 2004; 2007; see also Faust in press a), and in this article I would like to present a broad picture which is based on some of the previous publications, in order to use the debate over the transition from the Iron Age to the Persian Period to shed light on the society during the latter era.

A Brief Introduction

The Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem is an important historical event. For scholars this date usually marks the end of the Period of the Monarchy or even the end of the Iron Age, the beginning of the Exilic Period, etc. For many, this date was regarded as a watershed. But what was the reality in Judah following the 586 BCE events? The Bible informs us that there were remnants in the land, but seems to give the general impression that they were relatively few and unimportant. The debate that has evolved during the past few years over this issue has brought the archaeological evidence to the front. The problem is, however, that as of yet, no material culture of the 'Babylonian period' has been identified. The relative lack of evidence is explained in two contrasting ways. It could be assumed that for various reasons the region was only sparsely inhabited, therefore leaving only scant remains (e.g., Stern 1997; 1998; 2000). Other studies, however, attributed the lack of material culture specifically belonging to the Babylonian period to the fact that we are dealing with a very short period which had no distinct

literature, most scholars, including these cited above, did not see the land as 'empty', and some of them had explicitly rejected this notion (e.g., Faust 2003b: 46; in press a; and many references). They did, however, view the Neo-Babylonian period in Judah as one of a great demographic decline. In a sense, by attributing previous generations of scholars the view that the land was literally empty (a view that was not shared by at least the vast majority of them), the new school (below) created a 'straw man', in contrast to whom its own views could have been seen as more reasonable.

characteristics. According to this view, the period's material culture should be viewed as a continuation of that of the late 7th and early 6th centuries BCE, and as a predecessor of that of the Persian period. This school, therefore, views the material culture of the Babylonian period as a continuation of that of the Iron Age (Barkai 1992; Lipschits 1997; 1998; 2005; Barstad 1996). Adherents of this school of thought usually (though **not** necessarily) regard the 6th century as much more populated than supporters of the first school (e.g., Barstad 1996; 2001; Lipschits 2005).

Both explanations could, theoretically, account for the lack of detailed and specific knowledge of 6th century BCE material culture, and for the lack of knowledge on this period's settlements, and it is, theoretically, difficult to judge them. I believe, however, that following the healthy debate that has evolved recently, enough archaeological evidence has been presented in support of (a slightly moderated version of) the first school.

Continuity in the Urban and Rural Settlement Sectors

It is agreed by scholars from both schools that the urban centers were destroyed (e.g., Barstad 1996: 47; Mazar 1990: 438; Lipschits 2005: 368; Stern 2000; 2002; 2004). Supporters of continuity claim that it can be found in the rural sector, and that this settlement sector was not destroyed during the Babylonian campaigns. They base this suggestion on their analysis of the data from surveys (in contrast to the interpretation of the original surveyors, but this is legitimate of course); (see Faust 2003b; in press a, for a detailed disussion).

However, a close examination of the evidence from this settlement sector shows quite clearly that it suffers greatly during the transition form the Iron Age to the Persian period. An examination some 50 Iron Age *excavated* rural sites in Judah reveals that the vast majority of them did not continue to exist in the Persian period, and only 7 sites show possible (usually very limited) Persian period occupation (Faust 2003b; Faust and Safrai 2005; see extensive discussion in Faust in press a). Since scholars from both schools of thought agree that the urban sector was devastated, this means that both the urban and rural settlements sectors were destroyed at the time, in line with the traditional view.

In the present article, however, I wish to discuss social and cultural as well as demographic changes that occurred during the 6th century, combining various lines of evidence (following Faust 2004; 2007) which might provide conclusive evidence regarding the nature of the transition from the Iron Age to the Persian period, and on the social reality in the latter era.

Social and Cultural Changes in the 6th Century BCE

There are several material traits that seem to have been of great importance in late Iron Age Judahite society—prominent among them are the four-room house and the Judahite tomb—and an examination of their fate in 6th century BCE can be very instructive as to social and cultural situation at the time (for a detailed discussion, see Faust 2004; in press a).

The Judahite Tomb

The Judahite tombs have received a great deal of discussion (e.g., Barkai 1992; 1994; 1999; Yezerski 1995; 1999; Bloch-Smith 1992; 2002; Mazar 1990: 520-26). The term refers to a new type of burial that appears in Judah in the Iron Age II, and mainly, in its crystallized form, during the 8th-7th centuries BCE. The typical Judahite tomb is composed of a hewed burial cave, with a *dromos*. From the *dromos* one enters the cave by stepping down a rock step(s). The cave itself was usually composed of a single space of approximately 2.5 x 3 m. The chambers were usually dug in strait lines, although the quality and the finish vary greatly. After entering the cave one reaches a central passage, on three sides of which benches were left undug. The benches are organized like a ⊓, one facing the doorway, and two on the right and left side of the central passageway. The deceased were laid on the benches, until the flesh decomposed. On one of the inner corners, or below one of the benches, there is usually a repository, into which the bones of the deceased were collected for secondary burial. The bench was thus freed to accommodate a new body. Many funerary gifts accompanied the burials, and these were also found in the repository. This type of burial was used by extended families for many generations. While hundreds of caves follow the above guidelines, there are many differences among them. Some of the caves are hewn in a high quality: the benches are all uniform, and the walls and roof are smooth, etc. Others, however, are very rough. In addition, while most caves include a single chamber, others were composed of a cluster of adjoining chambers.

Today, we know of hundreds of such burials throughout Judah. Yezerski (1995: 109) counted some 395 burial chambers, in 278 tombs (in 39 sites), the vast majority of which belongs to the discussed type. Such caves were unearthed all over Judah, from Tel ‘Ira in the Beersheba basin in the south (Beit Arieh *et al.* 1999), through Kh. ‘Anim, Tel Halif, Kh. Za’ak, Ein Gedi, Tell Beit Mirsim, Tel ‘Eton, Kh. el-Kom, Ras a-Tawil, Sa’ir, Tel Goded, el-Arub, Tekoa, Nebi Daniel, el-’Atan, Bethlehem, Manahat, Zuba, Moza, Shoresh, Abu Ghosh, Jerusalem, to Nebi Samuel, Tell el-Ful and Gibeon in the land of Benjamin in the north (a partial list from Yezerski 1995: plate 1; 1999: 265).

Admittedly, the caves do not represent the burials of the entire population of Judah. Apparently, only the middle and upper classes, i.e., the rich, the nobility, and the land-owning peasants, buried their dead this way (Barkai 1992; 1994; 1999; Faust in press b; see also Bloch Smith 1992: 49). The majority of the urban poor probably disposed of their dead in simple inhumations in the ground (Barkai 1992; 1994; 1999; Faust in press b).

The Judahite tombs stress generational continuity and the permanent nature of the family, as well as possession of land (Faust and Bunimovitz 2008), and also some beliefs about death and the relations between the living and the dead (e.g., Barkai 1994; 1999; Bloch-Smith 1992). Moreover, several scholars have noted the similarity between the tombs and the typical house of this period (the four-room house, see below), and have suggested that the former was viewed as the house of the dead, where all family members went after their death (Mazar 1976: 4 n. 9; Barkai 1994; 1999). It is clear that the Judahite tomb had became an important social phenomenon, both reflecting Judahite values and structuring them.

It is therefore striking to note that no such caves are known from the Persian period (e.g., Stern 2001: 470-79; Yezerski 1995: 113-14; Wolff 2002: 132, 133, 136). The absence of the typical Judahite burial custom in the Persian period indicates that an important social institution had disappeared rather suddenly. This could have only resulted from a cultural break in the 6th century BCE.

Admittedly, there is some evidence for the continued use of a *few* of these Iron Age tombs during the 6th century (Faust 2004; in press a, and references). The fact that there is some ephemeral use of these tombs in the 6th century, however, reinforces our position on their significance as indicating a major social break at the time. First of all, only a few tombs exhibit such continuity. This means that the continuity was extremely limited, and the vast majority of the Iron Age tombs were not used at the time. These few tombs indicate that the *small* population of 6th-century Judah continued to practice the traditional Judahite burials in the first generation(s) after the collapse. Moreover, these burials represent the last phase of usage in the Iron Age cemeteries. This means that, after a few generations, the old Judahite practice simply died away (see more below).

It is clear, therefore, that the 'continuity' in use of some of the tombs is an ephemeral episode and statistically insignificant. These later burials were probably practiced by these who remained in Judah after its fall, and still conducted their traditional burial. This temporary use is an indication that the remnants of the population were very few, otherwise we would have expected many more caves to be used in the 6th century.

The fact that no Judahite tombs were hewn during the Persian period clearly poses a problem for these who assume almost full continuity between the Iron Age and the Persian Period. A major social institution

simply ceased to exist at some point between the end of the Iron Age and the Persian period. Since these tombs were not hewn (nor used) in the Persian period, it is clear that we are witnessing a break between the late Iron Age practice and that of the Persian period. While archaeologically we cannot date the time when this change took place within the 6th century, anyone who doubts that it is a result of the 586 events and the processes that followed, will have to come up with another reason. Whatever, the exact date, only major population shifts could have caused such an abrupt change.

The Four-Room House

Another dominant feature of the Israelite and Judahite society during the Iron Age II is the four-room house, which has received a great deal of scholarly attention over the last couple of decades (Shiloh 1970; 1973; 1978; Stager 1985; Holladay 1992; 1997; Netzer 1992; Braemer 1982; Faust 1999: 190-206; in press b; Faust and Bunimovitz 2003; Bunimovitz and Faust 2002; 2003).

The four-room house, along with its subtypes, was the dominant type of house during the Iron Age. The house appeared during the early Iron Age, slowly crystallizing into its more familiar form, and becoming dominant in Iron Age II. Not only were most dwellings built following this form (or its subtypes), but even some public structures were built in this fashion (e.g., the fort in Hazor). Moreover, we have seen that this plan probably influenced the above-mentioned Judahite tombs, which were built following a similar perception of space.

In the early stages of research, many scholars viewed the house's temporal and spatial distribution as matching those of the Israelites. The house was therefore labeled the 'Israelite house' (e.g., Shiloh 1973). Later scholarship tended to attribute the house's dominant position in the Iron Age to its superb functionality, whether accepting the ethnic label or not (e.g., Stager 1985; Holladay 1982; Ahlstrom 1993: 340). This functionality referred to the house's assumed suitability for the life and practical needs of the Israelites (and possibly others). According to this view the uniform plan was adapted because it suited daily life, whereas certain rooms were used for storing animals, others for food preparation, sleeping, etc.

It is now clear, however, that a functional explanation falls short of accounting for the phenomenon. Among the reasons for disqualifying a functional explanation are the following (for more details, see Faust 1999; 2000; Faust and Bunimovitz 2003; Bunimovitz and Faust 2002; 2003): the plan was used in both urban and rural settings where functional needs are different, for rich dwellings and poor ones, and even for public buildings (where nobody would suggest that one of the rooms was used for storing animals). Moreover, we have seen that the house was even used as a template for the period's tombs. Also, the finds in the rooms of the various

structures do not reflect any uniformity in the use of these spaces, contrary to the assumption that it is functional. An additional fact that disproves the functional explanation is that *the construction of these houses ceased in the 6th century* BCE (e.g., Shiloh 1973: 281; Holladay 1997: 337; below). No technological changes took place in the 6th century; if the house was adopted because of its suitability to peasant life in the Iron Age, why was it not suitable for the peasants of the Persian Period?

In a series of papers, Bunimovitz and I (above) have attempted to show that the 'Israelite' label is justified. We claimed that whether or not all houses were inhabited by Israelites, it is clear that Israelites did use this house extensively, much more than any other group. We showed that the house suited the Israelites' world views, kinship and perceptions of space, and suited their daily practices, and that this is the reason for its dominant position.

Whether we are correct or not, the house's ubiquity clearly indicates its importance in the social landscape of Iron Age Judahite society. In light of the great importance of the four-room house for Iron Age society, its demise in the 6th century is interesting. While this fact seems to indicate that the functional explanation is faulty, since no major changes that could influence the functionality of the house took place at this time, it is also important for our discussion. The house, which practically embodied the Israelite world, simply ceased to exist in the 6th century, and this clearly indicates major *socio-cultural* change that took place at the time. Such a change can only be explained by a cultural break.

One need not accept all of our interpretations of the four-room house in order to appreciate the importance of the house's disappearance in the 6th century. The disappearance of something that must be seen as an important cultural feature of the Iron Age begs for an explanation. If life went on just as before the Babylonian destruction, why did the people not continue to use the same houses?

Again, it is possible that there is an ephemeral use of these structures in the 6th century (Faust 2004; in press a). Moreover, Jeffrey Zorn has attempted recently to date several large four-room houses from Tell en-Nasbeh to the 6th century (e.g., Zorn 1997). According to Zorn, Stratum II at en-Nasbeh represents the city that became the new capital of Judah in the early 6th century after the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem. If Zorn is correct (and this is doubted by many, e.g., Herzog 1997: 237; Faust in press a), then the fact that the inhabitants built four-room houses strengthens the notion that the people of Iron Age Judah built such houses whenever they lived.

Just as in the case of the Judahite tombs, the quantity of such (possible) 6th-century structures is exceptionally restricted, exhibiting a great demographic decline, and we are not familiar with any four-room house that was built in the Persian period in the Yehud pahwe (the only possible exception is a

house at Kh. ʻAlona), or even in the larger territory of what used to be Judah. This means that even the ephemeral use of these houses ceased during the 6th century, probably a generation or two after the destruction, but not much more.

Discussion

The traits discussed above are of extreme importance for the study of daily life, as they accompanied the individual from cradle to grave. The house practically structures the individual's *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977) on a daily and regular basis, and the tomb is where everyone goes to. Both the markers of life and death, which were so prevalent in Iron Age Judah, exhibit a sharp and abrupt change at the transition to the Persian Period. It cannot be seen as anything but an indication of an extreme social and cultural break. The above-mentioned changes reflect fundamental changes in lifestyle, ethos and beliefs, and only a significant event could have caused them.

It should be emphasized that archaeologically speaking the changes cannot be dated with any precision within the 6th century. It is clear, however, that they occurred during this century. The traditional view of the Babylonian conquest, according to which many people died in the war and the catastrophes that followed, while many survivors fled and others were exiled, leaving Judah with little population, can easily account for the phenomenon. The new school, which viewed Judah in the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods as a continuation of the Iron Age where life went on 'as usual', cannot accommodate these changes. If not the 586 events and the processes which followed, what could have caused them? In the absence of another explanation one must have recourse to the traditional and widely accepted explanation mentioned above.

Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations in Judah during the 7th–2nd centuries BCE

Settlement Dynamics

In the present section, we will examine the available information regarding long-term settlement processes from the 7th-2nd centuries BCE. This time-frame covers the late Iron Age, the Neo-Babylonian, the Persian and the Hellenistic periods (Faust 2007; in press a). Since, as we have seen above, we cannot identify the pottery of the 6th century BCE, in the following we will summarize the information on the late Iron Age, the Persian period and the Hellenistic period, and the reality in the 6th century will be studied by interpolation.

Our knowledge of settlement dynamics derives from several related sources of archaeological information, surveys, planned excavations and salvage excavations.

Surveys

Notably, the regions discussed here have been extensively surveyed. While the data from surveys are, in many respects, far from conclusive (Faust and Safrai 2005; forthcoming, and references), the patterns that are observed are, in the present case, quite straightforward (note that the patterns are confirmed by the use of 'stronger' types of data, see below).

Surveys have revealed some 586 Iron Age sites, a sharp decrease to 216 sites in the Persian period, and then an increase to 510 sites in the Hellenistic period (see extensive discussion in Faust 2007; in press a). While some statistical differences can be observed within the various sub-regions, the pattern of settlement dynamics is quite uniform. The late Iron Age II, a settlement peak by all standards, is followed by a decline, in many cases even sharp decline, in the Persian period,[2] and a significant recovery in the Hellenistic period.[3] Before the data from the various surveys can be properly evaluated, it would be worthwhile to analyze the data from excavations.

Excavations

A systematic examination of excavation data should distinguish between the two main types of excavations: planned excavations, mainly of large sites; and salvage excavations, usually of smaller, rural settlements.

Planned excavations. These were not examined statistically in the past, but the dearth of Persian period remains in Judah is a well-known phenomenon that prevails even today (e.g., Carter 1999; Stern 1983: 119-20; 1997: 25; 2001: 461-62; Lipschits 2001). The lack of substantial finds from Judah in the Persian period has prevented scholars from discussing various archaeological details, such as town-planning (Stern 1997a: 25; 2001: 461-62). The dearth of finds has also given rise to various explanations, such as that the houses in this period were built outside existing settlements, that the Persian period strata were destroyed by later activities and that the *tells* housed only palaces (Stern 1983; 2001: 461-62; Lipschits 2001). These suggestions, however, even if they can account for part of the problem, are clearly insufficient to explain the phenomenon (see already Stern 1983: 120). The fact is that the dramatic decrease in remains is much more significant in the highlands (Lipschits 2001: 46-47; Stern 2001: 461, 466), while the finds from the very same period in the coastal plain are numerous. This seems to disprove the above-mentioned suggestions, since they should have accounted for both highland and lowland sites to the same degree. Clearly, the finds attest to a much higher degree of human activity in the coastal plain. In addition, much of our

2. Most studies do not report finds from the Neo-Babylonian period; the few that do, identify very little activity at the time (see more below).

3. For some variation within Judea, see Faust 2004; in press a.

knowledge today is based on data from the many salvage excavations, and those were conducted mostly outside the main *tells* (Faust and Safrai 2005, and more below). Lipschits (2001) has recently suggested that the dearth of architectural finds should be attributed to Persian imperial policy which, in the highlands, allowed only settlement in villages. Such policy, however, is not attested anywhere, and only the scant remains in the highlands lead Lipschits to suggest it. Furthermore, even if the Persian Empire did have a policy that prevented the establishment of cities in Judah, there would have been remains of houses in rural settlements. The relative lack of building remains (even in villages, as discovered in salvage excavations, see below) cannot, therefore, be fully attributed to any of the above.

The simplest explanation for the phenomenon is that there was relatively little settlement in Judah, and the remains that we find attest to the reality of the time. It seems, therefore, that the dearth of finds simply reflects the dearth of settlements, and while some of the above explanations might 'increase' the 'statistical' significance of the Persian period settlements that have been found, what we see is still a phenomenon that resulted from the fact that settlements (and especially large settlements which are best reflected in planned excavations) were sparse during the period under discussion. Clearly, despite the lack of statistical data, the decline in the Persian period is well attested in the planned excavations.

Interestingly, if one wishes to attempt to quantify the data, we can use the *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Stern 1993) as a general index for trends in this settlement sector (see extensive discussion in Faust and Safrai forthcoming). In this database, some 30-35 sites yielded 'architectural remains' from late Iron II Judah, while only some 13 sites yielded such remains from the Persian period (Faust and Safrai 2005). There is not only a decrease in the number of sites, but most of the sites in which Persian period remains were revealed were much smaller in scale than their predecessors. The figure climbs again to about 25 when examining Hellenistic sites. The 'quantified' data, therefore, exhibit the decline observed above in the Persian period.

Salvage Excavations. Salvage excavations are usually carried out before construction, mainly in small sites. As of the present, well over 3000 such excavations have been carried out in Israel, but until recently no systematic attempt at using this large set of data has been conducted. Recently, Zeev Safrai and myself have been carrying out a systematic study of all *published* data from these excavations (Faust and Safrai 2005; forthcoming). The data from salvage excavations is detailed enough to enable us to learn of settlement patterns and dynamics. When examining the number of salvage excavations from greater Judea, with the exception of the Modiin-Shoham region, we find 30 excavations which reported finds from Iron Age II (including what was

defined as both architectural remains and pottery finds).[4] Only 17 excavations reported such finds from the Persian period and 36 had relevant finds from the Hellenistic period.[5] The data from the salvage excavations, like that of the surveys and planned excavations, shows a significant decline after the Iron Age and recovery in the Hellenistic period.[6]

Furthermore, when examining the relative importance of the region during the various periods (including all types of finds, from the whole of Judea), the following picture emerges: during the Iron Age the relative importance of the region of Judea was almost 27% (i.e., almost 27% of all the excavations in which finds from this period were uncovered were conducted in the area that was defined as greater Judea), during the Persian period it was about 16%, and during the Hellenistic period it was about 25%.[7]

The salvage excavations data clearly shows a decline in the Persian period and recovery in the Hellenistic period, both in the number of sites and of relative importance of the region.

In summary, the late Iron Age was a period of relative prosperity as far as settlement is concerned. Some 586 sites from this period were reported in the surveys. During the Persian period, the number of sites decreased dramatically. At the peak of the Persian period the number of sites was 216, i.e., about 35% of that of the late Iron Age. Furthermore, the settlements of the Persian period were relatively small and rural in nature. Large and dense settlements are hardly in existence in Persian period Judea—Jerusalem being the only 'real' center, and even it was quite small (see more below).[8] Later, settlement intensity rose once again, reaching 510 sites during the height of the Hellenistic period, and it appear as if the number of settlements then was close to that of the Iron Age. As far as settlement dynamics are concerned, the Persian period was in the shadow of the Iron Age and the Hellenistic period. Notably, the figures regarding the Persian period represents the peak

4. Note that in reality there were probably more Iron Age II sites excavated; several sites were reported as IAIIc, and others were reported as Iron Age with no subdivision. We did not count these because we preferred to err on the side of caution.

5. Note that this has nothing to do with the question of settlement continuity, which should be examined on a site by site basis (see Faust 2003a; 2003b; Faust and Safrai 2005; see also below).

6. Interestingly, the data from the Modiin-Shoahm region is completely different. Here, the number of settled sites increases from the Iron Age (8), through the Persian period (14) to the Hellenistic period (29), showing a completely different pattern.

7. One should note that since all of Judea is included in these statistics, there is a certain bias toward the Persian period, as the statistics include the region of Modiin-Shoham (which was overrepresented at this era, Faust 2003b; in press a). This even strengthened the importance of the statistics and the decline in the Persian period in comparison to both periods is highlighted.

8. In addition, it is doubtful that all of the Persian period sites coexisted even at the height of this period.

of settlement, and during most of the period the number of settlements was significantly lower (see more below).

Demographic Trends

Many studies have attempted to determine the population of ancient Israel in various periods (Broshi 1979; Broshi and Finkelstein 1992; Broshi and Gophna 1984; 1986). Counting ancient populations, however, is a dangerous endeavor. Even calculating the number of inhabitants of a single site is a tricky business, which may give results with a margin of some 400% (e.g., Postgate 1994; Faust 2005b), so to study an entire region, where the unknown variables are numerous, is almost impossible. What can be learnt, and even this very carefully, is demographic trends—the actual figures are quite meaningless. In this light, while the following discussion will quote the figures given by the various scholars, we should concentrate on the general trends (notably, even the trends are not accurate, but this is the best tool we have).

There have been several demographic studies that have dealt with Judea in the Persian period. Carter (1999: 201-202), in his detailed study of Persian Yehud, concluded that its population in the Persian I period was 13,350 persons, and it grew to some 20,650 in the Persian II period. The Meyers (Meyers and Meyers 1994: 282) reached similar conclusions (10,850 persons in Persian I), estimating that this was about one third of the population in the late Iron Age (based to a large extent on their interpretation of literary sources; note that their estimation of the Iron Age is also not founded on firm archaeological data). Carter estimated the Iron Age population in the areas that later encompassed Persian Yehud as some 60,000-68,500 people (based on previous studies), concluding that the Persian period II population at its peak was about one third of these figures (settlement in the Persian I period was, accordingly, about one fifth of that of the Iron Age; Carter 1999: 246-47). Notably, Carter examined only those areas that were part of the Persian province of Yehud, therefore excluding the Shephelah, the desert, etc., from his calculations. Clearly, were these regions (devastated in the end of the Iron Age according to all scholars) to be included, the demographic decrease would be much larger! While comparing only the limited area of Yehud is of course legitimate (after all, Carter's study focused on Persian period Yehud), anyone who is interested in the demographic processes that occurred in Judea from the Late Iron Age to the Hellenistic period should examine the processes in the entire territory. In the end, when examining demographic changes from the Iron Age onward, the fate of the entire population of Judah is of importance, and all of the territories that had been part of late Iron Age Judah should be investigated. As such, Carter's figures underestimate the Persian period decline.

The most detailed attempt to calculate the population Iron Age and Persian period Judah was undertaken by Lipschits. His conclusion (2003b:

364) was that the population of Judah in the 7th century was 108,000, and that in the Persian period was 30,125 (i.e., about 28% of that of Iron Age Judah) (Lipschits 2003b: 364; 2005; see also 2003a). Before proceeding, it should be noted that Lipschits's demographic study is fraught with problems that necessitate various corrections, and the actual demographic decrease in the Persian period in comparison with the Iron Age was much larger then that shown by Lipschits's figures (Faust 2007; in press a). In order to err on the side of caution, we will not correct his Iron Age figures. We must note, however, that he compared the small Persian Yehud to the larger Iron Age Judah. Clearly, the relative importance of the Persian period should be enlarged, and on the basis of Lipschits's own figures (Lipschits 2003a: 356-64, tables 1-3) we should add 8375 people. Viewed in this light, the relative importance of the Persian period should be about 35% of that of the Iron Age, very similar to Carter's estimation (of the Persian II). While both estimations err toward the Persian period, we would still use these figures, in order to err on the side of caution.

Clearly, when some two-thirds of the population simply 'disappears', one must realize that this represents not only a major and almost unparalleled demographic collapse, but also a social and cultural one (see above).

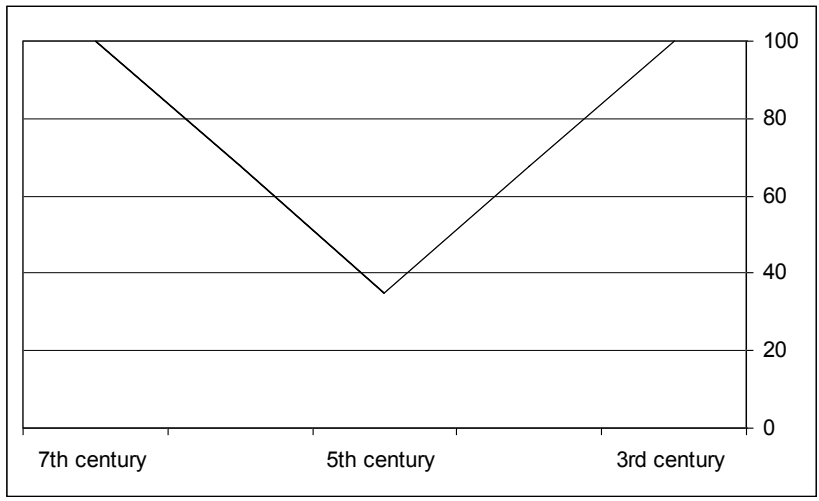
Furthermore, viewing these figures as comprising a simple decrease to a third of the population is simply wrong! The decline was much more significant than can be seen at first glance.

The observation that the population of the Persian period was about one third of that of the late Iron Age is somewhat misleading, with important implications for the study of the Persian period.[9] Our aim is to show that this 'simple' analysis of the data is wrong, and the decrease from the Iron Age to the Persian period was much larger than 66%. In the following we will use the 'one-third estimation' of Judah's Persian period population in relation to the Iron Age as our point of departure, despite the reservations raised.

We have seen that according to Lipschits and Carter the Persian Period had a population of about 33-35% of that of the Iron Age. Assuming that the demography of the Hellenistic period was somewhat similar to that of the later Iron Age, then their demographic trends are apparently represented in the following graph: [10]

9. The dates in the following discussion are also basically taken from Lipschits who referred to the 7th century as representing the late Iron Age—this will our point of departure. Lipschits also claimed that the peak of the Persian period was during the 5th century (Lipschits 2003b: 194, 292; 2005: 166, 259). The date for the Hellenistic period was arbitrarily chosen, as it was not discussed by Lipschits. Notably, the dates are not necessarily accurate (as we will see below, they are not), and are given as a general guide only. More detailed chronology will be discussed later. Since the purpose of the present section is methodological, the exact dates are of no importance.

10. That this line of thinking governed some past reconstructions is apparent in



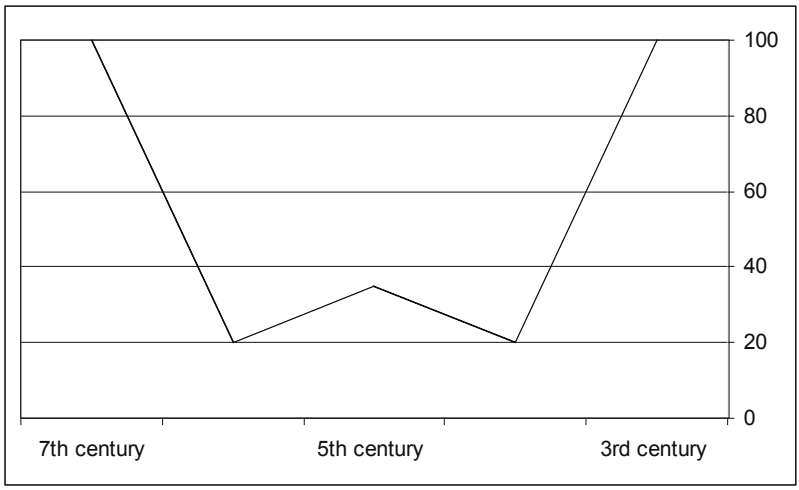
The graph represents a population decrease to 35% in the Persian period—a major decline by any standards.

This graph, however, is false. We should be aware of the fact that each of the 3 'dots' on the graph represents the *peak* of the relevant periods. While important for all three periods, this has grave consequences especially for our understanding of the demography of the Persian period. In the above graph, the 35% represents the nadir of the Persian period while, in reality, it should represent the peak of that period. The vast majority of the Persian period should actually be *below* this point (the degree the figures go below this point is a mere estimation, and the figures used in the graphs might be far from accurate. See more below).

Should the peak of the Persian period fall during the 5th century, the following graph (see overleaf) would more accurately represent the settlement trends of the periods discussed here:

The exact nadir is of course, a mere guess, but the trends are clear. If the peak of the Persian period was during the 5th century, then the decrease after the Iron Age was much more significant than to 35% (of the Iron Age settlement) as this figure refers to the peak of the Persian period. This peak came only after a nadir, and it was followed by another nadir. Only then did the demographic growth toward the Hellenistic period begin.

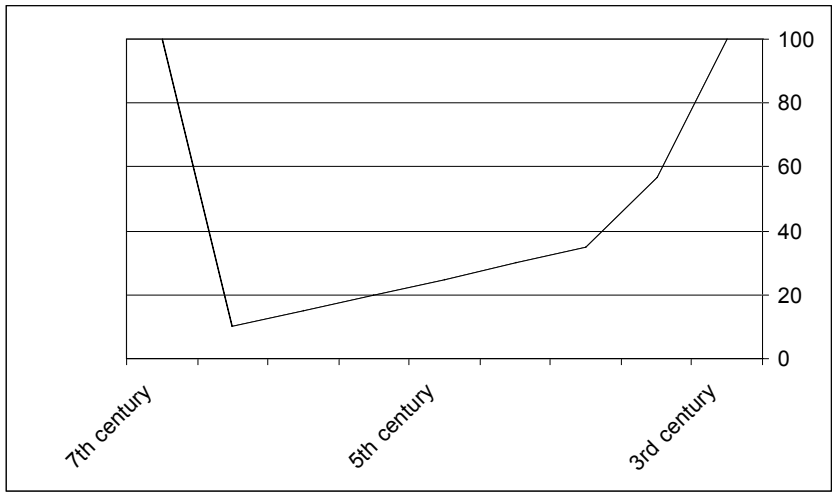
Lipschits's work. He explicitly claimed that the finds from the Persian period in Benjamin represent the nadir of settlement in the period, rather than its peak! In his own words: '…the finds of the Persian period discovered in the survey reflect this low point, rather than a peak in settlement activity or a stage of rebuilding' (Lipschits 2003a: 349; 2003b: 280). This is of course impossible. The Persian period finds represent the period's settlement peak, whenever one proposes to date that peak (in fact, if not all of the sites were contemporaneous, then the peak was even lower than that).



There are, however, several problems with this suggestion. We usually assume that demographic trends are relatively long-term processes, unless we have evidence and for the contrary, we generally tend not to 'invent' such episodes.

Theoretically, therefore, we are faced with two possibilities. The settlement peak could have been either at the beginning of the Persian period, or toward its end. It is quite clear that the second option is correct, for we do not know of any reason for a huge demographic decline throughout the Persian period, let alone toward the Hellenistic period. On the contrary: we do know of a crisis at the beginning of the period, in the 6th century BCE. The Babylonian conquests of the region brought about settlement instability and demographic decline that is acknowledged even by scholars like Barstad and Lipschits. We therefore witness a decline in the beginning of the Persian period (or, actually, in the Neo-Babylonian period) and a gradual recovery during this period (and not vice versa). In this light, it is clear that it is the following graph that best represents the trends. Indeed, this was the view of scholars like Carter (1999), Stern (2001: 581), Kloner (2003: 25-26), Berlin (1997), Meyers and Meyers (1994) and others who addressed the demographic proceses in the Persian period.[11]

11. All these in contrast to Lipschits. The latter, moreover, presented contrasting estimations regarding the trends during the Persian period, in some places suggesting that the 5th century was the peak of the Persian period, but in others writing that the decrease from the Iron Age to the Persian period was gradual and hence (though he did not realize it) placing the peak at the period's first day. Clearly, both his (contrasting) estimations are wrong. See also Oded and Faust 2006.



Clearly, in light of the fact that previous studies have underestimated Iron Age settlement and overestimated that of the Persian period, it is possible that the decline was even more severe, but since any reference to real figures is a mere estimation, we believe that the above graph is useful as it is. We should just bear in mind that it is possible that the decline toward the beginning of the Persian period (i.e., in the 6th century BCE) was even stronger.

In summary, the demographic studies by Carter and Lipschits err in favor of the Persian period. Still, even they indicate that during the peak of this period, probably toward its end, the population was only about one-third of that of the Iron Age. Regarding the earlier phases of the period it appears that one has to accept Carter's estimation that the population was only about 20% of what it had been during the previous period. These estimations allow us to appreciate the crisis that occurred at the end of the Iron Age—after all, after a few generations of recovery the population reached some 20%, and after 250 years it reached only some 33-35%.[12]

Yehud in the Persian Period as a 'Post-Collapse Society'

What is the significance of the above for the study of the society of the Persian period? The demographic trends observed in Judea indicate that the prosperity of the late Iron Age was accompanied by a sudden and severe crisis. Then, during the Persian and Hellenistic periods, came a slow and gradual recovery, which reached a peak only at some point in the Hellenistic

12. Notably, the discussion focused on demography, but the same observations are relevant also for the interpretation of settlement data, mentioned above.

period (probably only late within that period). It is clear that the entire Persian period lay in the shadow of the Iron Age collapse. A similar picture of rapid collapse was observed in socio-cultural traits.

Many studies conducted over the past couple of decades have been devoted to processes of collapse (Yoffee and Cowgill 1991; Tainter 1988). Less research has been invested in the periods and processes that follow such a collapse. In a seminal, cross-cultural study, Joseph Tainter (1999) has summarized various features that are common to many societies after their collapse—what he termed 'post-collapse societies' (see also Faust 2004; 2007; in press a).

According to Tainter (1999: 989) 'collapse is a rapid, significant, loss of an established level of socio-political complexity'. A society can collapse as a result of internal processes, as emphasized in many recent studies, or as a result of external forces, or a combination of them (e.g., Tainter 1999; Fagan 1999: 193-95, 288-89, 210; Liverani 2001). Frequently, collapse has consequences in diverse areas such as art, architecture and literature. Tainter's study bears much relevance for our discussion, and almost all his characteristics of post-collapse societies can be seen in 6th century BCE Judah:

The first feature in Tainter's synthesis is population, on which he writes (1999: 1021): '[W]hether as cause, consequence, or both, depopulation frequently accompanies collapse. Not only do urban populations decline, so also do the support populations of the countryside. Many settlements are concurrently abandoned. The levels of population and settlement may revert to those of centuries or even millennia before'. This is an amazing description of the way most scholars view Judah after the Babylonian conquest. Moreover, Tainter showed that, at times, the depopulation could have reached 75-90% (Tainter 1999: 1010) and even 94%! (1999: 1016). The data provided by Tainter do not prove that this is what happened in Judah, of course, but it clearly shows that it is *possible*.

Not surprisingly, this grave situation is reflected in the period's sources (Tainter 1999: 1022, 1028-29). This can be seen, for example, in Ezra 7.4: 'The city was wide and large, but the people within were few and no houses had been built'. The exact dating or historical reality behind the verse is not the important issue—what is important is the impression conveyed by the words; one of low density, especially when compared with the ruins which dominated the City of David as well as the Western Hill (Eshel 2000: 341). Moreover, various prophecies in Zechariah 9–14 (Second Zechariah) give the very same impression. It appears that the lower demographic density of Judah had a strong impact on Zechariah, as noted by Meyers and Meyers: '…the eschatological setting of a divinely effected in-gathering in chapter 10 emerges from the sense that the population of Yehud is extraordinarily limited in size… The sense that the prophet is speaking from the context of a weak and much reduced population is highlighted by the eschatological emphasis

on population growth and of expansion…' (1994: 271). They summarize: 'The eschaton, in military-political matters and also in demography, will be a dramatic reversal of the dismal situation of the first half of the postexilic period' (1994: 273; see also their discussion of Zechariah 13 and 14, 1994: 273-78). From the above it is quite clear that the inhabitants of Judah felt that they were few and weak.

Tainter (1999: 1022) also points out that as societies become vulnerable to collapse there are great differences in opinions as to what is wrong, if anything. He presents various literary evidence which seems to have been common to many such societies, from cases as diverse as China at the end of the Western Chou, Rome in the third century and the Old Kingdom of Egypt. Cleary, the literary evidence from late 7th and 6th century Judah fits well.

From an architectural perspective, 'there is an end to monumental construction' (1999: 1024). In many cases, people reuse older structures (e.g., for our discussion, the finds at Kh. Abu et-Twein; Mazar 1982: 105; see extensive discussion in Faust in press a). Collapse is also accompanied by territorial and political fragmentation (Tainter 1999: 1026), as is evident with the later emergence of Yehud Pahwe, which covered only a limited part of area of the former kingdom of Judah.

Tainter also notes (1999: 1025) that in many cases the term 'dark age' is applied to post-collapse societies. While he suggests that the term should be used with care, suffice it to show that situations similar to these of Judah are frequent.

Tainter also notes (1999: 1028) that a feature of many post-collapse societies is that they treat their past as 'a paradise lost, a golden age of good government, wise rule, harmony and peace'. While not surprising, it should be noted that this point, too, is known from Judah (as is evident by the vast literature that is usually dated to the 'exilic period').

An interesting point, which cannot be developed here, is that the recovery takes time—usually a couple of hundreds of years (Tainter 1999: 1026-27). From this perspective it should be noted that while the 6th century BCE reflects the lowest point in the region's social complexity, demography, etc., Judea during the entire Persian period should still be viewed as a post-collapse society. This is in line with our understanding of the demographic reality in Persian period Judea, briefly mentioned above (a more comprehensive treatment of the Persian period society will be published elsewhere).

All the characteristics mentioned above (and others) show that 6th century Judah should be viewed as a post-collapse society.[13]

13. Moreover, according to Tainter (1999: 1023) 'simplification of the political hierarchy is almost by definition an attribute of collapse'. Many ranks simply disappear, and the entire political structure changes its make-up, and becomes much simpler, and so also is the society in general (1999: 1024).

Conclusions

We have seen that both the urban and the rural sector of Iron Age Judah had collapsed during the 6th century BCE, and the demographic and settlement evidence indicates sharp decline at the time followed by a gradual recovery. This collapse was accompanied by sharp social and cultural changes, which included, for example, the disappearance of the four-room house and the cessation of use of the Judahite tomb. Recovery from this collapse took hundreds of years, and the result was the emergence of a new society.

In light of the above, it is clear that the society of the Persian period should be labeled a post-collapse society. This understanding should serve as a starting point for any assessment of Persian period society.

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Judah and Its Neighbors in the Fourth Century bce: A Time of Major Transformations

Alexander Fantalkin and Oren Tal

Abstract

The current article deals with Achaemenid imperial policy in fourth century bce southern Levant, as is evident by the historical sources and the archaeological data. It is suggested that following the Egyptian rebellion of 404–400 bce, southern Palestine underwent major transformation as a result of becoming the southwestern frontier of the Persian Empire. An attempt to reconstruct the political history and its social and economical manifestation is been offered, while focusing on the inland regions of Judah and Edom. One of the major consequences of this new geo-political reality has resulted in the canonization of the Torah. Thus, its inception should no longer be viewed as an outcome of inner-societal compromises between different Judahite groups, but rather as a conscious response of Jerusalem's priestly circles to early fourth century bce *Zeitgeist* of the southern Levant, when Egypt was no longer a part of the Persian Empire.

Keywords: Southern Levant, Judah, Edom, Achaemenid, Egypt, Fifth Satrapy, Southern Frontier, Imperial Policy, Archaeology, History, Lachish, Architectural Landscape, Moneyed Economy, *yhd/yh* Stamped Seal Impressions, Administration, Pentateuch, Canonization.

This paper aims at summarizing and updating in a coherent manner a number of previously published ideas regarding the Achaemenid imperial policy in fourth-century bce southern Levant, accompanied by new research findings and yet unpublished insights.[1] Using the results of archaeological excavations and surveys, and the available historical sources, we will try to

1. The framework of the International Symposium on Socio-economic Structures of Judah and its Neighbors in the Persian Period, which took place at International Christian University in Tokyo (February 17–19, 2011), provided a great opportunity for such an endeavor, undertaken at the request of the symposium's organizer. In this respect, we are grateful to Johannes Unsok Ro for his kind invitation and warm hospitality. The text of the paper follows in the main a number of studies previously published (Fantalkin and Tal 2004; 2006; 2012), with additional yet unpublished observations.

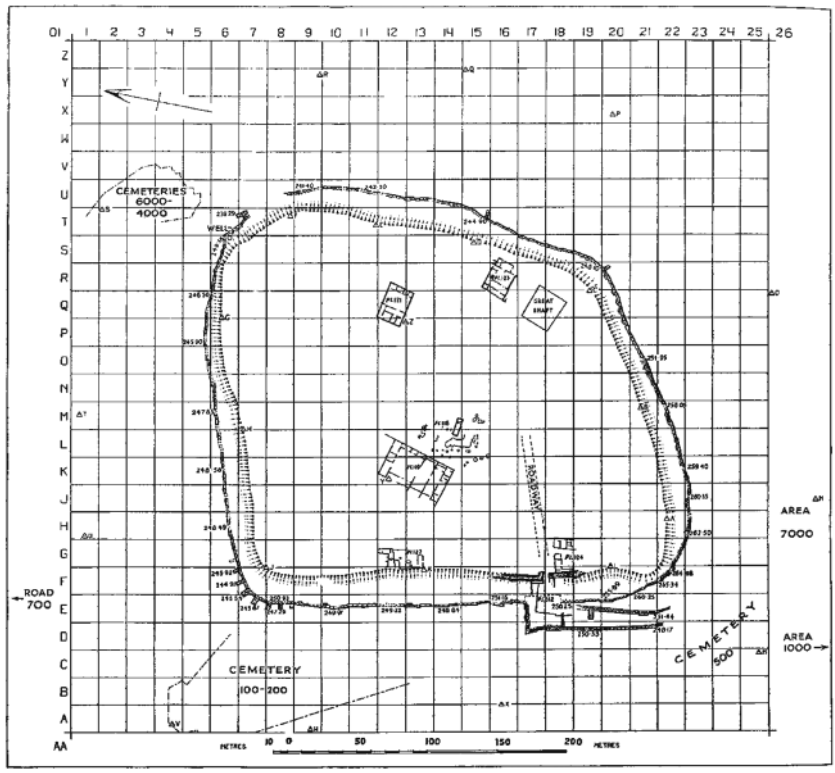
reconstruct the political history and its social and economical manifestation, focusing on the inland regions of Judah and Edom. Judah and especially Jerusalem, owing to their role in biblical literature and their religious impact on western civilizations, have long been archaeologically researched. However, the research directed at the region's first millennium BCE history has been mostly focused on the periods that preceded and succeeded the fourth century BCE, that is, the First Temple period and the latter part of the Second Temple period, when the country was a small but independent political entity. In the last few years there has been a growing interest in the settlement archaeology of the Neo-Babylonian, Persian (Achaemenid) and early Hellenistic (Ptolemaic-Seleucid) periods. The available data-base on Judah seems at first glance to be sufficient to tackle the problem at hand. Yet, this data-base is actually quite problematic. In many of the large-scale excavations carried out in archaeological sites in Judah, the strata pertaining to the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods were meager; some revealed few architectural remains with unclear building plans or pits (silos, refuse, etc.), while others yielded pottery that at best was in some cases unearthed and unstratified and did not represent proper occupational layers. Suffice it here to mention sites, such as Bethel, Tell en-Naṣbeh (biblical Mizpah), Gibeon, Tell el Ful (biblical Gibeah of Saul), Nabi Samwil, Anathoth, Bethany, Ramat Raḥel, and Jericho (cf. Stern 2001: 428-43; Lipschits 2005: 154-81; Tal 2006: 15-163 [and index], and Betlyon 2005: 20-26 [for a recent survey]). In the case of Jerusalem, the Persian period city shrunk back to its pre-eighth century BCE size and the western hill was empty until the second century BCE (Geva 2003: 521-24; Finkelstein 2008; Lipschits 2009). Even this small area of the city was apparently sparsely settled and mostly confined to the southern part of the City of David near the Pool of Siloam. The most impressive building plan of the period under discussion in Judah was discovered at 'En Gedi (Building 234) and dated to the Persian period (and below). The stratigraphic relation of the first fortress at Beth-Zur with occupational layers of Persian date is questionable and there we cannot assign its building plan to the Persian period with certainty (and below). Other late Persian and early Hellenistic buildings were documented in non-urban sites. Worthy of mention are the fortress and agricultural estate of Har Adar (Dadon 1997) and the agricultural estates of Qalandya (Magen 2004) and Aderet (Yogev 1982) (for a list of sites of early Hellenistic date, see Tal 2006: 125-29, 145-54). On the other hand the so-called satrapy of Late Persian- and Early Hellenistic-period Edom (Idumea) differs geographically from the territory of Edom of the Late Iron Age. Although the name Edom is normally reserved for the older, trans-Jordanian, abode of the Edomites, distinction was made in the scientific literature, and the Greek place-name Idoumaía—or more frequently the Roman Idum(a)ea—became the preferred toponym of the region that is generally located in the inland of southern

Palestine. The region, according to the consensual view, is bordered by the Negebite desert on the south, Philistia on the west, Judah on the north, and the Dead Sea and the trans-Jordanian mountain ridge on the east. In terms of settlement archaeology, the region's major border sites are Beth-Zur on the north, Beersheba, Tel 'Ira, Aroer, and Arad on the south, Tell Jemmeh and Tell el Far'ah (south) on the west, and the hamlets of the southern Dead Sea on the east. The archaeological evidence from these sites on the fourth century southern Levant is far more extensive and will be shown below.

Our first focus of interest is the site of Lachish which is located on the northwestern 'buffer zone' between Judah and Edom. Extensive archaeological excavations carried out at Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir) had uncovered substantial architectural remains and pottery finds attributed to Level I. Both the British excavations on behalf of the Wellcome-Marston Archaeological Research Expedition to the Near East, under the direction of J.L. Starkey (Tufnell 1953), and the renewed excavations on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, under the direction of D. Ussishkin (2004), have produced remarkable archaeological data. These data together with the results of surveys in the areas surrounding Lachish (Dagan 1992; 2000) enable us to revise previous interpretations of the finds from Level I (fig. 1). Following our revision, we shall argue that the construction of the Residency of Lachish Level I, and a number of other structures, should be dated to c. 400 BCE, or shortly thereafter, in sharp contrast to the previously suggested date of c. 450 BCE. Our revised chronology for Level I, combined with a reassessment of other sites in southern Palestine, demands a fresh look at a wide range of issues related to the Achaemenid imperial policy in the region. It seems that the establishment of the fortified administrative center at Lachish around 400 BCE and of other Persian centers in southern Palestine at that time or shortly thereafter, became necessary when Persian domination over Egypt came to an end in 404–400/398. Consequently, southern Palestine became an extremely sensitive frontier of the Persian Empire, all of which paved the way to a higher level of direct imperial involvement in the local administration.

Archaeological Synopsis of Lachish Level I and its Dating

Lachish is located on a major road leading from the Coastal Plain to the Hebron hills, bordering the Judean foothills (the Shephelah in the local idiom), some 30 km southeast of Ashkelon. According to the archaeological evidence, both the Residency and fortifications (the city wall and the gate) were constructed according to a preconceived plan. These architectural components suggest a Persian governmental center. The Residency was erected on the highest point of the mound upon the podium of the destroyed Judean palace-fort of the Late Iron Age. It was thus located close to the



TELL ED-DUWEIR: REFERENCE GRID, TRIANGULATION POINTS, FORTIFICATIONS, BUILDINGS AND CEMETERIES

Figure 1. Lachish, Site plan (after Tufnell 1953: pl. 108).

center of the mound, with its back wall facing the city gate. The ground plan of the Residency reflects the combination of an Assyrian building with central courtyard, evident by the open court in its northern part, and a Syrian *bit-ḫilani*, evident by the portico in the west part of the courtyard (fig. 2).[2] Columns of the porticoes were made of well-cut drums standing on round column bases above a square, stepped plinth. The presence of characteristic dressed stones indicates that some of the rooms were roofed by barrel vaulting.[3]

2. On the Assyrian open courtyard, see in general Amiran and Dunayevsky 1958; Aharoni 1975: 33-40; Reich 1992a. On the Syrian *bit-ḫilani*, see in general Frankfort 1952; Reich 1992a; Arav and Bernett 2000.

3. The well-cut drums found in the Residency at Lachish are the earliest stone-made examples documented in Palestine (see Fischer and Tal 2003: 21, 29). In earlier periods, they were most likely preceded by wooden columns, such as those reconstructed in the megara-styled Late Bronze Age buildings of cultic nature. A similar process is evident in the dressed-stone barrel vaulting, which likely replaced a similar technique in mud

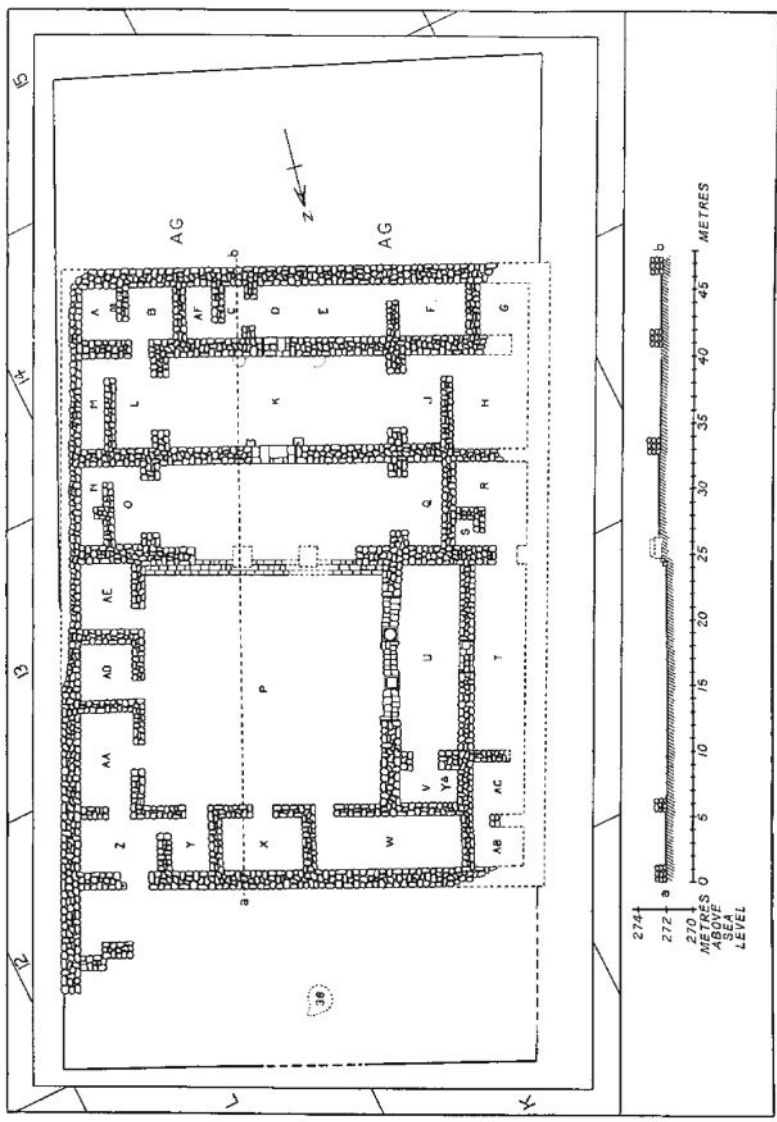


Figure 2. Lachish, Residency (after Tufnell 1953: pl. 119).

The city wall and the city gate reused the ruined fortifications of the Late Iron Age Level II, while preserving their contour and method of construction (fig. 3). By contrast, the Residency was built on pits and debris layers, which contained Persian-period pottery predating its construction, as shown in the renewed excavations (Ussishkin 2004: 96, 842). There is also evidence for its reuse during a subsequent Late Persian or Early Hellenistic stage: the drums of dismantled columns were found in a secondary context (Tufnell 1953: 133 and pl. 22.7).

Based on renewed stratigraphic analysis (Ussishkin 2004: 95-97, 840-46), we may conclude that Level I consisted of three phases:

- The first phase is designated by us Level IA, which is characterized by Early Persian pits.
- The second phase is designated Level IB, which is characterized by massive Late Persian construction. This included the Residency, fortifications, and a number of other structures and it corresponds to Lachish's role as a regional administrative center.
- The third phase is designated Level IC, which is characterized by a Late Persian and/or Early Hellenistic occupation, corresponding to the reuse of both the Residency and the building next to the Great Shaft, and the erecting of the Solar Shrine.

In the process of studying local and imported pottery from the renewed excavations of Level I, we were able to establish a more accurate dating for each of these phases (Fantalkin and Tal 2004). The assemblage of Level I consists of common, semifine and imported fine wares. The vast majority of common and semifine ware is definitely local, though there is a single example of an Egyptian ware bowl and few examples of East Greek amphoras from Chios. The common ware includes bowls and heavy bowls, as well as kraters, cooking pots, jugs, juglets, flasks, storage jars, amphoras, and lamps. The semifine ware includes bowls, juglets, and amphoras. The fine ware, for which we have a considerable number of fragments, is restricted to Attic imports. The pottery finds are mostly of Persian date and came from pits and fills that represent occupation layers. The difficulty in distinguishing typological developments in common and semifine ware pottery types of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, forced us to regard the Attic imports as the best anchor in establishing a chronological frame for the occupational periods of Level I.

brick, for which we have examples in the monumental architecture of Palestine from the Middle Bronze Age, such as the mud-brick city gates at Tel Dan (*NEAEHL* 1.324-26) and Ashkelon (*NEAEHL* 1.106-107); and from the Late Iron Age, such as the Assyrian vaulted mud-brick building at Tell Jemmeh (*NEAEHL* 2.670-72).

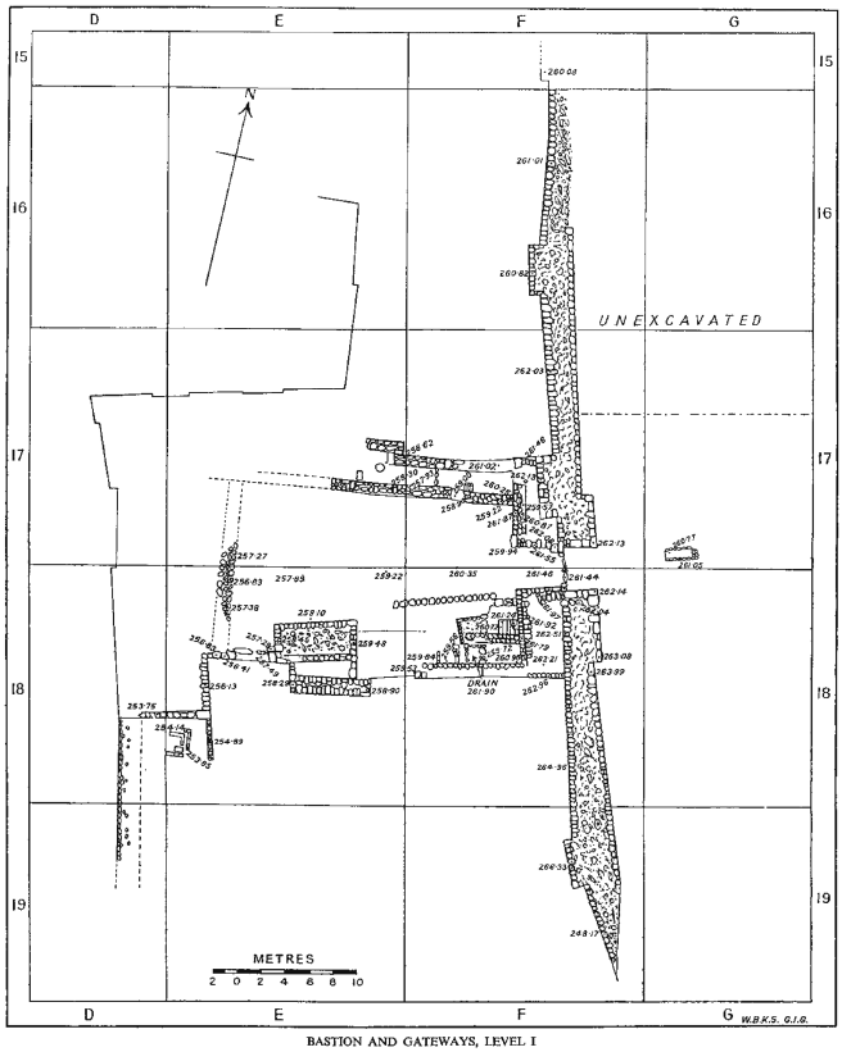


Figure 3. Lachish, city-gate of Level I (after Tufnell 1953: pl. 112).

The bulk of Attic imports retrieved in the renewed excavations must be placed in the first half of the fourth century BCE, with several transitional late-fifth/early-fourth-century BCE types (Fantalkin and Tal 2004: 2187-88). The same holds true for the vast majority of Attic imports retrieved during earlier British excavations at the site. This pottery is cursorily described in *Lachish III* but has never been fully published.[4] Despite the difficulties in

4. The present whereabouts of many of these sherds is unknown. However, we located and inspected more than two dozen fragments in the storerooms of the British

distinguishing between common and semifine ware from the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, the general impression is that a majority of the local pottery is datable to the first half of the fourth century BCE. This impression is based on the appearance of so-called 'coastal' types at the site and the high occurrence of various pottery types of different wares. These characteristics may point to the fourth century BCE, when the regional frontiers of material culture (and especially pottery) were blurred. Unlike the frequency of imports on the Coastal Plain, the diffusion of Attic imports in inland regions such as the Judean foothills and the central mountain ridge is low. Therefore, when encountered in assemblages, Attic imports are typically connected to major administrative centers (as in the case of Samaria). It appears most logical to attribute the bulk of Attic ware retrieved from the site to the Residency—in other words, our Level IB.[5]

In 1953, Olga Tufnell, in her *Lachish III*, dated the foundation of the Residency to c. 450 BCE (Tufnell 1953: 58-59). This date was based on the Attic imports and the mention of Lachish in Neh. 11.30.[6] This date has been subsequently accepted in the archaeological literature as an undisputed fact, the most recent studies not excluded (cf., e.g., Hoglund 1992: 140; Carter 1999: 170; Stern 2001: 447-50; Lipschits 2003: 342). However, since the publication of *Lachish III*, significant progress has been achieved in the study of plain Attic ware and painted Black and Red Figure ware.[7] Based on studies

Museum. The vast majority of these newly rediscovered sherds can be dated to the first half of the fourth century BCE, a date consistent with that of the Attic ware retrieved during the more recent excavations.

5. See Tufnell's observation: 'At the time of excavations Starkey was of the opinion that the temporary resettlement of the ruined Residency took place in the middle of the fifth century B.C., on the evidence of the Black Glazed and Black Figured Attic sherds, which J.H. Iliffe dated to 475–425 B.C. Further investigation of the position of sherds in relation to the Residency floor levels, however, does not preclude the possibility that the good quality Attic imports were used by the original inhabitants of the building, for there were Attic sherds lying on or close to the original floor surfaces in several rooms' (1953: 133).

6. 'Taking into consideration Sir J.D. Beazley's remarks on the Red Figured sherds, Miss du Plat Taylor noted an equal proportion of fifth- and fourth-century types, which limits the time range more closely to the last half of the fifth century, continuing into the fourth century B.C.… The contents of the floors and fillings of the Residency rooms were consistent. Characteristic Attic sherds provided the best comparisons to dated pottery from other sites, ranging from the mid-fifth to mid-fourth century B.C.… A date for occupation of the Residency from about 450–350 B.C. is in close agreement with the historical evidence, for Lachish is mentioned as one of the villages in which the children of Judah dwelt after Nehemiah's return about 445 B.C.' (Tufnell 1953: 133, 135).

7. It will suffice to cite the publications of the Athenian Agora (namely, Sparkes and Talcott 1970), as well as the series of articles and monographs of B.B. Shefton (2000, with earlier bibliography), among others. We should add that in many instances the dating of a given assemblage in the Athenian Agora is based (in whole or in part) on the recovery

that have appeared since the publication of *Lachish III*, du Plat Taylor's observation regarding an equal proportion of fifth- and fourth-century types (above n. 6) appears to be inaccurate. Consequently, if the bulk of imported pottery should be placed in the first half of the fourth century BCE, Tufnell's date for the establishment of the Residency, c. 450 BCE, is irreconcilable with ours. Her argument rests on a miniscule proportion of Attic sherds datable to the late fifth century BCE. We believe, however, that these sherds are better explained as heirlooms than as constituting a chronological anchor for the establishment of the Residency.

Most of the pits from Level IA clearly predate the construction of the Residency.[8] Indeed, unlike the Residency, the Attic pottery from these pits includes mostly fifth-century BCE types, such as a few earlier forms of Attic Type A skyphoi.[9] It seems that the 'pit settlement' of Level IA, preceding the

of Athenian tetradrachms currently dated to circa 450s–404 BCE (cf. Kroll 1993: 6-7), and that, more often than not, the higher dating (the 450s) was assumed while establishing a date for any given context. The chronology of the Athenian Agora deposits was criticized by Francis and Vickers (1988) as a part of their approach in lowering the dates of all late Archaic Greek art by roughly 50 years (cf. Francis and Vickers 1985). In this regard, one should mention Bowden's attempt to lower the chronology of Greek painted pottery by roughly 40 years (1991). In both cases, the suggested low chronology for the Greek pottery should be rejected (for a general critique of the low chronology of Francis and Vickers, see Cook 1989; for rejecting their lower date for the Athenian Agora deposits, see Shear 1993; for rejecting their lower date for the Near Eastern sites, such as Meẓad Ḥashavyahu, see Waldbaum and Magness 1997: 39-40; Fantalkin 2001a: 128-29; for the improbability of significant lowering of accepted Aegean Iron Age absolute chronology and related problems, see Fantalkin 2001b; Fantalkin, Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2011). Recently, James has reopened the debate (2003), modifying Bowden's earlier study (1991); see, however, Fantalkin 2011; forthcoming.

8. The renewed excavations demonstrate that the Residency was erected above pits and debris layers containing typical Persian-period pottery (Ussishkin 2004: 96). Moreover, more pits were uncovered in the Iron Age courtyard, and C. H. Inge suggested (in a field report dated February 1938) that they also predate the Residency (cited in Tufnell 1953: 151). The Level I city was fortified by a city wall and a city gate built over the ruined fortifications of Level II (Tufnell 1953: 98-99, pl. 112). In Area S of the renewed excavations, it was observed that a Level I pit (Locus 5508) had been cut in a place where the city wall, not preserved at this point, must have passed. According to the excavator, it indicates that the fortifications were also built in our Level IB (Ussishkin 2004: 97, 463, fig. 9.41).

9. It is worth noting that, according to registration files in the British Museum, a fragment of an early-fourth-century BCE Attic glazed bowl (BM/1980,1214.9758) was found in the burnt brick debris, below the level of one of the Residency's rooms. If this is indeed the case, this sherd may serve as further evidence for placing the Residency within the first half of the fourth century BCE, as suggested by the vast majority of the finds from the Residency's floors and fills.

massive construction activities of Level IB, may be generally dated to the fifth century BCE[10]

Level IC is attributed to the Late Persian and Early Hellenistic occupation of the site. The finds retrieved from the Residency reflect no definite Hellenistic use. It may be assumed, therefore, that the Residency was reused before the end of the Persian period and abandoned during Late Persian times. The ceramic evidence does not clarify the nature of this later phase, and the reasons for the site's abandonment during the Hellenistic period cannot be determined. The Solar Shrine appears to be the only building of a secure Hellenistic date (fig. 4). Following Aharoni's suggestion, it may be reconstructed as a Yahwistic shrine serving nearby rural, and possibly urban, inhabitants of Jewish faith during the Early Hellenistic Period. We have a dedication altar with a possible Yahwistic name incised upon it found in Cave 534 southwest of the city gate (Tufnell 1953: 226, no. 534, pls. 49.3, 68.1; and see also pp. 383-84; for its reading, Dupont-Sommer in Tufnell 1953: 358-59; and Aharoni 1975: 5-7, fig. 1, with discussion).[11]

This altar formed part of an assemblage found in a number of caves southwest of the city gate (506, 515, 522, 534; cf. Tufnell 1953: 220-21, 224-26) and was probably cultic in nature. The recovery of Persian and Hellenistic pottery in Pit 34 below the floor in the center of the temple's courtyard strongly suggests a Hellenistic date for its foundation. According to Ussishkin (2004: 96 n. 9), this datum is not reliable: only a few Hellenistic sherds were uncovered in Pit 34, their stratigraphy is unclear, and a single fragment was uncovered deep beneath the floor of the antechamber. However, if we accept Aharoni's stratigraphic attribution of Building 100 to the Hellenistic period and contemporaneous stratigraphic relation to the Solar Shrine (Aharoni 1975: 5), we see no possibility for an earlier dating. Moreover, none of the finds recovered in the Solar Shrine is of Persian date. The same holds true for the Hellenistic pottery recovered during Aharoni's

10. We tend to consider this phase sporadic, because not all the pits of Level I are necessary connected to Level IA. Moreover, the possibility of the existence of earlier pre-Level I occupations at the site cannot be completely rejected. There are a few vessels of possible late-sixth-century BCE date that were retrieved in the renewed excavations; among them are an Egyptian bowl (cf. Fantalkin and Tal 2004: fig. 30.7: 1) that is dated according to comparative material to the Late Saite and Persian period; and two fragments of Chian amphoras (cf. Fantalkin and Tal 2004: figs. 30.2: 1; 30.3: 16) that can be dated to the late sixth century BCE. In both cases, however, a much later date appears to be possible.

11. Starkey's identification of its cult as an intrusive one, 'introduced during the Persian regime' (Tufnell 1953: 141 [PEQ October (1935) 203]), supported by Ussishkin in light of his reconstruction of the Solar Shrine as a cultic Persian governmental center (2004: 96-97), can be rejected due to the late date of the finds (third and second centuries BCE).

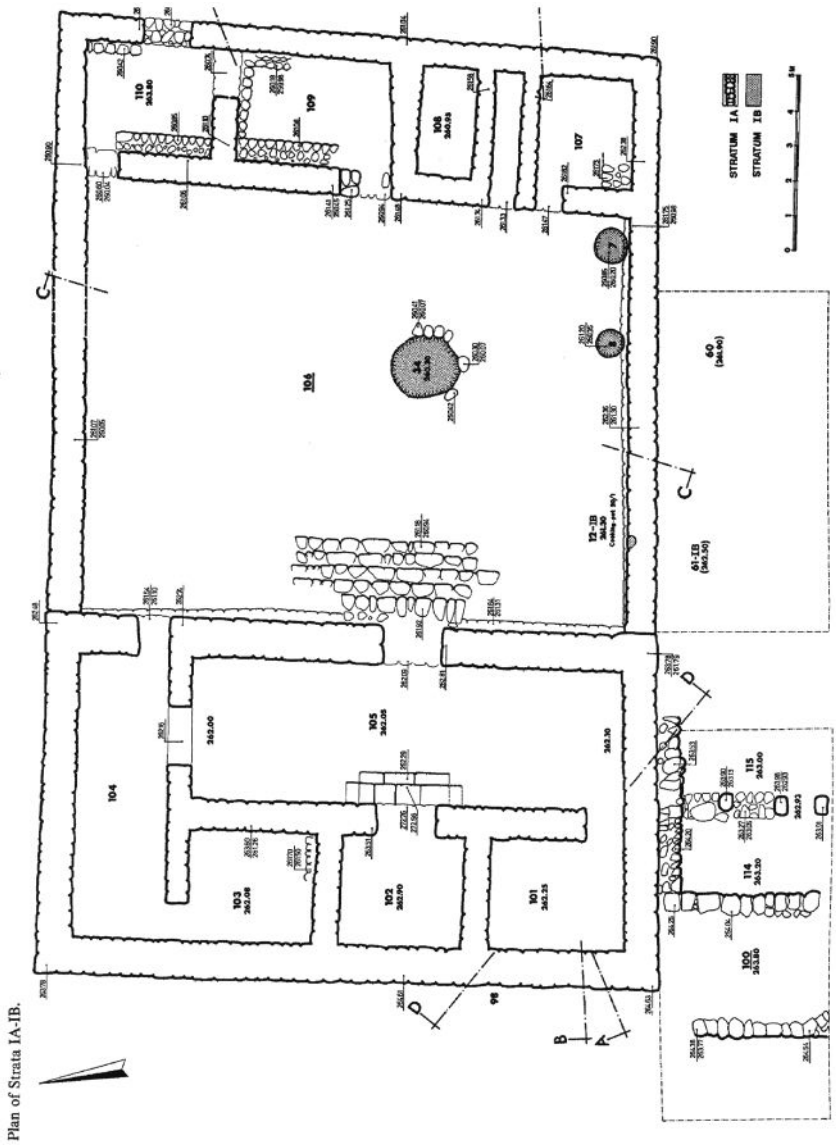


Figure 4. Lachish, Solar Shrine (after Aharoni *et al.* 1975: pl. 56).

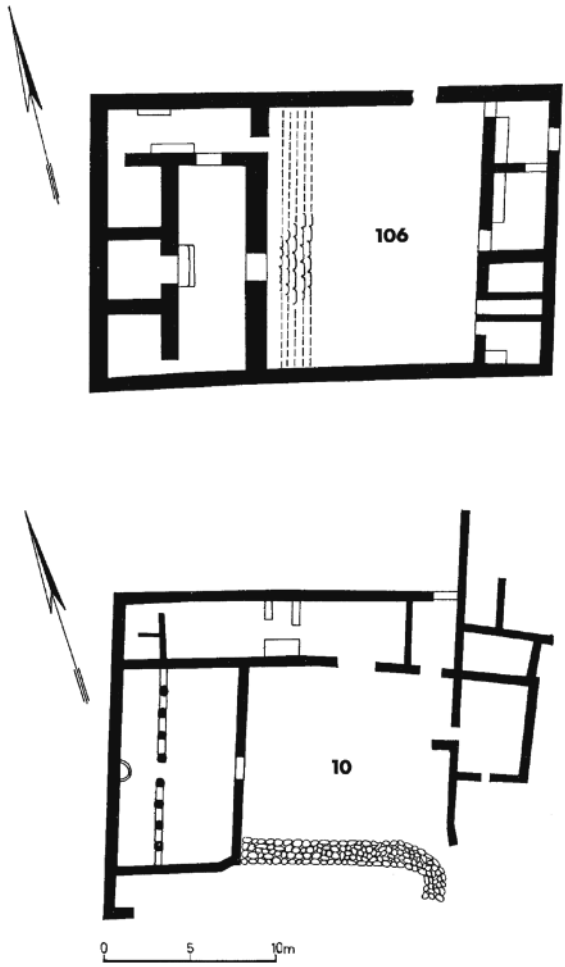


Figure 5. Lachish, Solar Shrine (top) and Building in Grid Squares R/Q/S.15/16: 10–21 (bottom) (after Aharoni 1975: fig. 3).

excavations but never presented in the report. This pottery is at present in the Israel Antiquities Authority storehouses.

Some reference must be given to another building (fig. 5, bottom) still in use during this phase and discovered to the north of the Great Shaft (Grid Squares R/Q/S.15/16: 10-21). According to Tufnell (1953: 147), 'Nearly all the pottery fragments were found on or in the floor levels of the building and can be associated with it'. She adds, '…there are enough fourth- to third-century forms in the rooms to show that the house was in use at that time' (1953: 148).[12] Aharoni's suggestion, based on their similar building

12. Tufnell misread, however, the cooking-pot fragments that are of Early Roman

plan, orientation, and a limestone altar imitating a shrine (1975: 9-11, fig. 3), that this building served as the fourth- to third-century BCE forerunner of the Solar Shrine is reasonable. It seems that both the Solar Shrine and the building in Grid Squares R/Q/S.15/16: 10-21 were abandoned sometime during the second half of the second century BCE.[13]

A Reorganization of the Southern Frontier of the Fifth Satrapy

The Arrangement of Boundaries

Our reevaluation of the archaeological data and the revised chronology for Level I force us to reconsider a range of issues related to Achaemenid imperial policy in southern Palestine.

First, we have to address the question of 'Lachish and its fields' mentioned in Neh. 11.30. One could suggest that our 'pit settlement' (Level IA) is a reflection of the settlement's renewal, which can be connected to Judean settlers returning from the Exile. Likewise, the establishment of the fortified center with the Residency (Level IB) could have been initiated by the Achaemenid government in response to changes occurring in the Judean foothills at the time (cf. Tufnell 1953: 58-59). However, does the present state of research permit us to take literally the passage in Nehemiah 11? Much of the scholarship regarding this particular chapter has recently been summarized and reevaluated by O. Lipschits (2002). According to Lipschits, although a few scholars accept the list's historicity despite historical and textual problems, the vast majority suggest different interpretations. According to some, this list represents settlements where Judeans resided before the Exile, although certain parts of the region were no longer within the boundaries of the province of Yehud. Others suggest that these are the settlements that were not destroyed by the Babylonians and, as such, continued to be settled by Judeans, even though they were subjected to Edomite/Arab influence. It has even been proposed that the list reflects the reality of the end of the First Temple Period or even the Hasmonean Period (see Lipschits 2002, with earlier references). The majority of scholars, however, follow the view of Gerhard von Rad (1930: 21-25), who saw the list in Nehemiah as an ideal vision and not an actual reflection of the borders of Yehud. According to this

date (cf. 1953: pls. 104, 692) and may well correspond to the two Roman coins found minted at Ashkelon (cf. 1953: 413, nos. 56a and 56b).

13. According to Finkielsztejn (1999: 48 n. 6), Hellenistic Lachish was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in the course of his campaign in Edom. We cannot support such a claim, however. No Hellenistic destruction is documented at the site, and none of the Hellenistic finds attests to an exclusive Edomite presence.

view, it is a utopian outlook, based on perceptions of the remote past and on hopes for the future, after the building of the walls of Jerusalem.[14]

What can be said from an archaeological perspective? The establishment of the Persian fortified administrative center around 400 BCE is definitely preceded by the 'pit settlement'. A special term appears in Neh. 11.30 for the hinterland of Lachish—שדתיה, that is, its fields. It seems that the author had an intimate knowledge of Lachish's area and thus deliberately labeled it in a different manner as an agricultural hinterland. In the survey map of Lachish, eleven settlements from the Persian period were documented (Dagan 1992: 17*). Given the nature of material collected in the surveys, it is virtually impossible to establish their precise chronological setting within the Persian period. Generally, they could be attributed to a fifth and fourth centuries BCE chronological horizon. It seems to us, however, that given the existence of the 'pit settlement' at Lachish already in the fifth century BCE (Level IA), it is more than probable that some of the sites discovered in the survey are of the same date. The establishment of the Persian fortified administrative center around 400 BCE (Level IB) can be seen as a response to the changes occurring in the area. Who were these new settlers? Were they Judeans, Edomites/Arabs, or both? Based on the archaeological data, we find it virtually impossible to answer this question in a satisfactory manner. It should be noted, however, that even many of those who follow von Rad's view admit that, although Nehemiah 11 is an ideal vision, there is no dismissing the possibility that Judeans continued to live in the towns of the Negev and the Judean foothills during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, after the Babylonian destruction (Lipschits 2002). It seems that, even if some Judeans did indeed remain in this region, a larger number of Edomites/Arabs expanded toward the north, gaining control over lands of questionable Judean control. Epigraphic evidence suggests that, by at least the second half of the fourth century, a majority of Edomites/Arabs inhabited the region side by side with a minority of Judeans (Zadok 1998a: 792-804; Lemaire 2002: 218-23, 231-33, 264-83, 284-85). The resettlement in the area surrounding Lachish during the fifth century BCE, either by Judeans, Edomites, or both may have created potential territorial quarrels between the inhabitants of the area. The establishment of the administrative center at Lachish (bordering Judah and Edom) could have played a significant role in preventing any further territorial disputes in an area where borders are flexible. This new reality required a new policy in which a Persian official, or officials, most likely with a garrison, were

14. For a different approach that ascribes the account in Nehemiah 11 to the late Hellenistic period, implying that the addition in Neh. 11.25-35 may reflect the actual borders of Judah after the Maccabean victories, see Wright 2004: 307-309, with earlier literature.

stationed permanently at Lachish in order to protect the political, economic, and social interests of the Empire in the region.

This new interpretation of the archaeological data from Lachish forces us to reconsider the previous scholarly consensus regarding the boundaries of the province of Yehud. Those who believe that the list in Nehemiah 11 is wishful thinking have stated that such a utopia can be explained by the fact that most of the settlements appearing in the list are in areas that are not within the boundaries of the province at the time of the Return, whereas the actual areas of settlement are hardly represented. What do we really know about the boundaries of the province at the time of the Return, that is, the fifth century BCE? Can the existence of these boundaries during the Early Persian period really be assumed?

The boundaries of Yehud are one of the most debated issues in the study of the Persian period in the region of Israel. According to most scholars, after the Neo-Babylonian destruction, Lachish never reverted to being a part of Judah, and it likely served as the center of the province of Edom (see, most recently, Lipschits 2003: 342). However, there are still numerous questions concerning the boundaries of both provinces, Yehud and Edom, during the Persian Period (see Carter 1999: 75-113, 288-94, with earlier references). The insufficiency of biblical testimony and the fragility of the archaeological interpretations have led some to apply Christaller's 'Central Place Theory' (1933) to the analysis of the boundaries of Yehud. This theory is based on the logical assumption that the socio-economic relationship between larger, central sites and smaller, 'satellite' sites is best represented graphically, through a series of interconnected hexagons, a spatial organization that is similar to the geographical organization implemented in southern Germany during the 1930s. This model was subsequently applied to other geographical settings, while political, economic, and social aspects of a settlement were reconstructed according to a pattern of 'Site Hierarchy' (cf. Lösch 1954; Haggett 1965: esp. 121-25). Later scholars such as Johnson (1972), who suggests that a rhomboid pattern is preferable to a hexagonal one, modified the model without contradicting its basic premises (see in general Jansen 2001: 42-44). Scholars who have tried to apply this theory to the boundaries of Yehud have drawn a series of circles or ellipses with radii of approximately 20 km surrounding Jerusalem, Lachish, and Gezer (cf., e.g., Carter 1999: 93-97, fig. 7). Both Lachish and Gezer, at least according to general scholarly consensus, have architectural remains that can be interpreted as governmental complexes. It is postulated that the spheres of influence of these sites intersect at the border of the Judean foothills and the hill country. The Judean foothills were therefore outside the province of Yehud.

It is definitely not our intention to embark here on taking theoretical models from the exact sciences and applying them to a complicated human past. What appears to be quite certain, however, is that the new archaeological evidence from

Lachish undermines previously proposed reconstructions of the boundaries of the provinces of Yehud and Edom, based as they are on the Central Place Theory. These reconstructions assumed the establishment of Lachish Phase IB as a major administrative center by at least 450 BCE (i.e., Tufnell's dating), in stark contrast to the foundation date closer to 400 BCE that is suggested here. It seems to us that, given the contested nature of the region's periphery (cf. Berquist 1996; M.J. Allen 1997), the final settlement of its boundaries, including those of Yehud, is better seen as part of a flexible process that was finally accomplished no earlier than the fourth century BCE. In this regard, it is worthwhile to remember that the creation of an Idumean provincial district cannot be traced before the fourth century BCE (cf. de Geus 1979–80: 62; Eph'al 1984: 199; Graf 1990: 139-43). The same holds true for Yehud. This is not to suggest that Judah was not an autonomous entity with a series of governors already in the beginning of the Achaemenid period (Williamson 1998) and perhaps even earlier (Na'aman 2000). But signs of autonomy such as the minting of Yehud coins and standardized Aramaic stamp-seal impressions on local storage-jar handles probably did not appear before the fourth century BCE.

Yehud Coins and Judahite Moneyed Economy

It has been argued that the coinage of Judah served temple needs rather than the general economy (Ronen 2003–2006: 29-30; Tal 2007: 24-25).[15] The fact that most of these coins bear legends written in paleo-Hebrew script (and not in the common Aramaic script) lend support to such an assumption. If they were intended for temple payments (poll tax dues and the like), we can explain also their Hebrew legends, which in a way 'cleansed' them from their conventional secular role and facilitated their use in the temple. Finally, the circulation of these coins (mostly in the region that is defined as Persian-period province of Yehud) (Ariel 2002: 287-88, table 3), small denominations (weighing some 0.5 [*grh*, 1/24 *šql*] or 0.25 [half-*grh*, 1/48 *šql*] gr) (Ronen 2003–2006: 29-30; Tal 2007: 19-20), and purity (c. 97% silver on average) favor such an explanation.[16] Until now around 20 Persian-period *yhd* coin-types have been documented. Jerusalem struck small silver coins under the Achaemenids bearing the abbreviated name of the province *yhd* (and less frequently in full *yhwd*) but sometimes bearing the legends

15. One should make the logical assumption that the coinage of Judah as *Temple* money would have served mainly a poll-tax (e.g., Liver 1963; Schaper 1995); the latter suggested that two separate taxation systems were operated at the Jerusalem Temple: the Persian one, organized at satrapy level, and the local one. Following Schaper's argument, the local indigenous coins served the latter, i.e., the local taxation system, due to the coins' provincial circulation and use.

16. For chemical analysis and silver purity cf. Gitler and Lorber 2006: 19-25.

of personal names and titles.[17] Stylistically, the coins can be identified as Athenian-styled issues (normally with the head of Athena on the obverse and with an owl and olive spray as well as the legend *yhd* or *yhwd* on the reverse), or Judahite-styled issues (bearing more varied divinities, humans, animals and floral motifs) (Meshorer 2001: 6-19, *passim*).

Of special interest are the Judahite-styled issues that bear the dissemination of the head of the Achaemenid king (e.g., Gitler 2011). How should such coins, which are the most common *yhd* type known at present, be understood in relation to the use of money in the temple economy? We suggest that Achaemenid motifs—which originated in the Persian heartland and were mimicked in Phoenician, southern Palestinian and especially Jerusalemite (*yhd*) monetary series—may be viewed as expressions of Persian ideologies and imperial power (fig. 6). According to this approach, the Achaemenids may have manipulated royal artistic imagery as a form of communication in order to support or advance official ideology. Even if the motif of the Achaemenid king on the *yhd* coins merely typifies imperial iconography, the social impact of such a motif suggests a high degree of loyalty among the Judahite subjects. Although it is very unlikely that these coins inspired worship of the Achaemenid king, they did affirm Persian sovereignty over the province of Yehud in the face of the Egyptian threat. It is no coincidence that in Judah during the fourth century BCE, a poll tax was apparently levied from 'third of a *šql*' in the time of Nehemiah to 'half a *šql* by the sacred standard (*šql hqdš*)' or '*bq*'' in the Pentateuch. The latter may quite possibly be traced to the time of Ezra. If so, it should be viewed against the backdrop of what seems to have been increased Achaemenid involvement in the region, which required a much higher degree of monetary investment in building operations, conscription and garrisoning (Lemaire 2004; Liver 1963).[18]

Here one must emphasize once again that the advanced coin-based economy—or more specifically, the 'small change' in the provinces of southern Palestine (Philistia, Samaria, Yehud and Edom)—is evident mainly from the fourth century BCE. Prior to this stage, larger denominations were minted (mostly in Philistia) (fig. 7). Likewise, it should be noted that southern Palestinian coins of the Persian period were not minted on a regular basis. They were probably issued on official occasions and only as needed; e.g., for taxes, transactions, or to celebrate the independence of a city (or new rights granted to it). Judahite coinage, like other early coinages (in southern Palestine and elsewhere), seems to have been used for a limited range of purposes and by a limited number of people. This is supported by the total number of Persian

17. I.e., *yúzqyh hpúh*, *yúzqyh*, cf. Meshorer 2001: 14-16, nos. 22, 26; Gitler and Lorber 2008: 61-82, esp. table 1 for alternative view.

18. In this regard, Achaemenid preparations for the re-conquest of Egypt should be taken into consideration as well.

Figure 6. Athenian-styled (top) and Judahite-styled coins that bear the dissemination of the head of the Achaemenid king (scale 3.1).

(and Early Hellenistic) Judahite coins known to us, and by the scarcity of Judahite coins retrieved from controlled archaeological excavations (Ariel 2002: 287-88, table 3). The minting of coins of small denominations in Judah (the *grh* and half-*grh*), in the fourth century BCE, apparently occurred during the 'second minting stage' of the southern Palestinian coins, which many scholars have assumed to be the first stage. This is to say that according to the hoard evidence, Palestinian coin-based economies began in Philistia with *šqln* ('tetradrachms') and *rb*'*n* ('drachms'), whereas smaller denominations were introduced only after the local and neighboring authorities (Samaria, Judah and Edom) acknowledged the economic benefits of the minting of local coinage on a wider scale. Smaller denominations (in the case of Judah, the *grh*, half-*grh* and smaller fractions) not only enabled a wider range of flexibility in daily economic life and especially in cultic transactions, but also facilitated wealth accumulation.

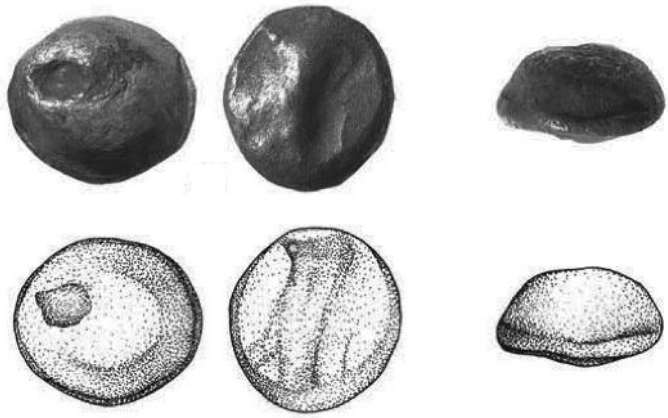


Figure 7. An Edomite coin (*rb*ʿ) (scale 2.1) (after Gitler, Tal and van Alfen 2007: no. 39).

The yhd/yh *Jars with Stamped Seal Impressions*

Circulation of storage jars with *yhd/yh* Aramaic stamped seal impressions on their handles serves as additional evidence for the borders of the province of Yehud, since these impressions are discovered, with few exceptions, at clearly defined Judahite sites (Stern 1982: 202-13; 2001: 545-51). Given the fact that Early/Late Persian as well as the Late Persian/Early Hellenistic contexts are rarely defined stratigraphically in Judah, attempts to differentiate between early and late types of stamped seal impressions were normally based on paleography of the script. Recently Vanderhooft and Lipschits proposed a new chronological framework for studying the stamped seal impressions of Judah. They distinguish 'Early' (late sixth–fifth centuries BCE), 'Middle' (fourth–third centuries BCE) and 'Late' (second century BCE) groups, whose dates are also based primarily on paleographic evidence. Quantification of these the stamped seal impressions show predominance (some 53%) for the 'Middle Types' (cf. Lipschits and Vanderhooft 2007: 80-84 ['Middle Types']; Vanderhooft and Lipschits 2007: 25-29 ['The Middle Group: Types 13-15']) (fig. 8). Given the hundreds of standardized stamped seal impressions and their sites of circulation, it is logical to assume that fourth century BCE Judah underwent an administrative reorganization, oriented towards the Achaemenid empire, on the one hand, and its internal cultic needs (i.e., its temple), on the other (above). Although the function of the storage jars with stamped handles is debated (cf., e.g., Stern 2007: 205-206; Ariel and Shoham 2000: 138-39), the sites that have yielded the majority of stamped seal impressions (Jerusalem and Ramat Raúel) were likely administrative centers that served as centers of production and especially distribution. The stamps may have served as marks for official

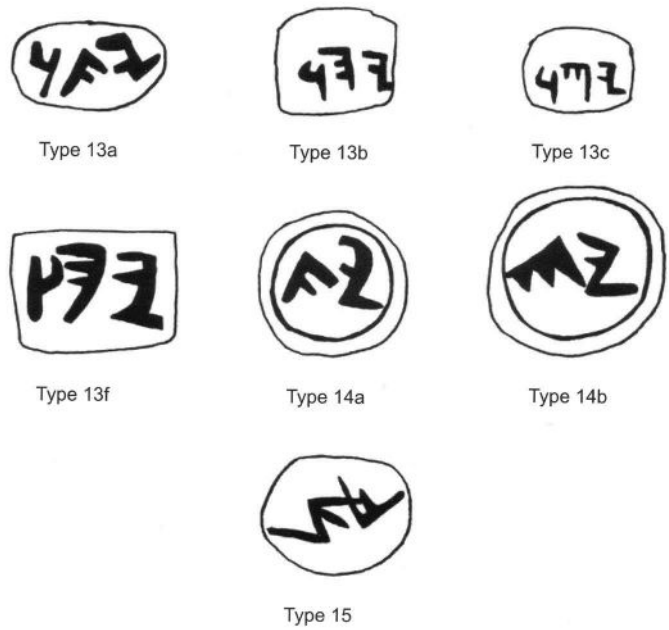


Figure 8. Yhd stamped seal impressions of the 'Middle Group' (after Vanderhooft and Lipschits 2007: 33).

(provincial), local, priestly or more likely priestly-authorized consumption, as well as for quality, purity and fixed volume of standards for liquids (wine and/or oil) and possibly grains (wheat and barely). Yet their widespread appearance in comparison to the preceding period (late sixth–fifth centuries BCE), should be understood against the re-organization of imperial policy on the newly established frontier.[19]

The same holds true for a few thousand Aramaic ostraca (e.g., Lemaire 1996; 2002; Eph'al and Naveh 1996; Yardeni in press, all with further bibliography), dated to the last three quarters of the fourth century BCE (the earliest is apparently dated to year 33 of Artaxerxes II = 372/1 BCE or year 40 = 366/5 BCE). All are allegedly from the site of Khirbet el-Kom and its immediate environs in the Judean foothills (Edom), but there is no clear evidence that all the ostraca came from a single source and it is possible

19. It remains to be seen if the exceptional phenomenon of stamped seal impressions in Judah—that is the longue durée attested for the practice of stamping handles of locally-made storage jars prior to firing, with various motifs of official meanings, from the late eighth through the mid-first centuries BCE—is directly connected to the economic activities of the *Temple* and its priests (closely supervised by the royal administration at the time of the monarchy). Linking this practice with cultic needs and method of income, that is the priestly verification of the purity of goods whether used in the *Temple* or by the members of the Jewish community in Judah, seems to be the most logical assumption.

Figure 9. Two aramaic ostraca mentioning the name of Alexander (IV) (after Eph'al and Naveh 1996: nos. 111-112).

111. … / … / … ב 20 לשבט שנת 5 / אלכסנדר מלכ[א]
112. לחלפנ שח ת[ ] / ב 5 לכסלו [שנת X] / אלכסנדר מלכא

that the they were looted from several Edomite sites given their resemblance to provenance material such as those from Beersheba and Maresha/Marisa (fig. 9). It thus seems that southern Palestine experienced a significant transformation in its political organization in the first half of the fourth century BCE. This transformation suggests a higher level of direct imperial involvement in the local administration. What one can observe here is a completely different level of Achaemenid involvement in local affairs that most likely included a fixed arrangement of district boundaries, garrisoning of the frontiers, and, most of all, tight Achaemenid control and investment, witnessed by the unprecedented construction at the sites in southern Palestine briefly and selectively described below.

A New Architectural Landscape

Given the scarcity of Persian-period remains in Jerusalem and their almost exclusive appearance in sections of the City of David (Geva 2003: 521-24; Finkelstein 2008), we may reasonably assume that Jerusalem, as the capital of Yehud, was more confined to its temple community and religious functions, while the administration of the province was centered at nearby Ramat Raḥel (Weinberg 1992).[20] Na'aman has argued that the site served an Assyrian and

20. It should be noted that contrary to Weinberg, the governor of the citizen–temple community in Jerusalem and the governor of the province of Yehud should not be considered the same; that is at no time was the Jerusalemite citizen–temple community identical with the whole province, neither demographically nor territorially. On the other hand, although many premises of Weinberg's theory were thoroughly and appropriately criticized, we tend to agree with Ska, according to whom many of the critical voices

Persian administrative centre and that imperial officials, with their staff and guard, lived there (2001). In our opinion the meager architectural remains discovered at Ramat Raḥel (Stratum IVB), which include the sections of a 'massive wall' (1.2 m thick) in the eastern part of the excavated area following the course of an earlier Iron-Age citadel's outer wall, may well have formed part of a residency that was established by the Achaemenid representatives during the fourth century BCE and not before.[21] The renewed excavations at Ramat Raḥel lend support to our argument. According to the excavators, the site's Third Building Phase dates to the Persian period (late sixth–late fourth centuries BCE). To this phase they also assign the remains of a large building (about 20 × 30 m), rectangular in shape, built on the northwestern side of the palace complex from the Second Phase. It appears that the building was not planned as an independent structure but rather as a new wing of an existing complex, i.e., as a northward expansion of the fortress tower that extends west of the line of the palace. The only stratigraphically secured pottery assemblage related to this building phase, however, includes three jars and a jug on a floor level that can be dated to the fourth century BCE (Lipschits *et al.* 2010: 36, fig. 38a-b).

The most impressive building that can be dated with certainty to the Persian period on the southeast border of the province of Yehud was discovered at 'En Gedi on the western shore of the Dead Sea. The edifice ('Building 234', c. 23.5 × 22 m) is of an (irregular) open courtyard type with several rooms flanked around central courtyard/s and assigned to Stratum IV (fig. 10). According to the excavators, Building 234 was in use during the last three quarters of the

'tend to undervalue the importance of one essential fact about postexilic Judah, namely, that the temple was the only important indigenous institution after the return from the exile, since the monarchy could not be restored'. That is to say, the postexilic community was rebuilt around the temple and not around the royal palace (Ska 2001: 174-76, with extensive literature).

21. Albeit Aharoni based his dating of this 'massive wall' on pottery of unsecured stratigraphic contexts which he defined as pottery-types of a transitional phase between the Persian and Hellenistic period (Aharoni 1964: 18-19, figs. 2, 12-15 [Locus 484]). However, while studying the local and imported pottery from Aharoni's excavations at the site we found out that Locus 484 (which was partially published) is an accumulation of piled material from the site with pottery-types that date from the 7th through the 2nd/early 1st centuries BCE. The material was assembled against the east side of the 'massive wall' for reasons unknown—it has no bearing whatsoever on its dating. In fact all the Persian and Hellenistic pottery retrieved from Aharoni's excavations at the site came from unsecured and/or unstratified loci. The pottery as found, documented and reported cannot help us in establishing relation between certain architectural features and Persian and Hellenistic periods of occupation. Still, the considerable amounts of Late Persian pottery types from the site discovered in Aharoni's excavations do suggest that the site was active at the time. What its status and role were in the layout of the ruling bodies is open to speculation.

fifth century BCE and was destroyed in c. 400 BCE. Moreover, judging from the distribution of Attic ware within Building 234, the excavators conclude that the western part of the building was cleared of debris and reused as a dwelling by the surviving inhabitants of the site for half a century or more (the first half of the fourth century BCE) until this too was destroyed by nomadic (possibly Nabatean) raiders (Mazar and Dunayevsky 1967: esp. 134-40). The final publication of the building suggests a different interpretation, however. Acknowledging the difficulty in distinguishing typological developments in common and semi-fine wares of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, the excavators rightfully deemed the Attic imports to be the best chronological anchor (Stern 2007, 193-270, *passim*). Like other governmental Achaemenid sites, 'En Gedi yields fairly numerous Attic pottery-types that are mostly confined to the late fifth and early fourth centuries BCE.[22] These finds have been found in many of the rooms of the building, and the assumption of the excavators of a destruction c. 400 BCE is not supported by the published final report.[23] In any case, the excavators are convinced that surviving inhabitants reused the building (or parts of it) until about the middle of the fourth century BCE. They base their conclusion on the finds allegedly retrieved on top of the 'destruction' level, though no such level is apparent. This is not the place to discuss the foundation date of Building 234 or to criticize the dates given to the Attic pottery types. However, the dated finds seem to suggest that the building maintained its character throughout its existence until about the middle of the fourth century BCE. Moreover, Attic pottery types, which can securely be dated to the first half of the fourth century BCE, were found on the building's 'late floors' as well as glass pendants in the shape of human heads; they point to the administrative nature the building (Stern 2007: 228-40, *passim*).

Another administrative site located on the far southern border of the province of Yehud is Beth-Zur. According to Neh. 3.16, the site formed the capital of half a district governed by Nehemiah ben Azbuk. Architectural remains from the Persian, and especially from the Hellenistic periods,

22. Stern 2007: 230-40, esp. fig. 5.4.1. According to Stern, most of the Attic sherds found in the site and in particular in Building 234 belong to the second half and especially the end of the fifth century BCE, others belong in part to the second quarter of the fifth century BCE and in part to the first half or the middle of the fourth century BCE. The photographs presented in the final publication, as well as the lack of drawings and/or well-dated *comparanda* to the Attic pottery types retrieved, make these observations uncertain.

23. Stern 2007: 193-97. There is no indication whether the destruction of the floor relates to about 400 BCE, 350 BCE or possibly a later stage. Moreover, fig. 5.1.2 on p. 196, which provides a detailed plan of Building 234 shows that the only alteration within Stratum IV occurred in the north (W218) and west (W219) walls of a small room (252), hence the destruction in about 400 BCE seems highly speculative.

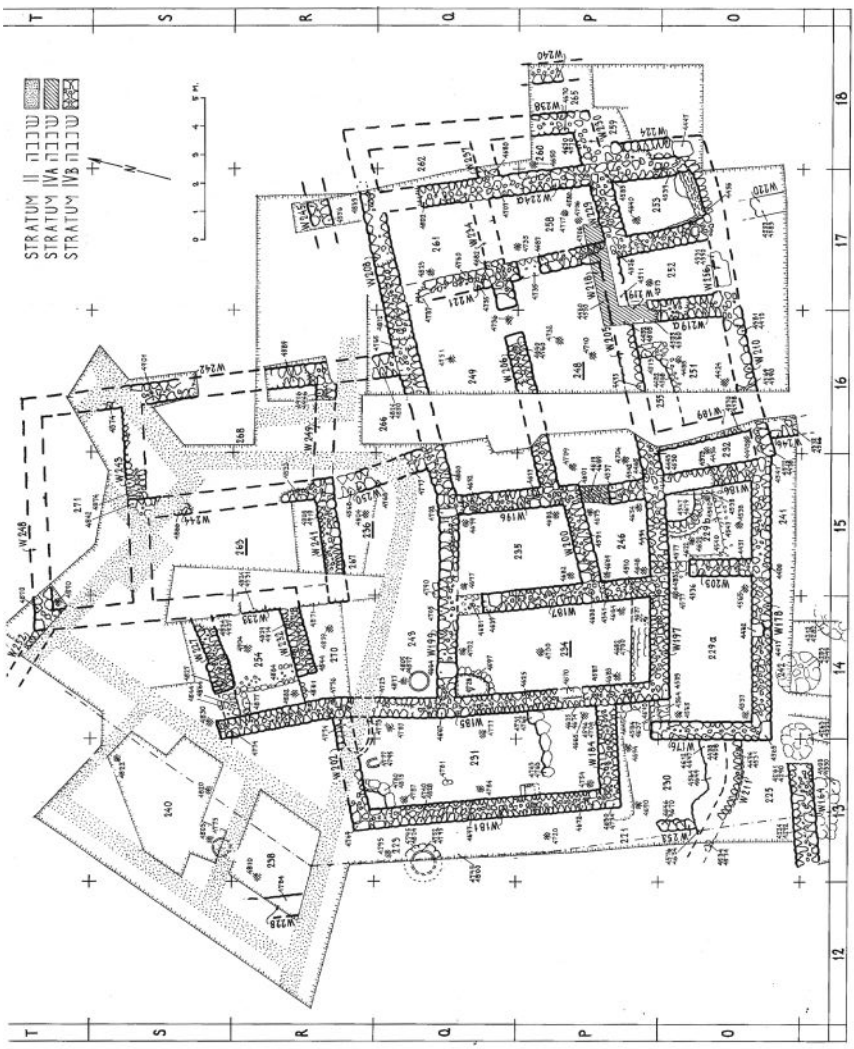


Figure 10. 'En Gedi, Building 234 (after Stern 2007: fig. 5.1.2).

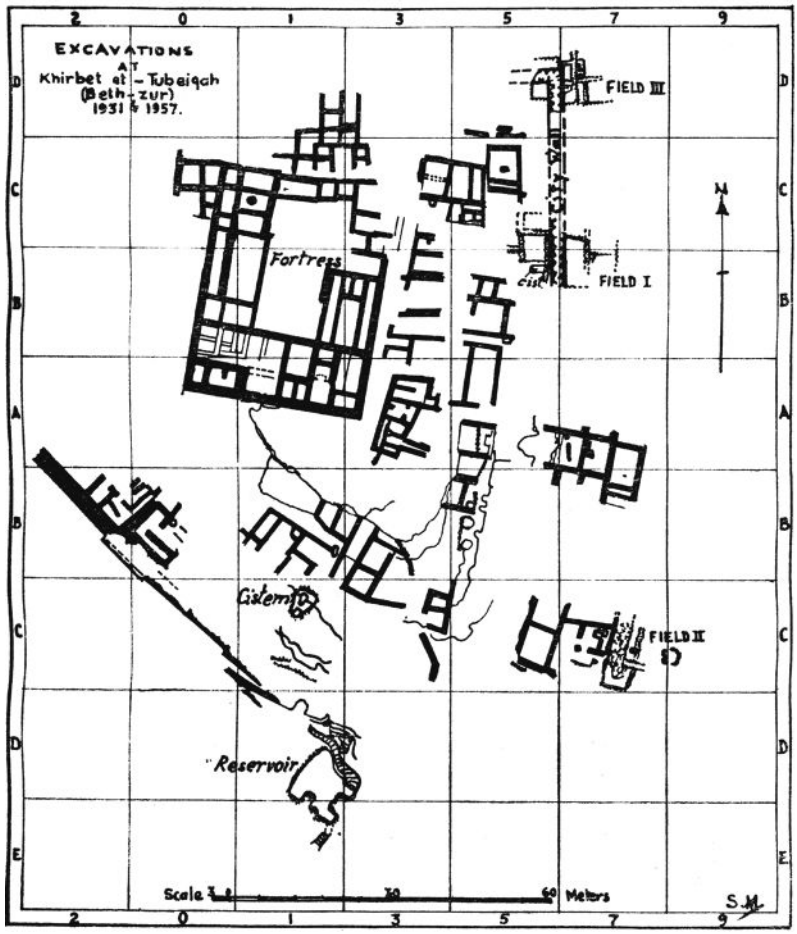


Figure 11. Beth Zur, site plan (after Sellers 1933: plate 2).

are substantial and represent most of the excavated features at the site. Architectural remains on the tell originate from various periods. The walls were robbed and eroded to the extent that the total accumulation did not exceed one meter. In addition, the foundations of the buildings of the upper stratum, which were better preserved, had penetrated the earlier strata. For these reasons, the excavators were unable to attribute the architectural remains to a specific period and therefore published a general plan in which all the remains appear together. At the center of the tell is a fortress, and in some of its walls, we can discern three occupation phases. Solid walls (some 1.5 m thick) surrounded the fortress (41 × 33 m) in the east, south and west (fig. 11). Whether the first phase of the fortress should be assigned to the Persian period (and especially to the fourth century BCE) is disputed among scholars. The issue cannot yet be resolved due to the method of publication,

which prevents one from seeing the stratigraphic relation among the occupational layers. However, dated Persian-period finds from the site, and especially of the fourth century BCE (e.g., Philistine and Judahite coins, seals and seal impressions) point to its administrative function at the time (Sellers *et al.* 1968; Tal 2006: 150-52).

To this list of sites we may add the recently excavated site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, located on the west border of the province, in the western Judahite foothills (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009). So far, the site has attracted considerable attention mainly due to its Iron Age occupation, while the significance of its later, fourth-century BCE phase has been neglected. In our opinion, the Persian-period remains from Khirbet Qeiyafa should be viewed in the context of new developments discussed above. As in the case of Lachish Level I, here too, the refurbishing of the Iron Age gate and fortifications, as well as the construction of new buildings, should be assigned, on the basis of already published pottery and coins (Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: Chapter 12), to the first decades of the fourth century BCE. Although the excavators assign most of the pottery to the Early Hellenistic period, we can date its appearance to the early fourth century BCE if we take into consideration the published prototypes and relevant *comparanda*. In this regard, the early silver coins from the site are of special significance, since they exhibit a meeting point of two Persian-period minting authorities (that of Philistia and that of Judah) rarely documented in other Palestinian sites.[24]

A series of administrative sites was documented in the southern Coastal Plain and in the Persian-period province of Edom.

Tell Jemmeh in the southeastern Coastal Plain should be considered another example of Achaemenid governmental presence. The site, located some 10 km south of Gaza, was excavated during the 1920s, first by W.J. Phythian-Adams (1923) and, more thoroughly, by W.M.F. Petrie (1928). In accordance with Stern's thorough analysis of Petrie's stratigraphic conclusions (1982: 22-25), Persian remains at the site should be divided

24. Garfinkel and Ganor 2009: Chapter 13; see Gitler and Tal 2006: 50-51. Indeed, the same meeting point of two Persian-period minting authorities is also apparent in yet another 'border' site, Beth-Zur (above), where four Philistian coins are documented along with one Judahite coin (*yúzqyh hpúh*), and all are dated to the fourth century BCE. The meeting of indigenous southern Palestinian minting authorities of the fourth century BCE seems to be characteristic of 'border' administrative centers given their political status as 'bridging' authorities. Thus it is no surprise that coins from the yet unpublished 2010 season at Khirbet Qeiyafa yielded a much larger variety of issues from the mints of Philistia and Judah (Y. Farhi, pers. comm.), which yet again support our predating of the 'Early Hellenistic' occupation at the site to the early fourth century BCE. Not less important is the finding of another type of early silver (indigenous) coin that was recently suggested as belonging to the mint of fourth century BCE. Edom based on its circulation; cf. Gitler, Tal and van Alfen 2007.

into three stratigraphic phases: the first, probably of mid-fifth-century BCE date—Building A—a central courtyard fortress with dimensions of c. 38 × 29 m; the second, probably of late-fifth/early-fourth-century BCE date—Building B—a Residency (or 'Palace') composed of two separate units of the central courtyard house type; and the third, probably of late-fourth- to third-century BCE date—storehouse and granaries—scattered on the mound (fig. 12). This theory may be strengthened by the limited number of published Attic fragments and vessels from Petrie's excavations (1928: pl. 46; but see also Iliffe 1933: nos. 8-11, 13-14, 16-19, 21, 23, 25-27, 29-31, 33-36, and relevant plates; and Shefton 2000: 76 n. 4). It would, however, be extremely intriguing to recheck these data in light of the recent excavations carried out at the site (cf. Van Beek 1983; 1993; *NEAEHL* 2.667-74).[25]

Persian remains at Tel Sera' are quite similar to those discovered at Tell Jemmeh. The site is located in the western Negev desert on Naḥal Gerar, some 20 km to the east of Tell Jemmeh. Judging from the short report published by the excavator, Persian-period Tel Sera' (Stratum III) consisted of the same elements discovered at Tell Jemmeh: a brick-lined granary (c. 5 m in diameter) in Area A on the south part of the mound and the remains of a citadel and courtyard building in Area D on the north part of the mound (*NEAEHL* 4.1334).

The same applies to the remains discovered at Tel Haror located in the western Negev desert on Naḥal Gerar, located midway between Tell Jemmeh and Tel Sera'. The excavator's brief report concludes that there are one or two Persian-period settlement phases at the site (i.e., Stratum G1), represented in Area G on the southern part of the upper mound by a large building, cobbled floors, and grain and refuse pits (*NEAEHL* 2.584). It is thus tempting to see

25. It is worth quoting some of Van Beek's observations regarding the date of the Persian remains at Tell Jemmeh: 'Petrie's historical biases led to strange interpretations as, for example, his haste to have granaries built by 457 BCE so that they might serve as grain depots to feed a Persian army during its invasion of Egypt in 455 BCE. The key evidence here is the large Red-Figured lekythos in the Rockefeller Museum, which was found beneath one of the granaries [Petrie 1928: pl. 46: 4]. This lekythos was reluctantly dated to 460 BCE by Gardiner, as against his preferred date of 450 BCE; but for Petrie, a date of 450 was seven years too late to get it under a granary. Indeed, the lekythos may well have been *in situ* in the pre-granary layers, rather than having been thrown in the foundation hole just prior to construction of the granary, as Petrie assumed. According to Beazley, the lekythos is by the Phiale Painter, a pupil of the Achilles Painter, both of whom were active between 450 and 420 BCE. On this evidence alone, the granaries could hardly be dated much before the end of the 5th or early 4th centuries BCE. Thus, Petrie's lack of interest in late periods and his historical biases led to a cavalier treatment of archaeological deposits from the granary periods' (Van Beek 1993: 577-78, with earlier references). Bearing in mind this quotation, Tufnell's comparisons with dated pottery from other sites, chiefly with Tell Jemmeh's 457 BCE dating (Tufnell 1953: 135; above, n. 6), further undermines her dating of the Residency.

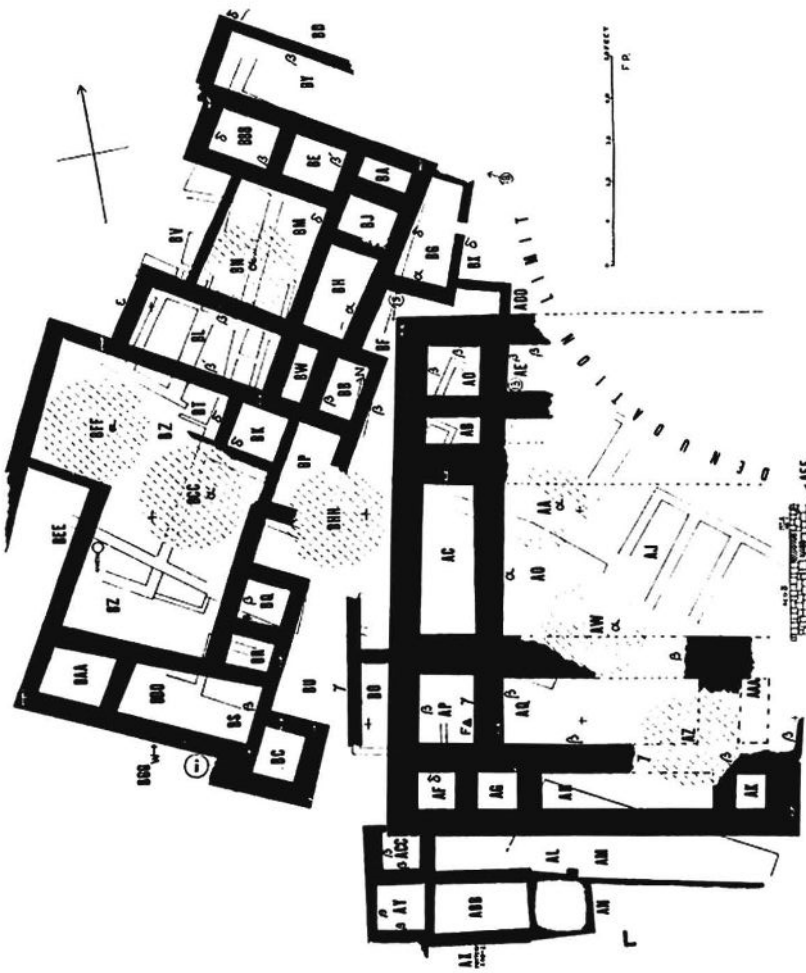


Figure 12. Tell Jemmeh, Building A and Building B (after Petrie 1928).

both Tel Seraʿ and Tel Haror in a similar stratigraphic context to the one suggested in Tell Jemmeh, since both sites not only share similar architectural elements but also yielded numerous Greek ware fragments, Aramaic ostraca, and other finds that may point to a governmental role.

To the above sites, we are inclined to add Tel Ḥalif, located some 15 km to the east of Tel Seraʿ. Excavations in Stratum V, which, according to the excavators, belongs to the Persian period, uncovered elements of a large building with walls one meter thick in Field II and pits and bins scattered in Fields I and III and Area F6 (*NEAEHL* 2.558). Furthermore, the excavators of Tell el Ḥesi, some 20 km to the north of Tel Seraʿ, conclude that the Persian-period settlement at this site ceased to exist by the end of the fifth century BCE (Bennett and Blakely 1989). Therefore, one may presume a southward shift in the settlement process of the western Negev desert region at this time. Needless to say, without the full analysis and publication of the finds from these sites, our argument is largely theoretical. However, the architectural elements discovered in the excavations of Tell Jemmeh, Tel Haror, Tel Seraʿ, and Tel Ḥalif, as well as their location along the same latitude line and their placement at somewhat fixed intervals of 10–15 km on the southernmost inhabited Lowlands regions of southwestern Palestine, doubtless had an Egyptian-oriented raison d'être.

The location of governmental sites in the Highlands (the central mountain ridge) was dictated by other factors, among which topography and the immediate environs seem to have played a significant role.[26]

There is certainly an extensive amount of site hierarchy among the above-mentioned governmental sites, and a few suspected others that are beyond the scope of this study. In our opinion, however, Lachish ranked fairly high on our proposed hierarchical ladder.

With the above outline of the southern governmental Palestinian sites of the inhabited land in mind, we can now briefly address the question of the Negev desert fortresses (and suspected fortresses), which yield some indications of Persian-period occupation. Among them are Ḥorvat Rogem (Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: 160-72); Ḥorvat Ritma (Meshel 1977; Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: 185), Meṣad Naḥal HaRoʿa (Cohen 1980: 71-72; 1986: 112-13; Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: 176-85), Ḥorvat Mesora (Cohen 1980: 70; 1986: 113; Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: 172-75), as well as the suspected

26. It seems that Rehoboam's list of fortified cities, which appears only in 2 Chron. 11.5-12, should be attributed to the time-period discussed as well (see already Zadok 1998b: 245). The issue remains controversial in the scholarly literature, with options of dating the list to the time of Rehoboam, Hezekiah or Josiah. Most recently, it has been even suggested that the list reflects a Hasmonean reality (Finkelstein 2011). We tend to believe, however, that the list should be connected to the reorganization of the region during the first half of the fourth century BCE.

fortresses located at Arad (Aharoni 1981: 8; Herzog 1997: 245-49; *NEAEHL* 1.85), Beer-sheba (Aharoni 1973: 7-8; *NEAEHL* 1.172), and perhaps also at Tell el Far'ah (S), where tombs with varied finds of the period were excavated (Stern 1982: 75-76) (fig. 13). Surprisingly, the location of these fortresses on the same latitude line suggests a linear setting. We have Ḥorvat Rogem, Arad, Beer-sheba, and possibly Tell el Far'ah (S) arranged in linear fashion on the edge of the inhabited territory and Meṣad Naḥal HaRo'a, Ḥorvat Ritma, and Ḥorvat Mesora in another somewhat linear pattern some 30 km to the

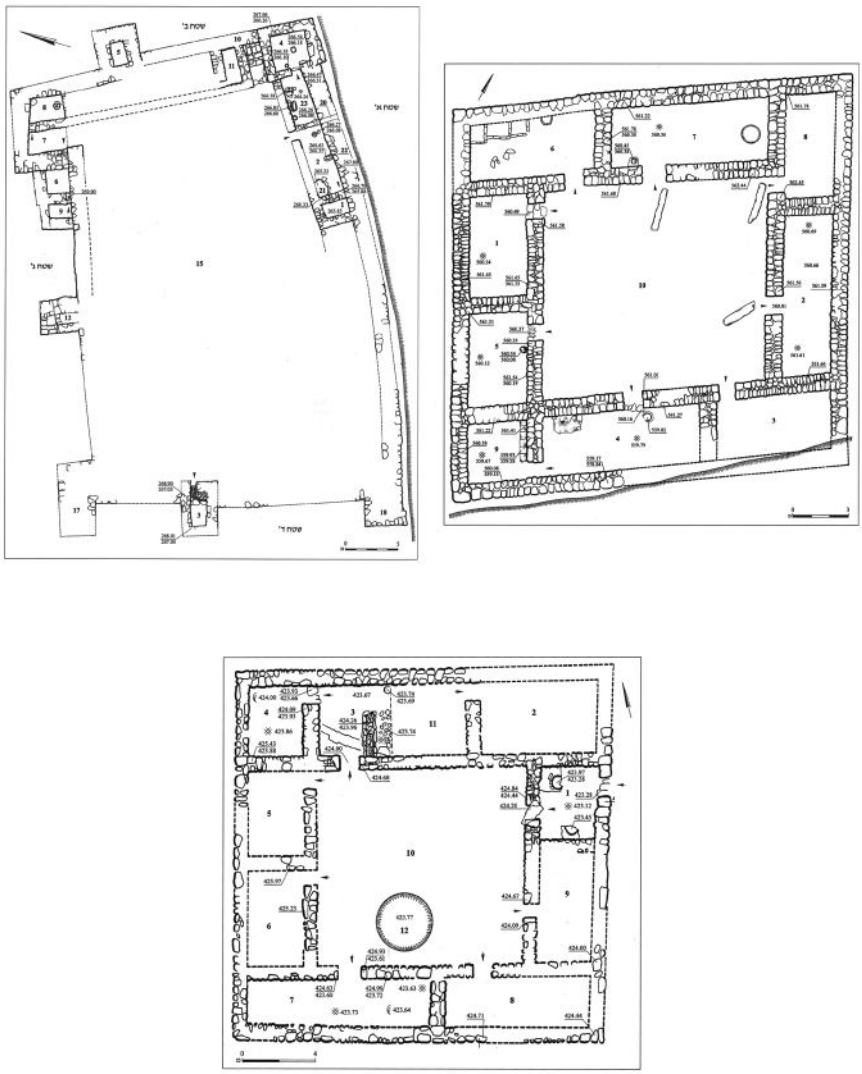


Figure 13. The fortresses of Ḥorvat Rogem (left), Meṣad Naḥal HaRo'a (right) and Ḥorvat Mesora (bottom) (after Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: figs. 98, 105, 108).

south of the former. We further suggest that Kadesh-barnea (Cohen 1980: 72-74, 78; but esp. 1983: 12-13) and ʻEn Ḥaẓeva (biblical Tamar; Cohen and Yisrael 1996; but see Na'aman 1997, who suggests that the Stratum 4 fortress is of Persian date) were the southernmost defensive line against the south (i.e., Egypt), although Persian finds at Kadesh-barnea were attributed by the excavator to an unwalled domestic settlement and at ʻEn Ḥaẓeva are merely absent. Evidently, all suspected fortresses were located on main routes, with the aim of protecting the southern Arabian trade and alerting the Persians to an approaching Egyptian army (fig. 14). The preliminary form of some publications on these fortresses and suspected fortresses as well as the reported character of the finds make it difficult to reach a conclusion on the precise date within the Persian period for each foundation—the more so, because the finds shown in the recent final publication of the Negev highlands Persian-period fortresses (namely Ḥorvat Rogem, Ḥorvat Ritma, Meṣad Naḥal HaRoʻa, and Ḥorvat Mesora; Cohen and Cohen-Amin 2004: 159-201) point to a late Persian rather than an early Persian date, although the finds are quite scant and the quantity of imported ware is very small. One thing is clear, however: the careful pattern of their arrangement indicates that most (if not all) were contemporaneous with each other. What is the best explanation for this new settlement pattern?

The Rationale behind the Achaemenid Imperial Policy at the Southern Frontier of the Fifth Satrapy

What occurred in the region that triggered the Achaemenid authorities to act in the way they did? A broader look, beyond the borders of southern Palestine, shows that in 404–400/398? BCE Persian domination over Egypt, in effect since 525 BCE (almost continuously), came to an end.[27] It seems that the end of Persian domination in Egypt and the establishment of the

27. Due to the fact that one of the documents in the Elephantine archive, from September 400 BCE, refers to Year 5 of King Amyrtaeus (most likely a grandson of Amyrtaeus I), he must have been proclaimed Pharaoh during 404 BCE. On the basis of the Elephantine documents, it may be safely assumed that, though between 404 and 400 BCE Upper Egypt still remained under Persian control, Amyrtaeus had already dominated all or part of the Delta (Briant 2002: 619, 987, with earlier references). Although Artaxerxes II was still recognized at Elephantine as late as January 401 BCE while recognition of Amyrtaeus there does not appear until his fifth regnal year (June 400 BCE), already around 401/400 BCE it has been obvious for all parties involved that Egypt was effectively lost for the Achaemenids. The general unrest throughout the Empire following the accession of Artaxerxes II, which made an immediate re-conquest of Egypt unlikely, and the fact that already after the battle of Cunaxa (early August 401 BCE), Greek mercenaries have considered offering their services to Artaxerxes II in order to campaign against Egypt (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.1.14), point in the same direction.

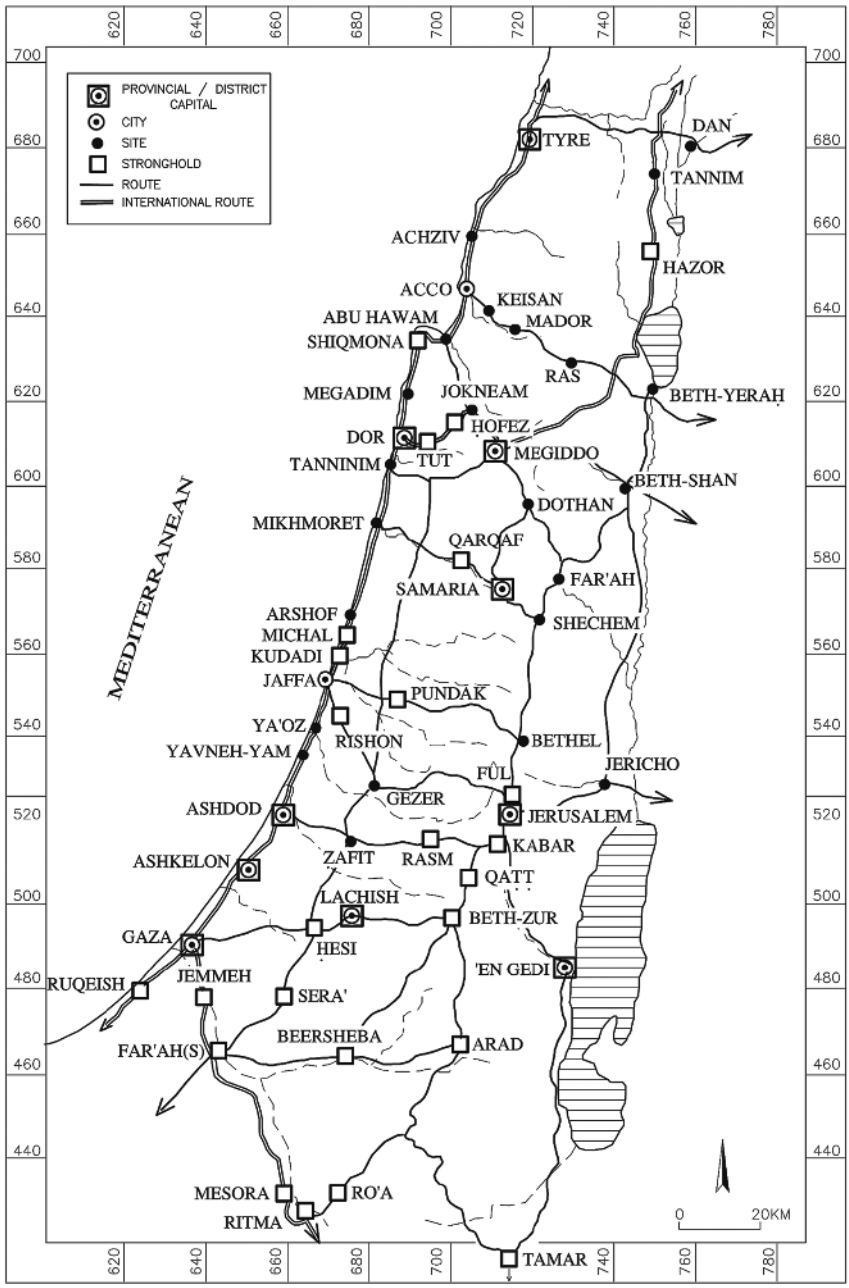


Figure 14. Sites and suggested routes in Persian period Palestine (after Tal 2005: fig. 1).

fortified administrative center at Lachish, both around 400 BCE, as well as the establishment of other Persian centers in southern Palestine at that time and shortly thereafter are not just coincidental. In this case, the establishment of Persian fortified administrative centers at Lachish, Tell Jemmeh, Tel Haror, Tel Sera‘ and Tel Ḥalif, Beth-Zur, Ramat Raḥel, and ‘En Gedi must be seen, not just as a response to the changes occurring in the region during the fifth century BCE, but mainly as a response to a new political reality: Egypt is no longer a part of the Persian Empire or subject to Achaemenid rule. Graf's suggestion that garrisons strung between Gaza and the southern end of the Dead Sea protecting the southern frontier during the period of Egypt's independence between 404 and 343 BCE (1993: 160) may fit well with such a reconstruction, especially when one observes the linear arrangement of the fortresses listed above. Needless to say these fortresses possessed multiple purposes, providing first and foremost security and necessary stops for refreshment and replenishment along the main routs for Arabian trade with its terminus at Gaza (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001).

Lowering the dating of the establishment of the Residency at Lachish and of the many other administrative sites in southern Palestine to around 400 BCE and shortly thereafter may have additional significance. Almost two decades ago, Hoglund proposed that the Inarus Rebellion in c. 464–454 BCE was an extremely significant event due to Delian League involvement, affecting immensely the modes of Achaemenid imperial control of Syria–Palestine. He argued that this is the reason for the establishing of a network of Persian fortresses of a distinctive type (central courtyard) in Palestine, dating to the mid-fifth century BCE (Hoglund 1992: 137-205). This theory was adopted in another extensive summary published by Carter (1999) and gained wide acceptance among many scholars (e.g., Petersen 1995: 19-20; Brett 2000; Greifenhagen 2002: 229-30; Betlyon 2004; Min 2004: 92-94; Pakkala 2004: 295). In all cases, the c. 450 BCE date is seen as a clear-cut line in the history of Persian-period Palestine. Tufnell's dating of the Residency at Lachish to c. 450 BCE may have served as key evidence for both Hoglund and Carter. Based on Hoglund's work, Carter suggests a new subdivision for the Persian period: Persian Period I lasts from 538 to 450 BCE and Persian Period II from 450 to 332 BCE. Those reconstructions, however, find no echoes in the archaeological record and the major premises of Hoglund's and Carter's theory were effectively refuted by a number of scholars (e.g., Janzen 2002: 104, 149-50; Sapin 2004: 112-24; Fantalkin and Tal 2006: 187-88). In fact, *not a single site* in Hoglund's list of fortresses can be dated with any degree of certainty to around 450 BCE. The same holds true for Hoglund's list of sites in Transjordan.[28] From the data presented above, it is clear that both Hoglund's and Carter's theories must be rejected.

28. Thus, Hoglund amends Pritchard's date of 420 BCE for Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh's Persian-

The Inarus Rebellion was just another event in a series of upheavals in the long period of Persian rule over Palestine and Egypt (cf., e.g., Tal 1999: table 4.13, with relevance to the southern Sharon Plain). This event, with no trace of rebellion anywhere but in the Nile Delta, was not significant enough to motivate a new policy regarding the political reorganization of Palestine.[29] The events that had followed the year 404 BCE, on the other hand, seem to be on a completely different scale. We believe that the situation in Egypt and the new reality in southern Palestine triggered the Persian authorities to establish a new policy with regard to the southern frontier of the Fifth Satrapy. The establishment of the Residency was accompanied by additional architectural features (see above) and reflected a new political reality that apparently demanded a new 'imperial landscape' (cf. DeMarrais, Castillo, and Earle 1996). We have to realize that, for the first time in more than a century of Persian rule, southern Palestine became *the frontier* of the Persian Empire. Frontiers of empires are usually ideal places to study how identities of dependent populations are born,

period building, placing it in the mid-fifth century BCE. However, the recent excavations at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh have demonstrated that Pritchard's Stratum III square building must be seen as the climax of a renovation process above a number of earlier levels of a courtyard building that started sometime in the Persian period or even earlier (Tubb and Dorrell 1994: 52-59). Therefore, as Bienkowski points out, 'these earlier levels may not fit into Hoglund's suggested chronology, or his proposed construction specification for a garrison' (2001: 358). Moreover, Bienkowski offers an additional example of a Persian-period administrative building discovered at al-'Umayri (cf. Herr 1993), which continues from the Neo-Babylonian period, 'suggesting that such administrative buildings simply reused existing structures' (Bienkowski 2001: 358).

29. Indeed, it has been generally conceived that Inaros Rebellion was just another event in a series of upheavals in the long period of Persian domination over Palestine and Egypt, with no trace of rebellion anywhere but in the Nile Delta (e.g., Gomme 1959: 306; Briant 2002: 575-77, 973; Green 2006: 141 n. 274). Recently, however, Kahn (2008) suggested that for some period Inaros, with the Athenians, controlled Egypt almost entirely. His reconstruction, which uncritically accepts a number of Greek sources, basically on the basis of the occurrence of the name of Inaros on the dated ostracon (463/462 BCE) from Ein Manawir in the Kharga Oasis, where he is labeled as 'Chief of the rebels' or as 'Chief of the Bakalu tribe' of Lybian descent (Chauveau 2004; Winnicki 2006). As Rhodes pointed out, however, 'this does suggest that early in the revolt Inaros was gaining power (or at any rate somebody thought that he would gain power) in Upper Egypt as well as the delta, but it is equally consistent with a scenario in which by the time he brought in the Athenians Inaros controlled the delta but did not control Upper Egypt' (Rhodes 2009: 358). In any event, even if the initial achievements of the Inaros Rebellion were indeed underestimated in the current scholarship, the fact remains that from the archaeological point of view the rebellion was not significant enough to motivate a new Achaemenid policy in its Fifth Satrapy.

shaped and reshaped.[30] This frontier was an extremely sensitive one, not only bordering on recently rebellious Egypt, but also subject to external influences from the west (Berquist 1996). It is no longer plausible to speculate that, after the Persian conquest, Egyptian civilization continued just as before, virtually unaffected. New discoveries have shown that Egypt was an integrated and extremely important part of the Achaemenid Empire (Briant 2001, with earlier references). One has to recognize the significance of this new situation for both Persian and Egyptian affairs, especially during the first half of the fourth century BCE (Briant 2002: 664-66, 991-92). From an archaeological point of view, it looks as though the Persian authorities expended significant energy organizing their newly created buffer zone with Egypt c. 400 BCE. We are suggesting that only after this date should one look for established boundaries for the provinces of Yehud or Edom (Idumea). Likewise, the increase in the number of sites in the fourth century BCE reflects the demographic changes on the regional level (Lipschits and Tal 2007; Faust 2007). It seems that before this date, during the fifth century BCE, the Persian authorities deliberately permitted a certain degree of independence with regard to the resettlement of the area: first they let the newly established rural communities organize themselves and, thereafter, they included them within a rigid taxation system. The organization and spatial distribution of these newly established rural communities may be seen as an internal creation, due to the 'self-organization process',[31] and without strict imperial intervention at any time during the fifth century BCE.[32]

30. Cf., e.g., Hall 2009; Naum 2010; for comparative *longue durée* perspective, concerning the shifting fate (significance versus neglect) of the Middle Euphrates frontier between the Levant and the Orient, see Liverani 2007.

31. For a definition and theoretical framework for the 'self-organization' paradigm, see Nicolis and Prigogine 1977; Prigogine and Stengers 1984; Haken 1985; McGlade and van der Leeuw 1997. For methodological implications, see Allen 1982; 1997; cf. also Schloen 2001: 57-58. In terms of the 'self-organization' approach, the arrival of the Golah returnees, who may be considered a 'Charter Group' (see Kessler 2006), doubtless created a new paradigm. This new pattern suggests that the Golah returnees may be identified as creating an 'order parameter' that 'enslaved' a previous unsteady system and brought it into a new steady state. This transformation took place during the fifth century BCE as a result of 'self-organization' and without strict Achaemenid intervention. However, the imperial Achaemenid authority doubtless stood behind the initial decision-making, that is, in letting the groups of people return. In this regard one should look for a delicate combination of the so-called 'positive–pull factors' and the 'negative–push factors' that make any migration possible (cf. Antony 1990; Burmeister 2000).

32. Perhaps with the exception of Stratum IVb at Ramat Raḥel, which may be considered the sole center of Persian government during the fifth century BCE. However, even this attribution is uncertain due to the fact that none of the published finds from the excavations at Ramat Raḥel attests to an exclusive fifth-century BCE date (see above).

From an imperial point of view and on the basis of the archaeological record, it seems that during the fifth century BCE, the rather undeveloped inland mountainous region of Palestine was considered strategically insignificant, hardly worthy of large-scale imperial investment or monitoring.[33] This state of affairs is understandable as long as Egypt remained an integral part of the Achaemenid Empire.

In contrast, with southern Palestine becoming the southwestern frontier of the Persian Empire in the first part of the fourth century BCE, the region needed to be organized differently, especially in view of Achaemenid preparations for the re-conquest of Egypt. The ethnic diversity in the area discussed—Judeans, Idumeans, Samaritans, descendants of the Philistines, which included a strong Phoenician element and even Greeks (cf. Eph'al 1998)—may be seen as an additional component that triggered the immediate need for the intervention of imperial authority in the newly established frontier, resulting in roads,[34] fortresses, and royal residences.[35] All in all, the most striking consequence of our archaeologically based historical reconstruction implies that the Persian domination over southern Palestine became particularly prominent during the first half of the fourth century BCE[36]

33. Here, some reference should be given to Edelman's thesis (2005), according to which a master plan to incorporate Yehud into the Persian road, postal and military systems was instituted by Artaxerxes I. In our opinion, however, this theory, which also postulates that the temple of Jerusalem was completed only in the days of Artaxerxes I, can neither be corroborated by Edelman's challenging textual analysis nor by the archaeological finds from the fifth century BCE in the area discussed.

34. For the political reasoning behind the construction and maintenance of formal road systems, see Earle 1991. For the social complexity inherent in the establishment of a road system, see Hassig 1991.

35. For somewhat similar cases of organizing a frontier, see Smith 1999; 2000 (for Urartu); and Parker 1997; 2001; 2002; Gitin 1997 (for Neo-Assyria). For suggested reorganization of the Achaemenid Cilician frontier at the beginning of the fourth century BCE, see Casabonne 1999.

36. This is in contrast to Nihan's recent suggestion, according to which 'the end of the Persian period (from 400 BCE) shows a growing and rapid decline of the influence of the Achaemenid administration in the entire Levant after the loss of Egypt which, in the case of Yehud, appears to have significantly strengthened the control of the Jerusalem temple over the local administration, as the epigraphic record suggests' (Nihan 2010 [citing Lemaire 2007]); for a not dissimilar approach, according to which the Persian imperial control of the vast empire was gradually disintegrating during the fourth century BCE, see also Greifenhagen 2002: 232. Lemaire's interpretation of some recently discovered epigraphic and numismatic material from the fourth century BCE cited by Nihan provides however even more support for our reconstruction and certainly cannot be taken as evidence for the decline of Achaemenid influence in the Levant after the loss of Egypt. For a rejection of the notion of Achaemenid imperial decline in the fourth century BCE, see especially Wiesehöfer 2007b. As Ray (1987: 84) clarifies, 'the entire history of Egypt in the fourth century was dominated, and perhaps even determined, by the

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Persian domination over Egypt was reestablished for a short period, between 343 and 332 BCE, prior to the Macedonian conquest. As a result, the frontier shifted once more, leaving Palestine deep in Achaemenid territory. It is thus tempting to connect the 343 BCE date with the archaeologically attested abandonment of the Residency, which was then reused by local inhabitants during the late years of Persian rule.[37] In this context, for levels attributed to the Late Persian Period, it is abandonment rather than destruction that we are witnessing in the above-listed governmental sites of southern Palestine, with the exception of the alleged destruction at 'En Gedi. Some of these sites were never resettled after this abandonment, while others were occupied during the Hellenistic period, a few of which preserved the governmental character of their Achaemenid predecessors.

The Canonization of the Pentateuch as a Reflection of the Major Transformation in the First Half of the Fourth Century BCE?

Traditionally, the canonization of the Pentateuch is associated with the 'mission' of Ezra, who, according to the book of Ezra–Nehemiah (hereafter: EN), presented the Torah of Moses to the inhabitants of Judah gathered in Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. Although the account is located in Nehemiah 8, the majority of modern scholars consider it an integral part of the Ezra traditions, originally placed between Ezra 8 and 9.[38] In what follows, we assume the independence of the Chronicler from

presence of Persia, a power which doubtless never recognized Egyptian independence, and which was always anxious to reverse the insult it had received from its rebellious province'. Taking into consideration a number of unsuccessful Persian attempts to re-conquer Egypt until the mission had been accomplished by Artaxerxes III in 343/342 BCE (Briant 2002: 685-88, with earlier references; or in 340/339 BCE if one accepts Depuydt's [2010] modified chronology), it is obvious that preparations for these invasions required tight imperial control in the newly created buffer-zone from where the campaigns were launched (see also Redford 2011).

37. Here, some reference must be made to the Tennes Rebellion. It was Barag (1966) who first suggested that destruction (and abandonment) evident in more than a few sites in Palestine, the Coastal Plain, Galilee, and Judah, including Lachish and En Gedi (1966: 11 n. 31) are the result of this event. Stern on the other hand partially relates this event to several sites along the coast of Palestine (1982: 243; 1995: 274). The extent of this rebellion and its exact dating are still questionable (Elayi 1990: 182-84; Briant 2002: 683-84, 1004). Our reconstruction tends to support Stern's view and other minimalists.

38. In fact, already Jerome around 400 CE admits, of course without questioning the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, that Ezra gave it its final form (*Contra Helvidium*, ed. Vallars, II, 212). Although there is little doubt that Nehemiah 8 was heavily edited

EN, and concur with the view that, chronologically speaking, the earliest material from EN predates the Chronicler's work (Williamson 1987: 55-69; Japhet 1991).[39] The historicity of Ezra as the promulgator of the Law, however, has been doubted on some occasions.[40] Be it as it may, Römer fittingly states that whether this tradition has any historical basis or not, 'it is quite likely that the gathering of different law codes and narratives into one 'book' with five parts, the Pentateuch, goes back indeed to the time of Ezra's mission in Jerusalem' (2005: 179). Although attempts of creating a single literary unit of what later will be known as the Pentateuch may have begun already during the second half of the fifth century BCE (if not earlier), this activity should not be confused with the attempts of establishing the canonical version of the Torah, which corresponds to the time of Ezra's mission. But the question remains: When did this mission take place?

One of the most puzzling questions with regard to the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah concerns their chronology. Justifiably or not, Nehemiah's journey to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes I (445 BCE) is considered by the vast majority of scholars as a reliable historical event. The arrival of Ezra, on the other hand, remains a subject of debate. Among the positions defended thus far, only two hypotheses seem to have survived as tenable options:

1. According to the traditional view, if both Ezra and Nehemiah were active under Artaxerxes I, then Ezra would have arrived at Jerusalem in 458 BCE, Nehemiah in 445 BCE;
2. The most common alternative to this view places Ezra's mission at the time of Artaxerxes II and his arrival in Jerusalem in the seventh year of this king, 398 BCE.

Although any certainty in these matters is probably unattainable,[41] it seems that the majority of modern scholars favor the second hypothesis. In what

throughout the Persian and Early Hellenistic periods, we tend to agree with Pakkala (2004: 177-79, 301), according to whom the account in Neh. 8.1-3, 9-10, 12a belongs, most probably, to the oldest stratum in Ezra 7–10 and Nehemiah 8 (*contra* Wright 2004: 319-40, according to whom Neh. 8.1-12 belongs to the latest compositional layer of Nehemiah 1–13, which most probably should be dated to the Hellenistic period).

39. As it is evident from a number of references in Chronicles, which include the intentional modification of the Chronicler's sources, by the time of the composition of Chronicles the Torah of Moses (most probably the Pentateuch) was already canonized (Talshir 2001: 386-403).

40. E.g., Torrey 1910; Grabbe 1998: 152-53, *passim*; 2004: 329-31.

41. The literature on this subject is limitless; for summarizing major pros and cons concerning the contested theories, see, e.g., Williamson 1987: 37-46; Blenkinsopp 1988: 139-44; Miller and Hayes 1986: 468-69; Lemaire 1995: 51-61; Burt 2009: 176-99.

follows, we adopt the year 398 BCE as the most plausible date and offer some additional observations in favor of its reliability.

Current views on the formation of the Pentateuch tend to abandon the major premises of the Documentary Hypothesis (e.g., Rendtorff 1990; Otto 2000; 2009; Kratz 2000; Gertz 2000; Achenbach 2003; Schmid 2010; Albertz 2010; for recent collection of papers, see Knoppers and Levinson 2007). In its place, many opt for a model in which independent narrative units—the primeval history, the patriarchal stories and the Exodus traditions—stand on their own and were combined only at a very late stage, with Numbers being perhaps the latest book of the Torah.[42] In any event, the canonization of the Torah—or better, the proto-canonization under the authority of Ezra and his circle—should not be considered as the final redaction of the Torah that miraculously survived to these days, but rather as an initial attempt of canonization, with certain modifications made after Ezra's time.

For that reason, we are focused on the *beginning* of the process of canonization rather than its end. Notwithstanding, the move toward canonization, i.e., the initial attempt to assemble such a great number of various traditions into a single unit, requires an explanation. Why did it happen in (or shortly after) 398 BCE, in keeping with the Low Chronology? Could it have begun already in the fifth century BCE, as the traditional view assumes? With the aid of the archaeological and historical evidence discussed above, we suggest that the most compelling explanation for the inception of Torah-canonization should be viewed as a conscious response by Judahite Priestly circles to a new geopolitical reality that characterized the first half of the fourth century BCE, when Egypt was no longer a part of the Achaemenid Empire. To be clear: the date 398 BCE serves only as a general point of reference, a plausible *terminus post quem*. However, even without accepting the historicity of the Ezra traditions, it seems that the geopolitical conditions of the first half of the fourth century BCE, as described in the preceding pages, represent the most reasonable framework for the canonization of the Pentateuch.

Some may question the possibility of determining the specific historical circumstances that triggered the canonization of such a complicated literary and theological work as the Torah. Admittedly, the creation of the units that composed the Pentateuch and their compilation/redaction into a unified whole represents a lengthy and complex process. However, what concerns us here is the initial impetus for canonization. We do not deny that certain

42. Römer (2008a) considers Numbers as a 'livre-pont', bridging between Genesis–Leviticus and Deuteronomy, in order to create the Pentateuch; and see already Noth 1966; for discussion concerning additional redactional revision in Numbers, the so-called *theokratische Bearbeitung*, which probably took place in the first half of the fourth century BCE, see Achenbach 2003.

redactions and modifications to the Pentateuch were made subsequently (e.g., Otto 2004: 31 n. 69; Schmid 2007; Achenbach 2007).[43] Yet as Goody pointed out (1998), canonization constitutes a deliberate process of selection, where certain traditions were purposely included while others were consciously excluded. That is to say, we are justified in our effort to investigate the connection between contemporary geopolitical dynamics and the proto-canonization of the Pentateuch. As we argue, the rebellion of the Egyptian province provoked the establishment of a new buffer zone, accompanied by Achaemenid imperial investment and monitoring. This was without a doubt a watershed moment in the history of the postexilic community of Yehud. It required significant ideological rethinking, and it resulted, we suggest, in the initial attempt of compiling, redacting and canonizing the constituent literary blocks of what would become the Torah.[44] In placing the proto-canonization of the Torah into the broad geopolitical conditions of a newly created southern frontier of the Fifth Satrapy, we are not subscribing to the theories of Persian 'imperial authorization' of the Torah, as advocated by Frei (1996) and others. As demonstrated by many scholars, the idea of *Reichsautorisation*, according to which the canonized Pentateuch functioned as an instrument of imperial control, is difficult to maintain.[45] We tend to

43. According to Pakkala (2004: 157), one should consider that some parts of the Pentateuch (e.g., Deut. 31.9-13) could be dependent on Nehemiah 8 and not vice versa; for apparent early Hellenistic insertions (e.g., Exod. 4.6-7), which should be understood as a 'counter history' that reacts against anti-Jewish Egyptian Hellenistic polemic describing Moses as a man affected with leprosy, see Römer 2008b.

44. For a cross-cultural perspective, including the notion that specific incidents and geo-political circumstances may be considered as social catalysts for beginning the process of canonization see, e.g., Stordalen 2007.

45. As has amply been demonstrated by many contributions collected in Watts 2001. During recent years there has been no shortage of possible scenarios regarding the notion that canonization and promulgation of the Pentateuch relates in some way to the Persian imperial goals. For instance, according to Berquist's analysis (1996), although due to its inconstancies the Judahite canon should not be considered a truly imperial artifact, the imperial canonization was imposed on colonized Judah during the reign of Darius I, with the goal of functioning as an expression of imperial power. This view, however, suffers from inner contradictions and finds little echo in the archaeological/historical reality of the early fifth century BCE. Zlotnick-Sivan on the other hand (2004), has suggested that the redaction of Exodus 1f should be set between 530 and 525 BCE, mirroring Persian anti-Egyptian propaganda. In her reconstruction, by creating the story of the Exodus out of Egyptian bondage, Judahite elites provided ideological justification for Egyptian conquest by the Persian empire. We find this reconstruction quite implausible, and not only because of such a narrow chronological limits for the redaction of Exodus 1f. It is simply hard to believe that the Persian authorities would need any ideological justification for their westward expansion from Judahite subjects (among many others), not to mention the improbability of such a complicated hidden message (written in Hebrew) being correctly understood and deciphered on the Persian side.

believe, however, that rather than being the product of an imposed imperial authorization, the canonization of the Torah should be considered as a conscious response by Judahite Priestly circles (most probably under the guidance of Ezra) to a new geopolitical reality. Canonizing such a vast variety of traditions within a single literary unit, whose basic premises were shared by the Priestly school and the Deuteronomists, both in the Land and in the Diaspora, had a high potential of crystallizing a collective Jewish identity—a great desideratum for the survival of the postexilic community.[46] The renegotiation of new corporate identity *vis-à-vis* both the Persian authorities and local non-Judahite populations, underscored the right, from time immemorial, of a "divinely chosen people" to possess a territory. From the point of view of the ruling Persian administration, the possibility of monitoring this people via a written law would have been appealing—and not necessarily only for the reason of economic exploitation or logistical assistance to Persian armies. In the context of intercultural translatability of deities, where 'people in one culture, most commonly at a highly elite level, explicitly recognize that the deities of other cultures are as real as its own' (M. Smith 2008: 6), it would have been an advantage to have on your side a people whose God (at least according to their own claims) defeated the gods of Egypt.

But there is much more at stake here. As Bruns suggested (1984: 464), 'the whole point of canonization is to underwrite the authority of a text, not merely with respect to its origin as against competitors in the field—this, technically, would simply be a question of authenticity—but with respect to the present and future in which it will reign or govern as a binding text'. The very purpose of canonization, in Bruns's opinion, is to distinguish between texts that are powerful in a given situation and those that are not. In other words, it is always an issue of authority and power. What authority and power could be gained by the postexilic community and its leaders by

46. Cf. Ska 2001: 161-82. Bringing 'all the people' under the binding authority of the Torah should be definitely emphasized (Knoppers 2009). In this respect, the role of Moses in the construction of Diaspora identity is of paramount importance. Römer (2008b), for instance, points out that the tradition about Moses' Ethiopian wife, with its aim of legitimating intermarriages, most probably originated in a Diaspora context. If so, Ezra's prohibitions of intermarriages should be seen as a midrashic interpretation of Diaspora-oriented tradition, addressed specifically to the local community of followers. In other words, for the sake of the preservation of the Yehud indigenous community and the power of its elites, authorized by the existence of the temple at Jerusalem, what is allowed hesitantly abroad is not tolerated on a local level. In this regard, if the account presented in Nehemiah 8 indeed originally bridged Ezra 8 and 9, it would come as a little surprise that the midrashic interpretation that forbids intermarriages on the local level follows the presentation of the pan-Judahite oriented Torah of Moses to the people of Jerusalem.

canonizing the Pentateuch? On the other hand, how would the canonization have benefited the Persian crown? The complexity and inner contradictions of the Pentateuch, which continue to preoccupy the current generation of biblical scholars, became an invaluable asset for the postexilic Judahite community. The Persian authorities could not possibly comprehend the intricacies of Judahite laws and foundation myths, not even if they had been written in Aramaic. In imperial eyes, what might have been most important is the central message(s) carried by the proclaimed canonical version of the Pentateuch. That is to say, redacting and canonizing blocks of traditions in the form of the Pentateuch guaranteed a connection to the past and empowered interpreters (J. Smith 1982). The latter consisted to a great extent of Priestly circles who responded to new geopolitical realities. As long as the interpreters were responsible for transmitting the meaning of the text (manipulations are not excluded), they were capable of communicating different messages to different audiences (i.e., to the local Judahite population and its neighbors, to the Diaspora or to the Persian authorities). The most powerful message of the Pentateuch identifies the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah at Sinai as a charter myth of the nation of Israel. The Torah was transmitted by Moses, who is described as a prophet in a category by himself, with no successor like him.

By canonizing selected parts from the available materials, Judahite scribes (and leaders) who originated at the center of the Persian empire reveal a deep understanding of Persian imperial ideology and rhetoric. As already stated, the current opinions on the genesis of the Pentateuch tend to operate on the assumption of the existence of separate complex blocks of material, where smaller units (e.g., the primeval history, the patriarchal stories, the Exodus traditions, etc.) gradually crystallized into larger literary units before they were modified and compiled by Deuteronomistic and Priestly redactors.[47] If there is any validity to the Hexateuch thesis, Otto's analysis (2000; 2009), according to which the scribal redactors formed the Hexateuch in the fifth century BCE (in the period of Nehemiah's activity in Jerusalem),[48] makes a lot of sense in the context our reconstruction. As we already discussed above, the settlement patterns attested in the region of Judah during the fifth century BCE, suggest that the Persian authorities deliberately permitted a certain degree of

47. According to Russell's analysis of the traditions about Egypt and the Exodus in the Hebrew Bible, initially there were at least three different regional traditions concerning the episode (Russell 2009; cf. also van der Toorn 2001; see, however, Berner 2010).

48. See also Achenbach 2003; Knauf 2002; Römer and Brettler 2000. Although in Van Seters's (2003: 955) opinion: 'the Hexateuch is a scholarly fantasy and all the redactors invented to support it are likewise mere fantasies of scholarly ingenuity', we find it difficult to accept this approach, which is based on the invention of the so-called 'Yahwist historian' who is later than the Deuteronomist, and rejects the notion of Pentateuchal or any other redactor (e.g., Van Seters 1992; 1999).

independence with regard to the resettlement of the area: First they allowed the newly established rural communities to organize, and thereafter included them within a rigid taxation system. The organization and spatial distribution of these communities may be explained therefore as an internal creation ('self-organization process'), without strict imperial monitoring during the fifth century BCE. The aspirations for territorial expansion, reflected in the Book of Joshua, fit the absence of tight imperial control in the hill country of Judah during this period and strengthen the notion that the Hexateuch redaction was central to Nehemiah's circle.[49] One may assume that what triggered the concerns of Judah's neighbors, as expressed in Neh. 2.10-20, was less the act of repairing the ramparts of Jerusalem, but rather the expansionist agenda of the Hexateuch redactors.[50] In the same vein, Otto's hypothesizing of an additional Priestly redaction of the Pentateuch around 400 BCE, which included *Fortschreibung* and *Ergänzungen* and the omission of the Book of Joshua,[51] provides an additional corroboration for our archaeologically–historically oriented scenario. Indeed, in the period of consolidated imperial rule in the Fifth Satrapy, following the Persian withdrawal from Egypt, the story of military conquest by the Israelites would have met with disapprobation on the side of the imperial authorities. Hence, the Exodus became the central national myth.

As demonstrated by Cohn (1981) and others, Israel's journey from Egypt mirrors, on the whole, Van Gennep's famous tripartite structure of the rites of passage.[52] The separation stage (*rites de séparation*) is marked by a final break at the crossing of the Red Sea; the liminal stage (*rites de marge* or *limen*) concerns the period of wandering in the wilderness; and the last, reincorporation stage (*rites d'agrégation*), occurs at the crossing of the Jordan and the conquest. This scheme fits the Hexateuch's narrative perfectly. However,

49. We disagree with the theories, according to which the conquest stories narrated in the book of Joshua were *invented* in the Persian period, as a sort of 'a utopian manifesto, intended to support a project of return that never took place in such terms' (Liverani 2005: 272). These stories, utopian as they are, have a much earlier pedigree in the context of biblical historiography (Na'aman 2002).

50. From an archaeological perspective, we have no conclusive evidence of a city-wall dated to the Persian period, although the area of the city in Persian times has been intensively excavated (Finkelstein 2008). Presenting the act of repairing the city-wall of Jerusalem as the main trigger for a joint opposition to Nehemiah's activity (Neh. 2.10-20) may be a later reinterpretation of events, belonging most probably to the Hasmonean period (cf. Wright 2004: 67-127, *passim*). It should be noted that according to Nihan (2007), the separation of the Pentateuch from the Former Prophets accounts for the fact that the Torah of Moses was intended to be accepted by both Judahites and Samarians. In this regard, Knoppers's nuanced analysis (2006) of major contacts between Yehud and Samaria is particularly revealing.

51. Note that Achenbach's (2003) dates for HexRed and PentRed are slightly different.

52. For basic studies on this topic, see, e.g., Van Gennep 1960; Turner 1969; 1974.

in the context of what eventually became canonical Pentateuchal tradition, the reincorporation stage appears as a vague concept, since the conquest and the settlement narrative is missing. Nevertheless, one of the most important aims of reincorporation (i.e., Israel's disengagement from Egypt and what it symbolizes) remains manifestly visible already during the separation stage. In the final act of separation, Yahweh splits the chaotic sea into two. When the Israelites advance toward the world of heavenly inspired order (Promised Land), they leave the world of chaos (Egypt) behind.[53] It seems that an ancient Canaanite/Israelite tradition (Cross 1973; Kloos 1986; Anderson 1987) suddenly evolved into a forceful and relevant metaphor, extremely useful from the point of view of the postexilic community of Yehud.

Following the Egyptian 'reckless' disengagement from Achaemenid control, the canonization of such a tradition signaled to imperial authorities that the Judahites viewed Egypt as a world of chaos, an antithesis to the world of cosmic order so central to Persian imperial self-understanding. The Persian empire, as the successor of the neo-Assyrian and neo-Babylonian empires, possessed and promoted the same imperial ideology and system of values, with its aspiration to rule the entire universe (see, e.g., Liverani 1979; Tadmor 1981; Machinist 1986; Zaccagnini 1987; Horowitz 1998; Vanderhooft 1999; Kuhrt 2002). The basic element of this ideology is the notion that a correct relationship between divine and human levels can be obtained only under a firm authority of one kingdom, whose ruler is authorized by the gods. The cosmic order can be sustained only within the confines of a divinely chosen empire. The image projected by the empire was intended to assure the loyalty of its subjects: They should be grateful for being included within the limits of the *oikumene*. Those who live beyond the borders of the divine order live in chaos, and it is the duty of the empire to bring them into submission by expanding the realm of order. Subjugated peoples did not always realize the benefits of submitting to the yoke of the empire. Therefore, their resistance had to be eliminated—through both force and ideological propaganda. Operating within the same tradition of imperial ideology and rhetoric, the Persian empire developed the notion of imperial order that maintains the ultimate 'order/truth' (*arta*) in opposition to those who fall into the trap of 'lie/falsehood' (*drauga*). According to the inscription on the tomb of Darius I, Ahura-Mazda conferred kingship on him because the earth 'was in commotion (*yaudati-*)'. Like other rulers, Darius was divinely chosen to be the deity's instrument in quelling the chaos that ravaged the world and in bringing harmony, which required obedience to the Persian king and Ahura-Mazda (see, e.g., Kuhrt 2001; Briant 2002: 165-203,

53. The parallels between this act and Marduk splitting the watery Tiamat into two, in order to produce order out of chaos, are striking (see, e.g., Dozeman 2009: 298-300; Smith and Pitard 2009: 255-57).

passim; Wiesehöfer 2007a: 121-40; Berquist 2008).[54] Similarly, the Exodus story implies the impossibility of the worship of Yahweh in a land of chaos. Instead, Israel needed to resettle in the realm of the cosmic order, which lay within the borders of the later Persian Empire.[55]

The consolidation of imperial power in the southern frontier of the Fifth Satrapy during the first half of the fourth century BCE provided an occasion for Judahite priesthood to present a canonized version of the Pentateuch (cf. Achenbach 2010). The essential materials had already been compiled in the form of the Hexateuch. The pentateuchal redaction, however, which conferred canonicity on a fundamentally anti-Egyptian book anticipated imperial expectations and effectively prevented the imposition of what might have been unfavorable imperial obligations on Judahite subjects. The power over the province of Judah was left in the hands of the priests. Thanks to skillfully emphasized anti-Egyptian stances in the canonized version of the Pentateuch,[56] the very act of belonging to Judah may have signaled to the Persian authorities that they were dealing with loyal and law-obeying subjects.[57] The issue of loyalty was acute. After the Egyptian fiasco, many at the Achaemenid court would have feared additional rebellions in which

54. For Egyptian concept of cosmic order, the *Ma'at*, that should be maintained by a legitimate and righteous ruler, see Assmann 1990.

55. One might consider a notion of 'inclusive monotheism' (Thompson 1995). Following this, it has been suggested that Yahweh's identification with the God of the heaven (אלהי השמים) can be taken as a local manifestation of Ahura-Mazda (e.g., Bolin 1995; Trotter 2001: 151-53). This view, however, remains highly speculative.

56. Cf., e.g., Assmann 1997. On the other hand, one should consider an intended appeal of the certain parts of the Pentateuch to the Diaspora element, anticipated by Moses' death outside the Promised Land. For certain parts of the pan-Judahite community the importance of the 'Joseph cycle', where Egypt is portrayed rather favorably, made its exclusion probably impossible. However, as properly emphasized by Greifenhagen (2002: 35-49, *passim*), these traditions were subverted by the dominant voice of the central anti-Egyptian narrative. Besides, since the anti-Egyptian stance appears only after a new king arose over Egypt, the one who did not know Joseph (Exod. 1.8), there is no contradiction to our scenario, since the allegory between the arising of a new evil king and the Egyptian rebellion against the Persian rule is detectable. The inclusion of Joseph story within the Pentateuchal corpus, however, may also reflect a much later reality, where an old tale apparently receives a new meaning. Scholars who consider the *Josephgeschichte* as an independent literary composition have offered a variety of often contradictory views concerning its date, origin and purpose. The literature on this topic is rather extensive; e.g., de Hoop 1999: 366-450, *passim*; Levin 2004: 223-41. Without embarking on a lengthy discussion, all we can say in the framework of the present endeavor is that one should consider the possibility that the *Josephgeschichte* was added to the proto-canonized version of the Pentateuch at the beginning of the Ptolemaic rule, with the aim of justifying the renewed flourishing of the Jewish community in Egypt.

57. This point is also communicated in the money that represented the Achaemenid king (Gitler 2011: 105-19).

the Fifth Satrapy would cooperate with the Egyptians. Indeed, throughout the centuries Judah and its neighbors relied on Egyptian support against the incursions of Mesopotamian rule. Egypt was not only considered a natural ally in any conspiracy against neo-Assyrian or neo-Babylonian rule; it also provided a place of refuge in times of danger (Galvin 2009).[58] One may interpret the anti-Egyptian message of the Pentateuch against this backdrop, and the Persian authorities likely appreciated the point.[59] The anti-Egyptian narrative of course could not completely prevent Judahite participation in anti-Persian alliances. Yet the fact remains that during this period Judah appears to have avoided any participation in Egyptian orchestrated anti-Persian coalitions.[60] Furthermore, during the preliminary stages of Alexander the Great's campaign, Judah remained faithful to Darius III even after he fled back to Persia (after the Battle of Issus; and see Josephus, *Ant.* 11.317-19).

Finally, we may consider the possibility that the canonization of the Former Prophets, which was well under way already during the third century BCE, can be associated with the geopolitical transformations Palestine underwent under Ptolemaic rule. It seems that at a certain point during the Early Hellenistic period, significant changes could not be made to the canonical structure of the Pentateuch. Starting the process of canonization, the Former Prophets, with its more nuanced approaches toward Egypt, may be considered perhaps as an initial attempt to justify the presence of Judahite communities in Egypt. The process stands in connection with a large body of apologetic literature that was written either as a way of defending the persistence of these Egyptian–Jewish communities while an independent Jewish life existed under the Hasmonean kingdom or in dispute with Greek or Egyptian authors on the ancient roots of the Jewish nation and its place in Egyptian history (Bar-Kochva 1996; Gruen 1998). It stands to reason that the Syrian Wars and especially those of the first half of the third century BCE (First and Second Syrian Wars), when

58. The existence of the networks of spies, employed by the neo-Assyrian court to communicate with provincial officials during the eighth and the seventh centuries BCE, was recently surveyed in detail; see Dubovský 2006. It is plausible to assume that the neo-Babylonian court took advantage of the accumulated intelligence as well, and that the Persian court possessed enough information concerning unfaithful behavior of local subjects who crafted conspiracies with Egypt in the past.

59. Greifenhagen's thoughtful analysis of Egypt portrayed on the Pentateuch's ideological map, which emphasizes Jewish loyalty to the Persian government over its political challenger, is close in certain aspects to our reconstruction. However, Greifenhagen's thesis is flawed by historical reconstruction of mistakenly interpreted archaeological material, as discussed above. This resulted in too broad a date, c. 450–350 BCE, suggested by him for canonization of the Pentateuch (Greifenhagen 2002: 224).

60. Although it has been alleged that the Tennes rebellion around the middle of the fourth century BCE was of great importance for Judah (Barag 1966), this view has been rightly challenged (Grabbe 2004: 346-49).

Palestine and Judah were under direct Ptolemaic domination, reoriented Judahite and Jerusalemite attention to Egypt. It is worth noting that Jerusalem was virtually the only mint that continued to strike silver fractions on the Attic weight standard under the Diadochi and especially under Ptolemy I and II (Ronen 2003–2006: 30-31),[61] while the Lagid kings were promoting the use of bronze coinage with a similar range of values.[62] These silver coins most probably served as temple-money like their Late Persian-period predecessors. More interesting is the fact that Jerusalem was apparently deprived of minting rights once the coastal cities of Ptolemaïs, Iopé and Gaza were granted these rights in Ptolemy II's 25th regnal year (261/260 BCE).[63] The reasons for this change are not clear.[64] It may be related to the strategic organization of the Second Syrian War (260–253 BCE), as can be inferred from the major administrative reforms Ptolemy II initiated in the region in the same year (261/260 BCE). These reforms include the 're-foundation' of the coastal cities of Ptolemaïs, Iopé and Gaza, as well as the establishment of inland centers such as Beth-Shean (renamed Scythopolis), Beth-Yeraḥ (renamed Philoteria, after his sister), and Rabbat-Ammon (renamed Philadelphia after Ptolemy II's pseudonym). It is possible that Jerusalem's forfeiture of minting rights in 261/260 BCE, which cut a major source of income to the priestly class and called for the reorganization of the temple 'moneyed-economy' may be seen as additional trigger for the canonization of the Prophets, while Jerusalemites strived to regain minting (and probably other) rights by displaying a more sympathetic attitude towards Egypt and the Ptolemaic kingdom. This attitude is reflected in a number of the narratives of the Former Prophets, especially in the Books of Kings.[65]

Summing up the major points of the current endeavor, on the basis of our modified chronology for a number of archaeological sites in southern Palestine, we suggested that the Persian domination over southern Palestine

61. After the Greco-Macedonian conquest the weight standard of the provincial coinage of Judah changed, when the *grh* and half-*grh* were replaced by fractions of the *obol* on the Attic weight standard with a modal weight of 0.19 g for the quarter-*obol*.

62. These issues show a clear Ptolemaic iconographic influence, and see, e.g., Meshorer 2001: nos. 29-35; Gitler and Lorber 2006: Group 5, dated from circa 301–261/260 BCE.

63. For the sake of our argument his first regnal year started in 285/284 BCE, although it is known that he inherited the throne only in 282 BCE but later backdated his regnal count to 285/284 BCE, while he was co-regent with his father Ptolemy I.

64. This seems to be the case only if one accepts Gitler and Lorber's (2006) revised chronology for the Ptolemaic Yehud coinage, which is based on justified stylistic considerations. On the 'foundations/re-foundations' and their meaning, see Tal 2011.

65. For example, Galvin 2009: 111-46. This issue is beyond the scope of the current endeavor and should be dealt with thoroughly elsewhere. The possibility that the *Josephgeschichte* was added to the proto-canonized Pentateuch only in the early Hellenistic period (above), in order to justify the maintenance of the prosperous Jewish community in Egypt, should be taken into consideration.

became particularly prominent during the first half of the fourth century BCE. During the fifth century BCE, and despite a number of Egyptian uprisings, southern Palestine was a rather undeveloped, strategically insignificant area, hardly worthy of large-scale imperial investment. In contrast, following the Egyptian rebellion of 404–400 BCE, for the first time in more than a century of Achaemenid rule southern Palestine became an extremely sensitive *frontier* of the Persian Empire. The close interaction between the crown and the local administration points to a completely different level of Achaemenid involvement in local affairs that included a fixed arrangement of district boundaries, garrisoning and tight imperial investment, as is witnessed by the construction works at many sites in southern Palestine. Likewise, the introduction of a moneyed economy and the massive use of standardized stamp-seal impressions on Judean storage-jars suggest a significant transformation in the administrative organization of the Province of Judah. It should not be viewed as a coincidence that the canonization of the Pentateuch took place in the framework of this sudden geopolitical change. Indeed, major theological reforms, be it the reforms of Josiah or the reforms of Luther, were most often undertaken in response to macro changes. The canonization of the Pentateuch in the first half of the fourth century BCE should be seen as an essential tool in re-shaping the identity of Judahite postexilic communities in response to a new Persian Empire that no longer included Egypt in its realm. This new political reality demanded an immediate renegotiation and reshaping of local identities versus a re-arranged new imperial order. The canonization of the essentially anti-Egyptian version of the Torah in the early fourth century BCE should not be seen therefore solely as a result of inner-societal compromises between different Judahite groups in the Persian period, but rather as a sophisticated response of Jerusalem's priestly circles to this new reality.

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The Representation of the Persian Empire by Greek Authors, with Special Reference to Aeschylus and Herodotus

Yoshinori Sano

Abstract

This paper seeks to give a brief survey of the images of the Persian Empire and its rulers conceived by Greek authors in the 5th century BCE, with special reference to Aeschylus's *Persians* and Herodotus's *Histories*. The contrast between the Persians and the Greeks is emphasized in various respects: mentions of Persian gold and luxurious clothing, different military equipments between the Greeks and the Persians, and Greek freedom against the slavery of the subordinated peoples under the Persian kings. This contrast relates to the awakened Greek consciousness of the difference between themselves and the Persians after the victory of the Persian Wars. Some differences between the accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus seem to be due to the fact that tragedy can cover smaller time span, and sharper presentation of the materials is required in a tragedy than in a historical prose work. For example, both positive and negative sides of Darius are presented by Herodotus, whereas by Aeschylus Darius is presented solely as a good and pious ruler to make a sharp contrast with Xerxes. The pattern of overconfidence and hybristic act leading to destruction is shared by Aeschylus and Herodotus. This pattern permeates early Greek poetry. Aeschylus's and Herodotus's familiarity with this notion may be related to the fact that these two authors perceived in the Persians, who were different from themselves, the common human condition. This perception may be related to the fact that Aeschylus and Herodotus did not overtly show the trace of the sense of cultural and ethical superiority of the Greeks over the Persians, even though this sense of superiority began to emerge in the 5th century BCE.

Keywords: Aeschylus, Darius, Herodotus, Persian Wars, Xerxes.

Images of the Persian Empire

The Greek world was located on the north-western front of the Persian empire, while the Jewish communities were incorporated into the south-western part of the same empire. Different aspects of Persian rule over Jewish communities are directly or indirectly touched upon in the papers

of this volume. This paper seeks to give the readers a wider perspective by briefly surveying the images of the Persian empire and its rulers conceived by some Greek authors in the 5th century BCE.

The Persian empire had contact with the Greeks after Cyrus defeated Croesus's Lydia and captured Sardis in 546 BCE. The earliest trace of the description of the Persian empire among Greek authors can be found in fragments of Hecataeus's *Periegesis* which was probably composed in the late 6th century. A tragic poet, Phrynichus, took up the subject of military clashes between the Persian empire and Greek states in his plays, *The Capture of Miletus* and *Phoenician Women*. Though both plays of Phrynichus were lost, Aeschylus's *Persians* is extant, which took up the defeat of the Persian fleet at Salamis. The Persian war as a whole is described by Herodotus in his *Histories*. During and after the Peloponnesian war, the Persians tried to intervene. These interventions were mentioned in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* and in Xenophon's *Hellenica.* Xenophon describes his own experience of participating in the revolt of the Persian prince Cyrus against Xerxes II, and how, after Cyrus's death, he and ten thousand Greek mercenaries under his guidance marched through the Persian territory and returned to Greek cities in his *Anabasis*. Xenophon also described the education of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian empire, in his *Cyropaedia*. The Achaemenid Persian Empire was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE. Various aspects of Persian empire were described by other Greek authors such as Theopompus, Strabon, Arrianus and Plutarch.

Edith Hall has shown how the Persians began to be clearly differentiated from the Greeks in Greek tragedies of 5th century BCE. She further argues that the contrast of the barbarians (including the Persians) and the Greeks constituted an important aspect of self-definition of the Greeks (Hall 1989). This contrast between the Greeks and the barbarians led to the cultural and ethical prejudice that is termed 'Orientalism' by Edward Saïd; but Benjamin Isaac has pointed out that the sense of cultural and ethical superiority over the Persians cannot be found in Greek authors of the 5th century BCE, although a precursor of it is discernible in depictions of the Persians on Greek vases of the 5th century (Isaac 2004: 257-83 with figures 2a, 2b).

This paper will concentrate on the representation of the Persian empire by Aeschylus and Herodotus. Aeschylus's *Persians* was first performed in 472 BCE. The scene is set in the Persian city of Susa where the disastrous defeat of the Persian fleet is reported. The exact year of the composition of Herodotus's *Histories* is uncertain, but he must have completed it by 425 BCE. This work covers the entire Persian war beginning from its remote causes, which include the historical development of Persia and other countries.

Since both Aeschylus and Herodotus describe the Persian war, there is a considerable amount of overlap, but there are also interesting differences. Conspicuous common features and a few notable differences in the depictions of

the Persian empire and kings between Aeschylus's *Persians* and Herodotus's *Histories* will be examined, and the backgrounds for the similarities and differences will be discussed.

Luxury

An emphasis on the enormous wealth of the Persian empire is common to the accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the wealth of the Persian empire is frequently associated with gold (*Pers*. 9, 45, 53, 79-80, 159). Vast wealth was associated with Croesus's Lydia in Greek imagination (*Hist*. 1.50-51). The Persian empire which succeeded Lydia is seen in the same light by the Greeks.

In one passage of Aeschylus's *Persians*, the reference to the Athenian silver mine (*Pers*. 237-38) points to the contrast between the Persian empire, whose wealth is symbolized by gold, and Athens, which is associated with silver.

Another symbol of Persian luxury is the elaborate clothing of the Persians. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the stage costumes might have strongly impressed this feature of the Persians upon the audience. It should be noted that the act of tearing the beautiful clothes is repeatedly mentioned or enacted (*Pers*. 198-99, 468-70, 835-36, 1018, 1030, 1060). The tearing of luxurious clothes represents visually the end of Persian prosperity in Aeschylus's *Persians*.

In Herodotus's *Histories*, the material prosperity and luxury of the Persians is overtly emphasized. But the thriftiness of the Persians before their conquest of Lydia is also mentioned in Sandanis's advice to Croesus (*Hist*. 1.71). It should be noted that at the very end of Herodotus's *Histories* is placed a saying of Cyrus (*Hist*. 9.122) to the effect that richer soils will make the Persians weaker. While the emphasis on the great wealth of the Persian empire is common to Aeschylus's *Persians* and Herodotus' *Histories*, the reference to the former thriftiness of the Persians, which is also emphasized by Herodotus but not mentioned in Aeschylus, constitutes a difference between the two. It is understandable that Aeschylus's tragedy, with its smaller scale, needed to produce a simpler and more impressive contrast between the Persians and the Greeks. Herodotus's *Histories*, on the other hand, with its ampler scale, could locate the luxury of the Persians in a historical perspective.

Military Equipments

Their military equipment also distinguishes the Persians. They are associated with archery. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the title *toxarchos*, 'ruler of archery', is given to Darius (*Pers*. 556). It has been pointed out that in relief sculptures

at Behistun and other places, and also on Persian coins, Darius is portrayed as an archer (Hall 1989: 85). So the association of the Persians with archery is based on authentic Persian imagery. Furthermore, in Aeschylus's *Persians*, while the Persians are associated with the bow, the Greeks are associated with the spear. This bow-spear contrast is repeatedly utilized in the first half of the play (*Pers*. 85, 147-49, 278-79; Hall 1989: 85-86).

In Herodotus's *Histories*, the Persians are associated with light armour. Their attire is described in detail as follows:

> First the Persians themselves: the dress of these troops consisted of the tiara, or soft felt cap, embroidered tunic with sleeves, a coat of mail looking like the scales of a fish, and trousers; for arms they carried large wicker shields, quivers slung below them, short spears, powerful bows with cane arrows, and daggers swinging from belts beside the right thigh (*Hist*. 7.61; translation is taken from Sélincourt and Marincola 1972).

This Persian light armour is repeatedly mentioned (*Hist*. 5.97; 7.211; 9.62-63). It is further associated with Persian ignorance of the Greek hoplite tactics (*Hist*. 7.211; 9.62-63). Since hoplite tactics are closely related to the notion of Greek citizen-soldiers, the difference in war equipment and tactics points to the difference in political systems (cf. Hartog 1988: 44.).

Freedom and Slavery

The Persian war is conceived as the Greeks' fight to maintain their freedom. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the audience is repeatedly remided of this point (*Pers*. 50, 242, 402-405). The Persian elders hear the report of the defeat of their side and sing:

> Not for long now will the inhabitants of Asia
> abide under Persian rule,
> nor pay further tribute
> under compulsion to the King,
> nor shall they be his subjects,
> prostrating themselves on the ground; for the kingly power is destroyed
> (*Pers*. 584-90; translation is taken from Hall 1996).

The prostration mentioned in the last line is an overt sign of the servile status of the Persian king's subject people. In Herodotus's *Histories* (7.136), two Spartans are said to have refused to bow down before Xerxes.

The Persian king is regarded as a despot both in Aeschylus and Herodotus. In Aeschylus's *Persians* 213, the queen says that even if Xerxes makes a serious mistake, he is 'not accountable to the country' (*ouk hypeuthynos polei*). This expression brings out the contrast to Athenian officials who had to go through public examination (*euthynai*) after their terms expired (Hall

1996: 97-98). Herodotus states that there was a rule in Persia that a king could do whatever he likes without being punished (*Hist*. 3.31; cf. 3.80).

Differences between the Accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus

I would like to turn to some of the differences between the accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus. In Aeschylus's *Persians*, the war is seen solely from the Persian side. The actions are all set in Susa and no Greek character appears. In Herodotus's *Histories*, on the other hand, the war is depicted from both the Greek and the Persian sides. This peculiarity of the *Persians* may be due to the dramatic convention of Greek tragedy, in which the scene is usually set in one place.

It is also notable that personal names are confined to the Persian side in Aeschylus's *Persians*. No Greek name is mentioned. This may also be due to the conventions of Greek tragedy. The subjects of tragedies are usually taken from myths, not from recent events. The subject of this drama, the battle which happened just eight years before, may have needed to be presented as an event remote from Athenian everyday reality. So the scene is set far away in Susa and no Greek person, not even Themistocles, is mentioned. In this way, the Persian war may have been given the status of a myth (Garvie 2009: xi).

The Report of the Destruction of the Athenian Acropolis

Xerxes' army captured Athens, which was almost empty because most of the citizens and their families had fled from the city, leaving only some priests on the Athenian acropolis. In Herodotus's account, a report of this destruction is swiftly conveyed to Susa through the courier system and the Persians there greatly rejoiced; but when the defeat of the battle of Salamis was reported, the rejoicing suddenly turned into mourning (*Hist*. 8.98-99).

In Aeschylus's account, on the other hand, there is no mention of the destruction of the Athenian Acropolis; only the defeat at Salamis is mentioned. There is also no mention of the Persian courier system. The defeat at the battle of Salamis is reported by a survivor of the Persian army, and later in the play by Xerxes himself, both of whom have come back to Susa from Greece. It is probable that Aeschylus knew of the existence of the courier system, since the word used for 'courier' in this Persian courier system (*angaros*) is used in Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* (252). If so, Aeschylus consciously suppressed the report of the destruction of the Athenian Acropolis (Hall 1989: 93; Garvie 2009: xiii-xiv). Thus Aeschylus's *Persians* opens with the heavy anxiety of the Persian elders who have not received any report as to the outcome of the war, and this anxiety turns to grief.

The Figure of Darius

Another difference between the accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus is the representation of the figure of Darius. In Aeschylus's account, Darius is depicted as a highly successful ruler, whereas Herodotus describes both successes and failures of Darius (Flower 2006: 282). Herodotus describes Darius's failure in his Scythian expedition, as well as his defeat to the Greek army at Marathon. There is, on the other hand, no mention of Darius's Scythian expedition in Aeschylus's *Persians*. The defeat at Marathon is mentioned almost accidentally (*Pers*. 244, 475), without any emphasis. The ghost of Darius never mentions his defeat. Darius's hybristic act of constructing a bridge over the strait of the Bosporus is also mentioned by Herodotus, but suppressed by Aeschylus (Garvie 2009: xxxi). On the other hand, Xerxes' similar act of constructing a bridge over the strait of the Hellespont is openly emphasized in Aeschylus's account. The ghost of Darius explicitly connects Xerxes' hybristic act of bridging over the Hellespont and the destruction of Persian prosperity (*Pers*. 739-52, 821-31). Thus by suppressing Darius's negative aspects, the contrast between Darius the successful ruler and Xerxes the hybristic and failing ruler is clearly emphasized in Aeschylus's drama, while in Herodotus's account, the pattern of overconfidence accompanied by a hybristic act leading to destruction is apparent both with Darius and Xerxes. In Herodotus's *Histories*, the pattern of overconfidence, hybristic act and destruction can be seen also in Cambyses. Even in Cyrus the Great, his military campaign against the Massagetae (1.201-14) may be seen as an overconfident act leading to his destruction. In short, this pattern appears in the case of all the Persian kings in Herodotus's *Histories*, while Aeschylus applied the pattern solely to Xerxes. This may again be due to the difference in scale of the two works.

It is, however, notable that the pattern of overconfidence and hybristic act leading to destruction is shared by Aeschylus and Herodotus. A similar pattern in fact pervades Greek poetry. In the *Odyssey*, the process in which the insolent acts (*atasthaliai*) of humans, often ignoring warnings, lead to their destruction, is emphatically presented in the proem (1.1-10) and Zeus's speech in the assembly of the gods (1.32-43) following the proem, and is exemplified throughout the epic by the fates of Aegisthus, Odysseus's comrades, and Penelope's suitors. In Solon's poems, a still closer formulation of the process is expressed (Hall 1989: 70): 'Surplus breeds arrogance, when too much wealth attends such men as have no soundness of intent' (fr. 6.3-4 West, translation taken from West 1993). In Aeschylus's *Persians* (821-22) a similar process is expressed: 'for hubris flowered and produced a crop of calamity, and from it reaped a harvest of lamentation'. In this connection, it may be noted that the ghost of Darius refers to common human sufferings:

'It is the human condition that calamities happen to men' (*Pers*. 706). Both Aeschylus's and Herodotus's familiarity with tragedies and epics can account for this common feature (for Herotodus, cf. Griffin 2006: 56).

Conclusion

This brief survey has attempted to examine how Greek authors, especially Aeschylus and Herodotus represented the Persian empire and its rulers. The contrast between the Persians and the Greeks is emphasized in various respects. This relates to the awakened Greek consciousness of the difference between themselves and the Persians after the victory of the Persian war.

Some differences between the accounts of Aeschylus and Herodotus seem to be due to the fact that a tragedy covers a smaller time span, and sharper presentation of the materials is required in a tragedy than in a historical prose work.

The pattern of overconfidence and hybristic act leading to destruction is shared by Aeschylus and Herodotus. This pattern actually permeates Greek poetry, both epics and tragedies. Aeschylus's and Herodotus's familiarity with this notion may be related to the fact that these two authors perceived in the Persians, who are different from themselves, the common human condition. This perception may be related to the fact that Aeschylus and Herodotus did not openly show any trace of the sense of a cultural and ethical superiority of the Greeks over the Persians, even though this sense of superiority, which became widespread in the 4th century BCE, was occasionally expressed on vase-paintings in the 5th century BCE.

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