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EDITORIAL (May 29, 1997)

When I began thinking about this issue of Textual Reasoning, I realized there are many reasons to feel excited about our Postmodern Jewish Philosophy Network.

1) Over the past few weeks our discussion network ("tr-list@bu.edu") has been engaging in one of the most riveting conversations in its history. Starting with an exchange between Martin Jaffee, David Bakan, and others on the question of the relation between Oral and Written Torah (Jaffee arguing for the priority of the oral before the written Torah, and Bakan insisting on the legal character of Halakhah as distinct from the pursuit of truth (in the Gadamerian sense Jaffee seemed to impose on Halakhah), David Bakan raised the following question:

HOWEVER. The big however is when halakhah became sacramental. When? Luria? Not Mishnah and Talmud. Between Talmud and Luria? When how? True: When halakhah is a sacrament then its performance becomes a STATEMENT. When halakhah becomes a statement then the whole post modernist approach to sophia becomes relevant. But not till then. What I need from Jaffee, is what happens to his argument if he carefully distinguishes non sacramental from sacramental halakhah. (D. Bakan on tr-list, May 14, 97)

This question triggered the ongoing discussion on the sacramental character of Halakhah and the question of sacramental thinking in general. Pinchas Giller pointed to the cultic (ceremonial) aspect of the laws of the Torah as a sacramental practice. Martin Jaffee augmented this statement by pointing to the religious significance of the "whole rabbinic enterprise" that came in lieu of the destroyed Temple.

Halakhah is sacramental because it is an essentially religious rather than a legal phenomenon. It's as simple as that. Jewish law is "law" in the degree that it prescribes norms. But it is sacrament in the degree that its

proper performance draws blessings from the heavenly into the earthly domain, effecting reconciliation between God and Israel, and forestalling the powers of chaos. The power to effect the economy of the cosmos through the powers of Torah and tradition is ascribed to rabbinic sages from the third century on. It is the very essence of their authority.

So to repeat: there is surely a legal aspect to halakhah insofar as it functions sociologically as a legal tradition with its own logic range of application. But, in my view, what is “religious” about halakhah is not the legitimation of the authority of those norms in “revelation”. That is a purely ideological development. What is religious” about halakhah is precisely the sacramental piety that it inherits from the priestly tradition of Israel. By doing “what Gd wants” one is also effecting changes in the Universe Gd creates. This view is not the invention of the Qabbalists; but they gave it a rather fine metaphysical and mythic grounding. (M. Jaffee on tr-list, May 14, 97)

When David Bakan called for a clarification of the term “sacrament,” a term usually understood solely out of its function and usage in the Christian context, other discussants began to pick up the thread. Philip Culbertson from New Zealand carefully described the Episcopalian theology of sacraments; Robert Goldenberg reminded us of the fact that abstractions of Halakhah may generally be suspected as modern inventions (“\*The\* halakhah” became a problem when the rules became a problem. “What is the significance of ‘the halakhah’?” became a code for “Why were they so obsessed with rules anyway, and what are we going to do about them now?” — Goldenberg on tr-list, May 18, 1997), leading him to concluded that one should look at mitsvah as a sacrament as soon as the concept of a mitsvah arose. This, in turn, was countered by Pinchas Giller who reminded Goldenberg of the fact that the medieval trend to codify mitsvot was intricately related to the pursuit of “reasons for the commandments” (ta’amey hamitsvot), hence not a “modern” phenomenon if modern refers European modernity, political emancipation, and Jewish Reform. Gesine Palmer (Berlin/Jerusalem)

denied that there ever was a time when mitzvot were conceived of without concern for their meaning, adding transcendental-philosophical support to Giller's and Jaffee's religious categorization of the legal tradition.

And so it has been going on with new contributions on an almost daily basis. A wealth of material waiting to be analyzed. Perhaps the beginning of one or two or more forthcoming scholarly projects of research, a number of books or conferences. — Which brings me to

2) THE TEXTUALITIES CONFERENCE. The next matter to be excited about is the upcoming conference at Drew University (June 15-17, 1997). Below you will find the updated details of this event as well as a few samples of the kind of contributions to expect. This conference brings into conversation a number of philosophers and text scholars, this time not in the virtual reality of the internet but rather in the common time and space of Madison New Jersey, for the purpose of taking stock of the various recent attempts in our midst and beyond to overcome the dominant philological and philosophical paradigms and restore a helpful otherness and difference to the text-tradition which has been the well-spring of reason and reasoning to our communities of faith.

This sounds like a return in repentance of a community of scholars but I think it is rather a moment of reflection among scholars whose common discomfort with earlier modes of scholarship has let them to engage in various experiments with modes of meaning-making that may prove helpful in our respective searches for intellectual orientation. Peter Ochs, the spiritus rector and philosopher-in-residence of the conference, describes the goal of the event as follows.

The goal of the conference is to illustrate certain patterns of textual reasoning that are practiced today and that may also be read-into or discovered in certain practices of rabbinic text reading. There are at least two ways to describe the setting of the conference and its goal. First, the Society for Textual Reasoning has gathered an increasingly large group of

readers/thinkers who appear to be practicing certain overlapping methods of text-reasoning — rabbinic text-reasoning in particular — and who would like to talk more about what they are doing — comparing and contrasting their methods. Second, for many members of the Society, the dominant paradigms of western academic inquiry have lost their hegemony: that is, their autonomous capacity and authority to define the terms according to which non-Western or extra-academic traditions of reading and thinking are understood and evaluated. For these members, it is not self evident how contemporary text-readers and -reasoners will articulate their patterns of reading and reasoning: will they articulate them through certain rules of discourse recommended or imposed by the academy? will the text-readings and reasonings generate their own rules of articulation? or will these rules emerge out of some sort of hermeneutical dialogue between what were dominant (alias western) and subjugated (alias non-western, for example, rabbinic) modes of discourse? The conference offers an occasion for both considering these questions and experimenting with some answers.

The open-ended (i.e., talmudic) results of this encounter will be made available in written form as a publication of the Society for Textual Reasoning, becoming a first interpretation of, or even a “New Testament” to, Steven Kepnes, *Interpreting Judaism in a Postmodern Age* (New York: NYU Press, 1996) which itself represents the first concerted attempt of coming to terms with the methodological issues underlying the explorations of this Network.

3) Other events are coming up. Textual Reasoning plans to hold its customary reception/study session at the annual conference of the American Academy of Religion, this year in San Francisco, November 22-25. The text which will be the basis for this event is part of this issue of *tr*. The study session will be chaired by Pinchas Giller of Washington University/St. Louis who also provided translation and introduction of *Sifra de Tseniuta*. This will be the first time we officially venture into the mystical tradition of texts and study on such an occasion.

Similarly we hope to hold a roundtable discussion at the World Congress of Philosophy in Boston, August 10-16, 1998. The general theme of the Congress (only the second in its history to be held in the USA) is PAIDEIA. Our network member Gerda Elata of Ben Gurion University and I rather hurriedly put together the following abstract on "TALMUD TORAH as PAIDEIA" which is, of course, still open to suggestions for improvement and realization.

We propose to organize a set of roundtable study sessions on the topic TALMUD TORAH AS PAIDEIA. 'Talmud Torah' means the 'study of Torah,' i.e., the study of the canon of sacred literature (the Bible and its canonical streams of interpretation) that in rabbinic Judaism is the central form of religious piety. Torah-study was developed in close proximity to Greco-Roman models of education. Hence it should be worthwhile to explore whether it is possible to derive from Talmud Torah a critical perspective on other Western forms of education.

We propose to study biblical and post-biblical Jewish texts (from Midrash to Levinas) in which the notion of perfection as the ideal of paideia is dialectically juxtaposed with models of imperfection as a necessary condition of education both as process and goal; so, e.g., in the story of Eden, in midrashic, and mystical literature.

Out of these texts may emerge an exemplary pedagogical narrative of a God "realizing" (learning) that (perhaps, in order to create a finite world) He had to "imperfect" Himself (the "process," e.g. turning unified – androgynous, in His image and likeness (spiritual?) – "man" into a twosome made of earth, in mystical terms: tsimtsum/separating the Shekhina out from Himself) and to recognize concomitantly the necessary imperfection of His creation (after the Flood: "I will never again curse...for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth").

We shall look at the role of biblical imperfections of God, often glossed over in later philosophical notions of divine omnipotence, as a well-spring of pedagogical notions about human development. In this way, we would demonstrate in action how midrashic study of Torah can function as interpretation with a view to education.

These and other special events can be monitored on our website which is periodically updated

(URL [http://web.bu.edu/mzank/Textual\\_Reasoning](http://web.bu.edu/mzank/Textual_Reasoning)).

4) Speaking of EDUCATION: In this issue we continue the discussion of JUDAISM IN THE CURRICULUM, a discussion initiated by Aryeh Cohen who solicited contributions on this matter. We would like to renew this call for submissions. The matter is important and concerns most of us. How is Judaism represented in institutions of higher (or lower?) learning? What does it mean to educate ABOUT rather than IN Judaism? What about the inside vs. the outside perspective? How much critical scholarship should be part of our courses if our students often lack much of the traditional knowledge or familiarity with content of the sacred literature and its traditional interpretation? What are the larger theoretical and methodological problems in education that we ponder when we construct our syllabi and conduct ourselves as teachers? — Ze'ev Falk contributed a remarkable statement on this topic which we reproduce in this issue.

These are some of the things that went through my head when I thought about Textual Reasoning 6-2. Very exciting, indeed. — Then I remembered a conversation I had with Allan Udoff of Baltimore Hebrew College, one of the first members of what was then called the Postmodern Jewish Bitnetwork. Allan had cancelled his subscription a while ago and I asked him, Why? — Allan told me that at one point he was looking at what was coming over his computer screen and he felt disgusted by what he called a self-congratulatory style which he saw taking over an enterprise he had once supported and which he no longer felt comfortable with.



So in order not to be to self-congratulatory I would like to raise two issues of concern to the editors.

1. Our subject editors have been conspicuously silent and I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to get in touch with us and let us know what you are working on. What are your ideas for projects and for the direction in which you would like to see the journal develop? This goes for our readers in general. Textual Reasoning is an experiment that, in order to succeed, needs YOUR input.

2. This goes also for money. In the past, Peter Ochs paid expenses incurred, for example at the AAR receptions, out of his own pocket. Embarrassingly generous! How about y'all? Please consider making a contribution to the operating costs of Textual Reasoning. Some recipients of the hard-copy edition have been very generous and kind to do so already. We know, we could ask more politely, but, in fact, we did so in the past without result. So here, in plain text: We need at least \$ 250.- for the AAR reception alone! Please give generously! Thanks again, on this occasion, to Steven T. Katz, Director of the Center for Judaic Studies at BU, who sponsored our very elegant website. Thanks also to Miriam Shenitzer who donated the original artwork which graces the website and the title page of the hardcopy of the journal.

There may be other, more profound, matters of concern for the future but these are the most pressing ones for now. Plus, there is a whole issue of Textual Reasoning waiting for your attention.

Thank you for reading/reasoning!

For the Editors,

Michael Zank

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I. DETAILED SCHEDULE AND ABSTRACTS FOR THE CONFERENCE  
ON TEXTUAL REASONING

DREW UNIVERSITY, JUNE 1997

Following is a detailed schedule of the upcoming conference at Drew. This program contains a brief description of the main paper topic, thesis, and/or abstracts of the planned responses.

SUNDAY JUNE 15. SESSION 1: MIDRASH HALACHA  
"COMMENTARY WITHOUT LOGOS, OR INTERPRETATION IN A  
BARTER ECONOMY: PEREK HAZAHAV (TB BABA MATZIA)"

This first session warms us up for the whole conference: introducing some of the most dramatic issues and debates on the relation of theory to practice to textual reasoning.

The main speaker is Daniel Boyarin: a rabbinic text response to Jean-Joseph Goux's neo-Marxian, semi-structuralist analysis of money economies.

Prof. Boyarin writes that his "intention is to use the teaching of Hazahav to introduce the non-logocentricity of rabbinic culture, expressed through its non-monetary nature. This is rabbinic Judaism as a mode of signification, dictated by its non-logos." Drawing on a study previously presented in the electronic journal *Textual Reasoning*, Robert Gibbs suggests that the Amoraim, albeit not the Tannaitic commentary, may be more open to monetary value and its associated semiotic than Boyarin allows.

ABSTRACT OF ROBERT GIBBS, RESPONSE TO DANIEL BOYARIN

The central topic of Boyarin's paper is the Sages' semiotics, and I find myself in profound agreement with his desire to travel across fields of semiosis (money, Scriptural interpretation, gender relations, etc.), in order

to understand the self-conscious rejection of a certain sort of Platonising view of reality and signs. My job, however, is to respond not merely to affirm, and I believe that I can set in motion a discussion that addresses both the economics and the sort of reasoning the Sages do.

The theory I propose is less well-formed than Goux's but I believe that you will also see that it is inclined toward theology more specifically. At the level of the text, I would like to consider further the economics of the Sages and its relation to what I will call the Temple economy. I will distinguish three historical phases of the economic theory. The chapter of mishnah addresses the relation of money as signs and things, but it is confused about whether signs themselves are things and is concerned about the exchange of one sign (gold) for another (silver). This is the problem of translation of meaning. The Tannaim seem determined to make the reality lie in the thing (fruit), and not in the money (only a sign). But their anxiety, as Peter Ochs and I read it, is complicated because there used to be a Temple economy where things and money had absolute value, ascribed through sanctification, and measured by the requirements of Temple service (See Mishnayot 6-8). Thus a third element is introduced by recourse to the Temple economics: the process of signifying, the way of making a cow or some money sanctified and revalued in relation to the Temple. This way of absolute signification/sanctification is destroyed with the destruction.

The problem is the transition from the a Temple Economics (Phase 1) to a realistic economics, where the realia, the produce serves as norm for the economic exchange (Phase 2). I wish to raise the question of how these phases relate to a gold standard economy? Can we make a gold standard substitute for a Temple standard? Or had we better to advocate barter? Our reading of the gemarah, however, points in a quite different direction. While the Tannaim sought an ersatz for the Temple economy, the Amoraim accept the reality of the money economy, but understand it not as a gold standard, but as an exchange between monetary systems, in which there is no absolute standard for the meaning (Phase 3). The focus

now is not on money or thing, but on the way we exchange from money to money, from thing to thing. But this elevates that third element, the process of signification and allows the ethical issues of exchange to dominate (See 45a and following).

At the heart of that examination of signification is an analysis of how authority is secured—how rules of exchange and meaning themselves get established. Without an absolute sanctification securing the rules, the Sages themselves became agents in determining the semiosis. Thus, with Danny, I hold that the Amoraim self-consciously frame their economics against the gold standard, but their interests are not simply barter, a barter that is historically situated after the collapse of an absolute economy.

The second level of my response is a translation of these economic semiotics into a general theory. The distance from Temple Economy to Gold standard becomes one from a theological discourse that has a transcendent God to one that tries to Platonize in the sense of elevating one human idea to a standard position. It is not clear that the Tannaim are following this Platonic tendency, but it is quite clear that the Amoraim are refusing it. One could note that God's Name follows a semiotic like the Temple economy, while theological discourse understood as descriptive discourse about a transcendental principle follows that of the gold standard. But what of the gemarah? If there is a third phase, a post-absolute barter, then this becomes the discourse of a God withdrawn, no longer speaking through prophets, but also not the transcendental signified of philosophic discourse. Just as translations begin to appear kosher, so exchange between currencies is possible. An erased, withdrawn, exiled God is neither the present God nor the pinnacle of logic and authority. Instead of securing reference by recourse to the transcendently real, we look more to the question of how rules get authorized.

If we can distinguish between 1) some idea that governs all discourse and 2) the God who spoke through the prophets and 3) the situation of the

name vulnerable to erasure, then we can see that the transcendence of the revealing God does not model the violence and governance of the Platonic logos, but provides for a richer materialism and a more thorough-going exchange economy than the inversion of the Platonic logos/Gold Standard. The absolute transcendence—especially withdrawn—produces a greater role for the human interpreters, who can neither rely on a natural order nor on a logocentric one. The Sages offer a model not of inverted Platonism, but of God who in exceeding the economy of present entities generates an abundance of meanings for those who interpret.

[END OF ABSTRACT]

Susan Shapiro has recently joined this debate to ask if Boyarin's critique of logocentrism would be better served if it began, itself, in midrash before theory; she asks what midrash itself may say about "economy." Here is what Susan submitted to us in preparation for the exchange.

#### ABSTRACT OF SUSAN SHAPIRO'S RESPONSE TO BOYARIN

I find intriguing the notion of treating midrash in the context of a barter economy, as Boyarin, following Goux, suggests. If one wants to make determinative economic relations for how all other exchanges were enacted, including all forms of discursive judgments and communication—legal and narratological—then reading midrash in these terms helps to locate its economy. But, surely, this is to be only the starting point of Boyarin's treatment of midrash. For, although I think Boyarin attempts to free midrash a bit from its containment within Goux's developmental and explanatory narrative, B. does not fully succeed in doing so and midrash remains captive to the logocentric (and phalocentric) character of Goux's theory.

In order to lift out the barter-economic aspect of Goux's theory from within its teleological narrative, I suggest that B. reverse or, at least, double his starting point. Why not begin with midrash, even the midrashim that are now embedded within the Goux theory? Or, retain the

Goux beginning and supplement it by a second beginning within barter economy and the exchange of midrashim? Starting with another midrashic reading would also be in keeping with the surplus economy of midrash in which meaning is not fulfilled, but augmented. Is there something about economy that midrash can teach us, if we follow its modes of argument, supplement, addition as well as displacement (without loss)? If Goux, in other words, can be used to tell us something about the exchange of words, can midrash tell us something about “economy”? Would even thinking economically differ for being outside of the logoscentric mode?

Another possibility. Take another midrashic text (the Brachot material on dreams, for example) and interpret it in such a way that the issues of Goux and Boyarin are thematized but also interpreted differently, i.e., questioned. I would like to do—and at some point will—this latter project.

There are other matters having to do with God as the measurer and not only as the measured or standard that may complicate some of Boyarin’s present ideas about the shift away from phallogentrism. (Some of this is in Yoma, I believe).

[END OF ABSTRACT]

Susan Handelman, the session host, also reflects on the relation of non-logocentric textual study to the theory of non-logocentricity. She offers an appeal. To enter into this discussion, participants may want first to read Perek Hazahav as a study of semiotics as well as economy: that is, of how money represents a means of signification that separates use (economic or linguistic) from absolute value. Goux’s theory interjects themes of money and mediterranean patriarchy. The resultant discourse finds its way, gradually, from the Father-Logos back to text-immanent reasoning.

ABSTRACT HANDELMAN, RESPONSE TO BOYARIN

This paper raises for me certain questions which I have been struggling with in my own work, and my own engagement with postmodern literary and cultural theory. They are not so much directed at the "argument" of the essay itself but about methodology, theology, language, academic discourse, and the goal of our endeavors.

**\*\*** isn't there some ultimate abyss between the assumptions of "cultural materialism" and the renewal of theology which I think a postmodern sensibility can bring?

**\*\*** Postmodernism should help us also question and alter the very rhetoric and pretentiousness of our academic discourse...and yet all too often we wind up feeling constrained to speak in the jargon of the reigning theorists, who become a kind of new Canon. In the name of differentiating rabbinic or "jewish discourse" from "hellenistic", we often adopt the "hellenistic" language of current academic discourse—whether it be Derridean, Lacanian, New Historicist, body studies etc. How should/could our own academic writing itself enact and embody that which we claim for rabbinic discourse?

**\*\*** who are we writing for? what is the relation of our work to *\*amcha\** and to undergraduate students in their spiritual struggles? How can their resistance to our work also teach us? How do we speak to those in deep search for a language about God, a language of mitzvah, a language of the soul...the latter being a word not commonly found in cultural materialist writing.

**\*\*** in the trinity of "gender, race, class" or "knowledge, power, subversion" where is there room for *\*emunah\**, faith? A story in my college alumna magazine (Smith college) about "religion on campus" quoted a Smith student who said "It is easier to come out as a Lesbian at Smith than as a person of faith." Professors of religion, someone noted, are the only people who are forbidden to profess what they believe.

SUNDAY. PANEL 1: "BEGINNINGS"

An introduction to a new book project on "Beginnings," edited by Aryeh Cohen and Shaul Magid. The panel introduces some of the new approaches to textual reasoning displayed in the book: for example, by Shaul Magid, Charlotte Fonrobert, and Aryeh Cohen as well as by other Conference participants.

MONDAY MORNING JUNE 16.

SESSION 2: BIBLE "REVELATION REVEALED"

(Nu 25: 1-5; Ex 19; 1 King 22; Ezek 20:21-26)

The center and model of all Jewish and other monotheistic revealed religions is the Torah with its assumption of the Mosaic revelation. The main speaker, Tikvah Frymer-Kensky, will present her provocative re-readings of the Biblical texts listed above. In a conference focussing on Talmud Torah — the oral interpretation of Torah —we might expect a session on the written Torah to return us to the conditions and signs of "revelation" itself. Not so, says Prof. Frymer-Kensky: the written Torah itself expresses doubts about the non-interpretive character of any revealed text. The *\*torah she b'chtav\** has its own thickness, we might say.

Virginia Burrus responds affirmatively, articulating the session's critique of foundationalist text-reading, wondering aloud whether the session's thesis might not raise questions about the very distinction between written and oral Torah, and extending the issues to the study of Patristic oral tradition as well. Here is her abstract.

ABSTRACT VIRGINIA BURRUS, RESPONSE TO TIKVA  
FRYMER-KENSKY

The four scriptural texts selected by Dr. Frymer-Kensky—Nu 25:1-5, Ex 19, 1 King 22, Ezek 20:21-26—all constitute, in various ways, through the instantiation of "chaotic" or self-contesting, multi-vocal discourses, "stumbling blocks" for any simple reading of the authoritative status of Scripture itself. Dr. Frymer-Kensky seems to invite us to follow with her the non-linear and self-dissolving "(dia)logic" of a "prohetic" or



"revelatory" book that represents Moses himself as a lying prophet, questions the possibility of a final assessment of the reliability of any voice in the clamor of competitive and contradictory revelations, and suggests that God Godself is capably of issuing "bad laws" purposefully. At stake (perhaps) is the viability of the distinction between "written" and "oral" Torah, between "text" and "commentary." "The authority of Scripture to say, 'It's true because it's written,' simply disappears." The multivocality and unresolved contestatory structure of "oral" traditions of commentary are sunk deep into the "written" text itself, on her reading, so that the line between the two "simply disappears."

Among my own scholarly preoccupations are questions about similarities and differences between "Christian" and "Jewish" theories and practices of reading in late antiquity; this present conversation seems to offer a productive opportunity for one "reperformance" of the ancient dialogue. Several possible lines of exploration suggest themselves at this point. If it may be argued that many early Christians were inclined to subordinate the "letter" of the written text to the prior "authority" of the "Logos" (or "Gospel of Christ"), as mediated by an "oral (apostolic) tradition" that effectively dissolved the distinction between divine author and human commentator (perhaps reflected in the shift from the use of scrolls to more everyday "notebooks" or codices for the copying of Scripture), how does this strategy compare? What is to be said about the structure of a Christian "oral tradition" that began to take the form, first, of schematized narrative "rules of faith" and, later, of codified "creeds"? Origen of Alexandria might provide an interesting focus, given his preoccupation with the "stumbling blocks" in Scripture, his willingness to entertain the possibility of a God who is a "lying" "author," his conviction that truth is to be pursued (but never grasped) through the text of Scripture, and his irrepressible hunch that "rules of faith" provide merely the starting point for a salvific "oral" interpretive enterprise that begins with their disciplined transgression. Later, Origen's conversation about "lies" in Scripture is taken up in a famous epistolary debate between Jerome and Augustine.

Other, more particular and idiosyncratic directions for my own reflections might include consideration of Patristic readings of the figure of Phineas in Numbers 25, or the Christian production (partly outside the commentary tradition) of “chaotic” multivocal texts that enact unresolved contestations of gender roles analogous to those of the Exodus 19 text.

[END OF ABSTRACT]

Session host, Aryeh Cohen, draws lessons for feminist readings of rabbinic as well as biblical literature.

#### MONDAY LUNCH. SESSION 3: MIDRASH AGGADAH

##### “TALMUD TORAH AS SPIRITUAL DESIRE: ON SHIR HASHIRIM RABBAH”

The main speaker, Michael Fishbane, summons our attention with these few words:

“Song of Songs Rabba I.2 offers a unique opportunity to consider a midrashic pericope as a religious-cultural instruction. In the present case, numerous traditions have been anthologized with a pedagogical purpose. Much can be learned from it regarding the mythic dimensions of Torah, the task of study, and the connections between study and spiritual desire. Diverse dynamics shall be considered — particularly those of fullness/emptiness; presence/loss; national/individual eschatology; spiritual desire/sin. I shall hope to consider the semiotics of the whole collection, as well as the religious hermeneutics of two or three key units.”

Prof. Fishbane’s previous work displays his tendency to offer concentric circles of readings, moving out from the narrative in its historical, literary, and redactional setting, to phenomenological, semiotic, and what we might call religious and spiritual dimensions of reading — or perhaps

what we should call readings of the religious and spiritual dimensions of the text.

Steven Fraade's commentary addresses the latter perspective in particular: how the midrash may disclose inner dimensions of the biblical text itself, or at least bring the text into intimate, dialogic relation with those who engage in Talmud Torah.

#### ABSTRACT STEVEN FRAADE, RESPONSE TO FISHBANE

Midrash Song of Songs Rabba, like all early midrashic commentaries, is an anthology of comments that derive from different authorities, times, and contexts. Many of the traditions contained within our sample have previous careers, some first evidenced in earlier midrashic commentaries to books of the Torah (e.g., the Mekilta to Exodus and the Sifre to Deuteronomy in conjunction with explicating the Song at the Sea or the revelation at Mt. Sinai). Reading Neusner's brief explanations to our text, it would appear that the creation of a running commentary to the Song of Songs was simply an editorial opportunity to join together such thematically related traditions with little hermeneutical relation to the sequential verses of Song of Songs to which they were attached. However, reading the list of themes that Buzzy will be addressing in his exploration of this commentary, we might ask to what extent the anthologized commentary, notwithstanding its characteristically midrashic reading of single verses or parts of verses out of context (or, into other contexts), is not, indeed, deeply colored and shaped by an engagement with the Song of Songs as a whole.

The recurring midrashic trope of desire and its deferral is certainly that of the Song of Songs itself, however much its sensual terms have been allegorized or rabbinized. Thus, the lovers of the Song, like Israel and God of the midrash, shuttle between intimacy of each other's presence and the sorrow of mutual loss, the simultaneous desire for and fear of unmediated ("mouth to mouth") contact, being alone to each other while in the lurking

presence of others, the longing for knowledge and the fear of forgetting, the blending of love and death.

But there is a third level — besides that of the Song of Songs and its literary midrash — at which these correspondences play out in the formation of commentary: the relation between the midrashic commentary and its oral enactment through social study by and between its students. In the time between promise/desire and its fulfillment, they too seek, experience, but ultimately defer spiritual intimacy. In their active yet anxious engagement with midrash, they uncover meaning even as it escapes them, they gain knowledge even as they forget it, they foretaste transcendence and holiness in the very midst of their mortality and evil. To borrow a psychoanalytic term, how does midrashic process fashion for its students a “talking cure” for the anxieties of these anomalies?

[END OF ABSTRACT]

Session host, Steven Kepnes, will address how Talmud Torah may disclose inner dimensions of the community of reading.

#### MONDAY AFTERNOON. SESSION 4: TALMUD

“IF THE TORAH HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN TO MOSHE...? On: b Sanhedrin. 21b-22a and parallels”

The main speaker, David Weiss Halivni, will present his theologically charged, historiographic reading of tb Sanh 21b-22 and related Talmudic passages. Halivni articulates a talmudic tradition according to which Ezra received, restored and repaired a “maculate” Torah, thereby initiating the tradition of oral Torah, torah she b’chtav, to which the rabbinic sages, and also Halivni, contribute. Commenting on Talmudic treatments of Shimon haTsaddik and on related texts, Halivni will make further claims about the evolutionary development of the oral torah throughout rabbinic history.

In response to Halivni, Menachem Lorberbaum asks “if a number of questions are not being conflated in Halivni’s uses of the image of Ezra: the importance of Ezra, the meaning of the redaction of the Torah, and the question of analyzing a Talmudic sugya, or argument. . . I think this is all unnecessary because I think Hazal (the sages) were of a radical hermeneutic mindset.”

Offering another response, Peter Ochs asks if Halivni has not introduced a paradigm for postcritical historiography. He suggests that the burden of modern academic inquiry has been reductive historicism as well as reductive theoria. In the manner of his academic colleagues, Halivni offers “plain sense historiography,” but he also offers a “depth historiography”

MONDAY EVENING. FIFTH SESSION: MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY  
“GERSONIDES ON THE TORAH OF CREATION: ON PESHAT AND TRANSLATION”

The main speaker on this topic is Norbert Samuelson, who will focus on pp. 9a-b of Levi ben Gershom’s (Gersonides’) Interpretive Commentary on Gen.1.1. The texts to be studied under Norbert’s guidance is a line by line comparison of the Hebrew of Gersonides used by Samuelson and by Robert Eisen, line by line comparisons of their two translations, and a letter from Samuelson about what he will present at the conference. Rober Eisen, Michael Signer, and session host Almut Bruckstein will respond to this guided reading.

Samuelson’s Jewish-philosophic interest in this philosopher’s Bible commentary will be captured through comments on how Gersonides has been translated and, in turn, how he “translates” the words and meanings of Genesis.

TUESDAY JUNE 17. BREAKFAST PANEL  
RESPONSES TO THE CONFERENCE BY A PANEL OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS: George Lindbeck, David Ford, Daniel Hardy

TUESDAY MORNING. SIXTH SESSION: MYSTICISM

"TALMUD TORAH AS TIKKUN HASHECHINA: MOSHE H. LUZZATTO'S ADIR BAMAROM (a commentary on the Zohar)"

Elliot Wolfson will present the main paper for this panel. He writes,

"In my presentation, I will focus on the link between Torah study and the task of repairing the Shekhina in the messianic kabbalah of Ramhal (1707-1746). The kernel of this idea is much older, indeed traceable to a passage in the BAHIR, on of the foundational texts in the emergence of kabbalah. What interests me is not the textual history of this idea, but the experiential dimension it assumes in its particular application within the kabbalistic fraternity of Luzzatto."

First Respondent is Tzvi Blanchard, Session Chair and Second Respondent is David Novak. Novak's response will focus on the question of sexuality:

NOVAK ON WOLFSON

Wolfson's presentation cogently analyzes not only the motif of sexuality that is integral to kabbalistic theology, but also how specific its symbolism becomes in the work of Luzzatto. That specificity extends to actually seeing symbolic significance in the parts of the male genitalia. After Freud, however, one must ask Wolfson just how one is to take the connection between religious and sexual reality in kabbalistic theology, especially but not exclusively that of Luzzatto. Is it one that assumes a pansexuality, where sexuality is the key whereby all reality is to be understood? Or, is it a cosmic sublimation of sexuality, one that takes sexuality to be essentially epiphenomenal and thus ultimately deprived of its own reality for the sake of a superphysical and superpsychical replacement? If the former, then how is religious practice sexualized? If the latter, then how is sexual practice transcended? Finally, what does all of this contribute to the cultural and political debates about embodiment, gender, and sexuality taking place in our society today?

[END OF ABSTRACT]

In a third response, Edith Wyschogrod raises the question of “epistemic affinities” between Luzzatto and Spinoza.

#### WYSCHOGROD ON WOLFSON

The theological disclosures of Luzzato’s text are read through its rich imagery. How are images as such construed, ie can a meta- level theory of images be discerned in his work? Where are the similarities and differences between the structural and lexical elements of Luzzato’s account of image/imagination and those of the preceding rationalist view of Spinoza? Elliot argues (contra Scholem) that Luzzato’s theistic view of the partsufim is not merely a demythologizing strategy; instead Luzzato is said to espouse the myth of the theosophical kabbalah but to locate the myth in the imagination. Elliot (in his galleys) cites Luzzato as saying “The soul that sees what it sees outside the body depicts these things the imagination” (p. 292n). Spinoza, amicus of intellect rather than of imagination, nevertheless contends that so long as the mind imagines those things that increase the body’s power to act, the body’s powers are actually increased and, as a result, the mind’s power of thinking is increased; conversely the mind’s powers are diminished when it imagines what diminishes the body’s actions. Does imagination function in something like this fashion in the reparation of the Shekhina in Luzzato? (This is not intended as a historical question about the possible kabbalistic resonances in Spinoza but rather as one about epistemic affinities.)

TUESDAY LUNCH: CONCLUDING PANEL: “MODERN AND POSTMODERN JEWISH THOUGHT”

Session Chair and First Presenter: Eugene Borowitz

Panel: Yudit Greenberg, Irwin Kula, Jacob Meskin, Michael Zank, Laurie Zoloth-Dorfman.

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## II. ON JUDAISM AND JEWISH STUDIES

In the following, we continue our series of reflections on Judaism and education, more specifically on the teaching of Judaism within the curriculum of secondary and tertiary education. You will find two very different contributions below. The first is by Professor Ze’ev Falk who will spend the coming summer in New York City to work on a postmodern approach to biblical texts. The second is by Yonatan Kaganoff, a student at Yeshiva University. The former considers the shift of paradigms from historicist philology to a postmodern reading of the sources to arrive at a fundamental programmatic statement, the second responds to Aryeh Cohen’s initial exploration of the often tense relation between traditional and academic talmud study. We gratefully acknowledge both of these submissions which indicate something of the variety of perspectives among our members.

### REFLECTIONS ON JEWISH STUDIES

By Ze’ev Falk

“Jewish Studies”, the present term for the “Wissenschaft des Judentums” inaugurated by Leopold Zunz in 1818, constitute those studies of the culture of the people of Israel based on the historical, philological and comparative methods. Texts and phenomena are being interpreted, in this discipline, in their human and historical settings as objectively as possible and without any subjective commitment or bias.

But already one of the founders of the new discipline, Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865), criticized those who study Israel’s culture exactly



like the cultures of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia and Persia, without making an attempt to understand the Bible as the Word of God and as a struggle between the divine and the human spirit.

Studying and teaching religious texts “objectively” “from outside” and “from a distance” means, indeed, missing an essential part of the message. He who applies the Weberian “Wertfreiheit” to the study of spiritual literature is like measuring the decibels of a concert or analyzing the colour print of a poem.

Being haunted by the historical-philological method, scholars of Jewish Studies usually miss the opportunities offered by the methods of comparative religion, anthropology and new literary criticism. The first discipline could have led them to a better understanding of the divine or of holiness. The second might have taught them about human capacity of self-transcendence, while the last could have developed the concept of continuous revelation.

Even more important would have been a greater use of an up-to-date hermeneutics. According to the teachings of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) and Hans Georg Gadamer (1900- ), there is no understanding of the past without a re-experience at present and without some prior commitment to the text under consideration (Gadamer: *Truth and Method*, London-New York, 1976). The criticism of language, as developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), should also serve as a warning to Jewish Studies against the hybris of knowing the “true” sense of a given text.

The study of any text is actually a dialogue between the text and its reader. Paul Ricoeur (1913- ) calls therefore for a criticism which is no longer reductive but restorative, for a “second naivete” and for an understanding in order to believe, as well as for believing in order to understand (The *Symbolism of Evil*, transl. E. Buchanan, Boston, Beacon Press, 1969, 350-352).

The sooner we get away from the illusion that there is only one “true”, critical and “scholarly” meaning of any text, the greater is our chance to perceive its spiritual meaning and to listen to its intended message. Oddly enough, this insight of the ancient rabbis creating the Midrash is the guideline of present-day hermeneutics, but not of the scholars of Jewish Studies.

Jewish Studies are urgently in need of theology and philosophy. There can be no real understanding of Torah, Prophets and Scriptures without engagement in the question of truth and metaphysics, and the same applies to rabbinical texts. The overemphasis of historical questions and the evasion of questions of meaning in the interpretation of a culture of metaphysics must lead to erroneous conclusions.

As Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) put it, “when we turn to the Bible with an empty spirit, moved by intellectual vanity, striving to show our superiority to the text; or as barren souls who go sight-Seeing to the words of the prophets, we discover the shells but miss the core... Just as we cannot test thinking without thinking, we cannot sense holiness without being holy... Thus we must accept the Bible in order to know the Bible; we must accept its unique authority in order to sense its unique quality. This, indeed, is the paradox of faith, the paradox of existence”.

The prevalent insistence among the scholars of Jewish Studies upon a secular attitude and their demonstration of irreligiosity is very often a means to differentiate them from the religious public studying the same sources out of religious identification. According to various studies, analyzed by Robert Wuthnow, faculty members in the social sciences or the humanities who believed in God were far more likely to say they had to keep their religious convictions and their research separate than those in the natural sciences, who felt they did not have to keep the two separate. Irreligiosity, therefore, plays a “boundary-posturing” function compensating for an ill-defined discipline to distance it from the general

public (Science and the Sacred, in: P.E. Hammond: The Sacred in a Secular Age, Berkeley, UC Press, 1985, 187-203).

Jewish Scholars, obviously, cannot return to the "primitive naivete", which is the rule among orthodox students of the classic texts. However, once the critical aspects to any given text have been discussed, they should follow the example of Brevard S. Childs in his Exodus commentary. The latter completes the critical discourse of every chapter by a christological exposition. A Jewish teacher of the Bible or other spiritual texts, likewise, should supplement his critical presentation by discussing with his students around the table the existential and spiritual meaning of the studied text for him or her personally.

Ze'ev W. Falk

1 Adar II 5757 (3/9/97)

A RESPONSE TO ARYEH COHEN,

"On Judaism and Jewish Studies" (tr 5-1, 1997) By Yonatan Kaganoff

Aryeh Cohen in his essay, "On Judaism and Jewish Studies", attempts to argue against the possibility for common dialogue between the Yeshiva and the New Academy. Particular to this barrier is the current competition for the authoritative interpretation of texts, especially Rabbinic texts of late Antiquity. At most, each side acknowledges a wary awareness of the other's existence, but they are prohibited from communicating by their different traditions and the inability to share a common language. Cohen also notes a social division between Rabbi and Heretic, or, as he denotes, "University Professor of Talmud". I find it erroneous, however, to assume that an uncrossable chasm exists between these two artificially constructed "academies." It would be more profitable to construct a model of textual analysis where the players are determined by their approach to text rather than historically, based upon entrance into modernity. With this understanding, those of the Yeshiva and the New Academy are seen in alliance against those using a Historical/Geographic approach. For both

the Sugyetist and the Talmudist (see below, note 1) respect an inherent cohesiveness within the text, between the question and the answer, alternative resolutions to textual issues, and various options in interpreting earlier statements, in contrast to the Historicist, who dissects the text into independent components. Both the Talmudist and Sugyetist seek a careful literary reading of the text and of its primary commentaries, seeing subtle, nuanced tensions within the wording and ideas give rise to multiple understandings, revealed in the reading of commentators from the canonization of the text through the current era.

By highlighting their common assumptions and techniques, a common language can easily be found between the Postmodern Academy and the Bait Medrash. A glaring example for this potential for communication is highlighted by Cohen himself in his latest piece on Kiddush Hashem, which is predicated upon the famous first essay of Rav Haym Soloveitchik of Brisk (1853-1918) where Soloveitchik reads the passive/active dialectic within the Kiddush Hashem Sugyah.

But questions must be asked. "What profit could this dialogue offer to each of its participants?" Among other benefits, the Sugyetists offer a deeper understanding of metaphor and psychological motivations than is currently available within the canon of the Yeshiva. Additionally, they present the possibility to translate the highly nuanced terminology of Brisker lomdus, the current conceptual approach of the Bait Medrash, into a language accessible to those outside of its four walls. For example, we lacked a proper literary equivalent to the idea of never totally rejecting a "I would have said" (Hava Amina), a building block of lomdus, until the invention of concepts under erasure. The Yeshiva offers the New Academy 1000 years of insightful readings of texts. It also offers a partnership with those who have mastered the corpus of the literature of late Antiquity and its "narrative arc" as guides and partners in exploring these texts. "Who could be asked to mediate this unprecedented dialogue of those from such divergent backgrounds?" But it is precisely in "academies" such as Yeshiva University (I do not know of the

Conservative Seminaries), where instead of the chasm being clearest, as described by Cohen, that a possibility for a bridge across the gap exists with students and faculty assisting “philosophers” and Talmudists across into each other’s domains. I envision a scene where the Talmudist would guide the philosopher through the text, with its medieval, and modern interpreters who reread and unify the Sugyah. The philosopher could then express those ideas in post-Modern terminology, expanding, elaborating, and further revealing the text, in a give and take chavrusa with the Talmudist. This unique possibility for textual reasoning is closed off in Aryeh’s essay.

1. I am using the term Talmudist only to designate the resident of the Yeshiva in contrast to the Sugyetist of the New Academy, but intend for no further implications.

Yonatan Kaganoff is a student at Yeshiva University and the RIETS of YU studying towards S’micha. He is a subscriber and avid reader of TR-list.

### III. A WORKING TRANSLATION OF THE SIFRA DE-TZENIUTA

Pinchas Giller, Washington University, St. Louis

#### Introduction

The Zohar is the central work of the Kabbalah, and the central passages of the Zohar are the Idrot which present the mysteries of the Divine anthropos. The Idrot serve as the basis for the subsequent development of Kabbalah, particularly the school of Isaac Luria. These texts include the Idra Rabbah or “great Idra” (Zohar III 127b-145a) and the Idra Zuta or “lesser Idra” (Zohar III 287b-296b). A third Idra, the Idra de-Bei Mashkena (“the Idra of the Tabernacle”) is also referred to at the beginning of the Idra Rabbah, although it seems not to be extant at this time. The Idrot are summarized and glossed in the allusive little work before us, “The Hidden Book” (Sifra de-Tzeniuta, Zohar II 176a-179a).

Kabbalah means, literally, “that which is received.” Sifra de-Tzeniuta is not meant to be an open palette of symbolism, or a spiritual Rorschach. It alludes to a very specific myth which is more fully explored in the Idrot. A faithful reading of the text presupposes that the reader is familiar with the accompanying myth. This myth, embellished in many ways, made up the oral tradition of the Safed kabbalists. Attempts to present the myth systematically make up the bulk of subsequent kabbalistic literature. It will be presented, as best as is possible, though the medium of the remarks in the end notes, (1) although they are not comprehensive. Sifra de-Tzeniuta presents many questions for scholarship. Was it composed as a precis to the Idrot. If so, was it composed before or after? Is it the work of the same author as the Idrot (2)?

This, then, is the center of the Kabbalah, a work that serves as a meditation text for kabbalists in the Lurianic school of R. Shalom Shar’abi and is thence considered, in the emerging spirituality of the Land of Israel, canon. Besides the myth of the Idrot, the text also works as a midrash on the first chapters of Genesis. The Sifra de-Tzeniuta contains imagery from across the Jewish mystical tradition, with much symbolic exegesis of the Bible (3). There is also a strong doctrine of the powers inherent in the Divine name YHVH, and how these powers alter based on the various ways that one may vocalize the Name. Finally, there are allusions to the sefirot, both directly and in the form of symbols, a mysticism of language that is the essence of theosophical Kabbalah.

## THE HIDDEN BOOK (SIFRA DE TZENIUTA)

### 1.

It has been learned- The hidden book (4), the book that was weighed on the scale.

Until there was a scale, they did not examine face to face.

The primordial kings died (5) and their unions were not found, and the land came to naught.

Until the start of the desire of desires, the garments of glory were set forth and stored.

This scale hangs in a place that is not, weighed on it are those who do not exist (6).

The cups are balanced on the stand (7).

It is not unified and it is not seen.

On it rise those who are not, who are and who will be.

Aspect within aspect, they are set forth and summoned in one skull (8), which is full of the dew of the bedellium (9).

The membrane of the air is gleaming and sealed.

The bleached wool hangs like a weight, the Will of Wills is revealed in prayer of those below.

Sharp, watchful, unblinking Overseen, watched constantly, ever guarded.

The oversight below is like the oversight that shines above.

Two windows of the command post ("pardashka"), arousing the spirit to all.

"First God Created Heaven and Earth," six-"Breishit."(10) Created six above them.

All are below and are contingent on the seven of the skull, until the glory of glories.

"And the Earth" two, but not in number, and does it not say, from that which was cursed it came forth, as it is written," from the land that God cursed (Gen . 5:29)."

It was "unformed and chaos and darkness was on the face of the Deep and the spirit of Elohim hovered on the face of the water."

Thirteen contingent on thirteen, glory of glories.

Six thousand years contingent on the first six.

The seventh above them, overcoming alone.

Everything was destroyed in twelve hours.

As it is written, "it was unformed and void and darkness was on the face of the Deep and the spirit of Elohim hovered on the face of the water."

Thirteen are upheld in mercy and renewed as before, and the six arise, as it says "created "after which it says it was" for it truly was. And in the end, unformed and chaos and darkness.

"None but the Lord shall be exalted on that day( Isaiah 2:11)."

He engraved engravings (11), like the image of a long snake, extending here and there, its tail to its head and its head to its shoulder (12), passing quickly, guarded and hidden.

Once in a thousand short days it is revealed the understanding, absorbing the gleanings (13).

Its fin is its portion.

Its head is broken in the waters of the great sea as it says (Psalm 74:13): "You broke the head of the sea serpents on the water."

There were two, and one was returned (for "taninim "is written in the shorter way).Heads, as it says (Ezekiel 1:22): "The image was on the heads of the beasts of the firmament."

"And God said let there be light and there was light."

As it is written (Psalms 33:9): "He spoke and it came to pass."

He alone.

And afterwards, there returned one YHV"Y YH"V VY"V.

And the last Y' is the lower Shekhinah, as the Shekhinah is found in the H', and they are weighed in one scale.

"And the beasts flew back and forth," as it says, "God saw the light, that it was good." "Say of the tzaddik that he is good" (Isaiah 3:10).

This one rises on the scale.

The first one is alone, and all returns to one.

The sister and her intimate (14) are subsumed, one in the other in YU" D H" E, the loving crowns that embrace.

Six go out from the branch of the root of the body.

The language of great speech.

The language, hidden between YU" D and H" E.

As it is written (Isaiah 44:5): "This one will say, I am for YHVH, another will use the name " Jacob" another will mark his arm for YHVH and adopt the name of Israel. "

Truly this one will say, for YHVH: sister.



And everything is said in YH" V.

All are contained in the hidden language for Imma, for she opens herself to bring forth.

Abba sits at the head. Imma in the middle, covered here and here.

Woe to the one that uncovers their nakedness!

"And God said let there be lights in the firmament of heaven," the male ruling the female (15).

As it is written (Proverbs 10:25) "The tzaddik is the foundation of the World."

The YU" D shines in two and shines past the feminine ("nukvah").

The YU"D unifies alone, rising though its levels, higher and higher.

The feminine darkens, Imma shines and is open through her gates.

Comes the key that is subsumed into six, and covers the opening and unifies below with this one and that one.

Woe is he that reveals the opening!

2.

The beard of faith is not mentioned (16) because it is the preciousness of all (17).

From the ears it goes out, circling the face; rising and falling, a white hair.

In the thirteen they separate (18).

In that glory of glories, it is written (Jeremiah 2:6) No man (ish) passed by it and no man (adam) sat there.

Adam is outside (19).

Adam is not included here, or "Ish," all the more so.

In the thirteen rushing springs, four are specifically guarded, and nine water the body.

Before the orifice of the ears the glory begins to set itself forth.

It descends in the beauty of the head of the lips.

It stands over this head to that head.

The path that goes out under the two windows of the command post, passing off sin, as it is written (Prov. 19:11): "And His glory passes over sin.."

His lower lip is surrounded by hair for the other head. The other path goes out beneath it, heaped with the fragrant offering for the upper head.

The two apples appear, shining with sparks.

The mazal of everything hangs down to the heart, on it are contingent the upper and lower.

The hanging ones do not go out from one another.

The shorter ones cover the throat of the glory.

The greater ones are measured out in a full measure.

The lips turn in from all sides.

Worthy is the one who is kissed with those kisses!

In that mazal of everything flow thirteen anointings of pure persimmon (20).

All are found and hidden in that mazal.

When Tishrei comes, the seventh month, these thirteen are found in the upper world and thirteen gates of mercy open.

In that time it is written (Isaiah 55:6): "Seek YHVH where He is found."

It is written (Gen. 1:11): "Let the Earth be covered with grasses sprouting seed, tree bearing fruit."

As it is written (Lev. 16:31): "You will afflict your souls "on the ninth of the month towards evening.

"ADN"Y YHVH you began to show Your servant Your greatness (Deut. 3:24)." YHVH, whole in his aspects. And here, in this arousal of the land, it is not whole.

YH" Y is not written.

We call the higher Yo" d the lower Yo" d.

"Va-yiytzer" (And he formed) the higher Y' , the lower Y'.

"Va-Yehiy"(And it was) The higher Y', the lower Y, H' in its body, the general wholeness.

Whole, (but) not to every aspect.

This name is uprooted from this place and planted in another.

As it says "YHVH the Lord planted (Gen. 2:8)."

H' between Yo" d to Yo" d of YH"Y.

A breeze from the command post (21) of 'Attika to Zeira Anpin.

With no spirit (ruach), it could not stand.

In H"e are contained the higher H', the lower H' and it is written (Jeremiah 1:6): "Aha, YHVH Lord!"

In the Divine flow(22) in the spirit of the scale YH" Y.

The higher Y' that is crowned in the knot of 'Attika is the higher membrane that is shining and sealed.

The higher H" e, that is crowned in the spirit of the command post (23), goes out to give life.

The higher V', the dark spark (24) (Butzina de-Kardinuta) that is crowned in its aspects, letters spreading back, subsumed in Zeira de-Anpin.

As it begins in the skull, it is found extending through the whole body, to ornament everything like clean wool as these letters hang from it.

As it is revealed to Zeira, these letters are settled in it and it is called by them.

The Yo" D of 'Attika is sealed in its crowns(25), for the left is present.

The H"H opens in another and is penetrated with two orifices and is present in tis tiqqunim.

Va" v is opened in the other as it is written (Songs 7:10): "My beloved walks the straight path."

In the dark spark is the opening covered.

V' above and V' below. H' above and H' below.

Y' above and no other joins with it and it does not rise in this, except though a hint that is hinted when the two are revealed and unify as one level, one feeling in order to separate.

O" D included in Yo" d.

Woe, when this departs and is revealed!

These spices of the empty scale(26), passing, are not detained in their places.

(Ezekiel 1:14)"The beasts passed back and forth.."

Flee back to your place!

"If you nest high as an eagle and if you place your nest between the stars, from there I will bring you down (Ovadiah 1:4)."

"And the land brought forth seed (Gen. 1:12)."

When?

When the name was planted.

Then the aether went forth and the spark was summoned.

One skull, extended in its aspects, full of dew, ascending in two colors.

Three chambers of the engraved letters are revealed in it.

Black as a raven, hanging over deep chasms that cannot be heard here, right or left. Here is one slender path upwards.

The brow in which no worldly conflict shines, except when the will oversees it (27). Eyes of three hues glimmer before him, surrounded by shining milk.

As it is written: "Your eyes will see Jerusalem, the tranquil dwelling (Isaiah 33:20)."

And it is written (Isaiah 1:21): "Righteousness will lodge there."

The tranquil dwelling is the sealed Attika..

It is written: "your eyes (28)."

The nose of the countenance Zeir, to be known (29)!

Three torches burning in its nostrils.

A deep level, teaching good and evil.

It is written (Isaiah 42:8): "I am YHVH, it is my name."

And it is written (Deut. 32:39): "I kill and bring to life."

And it is written (Isaiah 46:4): "I will bear and I will suffer."

"He is the one who made us and not ourselves (Psalms 100:3)."

"He does not reply to any mans charges (Job 33:13)."

He is that which is called sealed, inaccessible and unseeable.

He is that which cannot be called by a name.

H' containing V'.

V' containing A' and not containing H'.

A' Y' , that is hidden of all hiddennesses to which the O" d does not connect.

Woe when the Y' does not shine on the O" d!

When the Y' withdraws from the O" d through the sins of the World, the nakedness of all is revealed.

Of this it is written (Lev. 18:7): "Do not reveal the nakedness of your father."

When the Yu" d deserts the H" e, of this it is written: 'And the nakedness of your mother, do not reveal her nakedness."

She is truly your mother, "For you shall call Understanding (Binah) your mother (Proverbs 2:3)."

3.

Nine precious tiqqunim were passed on to the beard (30).

Everything that is hidden and not revealed, high and precious, it is found, and yet it is called "hidden."

The first tiqqun of the beard, strands upon strands, from above the opening of the ears until the upper lip, this top to that top it is found.

Beneath the two nostrils, a path so full that it is not visible.

The cheeks overlap from this side and that.

In them are visible the apples that are red as roses.

On one thread strong black locks hang to the chest; lips turning, red as roses.

Short ones descend down the throat and cover the neck.

Long and short fall down evenly. In these is found the mighty hero, wherever it is found.

As it is written (Ps. 118: 5): "From the straits I called, Y" H."

Nine did David say (31), until "all the Gentiles surrounded me," to surround and to defend himself.

"Let the Earth be covered with grasses sprouting seed, every seed in its own kind, tree bearing fruit. (Gen. 1:11)."

These nine were uprooted from the whole name and afterwards were planted in the whole name, as it is written (Gen. 2:8): "and YHVH Elohim planted."

The tiqqunim of the beard are thirteen in the higher one, and nine are visible in the lower.

Twenty-two letters engraved because of them.

On this, whoever sees in a dream that he has seized the beard of an important man, or that he stretches out his hand to him, let him know that he is one with his Master (32).

Those who hate him will be bent beneath him.

So much more so is the high beard that shines on the lower, for the higher is called "great lovingkindness," and the smaller is called simply "lovingkindness" and when necessary the higher beard shines on it and it is also called " great lovingkindness." "And

Elohim said: Let the waters swarm with every manner of living creature (Heb. Nefesh chayah) (Gen. 1:20);" that is to say, Ch"Y

Y" H extended the shining of this one onto that.

All of them were aroused at one time, the good waters and the evil waters, for he said "Let (them) swarm "

The higher creature and the lower creature.

The good creature and the evil creature.

"And Elohim said: Let us make man! (Gen. 1:26)"

Not "the man," but simply "man." To exclude the higher man, who was made from the whole name.

When this one was completed, that one was completed.

Male and female were created to complete everything, YHV" H the realm of the male.

Elohim the realm of the female.

The male extended and set forth its tiqqunim like a mother in the mouth of a maidservant.

The kings that were negated are set up here.

The dinnim of the male are mighty at the beginning and rest at the end, while the reverse is true of the female.

And Y" H, the hard shells of the knots are tucked into the bosom, and the small Y' is found within it.

'Attika wanted to discern if the dinnim had been perfumed.

The serpent had intercourse with Eve (33) and a nest of pollution was established within her, creating a dwelling of sin, as it is written

(Gen. 4:1): " she conceived and bore Cain," the nest (34) of the dwelling of the evil spirits, the storms (35) and malevolent demons (36).

He set forth in that man crowns (37), general and specific (38) contained in specific and general.

highs and arms, right and left.

This one divided in its aspects.

Set forth male and female, YH"V. Y', male, H' female.

V', it is written ( Gen. 1:27): "Male and female he created them. And he blessed them and he called their name Adam."

The form and countenance of a man sitting on a throne.

And it is written (Ezekiel 1:26): "And on the image of the throne the image like a man on it from above."

4.

'Attika is hidden and sealed.

Zeira de-Anpin is revealed and not revealed.

For it is revealed in written letters, and concealed, sealed in letters that are not settled in their places, for the higher and the lower are unsettled in it.

"And Elohim said let the Earth bring forth every living being in its kind, animal and creeping thing (Gen. 1:24)."

As it is written (Psalms 36:8): "Man and beast will praise God."

One is found in the in the essence of another.

The beast in the category of the man, as it is written (Lev. 1:2):

"When a man (Adam) brings a sacrifice from you to YHVH, of an animal..." because it is in the category of the man.

When Adam descended below in the higher form, there were found two spirits from two aspects, and the man included both right and left.

From the right, the holy soul (neshamah).

Of the left, the living soul (nefesh chayyah).

When Adam sinned, the left extended, and these extended incorporeally.

When they embraced together, they gave birth like that beast that gives birth to many from one embrace.

Twenty two sealed letters, twenty two revealed letters.

A hidden Y' and a revealed Y'.

Hidden and revealed, weighed on balanced scales.

Male and female come out of Y'.

U" D (39) in this place, V' male, D' female.

In this way, D"U two (40) crowns.

Y' specifically male. H' female.

H' was first D'.

And when it conceived in a vav within it there came forth a vav .

It appeared as Y' in the general vision of YH' V.

When Yo" d came forth, as male and female, it dwelt behind and covered Imma.

"And the sons of God saw the daughters of man.(Gen. 6: 2)" As it is written (Joshua 2:1): "Two men, secret spies."

What are the daughters of men?

As it is written (Kings I 3:16): "Then came to two prostitutes to the king."

Because of them, it is written (Kings I 3:28): "For they saw that the wisdom of Elohim was within him."

Then they came, and not before.

On the rule of the embrace (knot) of the stillborn, there were two embracing above.

Below, they descended and inherited the dust.

They lost the good portion that they had, the crown of mercy and they were crown in a tunic of grapes.

"And Elohim said to Moses, why do you cry out to me? (Exodus 14:15)."

"To me, "specifically.

"Speak to the children of Israel and let them move."

"Let them move," specifically.

In the mazal on which it is contingent, that comes to glorify the beard.

"Do what is right in his eyes and hearken to his commandments and keep all of his laws (Exodus 15:26)."

"For I, YHVH, am your healer," specifically for this.

5.

"Oh sinning nation, people laden with iniquity, evil seed, degenerate children (Isaiah 1:4)!"

Seven levels Yo" d H' V' H' H' Y' bringing forth V' D' , it is H' bringing V' , V' bringing forth H'.

V' D' outside are hidden the Adam, the man and woman who are two (D"U).



As it is written: "degenerate children.."

"In the beginning (he) created."

" In the beginning," a statement.

"Created," a half-statement.

Father and son.

Sealed and revealed.

The higher Eden, sealed and hidden.

The lower Eden extends in portability (41) and there are revealed

YHVH, Y" H Elohim Et. ADN" Y AHY" H.

Right and left combined as one.

The heavens and as it is written (Chronicles 1 29:11): "the glory and the everlastingness."

"The Earth "

As it is written (Psalms 8:2): "How great is your name in the all the Earth  
"

"The whole Earth is full of His Glory (Isaiah 6:3)."

"Let there be a firmament within the waters "(Gen. 1:6) to divide the Holy and the Holy of Holies.'

Attika to Zeira , separate and cleaving, not really separate and the mouth says great things.

They are detached and crowned with small crowns, with five kinds of waters.

And it is written: "He places upon it living waters (Numbers 19:17)."

"He is the living Elohim and King of the World/(Jeremiah 10:10)."

"I will walk before YHVH in the lands of life ( Psalms 116:9)."

"And let the soul of my master be bound in the bond of life (Samuel 1 25:29)."

"And a Tree of Life within the Garden (Gen. 2: 9). "Y" H Yo" d H" e AHY" Y.

"Between the waters and the waters (Gen. 1:6)."

The whole waters and the waters that are not whole.

The whole mercy and the mercy that is not whole.

"And YHVH said, my soul will not be vexed by Man forever, for he is also flesh (Gen. 6:3)."

"And YHVH said, "when it was settled in Zeira.

From this, to say the word in the name of the one who said it (42).

For 'Attika is hidden, as was said. "My soul will not be vexed by Man," above.

For in that spirit exhaled from the two windows of the guardhouse was drawn down.

So it is written (Gen. 6:3): "And his days will be one hundred and twenty years."

Yo" d, whole and not whole.

Y' alone is one hundred.

Two letters, two instances.

One hundred and twenty year.

Y' alone when it is revealed in Zeira it is drawn down in ten thousand years.

From this it is written (Psalms 139:5): "You lay your hand upon me."

"And the nefillim were in the land then (Gen. 6:4)."

As it is written (Gen. 2:10): "From there it separated and come to four heads."

From the place that the garden divided is called "the nefillim" as is written: "From there it separated. "

They "were in the land "in those days and not at another time.

Until the arrival of Joshua and the sons of Elohim were hidden.

Until the arrival of Solomon, and the daughters of man were subsumed

As it is written: (Ecclesiastes 2: 8 ) "and delights (ta'anugot, f.); not ta'anugim (m.).

The sons of man were cast forth from the other spirits, not included in the higher wisdom, as it is written (Kings 1 5:26): "YHVH gave wisdom to Solomon. "

And it is written (Ibid 5:11): "and he was wiser than any man (adam)."

For these were not included in Adam.

"YHVH gave wisdom." The higher H' "and he was wiser " for through him was conveyed wisdom below.

"They are the heroes that were forever (me-'olam) ( Gen. 6:4)."

The higher world.

"Men of renown (anshei shem) (Ibid)."

That they conducted themselves according to the Name (shem).

What is the Name?

The Holy Name, according to which the less than holy ones below conduct themselves, who only conduct themselves according to the Name.

Simply men of the Name.

Not men of YHVH.

Not of the hidden hiddenness but flawed, and those who are not flawed.

Men of renown (anshei shem) come out of the category of Adam.

As it is written (Psalms 49: 13): "Man (adam) does not abide in honor."

A man's honor is in the honor of the King.

He does not abide, without a spirit.

Thirteen kings of war in seven.

Seven kings in the land, appearing as victorious in battle.

Nine ascend on levels that run with their will and there is none that will erase it from their hands, Five kings exist in confusion.

Before four none one can stand.

Four kings go out to before the four.

From them hang, like grapes in a cluster, knots of seven runners, bearing witness when they are not in their own place.

The perfumed tree sits within, its branches unified, a nesting place for birds.

In its shade shelters the beast that rules that tree in twelve paths, passing through seven columns that surround it.

In the four beasts they revolve through four sides.

The serpent that runs in three hundred and seventy leaps over the mountains and skips over the heights.

Its tail is in its mouth, in its teeth it punctures both sides.

When it takes its portion (43) it divides to three sides.

As it is written( Gen. 5:23): "And Chanokh walked with Elohim. "

And it is written (Prov. 22:6): "Educate (chanokh) the youth (na'ar) according to his way." The youth, that is known (44).

"With Elohim "and not with YHVH.

"And he was not (Gen. 5:28)."

With this name. "For Elohim took him," to be called by His name.

The three courts are really four.

Four courts above and four below.

As it is written (Lev. 19:35): "You shall not falsify measures (mishpat), of length weight or capacity."

Harsh Din (judgement).

Din that is less harsh.

Din that is weighed and Din that is not weighed.

And soft Din that is neither this one nor that.

"And when man had begun to multiply upon the face of the Earth (Gen. 6:1)."

Man had begun to multiply, as it is written (Gen. 6:6): "For he is also flesh...The higher Adam."

As it is written" upon the face of the Earth (Gen. 6:1)."

"And Moses did not know that his face was shining rays( keren 'or) (Exodus 34::29)."

As it is written : "a tunic of leather ("or) ( Genesis 3:24)."

Keren, as it is written( Sam. I 16:13): "and Samuel took the horn of oil.."

There is no anointing (meshiach) except through the keren:

"And through Your name will our keren be exalted ( Psalms 89:18)."

"There will flower the keren of David (Psalms 132:17)."

The tenth of the King, Coming from the Jubilee which is Imma, as it is written (Joshua 6:5): "And it shall come to pass when they draw the keren of the Jubilee. "

The keren of the Jubilee is crowned with the tenth of Imma.

A keren for he takes a keren and the spirit to return the spirit to him.

And this keren is of the Jubilee.

And the Jubilee is H'.

H' is the drawing of spirit for all.

All return to their place, as it is written (Jeremiah 1:6): "Aha, YHVH Elohim!" And when the H' is seen and the H' of YHVH Elohim is called the full name, at is written (Isa 2:17): "None but the Lord shall be exalted on that day."

Therefore he is sealed and crowned the hiddenness of the king, which is the Book of Hiddenness (Sifra de-Tzeniuta).

Worthy is the one who ascended and went out and knew its paths and ways!

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## Notes

1. Issues in the Idrot form the core of two seminal essays by Yehudah Liebes, "The Messiah of the Zohar" and "How was the Zohar Written?," which are contained in Liebes' *Studies in the Zohar* (S.U.N.Y. 1981). See Cordovero, *Or Yaqar-Tiqqunei ha-Zohar* 1:15, on *Tiqqunei Zohar Chadash* 93b.

2. Yehudah Liebes has pointed out that there seems to be no trace of the in the Hebrew writings of Moshe de-Leon ("How was the Zohar Written?" p. 98).

3. The use of symbols in Kabbalah is addressed in Joseph Dan, "Midrash and the Dawn of Kabbalah" in *Midrash and Literature* pp. 127-139; Pinchas Giller, *The Enlightened Will Shine* pp. 7-20; Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* pp. 173-249; "Infinites of Torah in Kabbalah" in *Midrash and Literature* pp. 141-157; "Reification of Language in Jewish Mysticism" in *Mysticism and Language*, pp. 42-79.; Ronit Meroz, *Redemption in the Lurianic Teaching* (Ph.D.. Thesis; Hebrew University 1988) pp. 33-35; Mikhal Oron "Place me for a Sign upon your heart: Studies in the Poetics of the Zohar's Author in Sabba de-Mishpatim" in *Massuot: Studies in Kabbalistic Literature and Jewish Thought Presented in Memory of Professor Ephraim Gottlieb*, pp. 8-13; Gershom Scholem, "The Meaning of the Torah in Jewish Mysticism" in *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* pp. 32-86, "The Name of God and Linguistic Theory of the

Kabbalah," pp. 59-80, 164-94; David Stern "The Rabbinic Parable and the Narrative of Interpretation" in *The Midrashic Imagination* p. 82; Isaiah Tishby, "Symbol and Religion in Kabbalah" in *Paths of Faith and Heresy* pp. 11-22. See also Elliot Wolfson, "By Way of Truth: Aspects of Nahmanides' Kabbalistic Hermeneutic" pp. 116-117, note 43; "Female Imaging of the Torah: From Literary Metaphor to Religious Symbol," *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism, Essays in Honor of Marvin Fox II* (Atlanta: Scholars Press 1989) pp. 271-307; "The Hermeneutics of Visionary Experience: Revelation and Interpretation in the Zohar" : 311-345, idem. *Through a Speculum That Shines* p. 283-285, 298, 356-392.

4. The word "tzeniuta" implies putting away for later use, according to Targum Yonatan Ex. 16:23 and Targum Onkelos Ex. 16:24.; c.f. Liebes "How was the Zohar Written?" p. 201, no. 58.

5. The Idrot and Sifra de-Tzeniuta are haunted by an incident in prehistory, the mysterious account of the "Death of the Kings." This tradition maintains that the "Kings of Edom," mentioned in Genesis 36, are an allegory for a midrashic tradition that God had made many worlds prior to the present one, but had discarded them (boneh 'olamot u-machrivan : Bereishit Rabbah 3:7, 15:1, Kohelet Rabbah 3:11). This foreshadowing of Divine catastrophe is mentioned as a principle in the Idrot and Sifra de-Tzeniuta and provided a basis for the later Lurianic myth. Nonetheless, the Idrot and Sifra de-Tzeniuta do not present the myth of the death of the Kings in a systematic fashion (Zohar III 48b-49a, 128a,135a-b, 142a, 292a-b; c.f. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* pp. 276-277, 289, 332-336; idem. "Distinguishing the Nature of Embodiment and Ineffability in Kabbalah" *Paths of Faith and Heresy* pp. 25-26.

6. The original worlds were not balanced appropriately in the proper measures of Chesed, Gevurah and Tiferet , which balance, complement, and counter one another. This balance is the "weighing on the scale," literally the hanging scale of antiquity. The early kings who are not "weighed on the scale" are constructed in a world based on judgement,

untempered by the quality of mercy. Therefore, in the *Idrah Rabbah*, R. Shimon avers that he can only reveal the secrets to those who are “weighed in the balance,” in *Liebes* view, who are not celibate (*Zohar* III 141a; *Liebes* “The Messiah of the *Zohar*” p. 68.) The association of gender balance with the “balanced” emanation is also the position of Isaac Luria in his commentary to the *Sifra de-Tzeniuta* (chapter 1), one of his rare original compositions, that he wrote while still in Egypt, before his arrival in Safed.

In this regard, some accounts refer to seven kings who similarly could not survive because they did not have the “*tiqqun* of Adam,” the emanation of the *sefirot* in their anthropomorphic model, in which various *sefirot* are balanced in a series of triune structures along the model of a human body or the Tree of Life. This balancing allowed negative aspects to be included in the Divine superstructure and not render it unstable. The answer to the problem of the stillborn worlds that have been improperly emanated is their balanced emanation into the world, through the form of the Divine Anthropos, the three primordial figures of ‘Attika, Zeir and Nukvah. This instability of the unbalanced *sefirot* is also expressed in erotic terms (*Zohar* III 142a) as Nukvah, the feminine countenance, being “unperfumed” until the quality of transcendent lovingkindness (*chesed* ‘elyon) descended, when “the *tiqqunim* of nukvah were perfumed in yesod.” “Edom” symbolizes the source of the powers of judgement (*dinnim*). *Chesed*, the realm of lovingkindness, descended and nestled in the mouth of Yesod, the *sefirah* that regulates sexuality, and “they were suffused, Din in Din.”

7. The *Idrot* expound on the *Sifra de-Tzeniuta*’s obscure allusion in a number of ways, such as: “We learn in the hidden book that before the ‘Attika de-’ Attikin prepared his attributes, he brought the kings, gathered the kings and arranged the kings, and they could not survive until he had crushed them and put them away after a time (*Zohar* III 135a).” The destroyed worlds alluded to in the *Aggadah* are flawed, stillborn emanations. They are described as being like patterns woven into a curtain



or veil, which become indistinct (Zohar III 128a) or the sparks which fly off of a hammer and are extinguished immediately, "like the craftsman who strikes the anvil, the sparks flash and are extinguished (Zohar III 292b)." The most important thing about the mythos of the death of the Kings is its implication of imminent and past catastrophe, which was to become such a formative motif in subsequent kabbalah. The destruction of the Kings was a necessary element of the creation of the final perfected world. This notion of the necessity of destruction, sacrifice and chaos would figure prominently when the Lurianic myth was brought to bear on the Idra traditions.

8. The Idra Rabba begins with a description of the skull (gulgota) of 'Attika de-Attikin, ( Zohar III 128a-b) in which are housed the celestial ether (avira) and the hidden intellect ("mocha stima'ah"). From the skull pours out a revivifying dew (tal). 'Attika Kadisha's cascading hair also pours out light from the hidden mocha, or intellect, which pours, like a fountain, down to the second countenance, Zeir Anpin.

9. Do you really know what bedolach (Gen. 2:12) is?

10. A well-known aramaic pun in the Zohar, "Bara"- created "shit"- six.

11. This image of engraving is characteristic of the Zohar's creation traditions, the Hormanuta accounts.

12. The Mithraic snake, a universal archetype! C.f. Joseph Campbell *The Mythic Image* p. 292-301.

13. This term, kultra de-kultrui, is difficult. See Zohar III 288a, 289b, particularly the comments of Margoliot in Netzutzei Zohar, who refers to Menachem de Lonzano's Shteit Yadot, on the word kltr. This translation is based on R. Shimon Lavi and Chayyim Yosef Azulai, in the margins. The mysterious lexicon traditionally linked to Shimon Lavi (this connection has recently been disproven by Boaz Huss, See Kabbalah, Winter 1997 pp.

167-172) translates kultra de-kitfa as a "sap-bucket," that is, a receptacle for the Divine flow.

14. These are symbols of the sefirot Chokhmah and Binnah, after Proverbs (7:4), the "sister and the consort." The term achta, for sister, is also used further to mean "I descend."

15. The main innovation of the Idra Zuta is to cast the imagery of the Idra Rabbah in terms of the union of the pistis/sophia relationship of Abba and Immah. Zeir Anpin emanates from Abba and Immah, from the sparks that flash out to three hundred and twenty sides. These sparks are called the first worlds. This act of creation is portrayed in terms that fuse the imagery of the Hormanuta accounts with symbols of sexual union and conception.

16. Because it is so hidden, the beard is not mentioned in the Torah and was never revealed, only the beard of the higher high priest, which flows onto that of the lower high priest, as described in Psalm 133; c.f. Zohar III 132a.

17. Each of the parts of the countenance serve different functions (Zohar III 130a-130b). Moral issues are controlled by the brow, which emanates love and forbearance. The eyes of 'Attika see with undifferentiated love, while the eyes of Zeir reflect the divided nature of lower reality, one eye guards the righteous and one eye is watchful over the wicked. The whites of the eye pass between Arikh and Zeir as go-betweens between the two countenances. The nostrils of Arikh and Zeir have a similar divided function.

18. The beards of 'Attika Kadisha and Zeir Anpin, which overlap one another, are the main venue through which the spiritual energy flows into the world, in tumbling streams of Divine effluence. The beard of 'Attika Kadisha has thirteen aspects, that is to say, thirteen ways that the beard falls from the head to the lower regions. Each of the comrades takes upon himself the description of one aspect of the beard. In the Idra Rabbah, R.

Yitzchak (Zohar III 130b-131a) notes that the thirteen aspects of the beard of 'Attika are compared to the text that is popularly conceived as reflecting the thirteen attributes of God delineated in Micah (7:18-19), while the nine aspects of the beard of Zeir Anpin reflect the attributes recited at the incident of the Golden calf (Exodus 34:6-7).

19. Liebes addresses the nuances of the use of the term Adam in a different section of the Zohar ("How the Zohar was Written" p. 114, on Zohar III 48a).

20. The beard is the agent of mazal, which is here described as the source of the Divine effluence (Zohar III 289b). Mazal does not, in the eyes of the theosophical kabbalists, refer the astrological constellations. Mazal is the energy that courses through the beard (Zohar I 43b, II 174b. The Idra Zuta stresses that the mazal is the source of all life "the most precious preciousness," Life, sustenance, heaven and earth, the rains and the higher and lower Gardens of Eden are all sustained by mazal (Zohar III 289b). Taken this way, statements such as the mazal, "everything is contingent on mazal even the sefer Torah in the palace' may be seen as meditations on the nature of the flow of the Divine effluence (Zohar III 134a; The quotation exists nowhere else but the writings of R. Joseph Gikatilla, Sha'arei Orah 3-4, 37a, 6, 74a, Sha'arei Tzedek 17a, as well as being alluded to in his "Secret of the Thirteen Qualities," a work that substantially mirrors the teachings of the Idrot.

21. Pardashka, the "watch tower," implying the nose.

22. The Divine anthropos is made up of the three countenances: Arikh Anpin (which is also called 'Attika Kadisha and 'Attik Yomin), Zeir Anpin and Nukvah.. Arikh and Zeir are each portrayed in images of masculine physicality, as in terms such as 'the beard.' the "mane" and so forth, while Nukvah is portrayed as undifferentiated femininity.

23. Kitfui de-kitfin is somewhat impenetrable usage. Chayyim Yosef David Azulai interprets it as “cleaving.” The Talmudic image is that of flowing sap, see above note 13.

24. One of the most important images in the Zohar is that of the engraving spark, *butzina de-kardinuta*., which is emanated from the Infinite (Ein Sof). *Butzina de-kardinuta* is most often described as the instrument through which God begins the emanation of the ten sefirot . It is the instrument of the Divine, the pen or stylus with which God engraves and colors the phenomenal world. The image of God as measurer originates with Isaiah 40:12. The imagery of *butzina de-kardinuta* has a number of antecedents. The image of a primordial point, stylus or phallus that splits some primeval mass in order to create the Universe is very ancient. The Platonic idea that God, in order to create the world, had to split the primordial aether (*avir kadmon*) remains a subtext of a number early kabbalistic and pre-kabbalistic traditions, including the Iyyun text *Midrash of Simon the Just*. and the poet Solomon Ibn Gabirol’s work *Keter Malkhut*, which speaks of “drawing forth the light from the nothingness, splitting existence and piercing it.” (Zohar II 233a, Zohar Chadash 58b; see also *Genesis Rabbah* 1:8-9; Azriel of Gerona, “*Perush ha-Aggadot le-Rabbenu Azriel* ” (Jerusalem, 1945) pp. 89-90; Elliot Wolfson “Circle in the Square” pp. 65-74).

The image of the ring is synonymous with the function of the primordial aether in Isaac the Blind’s commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah* (Scholem, *Origins* p. 333; idem. “Traces of Gabirol in the Kabbalah” (Hebrew) *Meassef Sofrei Eretz Yisrael* (Tel Aviv 1940). One issue that has much exercised various commentators has been the meaning of the very term “*butzina de-kardinuta*.” One school of thought translates *kardinuta* as “hardened,” a misprision of the Talmudic “*hitte kurdanaita*,” “Kurdistani wheat.” The Gaon of Vilna translates the term as the hard candle, citing Rashi’s translation. Menachem de Lonzano and Meir Poppers compare it to

the heart, or essence, like the greek "kard." (Zohar ha-Raki'a 23b). A second school of thought translates it as "the dark spark," reading kardinuta as a play on kadrut, or darkness. Cordovero, compares it to the darkness of the moon. He also quotes Targum Onkelos as referring to Mt. Arrarat as Har Kardo, implying height and exaltedness, "although some say it means darkness." Cordovero continues:

The butzina means a candelabraum (menorah) indicating the ascent of the light, to show that it is the high and exalted menorah, the menorah of the morning offering. And why dark? Because of its great light, it darkens the vision of those who gaze upon it, or possibly the menorah that darkens all the light, so that all of them are like darkness and nothingness.

See Elijah of Vilna, Yahel Or 6a (Vilna, Romm, 1918); Moshe Cordovero, Or Ya'qar 1: 119. See also Lavi, "Ketem Paz" 41b; c.f. Isaiah Tishby and Fischel Lachover. The Wisdom of the Zohar Translated by David Goldstein (Oxford: 1991) , pp. 276-277.

25. As has been stated before, tiqqun is also a euphemism for sefirah, as is the term atarah, or crown. Sometimes the two terms blend into one another because of their multi-valences of meaning: Who can see the hiddenness of the elder's mane, sitting with the crown of crowns of the crowns of all the crowns? Crowns that are not subsumed into other crowns, and are like no other crowns. The crowns of the lower crowns are unified with it and through them the tiqqunim unify with the lower tiqqunim. The tiqqunim which have been set forth must be blessed with whatever requires blessing, for all the tiqqunim are set forth to receive them, the blessings are brought about as they must be, for everything is contained in these tiqqunim... If 'Attik was not set forth with those tiqqunim, then the upper and the lower would not exist, everything would be as nothing (IR 132a).

26. "Tifsa sherei'kin," based on pseudo-Lavi.

27. "In all of the physiognomies of the Divine, the brow is equivalent to the Divine Will (Idra Rabbah 129a-129b), the source of judgment, either as a trigger to Divine forbearance or the flashing of punishment. The brow that is revealed in 'Attika Kadisha is called will, it is the supernal head that is sealed above...the Will of all Wills, set forth on the brow, revealed in the Spark (Idra Zuta 288b)." The brow is a dynamic center, even as early as its Biblical model. Physically, the brow is the point at which the head is revealed, and from it emanate four hundred and ten lower worlds.

28. "Einekha," omitting the *yu*"d that is customarily written in the second syllable, implying the hiddenness of the Divine (symbolized by *yu*"d).

29. Zohar II 177b, See Zohar III 294a Margoliot (Nitzotzei ha-Zohar 8) on B.T.Yevamot 120a ("There is so witnessing except of a countenance with the nose").

30. The teachings regarding the beard are considered particularly recondite, the beard being, once again, the agent of *mazal*, which is here described as the source of the Divine effluence (Zohar III 289b). The center of the Idrot is the moment when the Rabbis recite the various aspects (*tiqqunim*) the beard. The setting forth of these *tiqqunim*, in which the various Rabbis actually embody the aspect of the Divine emanation into present reality, is a goal of the Idra as a whole. The beard is the "delight and glory" of the male countenances, so the Rabbis linger over the description of their aspects, or *tiqqunim* (Zohar III 139a-140b).

31. Compare to the Idra Rabbah -"We learn in the Sifra de-Tzeniuta that King David stated nine *tiqqunim* here, six of which are with the Divine name, which has six names, including three times the name Adam (Zohar III 139b). The nine phrases beginning with Psalm 118:5 are interpreted as signifying the nine *tiqqunim* of the beard of Zeir Anpin.

32. Idra Rabbah – “We learn in the Sifra de-Tzenuta that one who sees himself clutching the beard of someone important in a dream should know that he is at peace with the higher powers” (Zohar III 139b)
33. See Giller, *The Enlightened Will Shine* pp. 35-37.
34. A play on words, the Hebrew Kayin (Cain) being linked with the word ken (nest).
35. “Al’ulin,” see Targum to Psalm 107:25.
36. “Katfurin,” c.f. Ecclesiastes Rabbah on Ecclesiastes 10:2.
37. according to the Gr”a “kitrin (crowns),” in the editions “be-train,” in two.
38. heb. “klal u-prat.”
39. Transliterations of Yu”d
40. Du- Aramic “two”.
41. Aram. “nafik le-metaltelai.”
42. A Talmudic injunction, to always repeat an adage in the name of its author.
43. gistera, c.f. Lev. Rabbah 15.
44. Symbolizing Metatron, the demiurge, see David Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot* pp. 291, 301-305, 426.