MELILAH

VOLUME V
MELILAH
A VOLUME OF STUDIES

EDITED BY
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AND
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As this volume goes to press we have learned with sorrow of the death of Dr. MENAHEM ZULAY, Jerusalem, the greatest authority on the Piyut in our time. We remember with gratitude his valuable contributions to "Melilah", and express our sympathy with his relatives and with כל בוראיו וראיה.
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ARABIC AFFINITIES IN THE DIALECT OF RAS SHAMRA

J. GRAY

The problem of the dialectical affinity of Ugaritic is discussed. Features common to Akkadian and Ugaritic are noted but we believe that in morphology, vocabulary, grammar, and literature structure the affinities of Ugaritic are with the West, particularly with Hebrew. This indicates that the Hebrews adopted a Canaanite literary prototype. In the solution of problems in the Ras Shamra texts the Hebrew analogy lies thus ready to hand, but this has been responsible for many errors of interpretation, hence it must be applied with care. In many cases Arabic supplies the correct clue. Here we regard Arabic not as a mere dialect, still less as the mutilated torso of a once living and now dead language — like Akkadian, Aramaic, Syriac, and Biblical Hebrew — but as a living tongue which preserves many primitive common-Semitic words and usages and, owing to historical circumstances, has absorbed into itself and so preserved many elements from the cognate Semitic dialects.

To demonstrate the value of Arabic for the interpretation of Ugaritic we cite and examine instances of characteristics of Ugaritic structure and morphology peculiar to and characteristic of Arabic. Phonetic correspondences are also noted and a plea is made for the study of the Arabic counterparts in their living context.
The article traces the antagonism between Judah and Ephraim through the early stages of their history. Religious unity was achieved under Samuel and political unity under Saul. This eventually led to the creation of Jerusalem and the erection there of a Temple, as God’s dwelling place on earth. The Torah was completed under Samuel with the inclusion of Deuteronomy and became the law book of ‘all Israel’. The political disruption led inevitably to religious rupture and the abandonment of the Torah by the North. The subsequent history of the two kingdoms was coloured by the efforts to re-unite North and South and restore the Torah to its rightful place. The labours and utterances of the prophets, notably those of the 8th century, were directed to that end and must be interpreted in that light.
SOME ASPECTS OF LUZZATTO'S
COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH IN THE
LIGHT OF DSIA

A. RUBINSTEIN

In his Hebrew commentary on the Book of Isaiah S. D. Luzzatto singles out for careful consideration two kinds of passages: (a) those in which, in his view, the accents embody some special oral tradition as received by 'the sages of the Second Temple-period' and thereafter transmitted by them according to certain rules, and (b) those in which the sages have, in Luzzatto's opinion, by their reading as regulated by oral vocalisation and accentuation, 'wittingly deviated from what they knew to be the plain meaning of the text'.

The MT passages specified by Luzzatto are examined in the light of the corresponding passages in DSIA where the latter text affords a basis for such an examination. It is shown that a number of variant readings in DSIA are consistent with Luzzatto's explanations, while others are not. In yet other instances the results are inconclusive owing to syntactical peculiarities of DSIA.
FEATURES IN ARABIC TRANSLATIONS OF THE PENTATEUCH

R. EDELMANN

The description is given of a MS dating from the middle of the 14th century in the Royal Library of Copenhagen, Cod. Arab. LXXV, containing the Pentateuch in an Arabic version. Its peculiarities (i.e. the division of the text in sections, as used either in the Synagogue or in the Christian (Syriac) Church or both, the headings to the different sections of the text, the rendering of the word “section” by asbâh (from Syriac sebâbâ), etc. are compared with similar peculiarities in other MSS containing the same material. Further, a classification is made of the different Arabic versions of the Pentateuch. It appears that the MSS containing Saadyah's Arabic version are written in Hebrew characters, except for the Arabic Pentateuch used by the Samaritans. MSS written in Arabic characters represent the Arabic version as used in the Christian (Syriac) Church. A group of MSS written in Arabic characters also represent either Saadyah's version in a Christian adaptation, or the Christian version in a Karaite adaptation. To the last section of this group belongs the MS in the Royal Library. The two main groups of MSS can clearly be distinguished from each other. But even the individual groups of MSS reveal some variations. This is due to the copyists, who used to adapt the versions before them to conform with their own traditions and dialect. Thus these Arabic versions may also illustrate the contents of the other targums of the Bible: the LXX, the Aramaic Targums, etc. and shed light upon their growth and development.
THE ORIGIN OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

H. H. ROWLEY

Archæology, which was at first held to give us a *terminus ad quem* for the hiding of the Scrolls *circa* 100 B.C.E., has now shown that this *terminus ad quem* must be placed early in the Christian era. It clearly rules out some of the late dates for the MSS that have been proposed. Palæography, while yielding less definite evidence than has sometimes been claimed, is of greater importance than some critics have allowed, and while not enabling us to pin-point the date of the MSS offers a fairly broad period which again rules out the later dates. The internal evidence of the Habakkuk Commentary and the Zadokite Fragments appears to point to the 2nd century B.C.E. as the background of these texts, when many of their details would have particular relevance. The Milhemeth text carries back the origin of the sect to the time when Seleucids and Ptolemies affected Jewish history, at the beginning of that century, and the chronological data of the Zadokite Fragments would appear to bring the history down to *circa* 130 B.C.E. If the non-Biblical texts were written in the second century B.C.E. and all the MSS were hidden in the cave at the end of the first century C.E., this would allow time for the copying of all the texts and for their long use before their deposit. (This article is a summary of the writer’s book *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, and was prepared while that work was in the press. It therefore takes no account of subsequently published discoveries and discussions.)
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WERE HILLEL AND SHAMMAI REAL BROTHERS?

M. ZULAY

The core of the article contains an assertion regarding the persons of Hillel and Shammai, these two great contrasting figures, who represent the spiritual leadership of Palestine Jewry about the time of the birth of Christ. Two religious poems from the Cairo Genizah, which are published here for the first time, and whose theme is concerned with the chain of tradition from Moses to Hillel and Shammai, assert unequivocally that the latter two were real brothers.

In the entire corpus of Jewish literature, known to-date, there is no evidence which could serve to support such an assertion; yet it cannot be argued away by giving it an allegorical meaning, as A. Zeitlin has tried to do in the New York Jewish journal ‘DER TOC’ of the 20th July, 1951. It is much more likely that we are faced with an old Palestinian tradition, which must have been forgotten at a very early stage, or possibly deliberately suppressed, either because it was regarded as misleading, or on other grounds.

The entire character of the poems (of which the first is ascribed to Qalir) assigns them to pre-Islamic Palestine. They deserve attention not only because of the unusual assertion, already mentioned, but also as a proof of the existence of a distinct text, independent of the Mishnah, in which the “Chain of Tradition” extended only to Hillel and Shammai.
THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE JEWS IN BABYLON

L. JACOBS

Sassanian society was divided into four classes: (a) the priests, (b) the warriors, (c) the administrators and (d) the people i.e farmers, artisans and merchants. Jews were obviously excluded from the first class and appear to have had little representation in the second and third. In the fourth class they were numerous. Agriculture was the most popular pursuit among the Babylonian Jews, but they engaged in many other economic activities. The Sassanians, under the influence of Zoroastrianism, had an aversion to commerce and left this in the hands of the Jews and the Armenians, both of which peoples flourished in the Persian Empire in large numbers.

Despite the Tannaitic disapproval of Jews engaging in certain trades and professions, Jews in Babylon engaged in these 'objectionable' pursuits as well as in many others. Thus we find Jews active as physicians, cuppers, bath-house keepers, barbers, weavers, dyers, tailors, launderers, perfumers, jewellers, builders, carpenters, potters, smiths, tanners, millers, bakers, fishermen, butchers, shopkeepers, shippers, innkeepers and commercial travellers. Wages in Babylon were higher than in Palestine, and a number of important commodities were considerably cheaper. Hence the more affluent position of the Babylonian Jews. If there is any truth in the assertion of a Jewish aptitude for trade, such aptitude may be attributed to the long residence of the Jewish people in Babylon.
STUDIES IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE MIDRASHIM

I. WARTSKI

1. The use of אֶיךְ, eikhein, in the homilies on the Biblical אָכָּה, akhein.

2. The obscure sentence זוג טריהת אבותיהם in Gen. Rabbah, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 419 is elucidated by establishing the correctness of the variant טריהת in the Vatican MS. The meaning of the sentence is: and they paid the debt of their fathers.

3. The difficult homily קהל ישקב מבנים והדרים ידיע עשו מביאו ליה אמתי (ibid p. 733) is examined and is shown to be a reference to Jewish informers.

4. Certain Midrashic material is brought as proof that עצי הדרים, or, in Aramaic, קיסר יריבתא, was used as a figurative expression: "the wood of one's cradle", (i.e. the wood of which one's cradle was made) signified: one's ancestry, one's lineage.

5. Various points arising out of a difficult passage in Gen. Rabbah, Ch. 67, par. 5 are discussed and clarified. As a result it becomes evident that the expression פרוה אפייה ליה, his bread is baked for him, or פרוה אפייה אמייה לוף, his bread is baked before him, was used figuratively to describe a man of good fortune.

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BERAITHA DE SHEMUEL

A. A. AKAVIAH

The beginning of the fifth chapter of the Baraita de Shemuel is dealt with, proving that the tract was written in 4537 A.M. (=777 C.E.). It contains a detailed formula for the calculation of the new moon and equinoxes according to which the lunar month and the solar year would begin simultaneously after each 4536 years. As a result of analysis there appear to be differences between Shemuel's rules and those generally used today in the calculation of the calendar. Shemuel gives the year as having 366 days, 6 hours, whereas we now reckon the year as having 365 days, 5 hours, 55 minutes and 25.5 seconds and the month as 29 days, 12 hours and 40 minutes as against our 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, 3⅓ seconds; מַלְדֵּלְבָּהָד (א' לְיִירְדוּה) as the time of the new moon of the month Tishre of A.M.1 and consequently מַלְדֵּלְבָּהָד as the time of the new moon of Tishre of A.M.2 (which serve the ordinary calendar as epoch for new moon calculation, were as yet unknown in 4537. The present rule of seven intercalary years in a cycle of 19 years was as yet either unknown or not employed at that time. The author or authors of the Baraita in order to justify their calculations were therefore, forced to lengthen their count by one year, beginning their calendar one year before the Creation (לָפֶּדֶּשְפָּהָד). We find that the rules governing the present calendar calculations had not as yet been accepted between 4537 to 4600 (777—840 C.E.), for 80 years later Rab Saadyah in his arguments with Ben Meir expounds all the intercalary rules as they are known to us and mentions their having been in use for a long time.
A NEW FRAGMENT FROM THE
SEPHER HA-GALUY
OF SAADYAH GAON

S. M. STERN

The Sepher ha-Galuy ("Open Book") of Saadyah Gaon, a pamphlet containing an apology for his stand in his great quarrel with the Exilarch and an attack on his enemies, is an important document for its author's biography as well as for the development of Hebrew literary language — for Saadyah aimed at making it a model of Hebrew style. It used to be known only from two short allusions in later writers, but during the last eighty years or so several fragments have been discovered in succession in the Cairo Genizah. A new fragment of the second edition prepared by Saadyah (containing a translation of and commentary in Arabic on the original Hebrew text of the first edition) is published here. It is drawn from the Taylor-Schechter collection of Genizah texts in Cambridge University Library. The fragment, comprising eight pages (160 lines), is, apart from the Preface published by A. Harkavy, the longest one extant. It belongs to the last chapter, and considerably enriches our knowledge of the work. The article consists of an introduction, a Hebrew translation of the fragment, and the edition of the original Arabic text.

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A PIYYUT BY SAMUEL THE THIRD

(Part of MS. Oxford 2716/6)

M. WALLENSTEIN

A piyyut — a yose in the narrow sense — composed by Samuel the Third, an eminent paytan and member of the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem in the 10th and the beginning of the 11th centuries, is here reconstructed and commented upon. It is based on the Weekly portion of Wayehi and embodies much Midrashic material. This piyyut, as many other piyyutim, should prove of interest to Biblical as well as to Post-Biblical scholars. The student of hymnology, too, may be interested in comparing the piyyut with the hymns with which he is acquainted. The hymns of the controversial Judean Scrolls give additional stimulus. The philologist is also bound to find interest in the peculiar language as well as in the various emblematical formations.
THE DOCTRINE OF R. MOSES B. JOSEPH HALEVI ON PROVIDENCE

GEORGES VAJDA

The Arabic treatise of Joseph b. Abraham Ibn Waqar on the reconciliation of philosophy and religious law has preserved several texts of the Judeo-Arab philosopher Moses b. Joseph Halévi. Of these, two fragments with Hebrew translation are here published. One expounds the authors doctrine regarding divine providence. Providence, in principle, is of a general nature, but becomes particularised in so far as it operates through the understanding of the complete philosopher, which forms the link between the material and the intelligible world. The second fragment is an attempt to interpret, in the manner of Ibn Sina, the speculation of Ghazzali on the intermediate being between God, the Prime Cause, and the Prime Intellect, the Prime Mover.
AN HISTORICAL DOCUMENT IN
R. SAMUEL DE MEDINA'S RESPONSAS

B. LEWIS

The 364th Responsum of the section Hoshen Mishpat, in
the Responsa of R. Samuel de Medina (1506—1589), deals with a
dispute between the Jewish community of Constantinople and the
descendants of a Jewish physician, whose name is not given. The
community has demanded the payment of certain taxes from the
descendants of the physician, who claim exemption on the ground
of a privilege granted to their ancestor by Sultan Mehmed II.
The preamble to the question, containing a brief biography of the
physician, an abridged Hebrew translation of the ferman of exemp-
tion granted to him, and an account of assessment and collection of
Jewish taxes, is re-edited from the Salonica edition of 1595 and
examined in the light of Turkish and other evidence.
Little research has been done of recent years on the distinctive but largely overlooked liturgical poetry of the Karaites. A number of funeral poems are here published from a manuscript in the Roth Collection. They were probably written in Egypt in the 16th or 17th century. They are by the poets Shemaiah, Elijah, Solomon the Karaite, and Abraham. One of them, apparently written for some specific occasion, bears the acrostic 'Samuel mourning for his loved one'.
SOME DRAMATISTS OF THE HASKALAH PERIOD IN GERMANY

Ch. RABIN

While the great dramatists of the 18th century imitated foreign models, the rise of an original Hebrew drama belongs to the post-Meassef period (1797-1830).

An isolated case is I. B. Bing of Würzburg, whose play Obed und Thürza (partly publ. 1810) is a cloak-and-dagger play and attempt to create a Hebrew slang.

All other writers are connected with Breslau, and the inspiration was provided by Joseph Haephrathi (1770-1804) either directly or via J. L. Bensew. In Breslau, M. Kunizer wrote in 1797 a Charakterdrama, excellent in parts, on the life of R. Judah the Prince, projecting Haskalah ideals back into the Tannaitic period. The influence of Shakespeare, via Lessing’s Hamburgische Dramaaturgie, is evident. The earliest romantic plays were written by two Hungarian authors, S. M. Neumann (publ. 1805) who was possibly influence by Haephrati directly, and M. Poper (1806) who seems to have been influenced by Kunizer.

The Breslau School proper produced romantic Biblical plays by S. Raschkow, E. Raschkow, and J. Cohen from Groningen. Its chief luminary is D. Samoscz (1789-1864), who proceeded from allegory via Biblical romanticism to realistic plays dealing with contemporary German Jewish life and its problems (1821 and 1829). To the period of decline of this school belong R. J. Fürstenthal and H. Miro.

The Breslau School or its Hungarian offshoot inspired the few playwrights of the Haskalah period in Galicia and Lithuania, and probably also the novelist A. Mapu.
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
S. D. LUZZATTO

J. HAEZRAHI

Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865), one of the most outstanding figures in Modern Hebrew literature, whose many-sided researches have been loudly acclaimed by scholars, is also the author of an autobiography — "Toledoth SHaDaL"— the major part of which was published in serial form in "Hamaggid" during the years 1858-64. As a literary work "Toledoth SHaDaL" is inferior to other biographies of the Haskalah period such as M. A. Ginsberg's "Avi'ezar" and M. L. Lilienblum's "Hatoth Ne'urim". It contains however, data which is of great psychological and historical interest Luzzatto tells of his childhood in a surprisingly frank manner that sheds much light on his puzzling character. His description of the Jewish life in Italy in the first half of the 19th century is particularly vivid. Whereas in the greater part of Europe the Haskalah movement provoked strife and dissension within the Jewish communities, in Italy no such struggle existed. Here religion, though strictly observed, lacked the Eastern narrow-mindedness and allowed free play to various sentiments as well as to a wider European outlook. This is clearly shown in Luzzatto's autobiography.

There are serious flaws in the construction of "Toledoth SHaDaL": dissertations, essays, Biblical and Talmudic commentaries as well as linguistic researches are interspersed between passages of real descriptive beauty, to the detriment of the harmony of the work as a whole.
CHARACTER AND MENTALITY OF
AHAD HAAM

J. HELLER

Although Ahad Haam seems, at first sight, to be a harmonious and consistent personality, closer consideration reveals a fundamental duality in his mental development and make-up. This duality is a product of his innate dispositions and of the influence of his education and surroundings. By nature, he possessed a tendency towards introversion, which was enhanced by the loneliness of his childhood and by his emotional reaction towards the endeavours of his father to impose upon him his own will and ideals. It is also in keeping with his tendency towards introversion that the opposition to his parents remained passive and never manifested itself openly. On the other hand, this same tendency towards introversion accounts for his lack of self-confidence, his indecision in practical matters, and for the ambivalence of his attitude towards Herzl, as well as towards his own personality and the task of his life.

In his spiritual development Ahad Haam underwent several crises, passing from “Hasidism” to “Mitnagdism”, then to the Haskalah Movement and to spiritual nationalism. It is noteworthy that he abandoned Hasidism not because of rational doubts, but because of its emotional aberrations. In the final stage of his development Ahad Haam was most strongly influenced by the utilitarianism of the Russian critic Pisaryev and by the views of the English and French thinkers of the positivistic school. In his teachings the two different trends of Jewish ethical idealism and of modern positivism were fused together.