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ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

THE STORY OF HONI HAME'AGEL IN MISHNAH TA'ANIT 3:8: A CASE STUDY IN THE ART OF MISHNAIC NARRATIVE

Moshe Simon-Shoshan

The story of Honi Hame'agel is perhaps the best known and most studied story in the entire Mishnah. However, very few scholars have sought to study this story as a specifically mishnaic story. This article seeks to understand the Honi story in terms of its context in Mishnah Ta'anit and in relationship to other narratives found in the Mishnah. I propose that the story of Honi possess a hybrid form, combining the two most common narrative structures in the Mishnah: the *exemplum* and the *case story*. The article explores the consequences of the cross-generic form. In the final section I explore the history and transmission of the story in light of similar narrative traditions found elsewhere in ancient Jewish literature.

THE EXPANDED BIBLICAL STORY ABOUT ABIGAIL WHO PREVENTS DAVID FROM SHEDDING BLOOD

Gilad Sasson

In the Babylonian Talmud as well as in the Palestinian Talmud there is an expanded biblical story about David's meeting with Abigail. In contrast to the biblical description where Abigail succeeds in her mission due to her wisdom, in the Talmudic renditions she does so using provocative sexual behavior, which seemingly presents her as a promiscuous woman. An analysis of the stories reveals that the PT chooses to present Abigail as someone whose aim is to convert David's desire for revenge into sexual lust towards her and then prevent him from having sexual intercourse with her. This was the only way that enabled her to save her home and family. According to the BT, this behavior of Abigail implies and predicts David's future sin with Bat-Sheva.

ON POETRY AND POTENCY: *EN RON BECHA* –
A MUWASHSHAḤ BY ABRAHAM HĀBEDERSI

Uriah Kfir

The Muwashshaḥ *En ron becha* is probably the last poem written by Abraham haBedersi against his rival Issac haGorni. A bitter literary rivalry had existed between these two important Hebrew poets, who attacked each other's poetry and (male) potency in thirteenth-century Provence. Unfortunately, tracking the exchange of poems between the two is rather difficult, as their writings have been preserved in separate, unrelated manuscripts. Another, more significant obstacle is the small number of poems that we can attribute to haGorni, among which only one is addressed explicitly to haBedersi.

The paper attempts to reconstruct the dialogic nature of the rivalry between the two. Its main contribution, beside publishing haBedersi's poem, is to show that not only can we speculate how haGorni responded and opposed haBedersi, but we can also point at some of his expressions as being direct reactions to, or provocations against, his rival. Reading their poems within a reconstructed dialogic framework will lead to a better understanding of what concerned these two poets in particular, but also of the nature of Provençal Hebrew poetry in general.

THE TALE *IF NOT HIGHER* AND ITS HASIDIC SOURCE

Nicham Ross

In this article I engage in a close reading of Y.L. Peretz's method of adapting an existing Hasidic tale. Rejecting A. Cahana's suggestion as to Peretz's textual basis in writing *If Not Higher*, I identify the Hasidic work *Maaseh Zaddikim* not only as the source for the core of Peretz' plot, but also as the inspiration for additional themes which he incorporates and weaves into his tale. This leads to an analysis of the modern messages invested in Peretz's version which takes into account the complicated relationship of the 'new Jew' to the innocent traditional world of his past. In this connection, I discuss the significance of Peretz' interest in portraying the chief character of his tale as an anti-Hasidic Litvak, in conversion