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ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

THE TANNAITIC LAWS OF BATTERY: SCRIPTURE AND HALAKHAH

Amit Gvaryahu

Four laws in the Pentateuch discuss fights between people. The arrangement of these laws and their relationship to one another were debated in the Tannaitic academies. The school of Rabbi Ishmael read these laws as a single entity, each law “coming to teach things omitted” in the other law. Other sources, associated with the school of Rabbi Akiva, did not seek to connect these laws to each other or, necessarily, to injury.

Simultaneously, a careful reading of Mishnah Bava Kamma chapter 8, which discusses bodily injuries, reveals gaps and contradictions in the fabric of the text. This article shows that understanding the connection between homiletics and law in the Tannaitic schools enables us to uncover the various sources embedded in Mishnah and Tosefta, and explains the manner in which redaction subordinated them to later developments. The various midrashic readings of the verses which undergird the chapter ground a source-critical reading of the chapter as composed of three distinct sources. I also locate the fingerprints of named individuals in the redaction of this chapter of Mishnah, and discuss the uses of Midrash Halakhah in the source-critical study of the Mishnah.

In Appendix A I offer a reading of a Qumranic fragment on injuries; In Appendix B I discuss the outlying Tannaitic opinion of Rabbi Eliezer, ‘An eye for an eye – actually’ (ממש).

THE END OF THE AMORAIC PERIOD IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL: PERIODIZATION, HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Uzi Leibner

The historical circumstances that led to the termination of the Amoraic period in the Land of Israel are unclear. Even the criteria for determining the end of this period are in doubt. For example, while the Talmud Yeushalmi – the major work of the Palestinian Amoraim – was compiled ca. the late 4th century CE, the accepted date for the Amoraic midrashim is the fifth, sixth and even early seventh century. However, they mention no figure or event later than the fourth century and names of their Sages are identical to those of the Yerushalmi.

This paper discusses the parameters for defining the end of the Amoraic period in the Land of Israel, and the historical circumstances that put an end to the activity of these sages. It opens with a survey of the ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ in which the Amoraic literature was created and the data, which places it mainly in the Galilee. The dating and editing of works belonging to this literature are discussed next, as well as internal changes in the world of the Amoraim. These and other parameters lead to the conclusion that the Amoraic period ended in the late fourth century CE.

The dramatic historical events that took place in the fourth century, and their possible impact on the Galilean population and the disappearance of rabbinic circles, are discussed next. Archaeological data from recent surveys and excavations in the Galilee point to extensive settlement abandonment and sharp demographic decline, culminating in the late fourth century CE. These data stand in sharp contradiction with the common current view that Galilean Jewry enjoyed an era of prosperity during the Byzantine period, like other regions in Palestine. The historical and demographic processes that took place in the Galilee account for the disappearance of the rabbis in the fourth century and mark the end of the Amoraic era

THE TALMUDIC *STAM* AS AN EVOLUTIONARY PHENOMENON:
THE OPENING *SUGYOT* OF TRACTATE NEDARIM
IN THE TALMUD YERUSHALMI AND THE TALMUD BAVLI

Yoel Kretzmer-Raziel

Lately, the debate regarding the anonymous components of the Bavli is broadening. According to the predominant approach, one can often reconstruct the history of a given *sugia* through literary analysis, by separating its attributed components from the anonymous ones and positing a chronological gap between the two. Therefore, it is often claimed that the *stam* and its creators – the *Stamma'im* – represent a new culture, which revolutionized the methods of study and the recording of knowledge. This view has been criticized lately, at times through comparative analysis of the Yerushalmi.

This article re-examines the ‘Late-*Stam* Hypothesis’ by comparing the opening *sugyot* of tractate Nedarim in both Talmuds. The Babylonian *sugya* has many of the characteristics of assumed late anonymous *sugyot* and is quite similar to other opening *sugyot*, usually assumed to be the post-Amoraic. However, this *sugya* shows close affinity to the parallel *sugya* in the Yerushalmi and many of the supposedly late Babylonian characteristics are found there too.

After considering the theoretical possibilities for explaining the relationship between the two *sugyot*, the article argues that the supposedly late Babylonian *sugya* is better understood as the fruit of an evolutionary process, rather than a late Babylonian novelty. It seems quite likely that some of the supposedly late traits of the Babylonian *sugya* were inherited from an earlier, probably Palestinian *sugya*. Through examination of several other *sugyot* in both Talmuds, the article argues that this phenomenon is far from rare. Whereas quite often in Talmudic scholarship the Yerushalmi is adduced to support the chronological divide inside the Bavli, these *sugyot* seem to point to the contrary. Furthermore, many *sugyot* in the Bavli lack parallels in the Yerushalmi, while it is clear that Palestinian (and Babylonian) material was abundant and diverse. Therefore, in the analysis of non-paralleled anonymous material in the Bavli one must consider the possibility that this material originated earlier than usually assumed.

LOVER, SON AND PROPHET: MAGIC AND KABBALAH IN
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF YOHANAN ALEMANNIO

Gal Sofer

The figure of the Italian kabbalist, philosopher and physician Rabbi Yohanan Alemanno has been known to the scholars of Jewish studies for some decades. Nonetheless, his autograph in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris MS 849), has not been studied thoroughly. This article describes this manuscript and discusses certain kabbalistic and magical themes in it. The purpose of this discussion is to shed new light on the figure of Alemanno, while emphasizing his aspirations to lead the Jewish nation, like Moses, and to bring about the redemption. Furthermore, I argue that Paris MS 849 is a literary autobiography, in which the author used the literary frame of Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, and that this untitled manuscript might have a name.