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Rabbinics in the New Encyclopaedia Judaica

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REVIEWS



Rabbinics in the *New Encyclopaedia Judaica*

ELIEZER DIAMOND

There have been significant advances in almost every branch of rabbinic scholarship since the publication of the first edition of *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (hereafter: *EJ1*). It was the task of the contributors to *Encyclopaedia Judaica's* second edition (hereafter: *EJ2*) to summarize these advances in a concise yet comprehensive fashion. My role as reviewer is to highlight the advances mentioned in *EJ2*, to supplement each entry with scholarship that was not mentioned, and, on occasion, critique the style and/or substance of an entry. The latter is done with the full knowledge that it is no easy task to write an encyclopedia entry. The author must navigate the treacherous waters between the Scylla of excessive brevity and the Charybdis of information overload. Furthermore, it is a challenge to be current with all the literature on a given topic; as soon as one completes an entry new scholarship renders it incomplete, if not obsolete. To some extent I face these same challenges as a reviewer. I have done my best, therefore, to be fair to the authors of *EJ2* even in those cases where I feel that their efforts have not produced the ideal results.

For the most part the entries in *EJ2* addressing rabbinics are well written, informative, and up to date. Inevitably, there are some shortcomings, which may be classed in the following categories:

1. Partiality to Israeli scholarship at the expense of work being done in the North American academy. In addition, at times one scholarly view on an issue is presented and others ignored.
2. Failure to update entries despite important relevant new developments.
3. Indulgence in polemics in place of imparting information.

The entries discussed are divided into two main categories: (a) Halakhah, (b) Aggadah/Midrash. The list of reviewed entries does not pretend to be exhaustive; I have focused on the subjects most central to rabbinic scholarship as well

a number of instances where important advances in rabbinic scholarship deserving mention have not been included because an entry was not updated. Occasionally I have augmented entries with information that was in fact not available at the time of *EJ2*'s publication in order to give the reader as complete a picture as possible of the current state of research. After reviewing particular entries I will conclude with some general remarks.

HALAKHAH

Midreshei Halakhah

The difference between the treatment of this subject in *EJ1* and in *EJ2* is vast, due to the pioneering work of Menahem Kahana, the author of the *EJ2* entry. The *EJ1* entry summarizes David Zvi Hoffmann's view that each of the known collections of halakhic midrash can be attributed to either the school of R. Ishmael or that of R. Aqiba, as well as Hanokh Albeck's demurrer from that position. While he sides with Hoffmann, Kahana adduces evidence that there are significant differences among the halakhic midrash collections that emanate from the school of R. Aqiba. The latter group includes Sifrei Deuteronomy Zuta, which has been reconstructed by Kahana from excerpts cited by the Karaite sage Yeshu'ah ben Judah in his commentary to Deuteronomy.

Kahana, drawing on the work of J. N. Epstein, also details the differences in exegetical methodology between the two schools. In addition he discusses and offers explanations for the differences between biblical interpretation at Qumran and the exegetical methods of the rabbinic sages.

In his discussion of the development of exegetical methods Kahana illustrates how new interpretational methods were gradually added and how the meaning and use of some of the earlier principles changed over time. His discussion of the gradual development of exegetical methods that were increasingly distant from the initial interpretive principles should be supplemented by an article by Yitzhak Gilat in which he contends that new principles, such as the rule that one may not employ a *gezerah shavah* unless one has received it as a tradition from one's teacher, were formulated in the amoraic period in an attempt to stem this trend. Furthermore, Chernick's studies of *kelal u-ferat u-khelal* and *gezerah shavah*¹ deserve mention here or, at the very least, in the bibliography. Finally, Jay Harris' study of the exegetical principle "the Torah spoke in human language" and his survey of the differing attitudes of the champions of rabbinic tradition and their opponents toward halakhic midrash is worthy of mention.

¹ Editor's note: (a) *Gezerah shavah*—"Similar laws, similar verdicts," or drawing a conclusion argument by word analogy. (b) *Kelal u-ferat u-khelal*—a restriction on a general principle, derived from a specific case. (Source: *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, Geoffrey Wigoder, editor, [New York: Macmillan, 1989], via: <http://www.answers.com/topic/hermeneutics>.)

Kahana covers a number of other topics, including the nature of the aggadic portions of the halakhic midrashim, the relationship of the halakhic midrashim to other rabbinic literature, and the question of where and when these works were composed. He concludes by summarizing the work that has been done by contemporary scholars in the study of the halakhic midrashim and the production of critical editions, stressing the importance of locating and publishing fragments of these works as part of the effort to establish authoritative critical editions of them. Kahana himself has made impressive contributions to this project, publishing an exhaustive comparative critical edition of the Mekhilta of R. Ishmael and the (Aqiban) Mekhilta of R. Simeon b. Yohai for Parshat Amalek as well as painstakingly collecting, editing, and publishing the available Genizah fragments of the halakhic midrashim. (The volume containing fragments for all the midrashim other than Sifra has appeared; Kahana has promised a second volume of Sifra fragments.)

If there is any serious flaw in this entry it is its inadequate and occasionally clumsy English, which is clearly a translation from the Hebrew. (Kahana's article on Midreshei Halakhah in *The Literature of the Sages* [Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987–], vol. 3b, suffers from this deficiency to an even greater degree.) It is to be hoped that in the future Kahana will find a translator who can do justice to his majestic scholarship.

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Mishnah

In the mid-twentieth century the two great Israeli rabbinic scholars, J. N. Epstein and Hanokh Albeck, debated the origins, redactional history, and purpose of the Mishnah. Epstein saw the Mishnah as incorporating numerous traditions from the Second Temple period in their original literary formulations. While Albeck agreed that traditions from this period were embedded in the Mishnah, he argued that the literary formulation of the Mishnah began only after the destruction of the Temple with the compilation of Tractate Eduyot. Epstein described Rabbi Judah the Patriarch, or Rabbi, the reputed editor of the Mishnah, as taking an active role in emending, combining, and separating the rabbinic formulations that had been transmitted to him. Albeck, on the other hand, pictured Rabbi as organizing these traditions but not tampering with

their actual wording in any way. Finally, whereas in Epstein's view Rabbi's purpose in creating the Mishnah was to provide a code of law, Albeck saw the Mishnah as merely a collection of rulings that could serve as a basis for halakhic decision making by individual sages.

The entry for Mishnah in *EJ1* sides almost entirely with Epstein. Although Ephraim Elimelech Urbach, the author of the entry, includes two of Albeck's works in his bibliography, in the article itself he presents only Epstein's view on each of the questions mentioned above. The *EJ2* entry corrects this imbalance, citing the views of both Epstein and Albeck while also providing a critical assessment of their theories. Of particular importance is the mention of Albeck's findings in his German-language study of the Mishnah, *Untersuchungen über die Redaktion der Mischna*; these are presented in a much more abbreviated form in his Hebrew writings.

There are some lacunae in the entry as well. Although Jacob Neusner's scholarship is acknowledged in a general way in the section entitled "The Modern Interpretation of the Mishnah," it touches upon and contributes to some of the issues discussed elsewhere in the entry. For example, in the section entitled "The Mishnah as a Literary Work" mention ought to have been made of Neusner's taxonomy of the basic sentence structures used in the Mishnah. In addition, there are a number of studies of the literary character of the Mishnah that could have been mentioned. Although the scholarly consensus is that very often the Mishnah is organized associatively, Avraham Walfish argues that the Mishnah is carefully organized according to a sophisticated literary scheme. Also, Moshe Kline has demonstrated that there is a consistent overall literary structure to the Mishnah throughout.

Furthermore, while *EJ2* delineates at length the debate between Epstein and Albeck about the purpose of the Mishnah, a number of American scholars, including Neusner, Baruch Bokser, and David Kraemer, have considered this question in a broader cultural context. They suggest that the Mishnah is either a response to the disintegration of Jewish society in the wake of the Temple's destruction (Bokser and Neusner) or an attempt by the rabbis to imagine and describe an ideal world which they have the power to define and control (Kraemer).

In short, the entry on Mishnah in *EJ2* is a significant improvement over the article in *EJ1*. Nonetheless, as in the case of the entry on the Babylonian Talmud [hereafter: BT] (see below), this entry would have benefited from a consideration of some of the larger questions concerning the Mishnah, as well as the inclusion of more American and recent Israeli scholarship.

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Tosefta

EJ2's entry for Tosefta, by Stephen Wald, is a vast improvement over the entry in *EJ1*. The latter includes a listing of highly speculative theories about the origins of the Tosefta and its relationship to the Mishnah. Generally speaking these theories are not based on careful study of the Tosefta itself. These are omitted, and rightly so, from the *EJ2* entry. The *EJ2* entry focuses on two questions: the relationship between the Tosefta and the Mishnah, and the significance and origin of BT's claim that anonymous statements in the Tosefta should be attributed to the *tanna* R. Nehemia. The second question is addressed quite brilliantly by Wald himself.

The first question has recently been addressed extensively by Shamma Friedman and, to a lesser degree, by Judith Hauptman. *EJ2* highlights Friedman's work. Friedman has demonstrated that in many cases the formulation of a tradition in the Tosefta is a more primitive version of the tradition as it appears, in a more polished form, in the Mishnah. This work is part of Friedman's larger project of studying the significant and highly creative editing of earlier traditions by later rabbinic tradents² and editors. It has been pointed out by a number of scholars that Friedman is not entirely clear about whether he is claiming the chronological priority of the Tosefta relative to the Mishnah as a whole or simply that some of the Tosefta's traditions predate those in the Mishnah, at least in their present formulations. It seems likely, given Friedman's general prudence and caution and extrapolating from his work with Babylonian *baraitot*, that he is claiming only the latter.

There are some studies that might have enriched the entry. In a number of works, Jacob Neusner outlines the nature of the relationship of specific tractates and orders of Tosefta to the Mishnah of those tractates and orders. Avraham Walfish, continuing his literary studies of tannaitic literature, applies the same method of literary analysis to Tosefta Berakhot that he used to analyze Mishnah Rosh Hashanah in his doctoral dissertation. He argues that Tosefta and Mishnah Berakhot model different ideals of divine service: the Tosefta focuses on the performance of *mitsvot* while the Mishnah privileges the act of seeking the Divine Presence.

Finally, while it is taken for granted in the entry that the Tosefta was edited sometime in the first half of the third century one should not ignore the case that Yaakov Elman makes in support of Albeck, who assigned the final editing of the Tosefta to the post-amoraic period. While Elman's view has not been gener-

² Note: **Tradents** are carriers or transmitters of a **tradition** [Barry D. Walfish].

ally accepted it is carefully argued and deserves mention in a survey of recent Tosefta scholarship.

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Walfish, Avraham. "Approaching the Text and Approaching God: The Redaction of Mishnah and Tosefta Berakhot," *Jewish Studies* 43 (2005–2006): 21–79.

Baraita, Baraitot

The topic of *baraitot* is important and complex. Its importance stems from the role of *baraitot* as fundamental building blocks of the *sugyot* [passages] of both Talmuds, and a clear understanding of their origins and authority is crucial for an understanding of Talmudic discourse. The complexity of the topic stems from uncertainty about the origins, dates of composition, and authority of *baraitot*. These problems are caused, in part, by the variegated citation terminology used to introduce *baraitot* and the mixed reception given them by the *Amoraim*.

The seminal study of these and other questions relating to *baraitot* is Hanokh Albeck's *Mehqarim ba-Baraita uva-Tosefta*, published in 1944. Both *EJ1* and *EJ2* draw liberally on Albeck's findings. However, their presentations are in effect complementary because each chooses to focus on different questions. *EJ1* provides a fuller summary of Albeck's taxonomy of citation terminology used to introduce *baraitot*, discussing the nature and function of *baraitot* introduced with the term *tanna* and the distinction between *teno rabbanan* and *tanya*. There is also a discussion of the difference between *baraitot* that were part of Tannaitic collections contemporaneous with or predating Rabbi's Mishnah and those that were composed as supplements or commentaries to the Mishnah. A final subject discussed in *EJ1* but not in *EJ2* is that of Babylonian *baraitot*; more on this below.

EJ2, on the other hand, provides a detailed and nuanced exposition of the literary, legal, and historical characteristics of the *baraitot*. The *EJ2* entry also adds two important findings that postdate *EJ1*'s publication. The first is an extended discussion of the origins and significance of the term *baraita*. Stephen Wald, the author of the *EJ2* entry, first cites Neil Danzig's observation that the term *baraita* is first used by fourth generation Babylonian *Amoraim* and his consequent proposal that the term reflects a growing acceptance of the Mishnah's authority. This acceptance, argues Danzig, led to the characterization of tannaitic sources not in the Mishnah as *baraitot*, literally "external [traditions]." Wald then critiques Danzig's theory and suggests a link between the term *baraita* and the earlier Palestinian term *tosefet*.

As noted earlier, there is no discussion in *EJ2* of whether there are *baraitot* of Babylonian origin, meaning *baraitot* that were formulated and transmitted in Babylonia itself. This is perhaps explained by *EJ2*'s second major contribution to

the discussion of *baraitot*. Wald cites the findings of Shamma Friedman, which contradict one of Albeck's fundamental theories. Albeck argues that tannaitic sources were carefully preserved, with no attempt to change their language and style. Therefore, Albeck concludes, in any case where we find tannaitic traditions similar in content but worded differently we must assume that they are parallel traditions originating from different circles. Friedman, on the other hand, shows that the editors of BT took an active hand in reformulating the tannaitic traditions available to them. The corollary of this finding is that, absent compelling evidence, tannaitic sources with different formulations of the same tradition, and even *baraitot* recording views not found in any other tannaitic source, should not automatically be assumed to be variant synchronic formulations or traditions from an unknown tannaitic source, as they may well be the result of BT's diachronic editing of an earlier source or actual fabrication of a pseudo-tannaitic tradition.

Consequently, it can be argued that the whole question of Babylonian *baraitot* is rendered moot, since the heavy editorial hand of BT makes it virtually impossible to determine the geographical origins of a *baraita*. Thus, while it is clear that there are *baraitot* that contain Babylonian teachings, it is difficult to know when and where these traditions were formulated, as Yaakov Elman has observed.

Finally, *EJ2* does not address the question of oral transmission as a factor in shaping the language of Babylonian *baraitot*, an issue that has been discussed by Yaakov Elman. Friedman is undoubtedly right that the differences between Palestinian and Babylonian formulations of *baraitot* are due to conscious editing on the part of Babylonian tradents. Moreover, he has demonstrated, as mentioned above, that in some cases Babylonian editors fabricated *baraitot* and gave them the form of tannaitic traditions. Minor changes in wording, on the other hand, may well be due to the substitution by Babylonian tradents of terms more common in Babylonia for Palestinian expressions; this would explain the peculiar linguistic characteristics of Babylonian *baraitot* noted by Menahem Moreshet. In any case, the role of orality in shaping the wording and form of *baraitot* deserves further investigation.

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Jerusalem Talmud (Talmud Yerushalmi)

Of all rabbinic texts the Jerusalem Talmud [hereafter: JT] is the most inaccessible. Therefore, every advance made in JT studies—and there have been many since the publication of *EJ1*—is of major importance. Four of the most intractable difficulties facing students and scholars have been: the (presumed) corrupt state of the text with no unbroken interpretational tradition and few manuscripts available to emend it; lack of familiarity with the lexicon and grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic; uncertainty about the meaning and

function of many of the technical terms used in JT; and the difficulty in reconstructing the redactional history of JT because of its many enigmatic features, such as the phenomenon of parallel *sugyot*.

EJ2 reports on the great strides made since the publication of *EJ1* in meeting all the challenges mentioned above. The discovery of the Escorial manuscript of Yerushalmi Nezikin, which was published together with a commentary by Saul Lieberman, has improved greatly our understanding of this portion of JT. A more recent discovery not mentioned in *EJ2* comes from the so-called “European Genizah.” Pages containing portions of JT tractates from Moed and Nashim have been recovered from the binding of Latin books in Europe. Yaakov Sussman has identified them as fragments of the “Sefer Yerushalmi,” an Ashkenazic text containing both JT and numerous explanatory notes and addenda, that is mentioned by some medieval Ashkenazic sages.

EJ2 notes Michael Sokoloff’s monumental *Dictionary of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, which has made the language of JT much more penetrable, as well as Leib Moscovitz’s doctoral dissertation, a study of selected technical terms in JT. Stephen Wald, the entry’s author, expresses the hope that Moscovitz’s work will become accessible to a wider audience. In fact, Moscovitz has just published the first of a projected multivolume work that will be a comprehensive study of JT’s terminology.

Two major questions concerning the redactional history of JT, and the responses of recent scholarship to these questions, are mentioned in *EJ2*. The first is the nature of and reason for the stylistic and structural differences between JT and BT as redacted works; the second is the dating and provenance of Yerushalmi Nezikin.

Regarding the first question the *EJ2* entry highlights the relevance of recent BT scholarship to this question. In light of the regnant approach to BT that regards the anonymous stratum of BT as representing the extensive literary and editorial efforts of post-amoraic sages, there is in fact no significant stylistic and substantive difference between the style and structure of JT and BT as they were formulated in the amoraic period. Of course, one is still left with the task of accounting for the transformative editing process in which the later editors of BT engaged; however, the fact remains that according to this view the differences between JT and BT are no longer to be considered a basis for positing differences between Palestinian and Babylonian *Amoraim* in their methods of study or literary activity.

As for the origins of Yerushalmi Nezikin, this has long been a central subject of discussion among scholars of JT. In a groundbreaking study, Saul Lieberman claimed that Yerushalmi Nezikin was the product of an academy in Caesarea and that its redaction predated that of the rest of JT. The *EJ2* entry states, “Recently, however, the focus has moved away from the aspect of location, and more attention has been given to the aspect of time—[Yaakov Sussman’s proposal] that the redaction of Yerushalmi Nezikin represents an earlier stage in the development of the Talmudic tradition.” Sussman, extrapolating from the contrast between the elaborate post-amoraic editing of BT and the much briefer and straightforward formulation of JT, suggests that Yerushalmi Nezikin is a

“proto-Talmud” that did not undergo the same editing process as the rest of JT and is therefore even more laconic and unfinished. In other words: Yerushalmi Nezikin is to the rest of JT what the latter is to BT.

It is important to note that the shift mentioned in *EJ2* is due in part to some powerful arguments that have been made against Lieberman’s theory, in particular by Moshe Assis. In his article on JT in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, Leib Moscovitz sums up the present state of knowledge as follows: “[T]he chronological and geographical provenance of [Yerushalmi Nezikin] remains uncertain.”

The question of JT’s redactional history has been addressed from many different angles by Leib Moscovitz. He has investigated many of the stylistic phenomena of JT—parallel *sugyot*, *sugyot* that appear in two contradictory forms in JT, *sugyot* cited within other *sugyot*, material included out of context—and has offered some cautious observations about the implications of these phenomena for the redactional history of JT. One of his most important contributions to JT studies is his illustration of how a close reading of JT reveals variant versions and redactions that can be identified even given the paucity of witnesses; in effect, there are such witnesses embedded in the received text of JT itself.

As in the case of BT, an area of scholarship not mentioned in the *EJ2* entry is the study of the JT as a cultural document. A scholar who has done much in this area is Catherine Heszer. In particular she has tried to use JT to create a social history of the rabbinic movement in Palestine. There are also several essays in the series *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture* that contribute to this area of research.

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Babylonian Talmud

The entry on the Babylonian Talmud (henceforth BT) includes many of the recent advances in Talmud scholarship. In particular it stresses the present consensus that the vast bulk of anonymous material in BT referred to as the *stam* is

an elaborate post-amoraic superstructure built around the earlier core of BT, which consists of tannaitic and amoraic material. This stratum, moreover, is a carefully crafted literary creation, rather than “consisting of the oral discussions as they were delivered in the academies” as was stated in *EJ1*.

Although a number of earlier scholars, including Meir Friedmann and Joseph Dünner had theorized about the independent nature of anonymous portions of the Talmud—indeed, some of the medieval commentators already noted this—it was Shamma Friedman, influenced and inspired in part by the research of Hyman Klein, who established a firm basis for this approach. In a seminal study Friedman suggested fourteen criteria that could be used to separate the *stam* from the earlier strata of BT. Moreover, in his commentary to BT Bava Mezia ch. 6 and elsewhere, Friedman has shown, as the *EJ2* entry notes, that the creators of the *stam* often introduced their own concerns and concepts into the Talmudic discourse, thereby creating difficulties and inconsistencies in the flow of the *sugya*. Friedman and his students have produced exhaustive commentaries to chapters of BT that are based on the principles that the *stam* represents a separate and largely post-amoraic creation and that BT in its final redaction is a carefully edited literary work. Friedman has also established the Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud; one of its projects is producing a commentary to BT that makes available to all students of the Talmud the findings and methodology of academic scholarship. Four volumes have been published so far.

Much progress has been made as well in the collection and study of manuscripts and Genizah fragments of BT. *EJ2* mentions the Lieberman Institute, also headed by Shamma Friedman, which has collected and transcribed all known manuscripts and early printed editions of BT and has begun transcribing Genizah fragments as well as making available photographs of these fragments. This data is available with a search engine that makes it possible to locate textual and orthographic variants. In addition, the Friedberg Genizah Project has undertaken the daunting project of digitizing all the manuscripts and manuscript fragments found in the Cairo Genizah. A separate trove of manuscript fragments, including leaves of Talmud, has been discovered in the bindings of books in Italy, the so-called “Italian Genizah.”

EJ2 also documents an important shift in how the multiple text traditions of BT are viewed. Raphael Nathan Nata Rabbinovicz, the nineteenth-century editor of the monumental *Diḳduḳe sofrim*, limited himself to the listing of textual variants and, in some cases, suggesting which reading was to be preferred. In similar fashion, the editions of rabbinic works that were produced in the first half of the twentieth century, including Henry Malter’s edition of Tractate Taanit, did not attempt to establish the existence of discreet stemmata³ among the available text witnesses; instead they produced eclectic editions.

³ Note: **Stemmata** are diagrams showing the relationship between the surviving witnesses of a text [Barry D. Walfish].

An important shift in the study of BT text traditions began with E. S. Rosenthal's study of Tractate Pesahim, in which he identified two different text traditions for that tractate. Shamma Friedman, following Rosenthal's lead and basing himself largely on his work on Bava Metsia ch. 6, proposed that there were essentially two families of textual traditions for BT; he theorized that these derived from the traditions of the two Babylonian academies, each of which had a different recension of BT. In recent years many of his students have produced critical editions of various chapters, finding, for the most part, similar results.

The scholarship delineated in *EJ2* is presented cogently and concisely. The entry's major deficiency is that it reflects almost exclusively the scholarship and views of Shamma Friedman and his students. This has two consequences. The first is that dissenting views are not included. Thus while the entry presents Friedman's theories concerning the textual history of BT, there is no mention of Robert Brody's counterarguments. Brody cites evidence suggesting that, due in part to its oral transmission, the text of BT was fluid in the Geonic period, with some Geonim finding several versions of the same passage equally acceptable, such that one cannot speak of different versions of the text being produced by different academies. *EJ2* cites Friedman's response to Brody's critique, a proposal that the two branches reflect the existence of an "official," presumably written, version of BT as well as an oral, less official version. However, the stimulus for Friedman's revision of his view is not included, at least not explicitly; perhaps the author's rather hasty dismissal of the relevance of orality as a factor in forming BT's textual traditions is intended as an oblique refutation of Brody's theory.

The second consequence of the entry's relatively narrow focus is that there are many developments in BT scholarship that are mentioned neither in the text nor in the bibliography of the entry. These developments are so numerous that it is impossible to enumerate them all. I will mention just a few:

COMPOSITIONAL AND REDACTIONAL CRITICISM

While *EJ2* has a great deal to say about the role of the *stammaim* [anonymous post-amoraic redactors: Editor] in shaping the final form of the Talmud there has also been a great deal of work done on identifying earlier compositional and redactional layers of BT. Two related questions have interested BT scholars. The first is the degree to which the earlier redactional layers of BT can be identified. The second is whether, and to what extent, later editors either fabricated material that they then attributed to earlier authorities or reformulated and homogenized, in style or in content, earlier traditions that they received.

Jacob Neusner has argued that in considering BT, or any rabbinic work for that matter, we can only speak with confidence of each document as reflecting the views of the final editors of the document. This is the case, says Neusner, because we have no way of knowing how earlier material was shaped or altered by the editors, or the degree to which they attributed their views to earlier tradents. This view has been refuted by a significant body of research. The studies of David Rosenthal and Noah Aminoah have done much to uncover earlier redactional units within BT. Richard Kalmin has also demonstrated convincing-

ly that BT is a layered document in which many traditions from various locales (including Palestine) and periods have been preserved and transmitted in their original formulations. At the same time, Kalmin and others have identified instances in which earlier traditions have been reworked in BT to conform to the ideology of the editors of BT.

Furthermore, the present consensus among scholars that the anonymous material in BT is the product of post-Amoraic composition and editing has been questioned recently by Robert Brody. He has cited a number of instances in which it seems likely that named *Amoraim* are in fact responding to anonymous statements or questions that precede them in the *sugya*.

Selected Bibliography

- Aminoah, Noah. *'Arikhat Masekhet Qidushin ba-Talmud ha-Bavli*. Tel Aviv: Universitat Tel-Aviv, 1977.
- Aminoah, Noah. *'Arikhat Masekhtot Betsah, Rosh-ha-Shanah ve-Ta'anit ba-Talmud ha-Bavli*. Tel Aviv: Universitat Tel-Aviv, 1986.
- Aminoah, Noah. *'Arikhat Masekhtot Sukah u-Mo'ed Kaṭan ba-Talmud ha-Bavli*. Tel Aviv: Universitat Tel-Aviv, 1988.
- Brody, Robert. "Geonic Literature and the Talmudic Text" (Heb.), in *Mehqere Talmud I* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1990): 237–303.
- Brody, Robert. "The Anonymous Talmud and the Words of the *Amoraim*" (Heb.), *Iggud I* (2008): 213–232.
- Kalmin, Richard. *Sages, Stories, Authors, and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994.
- Kalmin, Richard. *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Neusner, Jacob. *Making the Classics in Judaism*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989.
- Neusner, Jacob. *Sources and Traditions: Types of Compositions in the Talmud of Babylonia*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.
- Rosenthal, David. "Abbaye's Public Lecture" (Heb.), *Tarbits* 46 (1977): 97–109.
- Rosenthal, David. "Early Recensions Embedded in the Babylonian Talmud" (Heb.), in *Mehqere Talmud I* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1990): 155–204.

AGGADAH AND THE STAM (ANONYMOUS REDACTORS)

EJ2 notes research by Friedman and others that has shown how Palestinian narratives are combined and elaborated upon in BT. Jeffrey Rubenstein has demonstrated that BT's literary efforts have an ideological component as well. Earlier Palestinian narratives are often recast to reflect the cultural and ideological concerns of the *stam*. In particular, the narratives as they appear in the *stam* are concerned with conflict between the value of Torah study and other values. Of particular value is the volume *Creation and Composition*, a collection of papers by numerous scholars dealing with the role of the *stam* in shaping rabbinic narratives.

Selected Bibliography

- Rubenstein, Jeffrey. *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Rubenstein, Jeffrey, ed. *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BT AND JT

Scholars have long debated whether the Jerusalem Talmud in its final form was known to the editors of BT. Analysis of JT and BT Horayot by Martin Jaffee and JT and BT Avodah Zarah by Alyssa Gray suggests that the editors of BT were in possession of JT in its final form (Jaffee's formulation is a bit more cautious) and used its structure and content as a template for the Babylonian tractate.

Another long-debated question is the degree to which cultural differences account for differences in halakhic interpretations between BT and the JT. Christine Hayes, basing herself on a careful study of BT and JT Avodah Zarah, has concluded that more often than not differences between BT and JT can be attributed to hermeneutics rather than culture. At the same time, she suggests a set of criteria for identifying those cases where divergence between the two Talmuds is in fact due to different cultural norms.

Selected Bibliography

Gray, Alyssa. *A Talmud in Exile: The Influence of Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah on the Formation of Bavli Avodah Zarah*. Providence, RI: Brown University, 2005.

Hayes, Christine. *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds: Accounting for Halakhic Difference in Selected Sugyot from Tractate Avodah Zarah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Jaffee, Martin S. "The Babylonian Appropriation of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Redactional Studies in the Horayot Tractates," in *The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmudic Redaction and Interpretation*, ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck (Lanham: University Press of America, 1989): 3–27.

BT AND MIDDLE PERSIAN CULTURE

Another important and quite recent advance in BT studies is the examination of BT's legal and cultural elements in the context of Middle Persian culture. The major elements of this development are in fact summarized in a separate entry, "Talmud and Middle Persian Culture." In this entry Yaakov Elman ably summarizes the scholarship in this field. Indeed, Elman himself has made an impressive contribution to this discipline; nine of his articles and a paper he delivered at an academic conference are listed in the bibliography. A name that might have been mentioned, at least in the bibliography, is that of Geoffrey Herman. His doctoral dissertation, situates the institution of the exilarch in the context of Sasanian Persian culture and politics. Herman has also published a number of articles in which he utilizes Persian sources to illuminate rabbinic texts.

Richard Kalmin's *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, although published too late to be included in Elman's survey, also uses Persian material to explain some obscure passages in the Babylonian Talmud. Kalmin has made a careful comparison of BT's treatment of a number of topics with their treatment in Palestinian sources in the JT and in BT. The differences that emerge from these studies indicate important distinctions between the attitudes

of the Babylonian and Palestinian rabbis toward non-rabbis. The picture of the Babylonian rabbis that emerges is one of insularity; the rabbis seem to be an elite group with little interest in non-rabbinic Jews. Palestinian rabbis, on the other hand, are far more involved in the larger Jewish community. Other differences exist as well, including attitudes toward dream interpretation and differing levels of concern about the encroachment of outside cultural and religious practices.

Selected Bibliography

- Herman, Geoffrey. "Rashut ha-golah be-Bavel bi-teḳufat ha-Talmud." Ph.D. Dissertation. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2005.
- Kalmin, Richard. *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

WOMEN IN THE TALMUD

In the last few decades, interest has grown in the characterization of women in the Talmud on the one hand and, on the other, how careful reading of texts involving women may help us uncover the attitudes of (some) women towards rabbinic authority. The scholarship of Tal Ilan has been particularly significant in this field; important contributions have been made as well by Judith Romney Wegner, Judith Hauptman, and Charlotte Fonrobert. Ilan has launched a project that is producing a commentary to BT addressing each of the instances in which women appear or are discussed.

Selected Bibliography

- Bar-Ilan, Meir. *Some Jewish Women in Antiquity*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998. (Brown Judaic Studies; 317.)
- Fonrobert, Charlotte Elisheva. *Menstrual Purity: Rabbinic and Christian Reconstructions of Biblical Gender*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- Hauptman, Judith. *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998.
- Ilan, Tal. *Mine and Yours are Hers: Retrieving Women's History from Rabbinic Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- Ilan, Tal. *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996.
- Ilan, Tal, [et al.], eds. *A Feminist Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud: Introduction and Studies*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.
- Wegner, Judith Romney. *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

In sum, there is much that has happened in BT studies that could have been included in *EJ2* but was not. In part this is understandable; the length of an encyclopedia entry is often limited by the editors, and it is impossible to encompass every subject and viewpoint in a particular discipline. Nonetheless, the article would have benefited both from a presentation of a broader range of views and from a greater consideration of BT as a cultural document as well as a literary creation.

AGGADAH AND MIDRASH

Aggadah

The *EJ1* entry is retained almost in its entirety (see below) as part of the expanded and updated entry in *EJ2*, although some minor editing has taken place as follows:

1. The brief introduction by Cecil Roth in *EJ1*, essentially a paraphrase of the first paragraph of the "Aggadah" entry in the *Encyclopedia Hebraica*, is omitted. Roth offers a brief definition of *aggadah* and, quoting Bialik, notes the symbiotic relationship between *halakhah* and *aggadah*. The new introduction by Stephen Wald clarifies the relationship between the two, distinguishing between *halakhah* and *aggadah* by describing the first as dictating behavior and the second as delineating the meaning, values, and ideals which underlie and are meant to be expressed through that behavior.
2. The first full paragraph in the right-hand column of vol. 1, p. 454, in *EJ2* is a revised version of the first full paragraph in *EJ1*, vol. 2, col. 356. (Although it is attributed to the *Encyclopedia Hebraica* in both editions of *EJ*, its provenance is in fact unclear.) While *EJ1* states, "The contribution of Babylonian Jewry in the field of *aggadah*, though not negligible, is very limited," *EJ2*, citing an example from the work of Shamma Friedman, describes the Babylonian Talmud (BT) as having a significant role in reshaping earlier Palestinian traditions. This indeed has become a commonplace among scholars of *aggadah* (see below).
3. The new section on "Women in Aggadah" (about which more will be said further on) is placed before "The Aggadah in Modern Scholarship," a section retained from *EJ1*, and the *EJ1* sections "In Islam" and "Aggadah in Illuminated Manuscripts" are preceded by the section entitled "Later Studies." (Incidentally, the relationship between *aggadah* and Islamic traditions has been touched upon briefly in recent studies by Carol Bakhos and Reuven Firestone.)

The new sections, "Women in the Aggadah" and "Later Studies," are excellent in that they ably summarize the significant developments that have taken place in the study of *aggadah*. These include a general shift from regarding *aggadah* as a source for reconstructing historical events toward viewing it as a literary creation that reflects the cultural, psychological, and theological concerns of its authors and tradents. However, it is disconcerting that in both cases we are given in effect dueling narratives. While the first subsection of "Women in Aggadah," written by Devora Weisberg, depicts the representation of women in *aggadah* as being essentially positive, noting that women are sometimes presented as religious exemplars, the second subsection by Judith Baskin, "Women's Otherness," posits that rabbinic views of women are grounded in "the

conviction of women's essential alterity from men." The picture of women in *aggadah* that emerges is a dark and negative one. Both essays contain important insights about the depiction of women in rabbinic narrative; an integrated presentation, one giving equal consideration to the variety of ways in which *aggadah* depicts and relates to women, would have been more enlightening.

In the case of the subsection "Later Studies" we are given an essay by Carol Bakhos that foregrounds the work of American scholars Jacob Neusner, Daniel Boyarin, David Stern, Richard Kalmin, and Jeffrey Rubenstein, while giving only a paragraph to the Israeli scholars Isaac Heinemann, Jonah Fraenkel, Dov Noy, Ofra Meir, Avigdor Shinan, Galit Hasan-Rokem, and Joshua Levinson. This is followed by an essay by Stephen Wald, in which he gives an excellent analysis of the importance of Isaac Heinemann's pioneering work *Darkhe ha-Agadah*, as well as a much fuller picture of the *aggadah* scholarship being done in Israel, including a masterful explication of the contributions of Jonah Fraenkel and Shamma Friedman to the study of *aggadah*. However, this exclusive focus on Israeli scholarship is problematic. Moreover, Wald begins his essay with what sounds like a polemic against *aggadah* scholarship outside of Israel. He speaks of "the erosion of accepted and authoritative cultural canons in both literary and religious studies" that is "primarily characteristic of North American scholarship," and he notes that "these trends have also had their followers in Israel as well," referring us to the Israeli scholars mentioned by Bakhos. (Presumably, although Bakhos mentions Jonah Fraenkel, Wald does not mean to include him in this group.) He contrasts this attitude with that "in many Israeli circles" for which "the classical literature of the *aggadah* has largely retained its canonical status as well as much of its cultural and (for some) its religious authority." The "North American" attitudes of which Wald speaks are nowhere mentioned in Bakhos' essay; therefore, it is unclear from his words to which American scholars Wald is referring—which is not to deny that what he says may well be true. Even if Wald could successfully make the case that this view is held by some American scholars of *aggadah*, it is questionable whether what amounts to an ideological, and even religious, critique belongs in an encyclopedia entry.

Finally, in emphasizing the importance of Friedman's work in tracing the development of *aggadah* in the BT, Wald contrasts his work with that of Jacob Neusner. A more apt and more recent American analogue to Friedman's work is that of Richard Kalmin and, in particular, Jeffrey Rubenstein, who have shown how Babylonian rabbis reworked Palestinian *aggadah* (Kalmin) and how earlier rabbinic narratives were reshaped by the anonymous editors of the Talmud (Rubenstein). Without doubt, Friedman's knowledge of the syntax, language, and terminology of the Talmud, as well as his brilliant analyses of variant readings and total control of the secondary literature, is unparalleled. Nonetheless, he is not alone in advancing our understanding of how and why rabbinic narrative was transformed by succeeding generations.

Moreover, the work of Friedman and that of Rubenstein, Kalmin, and other American scholars is complementary. This is particularly true of the relationship between Friedman's and Rubenstein's researches in the area of *aggadah*. In each of his articles Friedman, with his usual subtlety and erudition, shows that what

appear to be alternate aggadic traditions in BT are in fact a literary reworking of earlier Palestinian traditions—a point made as well by Kalmin, Devora Steinmetz, and others. Rubenstein, on the other hand, focuses on the way in which stammaitic *aggadot* reflect the particular cultural and religious concerns of the anonymous authors, which he sees as differing from the views of the earlier creators of the core narrative on which these *aggadot* are based. It is interesting and instructive that in one of his articles Rubenstein reworks the fourteen principles formulated by Friedman as a means of separating the anonymous portions of BT from the (presumably) earlier attributed strata in order to use them as a means of isolating and identifying stammaitic narratives.

In summary, the gap between Israeli and American scholarship may not be as wide as suggested by Wald. Though there are undoubtedly some fundamental disagreements between—and among—scholars in both countries there is also much agreement and, equally important, significant complementarity in the scholarly work that is being done.

Selected Bibliography

- Bakhos, Carol. *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006. See pp. 116–119.
- Firestone, Reuven. *Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1990. See pp. 11–21.
- Kalmin, Richard. *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. See pp. 61–86.
- Rubenstein, Jeffrey, ed. *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaitim) to the Aggada*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- Rubenstein, Jeffrey. “Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggada,” in *Creation and Composition*, 417–440.
- Rubenstein, Jeffrey. *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Steinmetz, Devora. “A Portrait of Miriam in Rabbinic Midrash.” *Prooftexts* 8:1 (1988): 35–65.
- Steinmetz, Devora. “Must the Patriarch Know ‘Uqtzin’? The ‘Nasi’ as Scholar in Babylonian Aggada.” *AJS Review* 23:2 (1998): 163–189.
- Steinmetz, Devora. “*Aggadah* Unbound: Inter-Aggadic Characterization of Sages in the Bavli and Implications for Reading Agada,” in *Creation and Composition*, 293–337.

Midrash

The body of this entry is unchanged from that in *EJ1*; the bibliography has been updated. A statement that certainly should have been corrected is the claim that the Passover Haggadah may be the earliest midrash that is available to us. (Similarly, in the entry “Haggadah, Passover,” the midrash in the Haggadah is described as being Tannaitic.) Jay Rovner, in a series of three articles, has demonstrated convincingly that most of this midrash first came into being in the Geonic period.

As in other entries, there are some additional fundamental questions that might have been considered. One is: Why did the rabbis choose to express

themselves through the medium of commentary, a device that seems rarely to have been used during the Second Temple Period? Steven Fraade has considered this question in a number of articles, and in particular in response to James Kugel's scholarship. Kugel has demonstrated that many of the midrashic interpretations found in rabbinic literature in fact predate the rabbinic period and are the basis of some of the divergences from the biblical narrative in Second Temple works such as Jubilees, works that Kugel calls "rewritten Bible." Fraade notes that this raises the question of why the rabbis, having inherited many of the interpretations appearing in the midrash from earlier sources, chose to express them in the form of commentary. One of his major theses is that in using the method of midrash the rabbis were able simultaneously to look inward at the biblical text and outward at their own practices and aspirations.

Selected Bibliography

- Fraade, Steven D. *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1991.
- Fraade, Steven D. "Looking for Narrative Midrash at Qumran," in *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center January, 2003*, ed. Steven D. Fraade, Aharon Shemesh, Ruth A. Clements (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 43–66.
- Kugel, James. *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it Was at the Start of the Common Era*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Rovner, Jay. "An Early Passover Haggadah according to the Palestinian Rite," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 90:3–4 (2000): 337–396.
- Rovner, Jay. "A New Version of the Ereš Israel 'Miqrā' Bikkurim' Midrash," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 92:3–4 (2002): 421–453.
- Rovner, Jay. "Two Early Witnesses to the Formation of the 'Miqrā Bikurim Midrash' and their Implications for the Evolution of the Haggadah Text," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 75 (2004): 75–120.

GENESIS RABBAH

The year 1936 saw the publication of a magisterial critical edition of Genesis Rabbah [hereafter: GR] including a comprehensive commentary begun by J. Theodor in 1903 and completed by Hanokh Albeck, who also wrote an introduction. Theodor and Albeck disagreed about which of the manuscripts available to them represented most faithfully the earliest version of GR; Theodor favored the London manuscript while Albeck argued that Vatican 30 was the better text witness. By the time *EJ1* was published the linguistic studies of Yehezkel Kutscher had strengthened the case for preferring Vatican 30. *EJ2* provides us with an update on this question. A manuscript of GR that was unknown to Theodor and Albeck, Vatican 60, was published in a facsimile edition in 1972. Michael Sokoloff argued that this manuscript, which often differs significantly from the other text witnesses for GR, reflected an early alternate version of GR. However, Menahem Kahana has demonstrated that the differences between this and other manuscripts are probably due to its assimilation of midrashic

material from other midrash collections. (Kahana's article appears in vol. 11 of *Te'udah*, not in the ninth volume as indicated in supplemental bibliography; the same is true of the article by Ofra Meir mentioned there.)

EJ2 also summarizes a debate between Chaim Milikowsky and Hans-Jurgen Becker about the relationship between GR and JT. There are actually two subjects debated by Milikowsky and Becker; the entry in *EJ2* refers only to the first, namely whether it is in fact possible to determine the dependence of one rabbinic work on another. Even if one accepts all the evidence adduced by Becker to show that passages in GR are derived from those in JT—and Milikowsky does not—this does not, in Milikowsky's view, prove a broader literary dependence. As Milikowsky points out, "To a very large extent, [rabbinic works] are largely compilations of preexisting material." The traditions contained in a rabbinic work date from many different periods and locales. Therefore, the fact that one particular passage in work A can be shown to be dependent on a passage in work B tells us nothing about whether one work is dependent on the other in toto.

The second debate between Milikowsky and Becker regards the question of whether GR is a "closed" or "open" work. In Milikowsky's view GR is a single redacted work of which there are numerous manuscripts. The variants among these manuscripts reflect nothing more than the usual differences among multiple witnesses of any work, often due to scribal error or unconscious substitution of familiar words or phrases for unfamiliar ones. Becker sees GR as an "open" text that never underwent any final redaction. Instead, every tradent felt entitled to reshape the text of GR in the manner he saw fit. It is this process of ongoing redaction, argues Becker, which is reflected in the textual differences, both in language and structure, among the various manuscripts of GR.

This debate is actually part of a much broader one between Milikowsky on the one hand and Peter Schaefer and his students on the other. Schaefer asserts that rabbinic works were never "edited" in the modern sense of the word. These works consist of agglutinated traditions that were added to, deleted from, and reformulated at will. Milikowsky argues that each rabbinic work has its own integrity and that variants found in manuscripts and other text witnesses are not a basis for adopting Schaefer's stance.

A valuable contribution to this debate is offered by Martin Jaffee. Citing scholars who suggest that the modern genre most analogous to rabbinic compositions is the anthology, he suggests that we view rabbinic works as collections of traditions that are considered to be "finished" when a work itself becomes regarded as part of the tradition. Moreover, Jaffee suggests plotting these "anthologies" along a spectrum. At one end of the spectrum one finds works that give more evidence of having been consciously edited; the case of the Mishnah comes to mind. On the other end of the spectrum lies the Hekhalot corpus, which indeed shows little or no evidence of redaction. It is probably not incidental, concludes Jaffee, that it was Schaefer's work in this literature that led him to formulate his theory of rabbinic literature as perpetually "open."

Selected Bibliography

- Jaffee, Martin. "Rabbinic Authorship as a Collective Enterprise," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Martin Jaffee (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 17–37.
- Milikowsky, Chaim. "The 'Status Quaestionis' of Research in Rabbinic Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 39:2 (1988): 201–211.
- Schaefer, Peter. "Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the 'Status Quaestionis,'" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 37:2 (1986): 139–152.

LEVITICUS RABBAH

At the time *EJ1*'s publication the major contribution to Leviticus Rabbah [hereafter: LR] scholarship was the publication in 1960 of a critical edition by Mordechai Margoliot. In addition, Joseph Heinemann, the author of the *EJ1* entry, had begun his form-critical studies and redactional analysis of LR. In both the entry and in an article published at about the same time Heinemann proposed that LR underwent a tripartite compositional process. It began with the formation of brief exegetical comments in study house circles. This was followed by the combining and shaping of these interpretations into sermons that were delivered before a live audience. The editor or editors of LR then combined and reworked these sermons into a collection of homilies roughly corresponding to the triennial cycle of scriptural readings followed in Palestine.

As noted at the end of the *EJ2* entry, Chaim Milikowsky and Margarete Schluter—who for some reason is mentioned neither in the body of the article nor in the bibliography as Milikowsky's co-author and collaborator—have continued and refined Margoliot's work by making available manuscripts and manuscript fragments online that were not known to Margoliot. This is done in a line-under-line format to ease identifying basic divisions among the text witnesses. This last aspect of the project is crucial to its larger goal of plotting the relationships and stemmata among the witnesses and determining which readings are original and which are derivative.

One important contributor to LR studies who is not mentioned is Ofra Meir, who has gathered evidence challenging Heinemann's depiction of LR as an anthology of public sermons. She also argues that Heinemann's delineation of GR as an "exegetical" midrash and LR as "homiletical" midrash obscures important connections and dependencies between them. The editors of both GR and LR have a strong hand in shaping the material in front of them, although there are certain stylistic differences between them, such as LR's greater use of rhetoricity. In particular Meir argues that it is in GR that we first find the structure of the proem, a structure that is borrowed and developed by the authors and editors of LR.

Selected Bibliography

- Meir, Ofra. "The Process of Redaction in Genesis Rabbah and Leviticus Rabbah" [Heb.], *Te'udah* 11 (1996): 61–90. (Mehkarim be-midreshe ha-agadah, ed. M. B. Lerner, M. A. Friedman.)

Milikowsky, Chaim; Schluter, Margarete. "‘Vayyiqra Rabba’ through History: A Project to Study its Textual Transmission," in *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: Proceedings of the 6th EAJIS Congress, Toledo, July 1998*, ed. Judit Targarona Borrás and Angel Sáenz-Badillos (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1999) vol. 1: 311–321.

MIDRASH PROVERBS

This is another entry that has been carried over from *EJ1* with no changes. In fact, since *EJ1*'s publication Burton Visotzky has done major work on Midrash Proverbs. Besides addressing the question of this work's date and provenance in the introduction to his dissertation on this midrash, Visotzky has published a critical edition of Midrash Proverbs, as well as an English translation. In his dissertation he cites evidence that suggests that there may be an anti-Karaite polemic in this work.

Selected Bibliography

Visotzky, Burton. "Midrash Mishle: A Critical Edition Based on Manuscripts and Early Editions with an Introduction and Annotated English Translation of Chapters One through Ten." Ph.D. dissertation. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1982.

Visotzky, Burton. *Midrash Mishle: ‘al pi ketav-yad Vatiqan, Ebr. 44*. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1990.

Visotzky, Burton. *The Midrash on Proverbs: Translated from the Hebrew with an Introduction and Annotations*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH

The body of this entry remains unchanged. Consequently, the important findings of Pinḥas (Paul) Mandel have not been incorporated into the entry (although one of his articles is mentioned in the updated bibliography). Alexander Marx observed more than a hundred years ago that Lamentations Rabbah existed in two recensions, one that circulated in France, Germany and Italy, and another that was known in Spain. This finding has been both supported and refined by Mandel in his dissertation, which includes a critical edition of Parasha 3 of the midrash. Mandel shows that the existence of two recensions preceded the creation of distinctive Sephardic and Ashkenazic cultures rather than being one of its consequences.

Mandel proposes that one version of Lamentations Rabbah was transmitted by way of Byzantium primarily in written form. A second version, which was transmitted orally, originated in Babylonia and shows many signs of linguistic "contamination" as well as numerous additions. Mandel suggests that these differences resulted from the different modes of study in each locale. In the Islamic world knowledge was generally acquired through memorization while in Byzantium scholars generally made use of books. His findings are summarized in the article mentioned in the updated bibliography in *EJ2*.

Selected Bibliography

Mandel, Pinḥas. *Midrash Eikhah Rabbati: mavo u-Mahadurah bikortit la-parashah hashelishit*. Ph.D. dissertation. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1997.

Marx, Alexander. "Midrasch Echa Rabbati," *Orientalistische Litteraturzeitung* 5:7 (Juli 1902): 293 ff.

PESIKTA RABBATI

This entry has not been updated. Consequently there is no mention of the synoptic edition of the first twenty-four chapters of Pesikta Rabbati and the related research produced by Rivka Ulmer. Of interest is Chaim Milikowsky's review of Ulmer's edition in which he discusses the circumstances in which the production of a synoptic edition—or as he calls it, a transcriptional edition—of a rabbinic work is appropriate. Milikowsky's essay prompted one by Ulmer in which she considers the challenges involved in producing a critical edition of Pesikta Rabbati or any other rabbinic text. In particular she raises the question of how much one ought to utilize an ideal formal model in the editing of rabbinic texts.

Selected Bibliography

- Milikowsky, Chaim. "Further on Editing Rabbinic Texts," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 90:1–2 (1999): 137–149.
- Ulmer, Rivka. *Pesiqta Rabbati: A Synoptic Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati Based upon All Extant Manuscripts and the Editio Princeps*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997.
- Ulmer, Rivka. "Creating Rabbinic Texts: Moving from a Synoptic to a Critical Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati," in *Recent Developments in Midrash Research: Proceedings of the 2002 and 2003 SBL Consultation on Midrash*, ed. Lieve M. Teugels and Rivka Ulmer (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005): 117–135.
- Ulmer, Rivka. "Further Manuscript Evidence of Pesiqta Rabbati: A Description of MS JTS 8195 (and MS Moscow 214)," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52:2 (2001): 269–307.

CONCLUSION

In general, the new *EJ* succeeds in providing the reader with an up-to-date summary of the state of the research on the major issues in the study of rabbinic literature. My critique of some of the *EJ2* entries has been motivated in part by three scholarly convictions. First, I have assumed that the author of an encyclopedia entry is obliged to provide a broad survey of the scholarship in the field, including views with which he or she does not agree or which do not represent the scholarly consensus. Another view, apparently that of contributors to and/or editors of *EJ2*, is that one should limit oneself to presenting what he or she believes to be the most compelling hypotheses for addressing the complex issues faced by scholars in their respective disciplines. At times this approach is a sensible one, particularly when the views that are thereby excluded are rejected by the vast majority of scholars in the field. Unfortunately, this has not been the case here; scholarly voices that should have been heard were not represented in the pages of *EJ2*.

My second assumption is that, in light of the increasing encounter of rabbinics with many other disciplines, such as orality studies, literary studies, cultural studies, and the like—an encyclopedia entry concerning a rabbinic document should not limit itself to the philological questions relevant to that

text. To the extent that a rabbinic text is a window into rabbinic culture as well as the rabbis' attitudes toward and interactions with the surrounding culture(s), it is impossible to explain fully its broader significance until its cultural and ideological connotations have been explored. Here, too, one runs the risk of including so much in the discussion of a text that the focus of discourse moves away from the document itself towards a set of questions more properly belonging to other disciplines. However, the field of rabbinics has been insulated from other academic disciplines longer and more completely than any other field of Jewish studies. Therefore it is crucial that we broaden our discussion of rabbinic texts to include the scholarship of those who have applied the tools and insights of disciplines other than philology to the study of rabbinic literature.

My third assumption is that new developments in a field deserve to be documented. A number of articles from *EJ1* were left untouched despite the existence of new research in the field (see examples above). Whether this was due to difficulties in finding suitable contributors, time pressures, or other factors is unclear, but to allow entries that should have been updated to be retained in their original form is misleading and ultimately inexcusable.



Encyclopedia Interrupta, or Gale's Unfinished: the Scandal of the *EJ2*

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Encyclopedias are important reference works. They are meant to summarize the state of knowledge in any given field and convey it to both the layperson and the scholar in a clear, concise manner. For Jews and Judaism, the first major effort in this regard was the *Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1906, which drew upon the knowledge of a cadre of European and American scholars of the Science of Judaism (Wissenschaft des Judentums). Its successor the German *Encyclopaedia Judaica* began to appear in 1929 but was interrupted in 1934