

# The Creation of Man and Woman

Interpretations of  
the Biblical Narratives  
in Jewish and Christian  
traditions

*edited by*  
*Gerard P. Luttikhuisen*



## THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN

THEMES IN  
BIBLICAL NARRATIVE  
JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

*Editorial Board*

PHILIP S. ALEXANDER – GERARD P. LUTTIKHUIZEN

*Assistant Editor*

FREEK VAN DER STEEN

*Advisory Board*

WOLFGANG A. BIENERT – JAMES L. KUGEL  
FLORENTINO GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – JAMES R. MUELLER – ED NOORT

VOLUME III



# THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN

*Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives  
in Jewish and Christian traditions*

EDITED BY

GERARD P. LUTTIKHUIZEN



BRILL  
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN  
2000



This book is printed on acid-free paper.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

The creation of man and woman : Interpretations of the biblical narratives in Jewish and Christian traditions. / edited by Gerard P. Luttikhuisen.

p. cm. — (Themes in biblical narrative, ISSN 1388-3909 ; v. 3)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 9004116710 (alk. paper)

1. Adam (Biblical figure) 2. Eve (Biblical figure) 3. Creation—History of doctrines. 4. Bible. O.T. Genesis I-II—Criticism, interpretation, etc.—History. I. Luttikhuisen, Gerard P. II. Series.

BS580.A4 C74 2000

291.2'2—dc21

00-025992

CIP

**Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme**

The creation of man and woman : Interpretations of the biblical narratives in Jewish and Christian traditions / ed. by Gerard P.

Luttikhuisen. - Leiden ; Boston ; Köln : Brill, 2000

(Themes in Biblical narrative ; Vol. 3)

ISBN 90-04-11671-0

Cover design: TopicA (Antoinette Hanekuyk)

Petrus Plancius, *Tabula Geographica, In Qua Paradisus ...*, Amsterdam ca. 1590

ISSN 1388-3909

ISBN 90 04 11671 0

© Copyright 2000 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.*

*Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Brill provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910 Danvers MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.*

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

## CONTENTS

Preface .....	vii
Abbreviations .....	ix
List of Contributors .....	xi
The Creation of Man and Woman in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Traditions .....	1
E. NOORT	
Pandora or the Creation of a Greek Eve .....	19
J.N. BREMMER	
The Creation of Man and Woman in Early Jewish Literature .....	34
J.T.A.G.M. VAN RUITEN	
Endowed With Reason or Glued to the Senses: Philo's Thoughts on Adam and Eve .....	63
A. VAN DEN HOEK	
Man, Woman, and the Angels in 1 Cor 11:2-16 .....	76
L.J. LIETAERT PEERBOLTE	
Keeping Marriage Out of Paradise: The Creation of Man and Woman in Patristic Literature .....	93
H.S. BENJAMINS	
The Creation of the Human in Rabbinic Interpretation .....	107
G.M.G. TEUGELS	
Eve and the Matriarchs: Aspects of Woman Typology in Genesis .....	128
W.J. VAN BEKKUM	
The Creation of Man and Woman in <i>The Secret Book of John</i> .....	140
G.P. LUTTIKHUIZEN	
“Two of Far Nobler Shape”: Milton's Re-creation of Eve and Adam .....	156
H. WILCOX	

The Creation of Eve and the Ambivalence Between the Sexes .....	172
P.E. JONGSMA-TIELEMAN	
The Performance of Creation, Creation in Performance.....	187
S. LEVY	
References to Ancient Texts .....	207

## PREFACE

In June, 1999, the yearly conference of the research group “Jewish and Christian Traditions” of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen, was devoted to the narratives of the creation of man and woman in the first chapters of Genesis and to the various ways in which these stories are interpreted in Judaism and Christianity. The proceedings of the conference are contained in the present book, which is the third volume of the series *Themes in Biblical Narrative*.

The opening chapter deals with the Genesis accounts in their broader textual and ancient Near Eastern contexts. Due attention is given by E. Noort to the issues of gender and sexual duality. J.N. Bremmer discusses ancient Greek conceptions of the origin of human beings, notably the lesser-known stories about the first female(s).

The following seven chapters deal with diverse early-Jewish and early-Christian interpretations of the ancient creation stories. J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten examines in detail the interpretations and re-writings of the Genesis texts in Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, particularly in Tobit, *Jubilees*, 2 *Enoch*, and in the *Sibylline Oracles*. The interpretation given to the biblical texts by Philo of Alexandria—an interpretation which turned out to be very influential among Christian theologians of the first centuries—is the subject of an essay by A. van den Hoek. References to the great Jewish Hellenistic exegete and philosopher can be found in several other parts of this book as well. L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte analyses the manner in which the apostle Paul refers to the biblical creation stories in his discussion with Corinthian Christians. The Church Fathers were faced with the difficult task of reconciling their preference for celibacy with the positive view of marriage they found in the Genesis stories. Their various solutions are evaluated by H.S. Benjamins. Two chapters are dedicated to Jewish interpretations. L. Teugels discusses the hermeneutical problems the Rabbis encountered in their explanations of the creation narratives. In this connection, she also focuses on the figure of Lilith, the woman who, according to some later Jewish sources, was created before Eve. W.J. van Bekkum proceeds from the opposite perspective, drawing attention to Eve and the subsequent matriarchs as female

prototypes. He reveals how the Genesis stories about these women helped Jews to come to terms with the issue of (in-)fertility. G.P. Luttikhuizen concludes this part of the book with a study of the critical use of biblical materials in the Gnostic creation myth of *The Secret Book of John*.

The last three contributions to this volume revolve around the idea of re-creation. H. Wilcox analyses the poetic re-creation of Adam and Eve in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In a provocative essay, P.E. Jongmsma-Tieleman re-reads the ancient stories from a "matriarchal" background. Finally, S. Levy turns to Divine creation as a model for human creativity. On the basis of several quite pertinent examples, he explores the motivation underlying the ancient desire to continue and expand the creative person's self.

I would like to express my thanks to the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies and to the Rudolf Agricola Institute for their organizational and financial support. It is a pleasure to thank Freek van der Steen and Brill Academic Publishers for all the help they provided in realizing the publication of the book soon after the conference. Thanks also go to Miriam Crajé, who prepared the list of abbreviations and the references to ancient texts. I extend my gratitude to all those who participated in the conference and whose papers and comments contributed to the final results.

Gerard P. Luttikhuizen

## ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
ANEP	Ancient Near East in Pictures relating to the Old Testament
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament
BG	Berolinensis Gnosticus (Berlin Codex)
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament
BT	Babylonian Talmud
BZAW	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CD	Cairo Damascus Document
Cod.	Codex
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Judaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DDD	Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible
EKK	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ExT	The Expository Times
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FGrH	Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker
Fr.	Fragment
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
Gen R	Midrash Genesis Rabbah
HAL	Hebraisches und Aramaisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament
IG	Inscriptiones Graecae
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBTh	Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism

JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOTS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series
JSPSS	Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha, Supplement Series
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JThS	The Journal of Theological Studies
LIMC	Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologicae Classicae
LSJ	Liddell-Scott-Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon
LXX	Septuagint
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta Unternehmens
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codex
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	New Testament Studies
OrSib	Sibylline Oracles
OTS	Old Testament Study
POT	De Prediking van het Oude Testament
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RB	Revue Biblique
RE	Real-Enzyklopädie
SPB	Studia Post-Biblica
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
TEG	Traditio Exegetica Graeca
Tg	Targum
Tg Ps-J	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
ThB	Theologische Blätter
TWAT	Theologisch Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament
Vulg.	Vulgate
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

W.J. van Bakkum: *W.J.van.Bakkum@let.rug.nl*

H.S. Benjamins: *HS.Benjamins@wxs.nl*

J.N. Bremmer: *J.N.Bremmer@theol.rug.nl*

A. van den Hoek: *ahoek@hds.harvard.edu*

P.E. Jongsma-Tieleman: *gg.gw@theol.rug.nl*

S. Levy: *levysh@post.tau.ac.il*

G.P. Luttikhuisen: *G.P.Luttikhuisen@theol.rug.nl*

L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte: *lietaert@stad.dsl.nl*

E. Noort: *E.Noort@theol.rug.nl*

J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten: *jtagm@hetnet.nl*

G.M.G. Teugels: *lteugels@theo.uu.nl*

H.E. Wilcox: *h.e.wilcox@let.rug.nl*



This page intentionally left blank

# THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN BIBLICAL AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TRADITIONS

ED NOORT

*In Honour of Horst Seebaß on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday<sup>1</sup>*

The creation theme has again become the focus of critical attention. In the shock following World War I and in the struggle for theological survival in Germany during the interbellum,<sup>2</sup> Gerhard von Rad argued “daß innerhalb des genuinen Jahwehgläubens der Schöpfungsglaube zu keiner Selbständigkeit und Aktualität kam. Wir fanden ihn durchweg in Bezogenheit, ja Abhängigkeit von dem soteriologischen Glaubenskreis”.<sup>3</sup>

Following the new attention to the religio-historical dimension, the shift in methodical approaches,<sup>4</sup> the ecological crisis, and a rethinking of the issue of the world as creation as well as the role of man in

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is dedicated to my friend and colleague Horst Seebaß (University of Bonn) in gratitude for the yearly Numbers and Joshua consultations where study and amicitia are connected in a very stimulating way.

<sup>2</sup> The political dimension of the theological statements about creation in the time of the rising Third Reich can not only be seen in dogmatics with the theology of the “Schöpfungsordnungen”, but also the other way around: in the monumental Jewish commentary of Benno Jacob, *Das erste Buch der Tora: Genesis*, Berlin 1934, 60: “Die Tora lehrt unzweideutig die Bildung nur eines Menschenpaares am Anfang (Monogenismus). Der Polygenismus wurde in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jh. . . . besonders von einer käuflichen Wissenschaft im Interesse der die Sklavenbefreiung bekämpfenden amerikanischen Südstaaten verfochten und später in Deutschland hauptsächlich durch den Engländer und Germanomanen Houston Stewart Chamberlain und unzählige Nachbeter zu dem gleich edlen Zwecke eines reinrassigen Nationalismus und Antisemitismus ausgeschlachtet”. On the other hand he argues against the haggadic tradition of the creation of an androgyne. After Jacob the theory of the creation of an androgyne first being comes from Plato and his myth in Symposium. The tradition itself probably dates back to ancient oriental traditions, known in Greece by the *Babyloniaca* of Berossus.

<sup>3</sup> G. von Rad, “Das theologische Problem des alttestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens” (1936), in: G. von Rad, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (ThB 8), München <sup>3</sup>1965, 136–147 (146). A study of the work of G. von Rad, M. Noth, and A. Alt in relation to the *Zeitgeschichte* is still a desideratum.

<sup>4</sup> The focus on genderstudies is the most important shift for the theme of this paper. After some decades of feminist interpretation, the most influential studies of the topic here treated are: Ph. Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Overtures to Biblical Theology), Philadelphia 1978; C. Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, New York 1988; A. Brenner, F. van Dijk-Hemmes, *On Gendering*

it, the monumental commentary of Claus Westermann on Genesis<sup>5</sup> marked a new period in critical approaches to the subject. The new point of view is that the saving acts of YHWH are still the centre (as they are for von Rad), but framed by creation: "Was ist das für eine Geschichte, die das Alte Testament erzählt? Sie ist darin von der Geschichte, wie sie die moderne Geschichtswissenschaft versteht, unterschieden, daß das hier Geschehende zwischen Gott und Mensch, zwischen dem Schöpfer und seiner Schöpfung geschieht".<sup>6</sup> Creation was back on the stage.

Now Old Testament exegesis always was aware of the fact that the role of the creation theme was not limited to the two first chapters of Genesis. These two chapters got the most prominent place at the beginning of the Bible and received the most extensive attention in the history of reception.<sup>7</sup> But various traditions concerning creation appear in different parts of the Hebrew Bible as well. Creation is present in a most important way in Isa 40–45, in hymns, in the psalms of lament, and in the book of Job as well. In the requests for help, which suggest motivation for divine intervention, the prayer often argues: "You have created me" with either the articulated or non-articulated conclusion: "therefore, do save me!" An example can be found in Job 10:8–9:

Your hands fashioned and made me  
and now you turn and destroy me.  
Remember that you fashioned me like clay  
And will you turn me to dust again?

In this way, the creation of man did have a function in the praise and lamentation of the individual, in the hope for a return to Zion, in wisdom literature and in eschatology. The two chapters in Genesis are only a very particular part of the thinking about God's creation of the world and mankind in the Hebrew Bible. The latter notion,

---

*Texts: Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible* (Biblical Interpretation Series 1), Leiden 1993; A. Brenner (ed.), *A Feminist Companion of Genesis*, Sheffield 1993; A. Brenner, C. Fontaine (eds.), *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*, Sheffield 1997; A. Brenner (ed.), *A Feminist Companion of Genesis (Second Series)*, Sheffield 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Cl. Westermann, *Genesis* (BKAT I/1) Neukirchen-Vluyn 1974.

<sup>6</sup> Cl. Westermann, *Theologie des Alten Testaments in Grundzügen* (ATD.E 6), Göttingen 1978, 8.

<sup>7</sup> J. Jeremias, "Schöpfung in Poesie und Prosa des Alten Testaments. Gen 1–3 im Vergleich mit anderen Schöpfungstexten des Alten Testaments", *JBTh* 5, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990, 11–36.

however, is quite limited, as gender plays an insignificant role in the texts which fall outside of Genesis.<sup>8</sup> Therefore—in view of the theme of our conference—we have to limit ourselves once more to the two narratives of Genesis.

### *The Two Stories*

In the first Priestly story, the world is created by the word of Elohim. Man, male and female, are created as the climax and the *last* of Elohim's work on the sixth day of creation: "So God created 'dm in his image, in the image of God he created *it*, male and female he created *them*" (Gen 1:27).<sup>9</sup> In the second, Yahwistic story (Gen 2:7), creation *starts* by forming man ('dm) from the earth ('dmh). But the animals created afterwards are not the real companions YHWH Elohim would like to give him (Gen 2:18–20), and so a woman ('šh) is created, built up around the famous rib taken from Adam (Gen 2:20–24). From a historical-critical point of view, the myth of the creation of man and woman is told first in the older Yahwistic story of Gen 2:7,18–24 and chronologically later in the younger Priestly narrative Gen 1:27. The story from the Priestly Code, however, is taken as a framework in the final text and precedes the Yahwistic narrative. In the final text, we have the sequence that man is created first as male and female and afterwards a detailed account tells us man is created first and woman after him.

The fact that these two versions are really different stories is not a discovery of historical-critical scholarship of the last two centuries.<sup>10</sup> Jewish philosophers and rabbinical exegesis already had difficulties in merging the two texts. Ruzer refers to Philo and GenR.<sup>11</sup> Philo states: "And when Moses had called the genus 'man', quite admirably did he distinguish its species, adding that it had been created 'male

<sup>8</sup> An important exception is the much discussed role of Lady Wisdom in Proverbs and Sirach: G. Baumann, *Wer mich findet, hat Leben gefunden* (FAT 16), Tübingen 1996; B. Lang, "Wisdom", *DDD*, Leiden/New York/Köln 1995, 1692–1702 (Lit.); B. Lang, "Lady Wisdom: A Polytheistic and Psychological Interpretation of a Biblical Goddess", in: A. Brenner, C. Fontaine (eds.), *Reading the Bible*, 400–423.

<sup>9</sup> *wybr' 'llym 't-h'dm bšlmw bšlm 'llym br' 'tw zkr wəqbh br' 'tm.*

<sup>10</sup> R. Simon, however, already used the differences between the creation of man and woman in his critical view of the Old Testament: R. Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678), Reprint Frankfurt 1967, 36.

<sup>11</sup> S. Ruzer, "Reflections of Genesis 1–2 in the Old Syriac Gospels", in: J. Frishman, L. van Rompay (eds.), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation: A Collection of Essays* (Traditio Exegetica Graeca 5), Leuven 1997, 91–102 (93).

and female', and this though its individual members had not yet taken shape".<sup>12</sup> The androgyne motif present here, is most clear in GenR 8:1: "When the Holy One . . . created the first man, He created him an androgyne as it is written 'male and female He created them'". Creation of man and woman is understood here in the following way. In the first story of creation (Gen 1:27) an androgyne is made by Elohim. In the second account of creation, YHWH Elohim separates man and woman by creating Eve (Gen 2:18ff). Now the androgyne is split up into two distinctive creatures, a male and a female.<sup>13</sup> But according to the divine explanation of the purpose of the creation of male and female (Gen 2:24), man and wife will be *one body*.<sup>14</sup> So the circle is closed, the original unity of Gen 1:27 is reached again.<sup>15</sup> But this nice solution demonstrates at the same time the difficulties of reading the two texts together.

### *The Priestly Story*

How does the Priestly Code, which offers the first account of creation in the final text speak of man and woman? Gen 1:27 reads:

- 27aa So God created *hā'ādām* (mankind) in His image,<sup>16</sup>  
 27ab in the image of God He created *it*,  
 27b *zākār un'qēbāh bārā' sōtām* (male and female He created *them*).

Two conflicting opinions have arisen in discussions concerning this verse. Horst Seebaß in his new Genesis commentary argues: "Als Einzeiler nach dem schönen Chiasmus V. 27a gibt V. 27b seine Pointe zu erkennen: Durch die Differenzierung in männlich und weiblich bleiben die Menschen davor bewahrt, sich mit dem einzigartigen Gott Israels zu vergleichen, der Geschlechtlichkeit nur für die Schöpfung bestimmt hat".<sup>17</sup> In the opinion of Seebaß, gender functions here as a separation between God and man.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Philo, *De opificio mundi*, 75.

<sup>13</sup> Ph. Tribble, *Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 94–105 follows the same reasoning when she argues, that both man (*'iš*) and woman (*'iššā*) originated from the human creature (*hā'ādām*) and represent complementary parts of it. Against it: R.A. Simkins, "Gender Construction in the Yahwist Creation Myth", in A. Brenner (ed.), *Genesis Companion (Second Series)*, 32–52 (45).

<sup>14</sup> *vedbq b'stw whyw lbsr 'hd*.

<sup>15</sup> S. Ruzer, "Reflections", 94.

<sup>16</sup> LXX omits the first *bšmw* and wrecks the chiasm of V. 27Aa and 27Ab.

<sup>17</sup> H. Seebaß, *Genesis I: Urgeschichte (1,1–11,26)*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, 82.

<sup>18</sup> In his explanation Horst Seebaß argues in the same line as Gerhard von Rad

An opposite position was defended last year by Johannes de Moor.<sup>19</sup> He defends the androgynous nature of original man in the view of the Priestly writer. First man was a bisexual human being.<sup>20</sup> Because de Moor understands the *imago dei* in a physical way, this androgynous nature of man can be extended to a duality in God. With references to the character of “all creator-gods of the Ancient Near East, like Aten, Amun-Re, Enlil, Marduk, Kumarbi, Ilu and Ahura-Mazda (who) are described as both father and mother”,<sup>21</sup> and the fact that “androgynous deities are not only creator-gods who are predominantly depicted as male but also great goddesses like the Babylonian Ištar, the Hurrian Šauška, the Ugaritic ‘Anatu and the Phoenician Tinnit”,<sup>22</sup> he concludes that “apparently bisexuality was seen as a sure sign of exalted divinity, a quality reserved for the highest divine beings who transcended the all too human limitations of split gender”.<sup>23</sup> The problem of the alternation between the plural and singular pronouns in V. 27, created *it* / created *them*, is due, in the opinion of de Moor, to an original use of the dual<sup>24</sup> which was replaced in later times by the more common plural. The proposal of de Moor is not new as far as the androgynous nature of first man and the understanding of Gen 1:27 as a commentary on Gen 2:7.18ff. are concerned; it is new in so far as it argues for a bisexuality in God<sup>25</sup> referring to the sexual duality manifest in many deities of the Ancient Near East.

---

did in his exegesis of the plural form of V. 26: “Let *us* make man in our image, according to our likeness”. G. von Rad, *Das erste Buch Mose: Genesis* (ATD 2–4), Göttingen 1972, 38 states: “Der merkwürdige Plural (‘Lasset uns’) verwehrt es, die Ebenbildlichkeit allzu direkt auf Gott, den Herrn zu beziehen. Gott schließt sich mit den himmlischen Wesen, die ihn umgeben, zusammen und verbirgt sich damit doch auch wieder in dieser Mehrzahl”.

<sup>19</sup> J.C. de Moor, “The Duality in God and Man: Gen 1:26–27”, in: J.C. de Moor (ed.), *Intertextuality in Ugarit and Israel: Papers read at the Tenth Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België, Held at Oxford, 1977* (OTS XL), Leiden 1998, 112–125.

<sup>20</sup> This position was put forward again by P. Winter, “Šadoqite Fragments IV 20,21 and the Exegesis of Genesis 1<sup>27</sup> in late Judaism”, *ŽAW* 68 (1956), 71–84.264.

<sup>21</sup> J.C. de Moor, “Duality”, 123.

<sup>22</sup> J.C. de Moor, “Duality”, 124.

<sup>23</sup> J.C. de Moor, “Duality”, 124.

<sup>24</sup> J.C. de Moor, “Duality”, 120f.: “In my opinion it is worthwhile to consider the possibility that the alternation between plural and singular as a designation of the first human being goes back to an original use of the dual as a designation of a dual personality, an androgynous creature, both man and woman”. He refers to rabbinical exegesis and the fact that in Ugaritic the dual loses terrain to the plural and “a dual deity could be designated in the singular as well”.

<sup>25</sup> As stated by de Moor, “Duality”, 112 referring to E.C. Stanton (ed.), *The Woman’s Bible*, New York 1895, 15.

This last point cannot be denied, but the important question is whether such an opinion was held in the view of the Priestly writer of Gen 1. Two questions are important here: (1) Is it possible that *zākār un'qēbāh* means an androgynous human being? (2) Is the view of a bisexual deity possible in the theology of the Priestly writer?

1) The common pair *zākār un'qēbāh* always means male and female in relation to human beings and animals.<sup>26</sup> In the Priestly Code, *zākār un'qēbāh* is used for human beings in the laws about impurity,<sup>27</sup> commutation of vows,<sup>28</sup> genital discharges,<sup>29</sup> the holyness of the camp,<sup>30</sup> the census of the Israelites,<sup>31</sup> the enrollment of the Levites<sup>32</sup> and the firstborn males of the Israelites.<sup>33</sup> For animals, the expression is used in the story of the Flood<sup>34</sup> and in some regulations for offerings.<sup>35</sup> Some aspects are important here. The commutation of vows differentiate between the equivalents for male and female: a male between the ages of 20–60 years: 50 shekels; a female of the same age: 30 shekels; a male between the ages of 5–20 years: 20 shekels; a female of the same age: 10 shekels; a male child of one month to 5 years: 5 shekels; a female child: 3 shekels; a male of sixty years or over: 15 shekels; a female of the same age: 10 shekels.<sup>36</sup> The census of Num 1:2,20,22 counts only male, the Levites of Num 3 are only male and the counting of the Israelites, Num 3:40, again refers only to males. Of course differentiations must be made. Not all of these laws and stipulations are newly formulated by the Priestly writer. A list counting people able to go to war normally only counts males. Carol Meyers has raised a serious objection concerning the analysis of the commutation of vows. She attacks the assumptions with which exegetes use the differential amounts as an indicator that women in the society of Ancient Israel were not worth as much as

<sup>26</sup> R.E. Clements, *zkr*, ThWAT II, 593–599.

<sup>27</sup> Lev 12:2,5,7.

<sup>28</sup> Lev 27:3–7.

<sup>29</sup> Lev 15:33.

<sup>30</sup> Num 5:3.

<sup>31</sup> Num 1:2,3,20,22 (male).

<sup>32</sup> Num 3:15,22,28,34.

<sup>33</sup> Num 3:40,43.

<sup>34</sup> Gen 6:19; 7:16 (15); (7:9).

<sup>35</sup> Lev 3:1,6.

<sup>36</sup> For the problem of the commutation of vows: O. Kaiser, s.v. *nādar*, TWAT V, 261–274; E.S. Gerstenberger, *Das 3. Buch Mose: Leviticus* (ATD 6), Göttingen 1993, 400–402.

men.<sup>37</sup> Her ethnoarchaeological model presupposes a tribal society in which the responsibilities for procreation, protection, and production were equally esteemed. While procreation belongs to the domain of the female, a “full complement of labour potential of 40% for females represent a high, not a low, status for women”.<sup>38</sup> It can be questioned, however, whether the lists of Num 27 mirror such a tribal society. The amounts given are probably orientated to the prices of slaves. The social background must be sought rather in an urbanised than in a tribal society.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the result of the observations must be that the Priestly Code is written in a social context where a male is worth more, both financially and economically; in a system of patrilinear descent, clearly showed in Gen 5, and in a cultic system where females do not belong to priesthood. For all these reasons it is unlikely that the Priestly writer should *correct* the older story of creation aiming at an equal position for males and females.

In the Priestly story of the Flood, the animals are marching into the ark *šnym mkl*, “two of each” differentiated as *zākār un’qēbāh*, “male and female” (Gen 6:19).<sup>40</sup> One pair of every genus will survive: one male, one female. If the Priestly writer uses *zākār un’qēbāh* here in the meaning of one pair, it is unlikely that he means something different in the story of creation. Therefore, the well-known explanation that *zākār un’qēbāh* in Gen 1:27b means the first pair of mankind, one male and one female, is to be preferred. This can be demonstrated from the use of the pronoun in Gen 1:27 and 5:1f. In the chiasm of V. 27A, the singular is used in the general statement: “He created mankind in His image, in the image of God He created *it* (*bārā’ ’oto*)”, but after the differentiation of V. 27b *zākār un’qēbāh*, “He created *them* (*bārā’ ’otām*)”. The same scheme returns in Gen 5:1,2: “When Elohim created mankind, He made<sup>41</sup> *it* in the likeness of Elohim”. And after the differentiation: “He created *them*”; “blessed *them*”; “named *them*”; “when *they* were created”. This systematic

<sup>37</sup> C. Meyers, “Procreation, Production and Protection”, *JAAR* 51 (1983), 569–593; C. Meyers, “Recovering Objects, Re-Visioning Subjects: Archaeology and Feminist Biblical Study”, in: A. Brenner, C. Fontaine (eds.), *Reading the Bible*, 270–284.

<sup>38</sup> C. Meyers, “Recovering Objects”, 283.

<sup>39</sup> O. Kaiser, *nādar*, 273; E.S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 402 (“verständerte Sozietät”).

<sup>40</sup> Gen 6:15 and 7:9 *šnym šnym*. LXX corrects 6:19 in this way.

<sup>41</sup> For an analysis of the stylistic variations between Gen 1:27 and 5:1,2 see: K.A. Deurloo, “Naar Gods gelijkenis, mannelijk en vrouwelijk (Gen 5:2,3; 1:27)”, *ACEBT* 7 (1986), 25–34.



change in the two most important texts about the creation of *'ādām* as *zākār un'qēbāh* do not support the thesis of an androgynous being in the Priestly account of creation. The Priestly writer needs a differentiation in male and female because it foreshadows the blessing of fertility of V. 28A: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it". The clear testimony of the genealogy of Gen 5 with the descendants of *'ādām* and their enormous life span demonstrates the fulfilment of the blessing. The genealogy refers back to Gen 1:27, not only in 5:1,2 but also in V. 3. Here "Adam fathered a child in his own likeness and according to his image, and he called his name Seth". To be the image-bearer of Elohim on earth, man is set apart from the animals. They are created "according to their types".<sup>42</sup> Man, male and female, are created "after the image of Elohim". The difference lies in the command to subdue and to rule animal-inhabitants of the earth. Creation "after the image of Elohim" can only be explained in this triangle: Mankind as male and female, mankind as vicarius dei on earth, and mankind in the blessing of fertility, which guarantees its future. To guarantee this future the Priestly narrative has to tell about the differentiation in sexes.

2) In de Moor's proposal, it is presupposed that the late text of the Priestly Code assimilates and reworks very ancient traditions of the *Umwelt*, where the sexual duality of the gods plays a role. Is this the way the Priestly writer thinks? Of course there are similarities with the cosmogonies of the Ancient Near East. But this never means a simple take-over. The world before creation in Gen 1:2 is described as "darkness covering *t'hôm*".<sup>43</sup> Here, Tehom is not anylonger the Akkadian Tiamat, nor is it even a sea-monster from the battle against chaos. Where other Old Testament texts speak of *t'hôm* as an anti-divine power,<sup>44</sup> *t'hôm* in Gen 1:2 is silent.<sup>45</sup> There is no relation to the Ancient Near Eastern sea-monsters here. In Gen 1:11, the earth is co-creatrix: "Let the earth put forth vegetation". But this role is limited: everything happens according to the word of Elohim. Moreover, if Seebaß is right about the antithetic relation between

<sup>42</sup> Gen 1:21,24,25.

<sup>43</sup> HAL IV 1557-1559.

<sup>44</sup> Ps 77:17.

<sup>45</sup> W.H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Genesis 1,1-2,4a und 2,4b-3,24* (WMANT 17), Neukirchen-Vluyn <sup>3</sup>1973, 81, Anm. 5: "Hat P den Mythos aus Gen 1 entfernt, sollte der Exeget ihn nicht wieder hineinbringen".

the earth being *tohû wabohû* of V. 2 and the fertile, greening earth of V. 11, this is the result of the word of Elohim in the preceding verses.<sup>46</sup> So again, in the view of the Priestly writer, fertile mother earth is here only an instrument in the hands of Elohim.

The last example is the creation of the lights in V. 14–18. The words for sun and moon with their associations to the sun- and moon god are avoided. The sun is “the great light to rule the day”, the moon “the lesser light, to rule the night”. They keep their function of ruling day and night, but they are set in the dome of the sky by Elohim. They have to serve as a clock for the (cultic) calendar. Every connection with an astral religion, as in some other Old Testament texts,<sup>47</sup> is cut off here.<sup>48</sup> If this overall tendency in the Priestly account of creation is correct, then it is unthinkable that the Priestly writer should take over the bisexuality of some gods for a characterisation of Elohim as de Moor suggested.<sup>49</sup>

Considering Seebaß’s diametrically opposed position, he is correct in describing the distance between Elohim and mankind. Only the maintaining of this distance makes it possible to describe the *relation* between God and man with the help of the *imago dei*. That gender should mark this distance, however, as stated by Seebaß, is not in my opinion the purpose of the Priestly writer. The purpose of the Priestly account of creation is not a narrative about how, once upon a time, everything came into being. Creation of mankind is connected with the future. Therefore, the account of creation is followed by the genealogy of *’ādām*. This future relies on fertility and procreation; this, in turn, relies on the differentiation between male and female. From this background, Gen 1:27 aims at the credo that the separation in male and female belongs to creation from the beginning. There is no priority. Neither male nor female have a dominant position here. Created in the image of Elohim means, among other things, to be created as male and female. If the Priestly writer did know the older narrative about the creation of woman in Gen 2, he left out every “chronological” dimension. Man does not exist before woman. There never was a short “time” when man was

<sup>46</sup> Seebaß, *Genesis*, 71f.

<sup>47</sup> Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 118; J.G. Taylor, *Yahuweh and the Sun: Biblical and Archaeological Evidence for Sun Worship in Ancient Israel* (JSOT.S 111), Sheffield 1993.

<sup>48</sup> Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 119; Seebaß, *Genesis*, 75.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. M.C. Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine*, Münster 1990, 123–127, 129–134.

alone.<sup>50</sup> Every possible discussion about “first” and “second”, so important in the history of reception of Gen 2, is cut off. From the beginning there were only men and women, giving the possibility of procreation and a future.

### *The Yahwistic Account*

Let us turn to the second narrative about the creation of man and woman in Gen 2:7,18–24. YHWH Elohim formed (*yśr*) man (*ʔdm*) out of dust (*ʔpr*) from the soil (*ʔdmh*).<sup>51</sup> Then YHWH Elohim said: “It is not good for man to be alone. Let me make him a helper, matching him” (*śh* + *ʔēser kʔnegdô*).<sup>52</sup> The real problem of the text in view of the history of reception is the exact meaning and function of *ʔēser kʔnegdô*. Then the story continues with the creation of the animals “brought to the man to be named”. But the result does not correspond to the intention of YHWH Elohim. The text of V. 20 reads: “But for man himself he found no helper matching him” (*lôʔ-māšāʔ ʔēser kʔnegdô*).<sup>53</sup> Then YHWH Elohim made a deep sleep (*tardēmāh*)<sup>54</sup> fall upon man, took out one of his ribs (*śēlaʕ*), closed its place with flesh (V. 21) and built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man (V. 22). Now the purpose of YHWH Elohim is achieved, for the man exclaims:

This at last is bone from my bones (*śm*),  
 flesh from my flesh (*bśr*),  
 This is to be called wo[mb]man (*ʔiššāh*),  
 for she was taken from man (*ʔiš*).<sup>55</sup>

followed by the explanation:

Therefore a man forsakes his father and mother, and sticks to his wife, and the two become one body (V. 24).

Before I turn to the expression of the *ʔēser kʔnegdô*, “the helper, matching him”, with the terrible follow-up in the history of reception in which these texts really became “texts of terror”, I would like to make some general observations.

<sup>50</sup> Gen 2:7–18.

<sup>51</sup> Gen 2:7.

<sup>52</sup> Gen 2:18.

<sup>53</sup> Westermann, *Genesis*, 312.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Gen 15:12.

<sup>55</sup> Gen 2:23.

a) The delicate, poetic scene of the creation of woman is understandable in itself. On the one hand the operation is told in a very clear manner: the *tardēmāh* even as anaesthesia, the *šēlaʿ* as the frame of the new creature and the closing of the body with an uncommon use of *bāšar*, which should demonstrate that there is a part of the human body which is not protected by ribs. On the other hand this clarity is contradicted by the reluctant way in which the creation of the woman is told. The way in which the woman is built is not described at all; it is quite likely that the narrator has used the analogy of the growing of a child during pregnancy. In biblical language,<sup>56</sup> a child comes into being in the mystery and darkness of the mother's womb, which parallels the *tardēmāh*. There its bones and flesh are made, parallel to *bnh*, and after birth it is welcomed with joy, parallel to the exclamation of V. 23.<sup>57</sup>

b) The whole scene of Gen 2:7–25 focuses on the differentiation of the original human being into man and woman. Before the creation of the *ʾiššāh*, the human being *ʾādām* is related to the *ʾādamāh* and his place and task in Gan Eden. Ellen van Wolde is right here when taking issue with Phyllis Trible, she argues that describing the human being as androgynous does not fit into the scope of the narrative. *ʾādām* in Gen 2:7–17 is “neither man nor woman”.<sup>58</sup> The gender differentiation, marked by the words *ʾiš* and *ʾiššāh* (“man” and “woman”), appears after the creation of woman for the first time in the narrative and for the first time in the Hebrew Bible in Gen 2:18. Here is the centre of the narrative, not in the later misunderstood interpretation of *ʿēser kʿnegdô*. These two relationships *ʾādām/ʾādamāh* and *ʾiš/ʾiššāh* however, are connected, as R.A. Simkins<sup>59</sup> has argued, around the themes of agriculture and procreation. They foreshadow the outcome of the Yahwistic narrative, describing the reality of the social world of Ancient Israel. “The woman’s social task of bearing children is dependent upon the man; he will have control over her pregnancies. The woman’s relationship to her husband is analogous to the man’s relationship to the arable land. Although the man comes from the land, the arable land is dependent upon the man to bring

<sup>56</sup> Ps 139:13–15; Job 10:8–13.

<sup>57</sup> Jacob, *Genesis*, 98.

<sup>58</sup> E. van Wolde, *A Semiotic Analysis of Genesis 2–3: A Semiotic Theory and Method of Analysis Applied to the Story of the Garden of Eden* (SSN 25), Assen 1989, 175 n. 67.

<sup>59</sup> R.A. Simkins, “Gender Construction in the Yahwist Creation Myth”, in: A. Brenner (ed.), *Genesis Feminist Companion (Second Series)*, 32–52.

forth vegetation . . . Similarly, the woman's ability to bear children is dependent upon her husband, who must first impregnate her".<sup>60</sup>

c) The differential in both sexes is distinction in unity. The joyful exclamation: "This at last is bone from my bones, flesh from my flesh", celebrates not the distinction but the unity.<sup>61</sup> Woman belongs to the same "material" as man does; from their very origins they are an inseparable union.

d) The exceptional V. 24 "Therefore a man forsakes his father and mother, and sticks to his wife, and the two become one body" is more than an explanation of the foregoing verses. It seeks to reveal the aim of the differences between man and woman in the world and society of the narrator. It also seeks to reveal the origin of passion. Gen 2:18–24 explains in a narrative way what is meant by Cant 8:6 "For love is strong as Death, passion relentless as Sheol". Where Gen 2:23 celebrated the physical unity of man and woman, 2:24 stresses the physical coupling or sexual contact.<sup>62</sup> In the eyes of the narrator, the creation of man and woman from one human being explains the real motif: the reason why love breaks social structures. In contrast with the over-all theme of the creation myth, there is no direct reference in V. 24 to the aspect of procreation. Passion is a value in itself.<sup>63</sup>

One final question remains. What does the keyword *'ezer k'negdô* mean? The expression translated by LXX with  $\beta\omicron\eta\theta\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \kappa\alpha\tau'\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$ , and by Vulg *ei adiutorium simili sibi* has already been explained in Sir 36:24 as a "pillar of support". In older exegesis *'ezer* is understood as a helper in the sense of servant. Gunkel comments: "Vielmehr ist das Weib nur die 'Hülfe' des Mannes und der Mann ist 'der Mensch'".<sup>64</sup> A semantic study of *'ezer*,<sup>65</sup> however, demonstrates that "the word 'help' implies neither superiority nor inferiority on the part of the person giving or receiving the aid".<sup>66</sup> This is confirmed by the use of *k'negdô* → *ngd*—"counterpart", here, "as in front of him,

<sup>60</sup> Simkins, "Gender Construction, 49.

<sup>61</sup> Van Wolde, *Semiotic Analysis*, 177.

<sup>62</sup> For a different view, see Westermann, *Genesis*, 318.

<sup>63</sup> For this reason, the conclusion of van Wolde, *Semiotic Analysis*, 178: "Until 2,18 man is alone and undivided, but woman saves man both from loneliness and the mortal danger of death, because she saves man from the threat of non-survival", is one bridge too far.

<sup>64</sup> H. Gunkel, *Genesis*, Göttingen 1901 (<sup>8</sup>1969), 13.

<sup>65</sup> E. Lipiński, s.v. *'ezer*, TWAT VI, 1987, 14–20.

<sup>66</sup> Van Wolde, *Semiotic Analysis*, 177.

corresponding to him, matching him”. *‘ēser k’negdô* means here mutual stimulation, helping each other as equals. It is interesting is, that the masculine form, *‘ēser* is used and not the feminine *‘esrah*.<sup>67</sup> So the outcome of the experiment, splitting the human being into man and woman, is not foreseen at the beginning of the experiment. This fits with a first try-out<sup>68</sup> after the conclusion of YHWH Elohim that is “not good that man should be alone” (V. 18) by which animals were created. The result however, is negative; the animals are no *‘ēser k’negdô*. Then woman is created by YHWH Elohim as the perfect counterpart to *‘ādām* and vice versa. The partnership that is alluded to is based on both similarities and shared origin. For the Yahwistic narrator, this is a *‘ēser k’negdô*.

### *The Ancient Near East*

In this narrative the author shares some motifs common to the Ancient Near Eastern traditions. How do the cultures of the Ancient Near East explain the origin of man and woman before Israel and his storytellers arrived on the scene?<sup>69</sup> I will limit myself to a few examples.

In the Old-Babylonian myth of Atramchasis man was created by the mother goddess Mami (Nintu) and the God Ea (Enki) who mix the blood and the flesh of a slain god, called Geshtu-e, with clay. Thus man has a double “nature”: clay from the earth, as in Gen 2, and the *īnum*, the capacity of planning from a divine origin. The gods create man for only one purpose: to relieve themselves of hard labour (*andurārum*). Now a mortal, Edimmu, is created (I 220ff.).

If we can assume that the following fragment proceeds from this point, the womb-goddesses are called up and they create male and female.

She called up the wise and knowledgeable womb-goddesses, seven and seven.

Seven created males, seven created females

<sup>67</sup> A. van Selms, *Genesis* (POT), Nijkerk 1967, 57.

<sup>68</sup> W. Zimmerli, *Die Urgeschichte: 1 Mose 1–11*, Zürich 1943 (1967), 138: “Gott experimentiert in seiner Schöpfung!”.

<sup>69</sup> A stimulating hermeneutical article about gender studies and the Ancient Near East: J.M. Asher-Greve, “Feminist Research and Ancient Mesopotamia: Problems and Prospects”, in A. Brenner, C. Fontaine (eds.), *Reading the Bible*, 218–237 (lit.).



sidered: cosmogony, theogony and kingship. The gods and the world come into being through “processes of transformation patterned on female and male reproductive modes, on the mechanisms of conception and birth . . . Creation on all levels was firmly linked to reproductive sexuality”.<sup>72</sup> In the Helipolitan Cosmology, the male god Atum appears in the waters of Nun, the “father of the Gods”. Through masturbation he gives birth to the first gendered pair Shu and Tefnut, air and moisture.

I am the one who masturbated with my fist,  
I stimulated with my hand.  
My seed fell in my own mouth.  
I spat out Shu and I expectorated Tefnut<sup>73</sup>

Troy argues that, although the procreation is described after a male mode, feminine attributes are present too, because the hand of the god is seen as his consort.<sup>74</sup> Together with Geb, god of the earth, Nut, goddess of the sky, and the children of Shu and Tefnut, the totality of the world is now expressed. In the next generation, kingship can be introduced in the myth of Isis and Osiris with gendered modes of generation. Although masculine fertility plays the most important role in the creation stories, Troy<sup>75</sup> draws attention to the Esna Text no. 206<sup>76</sup> in which the female creator, Neith, prepares the world of the gods for her son Re.

The father of the fathers, the mother of the mothers, the deity who began the transformation at the beginning when she was residing in Nun, who came forth from her [own] body when the earth was still in darkness and the land had not come forth nor had any vegetation sprouted. It was into a cow, unknown by any god or anyone else, that she transformed herself . . . She made the rays of her eyes bright and light came into being. . . . She created the thirty gods by saying their names one by one, and she rejoiced when she saw them. They said: Greetings to you, Mistress of the Gods . . . You have separated light and darkness. You have made the land on which we support ourselves.

<sup>72</sup> L. Troy, “Engendering Creation in Ancient Egypt: Still and Flowing Waters”, in: A. Brenner, C. Fontaine (ed.), *Reading the Bible*, 238–268.

<sup>73</sup> R.O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind* [BM 10188] (Bibliotheca Aegyptica 3), Brussels 1933, 26.21–27.1, var. 29.2–3.

<sup>74</sup> L. Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis), Uppsala 1986, 16; Troy, “Engendering Creation”, 243.

<sup>75</sup> Troy, “Engendering Creation”, 254ff.

<sup>76</sup> S. Sauneron, *Le temple d'Esna*. Cairo 1968; S. Sauneron, *Les fêtes religieuses d'Esna aux derniers siècles du paganisme*, Cairo 1962, 257–271. English translation: Troy, “Engendering Creation”, 254–256.



You have divided night from day. . . . And then this god was born from the fluids, which came forth from her flesh, which she had placed in the body of this egg. When she removed the waters, the Nile rose at one single place and semen fell on the egg. And when the shell, which was around this noble god, broke it was Re, who had hidden himself inside Nun. . . . His mother the Akhet-cow called out in a loud voice: "Come, come you whom I have created! Come, come you whom I have brought into being. I am your mother, the Akhet cow" (206:1-9).

The late text shares several general motifs with the stories of Gen 1 and 2-3 and 4: the darkness at the beginning, the non-existing vegetation, the creation of light, the separation of night and day, and the joyful exclamation after the birth of the first son. The difference between the commentary of Gen 2:24 and the gendered theogony of Egyptian creation stories can be seen in the evaluation of Troy: "This connection between human and divine reproduction may be interpreted as a devaluation of the creation of humankind as man and woman, which in Genesis was the culmination of the creator's labours. However, it can also be seen as elevating gender, since that part of the human condition most closely connected with sexuality, birth and death, is related to the level of the divine".<sup>77</sup> Here, Gen 2:24 represents a different view (see above).

As stated above, the creation of mankind is not represented as a main theme. One text expresses the notion that all men are created equal.<sup>78</sup> Sometimes the world is created for man's sake: "Well directed are men, the cattle of the god. He made heaven and earth according to their desire, and he repelled the water-monster. He made the breath of life for their nostrils. They who have issued from his body are his images. He arises in heaven according to their desire. He made for them plants, animals, fowl and fish to feed them".<sup>79</sup> A clear iconographic parallel to Gen 2 is offered by a relief of Khnum who creates man and his *ka* on the potter's wheel.<sup>80</sup>

Finally, in order to demonstrate the own position in which the biblical narrative is a working out of common Near Eastern motifs, I finally compare the Gen 2 story with a part of the Gilgamesh-Epic. As a counterpart (*k'negdô*) to the tyrannical Gilgamesh Aruru created

<sup>77</sup> Troy, "Engendering Creation", 268.

<sup>78</sup> ANÉT, 7.

<sup>79</sup> Meri-Ka-Re 131ff., ANET, 417.

<sup>80</sup> Temple of Amenophis III in Luxor, ANEP, 569. For the Great Hymn to Khnum, see M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. III, Berkeley 1973ff., 112.

... a primitive man], Enkidu the warrior.  
 His whole body was shaggy with hair,  
 he was furnished with tresses like a woman ...  
 He knew neither people nor country;  
 he was dressed as cattle are.  
 With gazelles he eats vegetation ...  
 with the wild beasts he satisfies his need for water.<sup>81</sup>

This counterpart to Gilgamesh lives with the animals. His transformation into a human being is described in Table I. A harlot is sent to him:

Shamhat looked at the primitive man,  
 the murderous youth from the depths of open country  
 'Here he is, Shamhat, bare your bosom,  
 open your legs and let him take in your attractions!'...  
 Shamhat loosened her undergarments, opened her legs  
 and he took in her attractions ... he lay upon her.  
 She did for him, the primitive man, as women do.  
 ... For six days and seven nights Enkidu was aroused  
 and poured himself into Shamhat.  
 When he was sated with her charms,  
 he set his face towards the open country of his cattle.  
 The gazelles saw Enkidu and scattered,  
 the cattle of open country kept away from his body.  
 For Enkidu had stripped (?), his body was too clean.  
 His legs, which used to keep pace with his cattle,  
 were at a standstill.  
 Enkidu had been diminished, he could not run as before.  
 Now he had [wi]sdom, [br]oader understanding.  
 The harlot spoke to him, to Enkidu:  
 You have become wise, Enkidu, you have become like a god!<sup>82</sup>  
 He rubbed the hair of his body,  
 anointed himself with oil.  
 He put on clothing,  
 became human.<sup>83</sup>

Enkidu lives with the animals, moves, feeds himself and drinks like an animal (cf. Gen 2:19f). A plan is made to neutralise this dangerous being. A harlot is sent to teach him the power of sexuality (cf. Gen 2:24). After a week of sexual activity, the animals flee from him because Enkidu has lost his "innocence", his obliviousness to sexuality. Nevertheless, he has got something in return. Following the words

<sup>81</sup> Gilgamesh I ii 34ff.

<sup>82</sup> I iv 2ff.

<sup>83</sup> II iii 15ff.

of the harlot he now possesses wisdom and knowledge. Now he has become human, and therefore, he puts on clothes (cf. Gen 3,7.21). He has become like a god (cf. Gen 2,16.17; 3,1-6.7.22f.).

Sexuality plays an important part in both narratives. Both in Genesis and in Gilgamesh, life with animals precedes the encounter with woman. After his week of sexual activity, Enkidu is like a god. The same is said about Adam and Eve (Gen 3:22), after they have eaten from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (cf. 2 Sam 19:35). That the fruit of this tree had a sexual connotation is shown in Gen 3:7. Between Gen 2:25 "They were naked and they were not ashamed" and the knowledge of being naked, connected with the necessity to clothe themselves (Gen 3:7), occurs after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 3:6). The result of the knowledge of sexuality is the same in both narratives.<sup>84</sup> Enkidu loses his natural connection with the animals and enters the world of culture (the court of Gilgamesh) and clothing. Adam and Eve who are clothed by YHWH Elohim himself, lose their place in Gan Eden because they are now "like God." Therefore they enter the "real" world of labour and childbirth, pain and death. Both will remain mortals, eternal life is beyond reach.

Against the background of these common motifs, the particular way in which Gen 2 describes the position of the woman and the importance of sexuality is evident. The divine words of punishment in Gen 3,16-19 show the state of the relationship between man and woman and the battle for survival in a patriarchal, agricultural society. The words of punishment build the bridge between the story of Gan Eden, that is, what should be and the reality actually experienced in the world of the storytellers. In the real world of the narrator, man and woman are not equal. The narrator of the poetic scene of Gen 2 shows, however, that this is not the original plan of YHWH Elohim.

---

<sup>84</sup> D.U. Rotzoll, "Die Schöpfungs- und Fallerzählung in Gen 2f. Teil I: Die Fallerzählung (Gen 3)", *ZAW* 109 (1997), 481-499 (486).

# PANDORA OR THE CREATION OF A GREEK EVE

JAN N. BREMMER

Where do we come from?<sup>1</sup> It is not only modern man which frequently poses this eternally fascinating question. The Greeks too had pondered the problem. In fact, they came up with rather different answers. Mankind could derive from ants, rocks, trees or earth.<sup>2</sup> These are perhaps the older solutions to the problem of man's origin, since they do not presuppose a specific geographical location. A probably younger solution located the first man or men in one's own home town. The church father Hippolytus has handed down a number of such Greek *Urmänner*: Boeotian Alalkomeneus, Arcadian Pelasgos, Eleusinian Dysaulos, Lemnian Kabiros, Pallenean Alkyoneus, the Cretan Kuretes and the Phrygian Korybantēs.<sup>3</sup> These human ancestors clearly do not derive from comparable traditions: Pelasgos cannot be separated from the Pelasgoi, the people supposedly living in Greece before the actual Greeks;<sup>4</sup> Alalkomeneus must have been the eponymous ancestor of the Boeotian town of Alalkomenai,<sup>5</sup> and the Kuretes, Korybantēs and Kabiros point to a background in initiation rituals.<sup>6</sup> Yet, despite these differences, they have one thing in common: they are limited to a specific location or people and they are all male. So, what about the first females? Did Greek tradition have nothing at all to tell about them?

---

<sup>1</sup> For translations and observations I am much indebted to the standard commentaries of M.L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford 1966) and *Hesiod: Works and Days* (Oxford 1978); W.J. Verdenius, *A Commentary on Hesiod Work and Days, vv. 1-382* (Leiden 1985).

<sup>2</sup> Homer, *Od.* 19.163; Hesiod, *Cat.* 205, 234; Asius, fr. 8 Davies; *PMG* Adesp. 985 Page; West on Hesiod, *Theog.* 35, 187, 563 and *Erga* 145; Kassel and Austin on Pherekrates, *Myrmekanthropoi*.

<sup>3</sup> Hippolytus, *Refutatio* 5.7.3-7 Marcovich ~ *PMG* Adesp. 985 Page, cf. M. Luginbühl, *Menschenschöpfungsmythen. Ein Vergleich zwischen Griechenland und dem Alten Testament* (Berne 1992) 136-43.

<sup>4</sup> K. Dowden, *The Uses of Greek Mythology* (London and New York 1989) 82-83; Luginbühl, *Menschenschöpfungsmythen*, 111-2.

<sup>5</sup> See also Stephanus of Byzantium, s.v. *Alalkomenion*; Scholion on Homer, *Il.* IV.8; *Etymologicum Magnum* 546.55.

<sup>6</sup> See F. Graf, "Zwischen Autochthonie und Immigration: die Herkunft von Völkern in der alten Welt", in D. Clemens and T. Schabert (eds.), *Anfänge* (Munich 1998) 65-93 at 82f.

This is certainly not the case. When in the second century CE the traveller Pausanias visited the Parthenon, he saw there carved on the plinth of Athena's statue "the birth of Pandora. Hesiod and others say Pandora was the first woman ever born, and the female sex did not exist before her birth" (1.24.7).<sup>7</sup> It is interesting that Pausanias refers only to Hesiod by name. And indeed, whenever later Greek authors refer to the source of the myth of Pandora, they only mention Hesiod.<sup>8</sup> Evidently, this was the canonical version. In recent years the place of the episode within its larger Hesiodic contexts has repeatedly been analysed and its socio-economic implications stressed,<sup>9</sup> but there is still room for some additional observations. We will therefore start our analysis with Hesiod's narration (§ 1), continue with later literary, iconographical and philosophical representations (§ 2) look at the genealogical aspects (§ 3), and end with a few conclusions (§ 4).

### 1. *Hesiod's Theogony and Works and Days*

As the title of Hesiod's *Theogony* suggests, this poem, which it is perhaps safe to date from about 700 BCE, begins with an account of the origin of the gods and ends with a catalogue of goddesses, who bore children to mortal men, a prelude, so to speak, to the somewhat later pseudo-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, which dates from about 580 BCE.<sup>10</sup> The poem relates the coming into being of the

<sup>7</sup> For some suggestions regarding the meaning of Pandora in this context see J.M. Hurwit, "Beautiful evil: Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", *Am. J. Arch.* 99 (1995) 171–86. R. Osborne, "Representing Pandora" *Omnibus* 37 (1999) 13–4 intriguingly suggests that Pheidias was perhaps inspired by a kalys krater of the Niobid painter, where on the first register Pandora stands almost in the center, facing front; see for this krater also E. Reeder (ed.), *Pandora* (Baltimore 1995) 282–4.

<sup>8</sup> Tertullian, *De Corona* 7.3; Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4.36; Eusebius, *PE.* 13.13.23, 14.26.13; Suidas, π 2472.3; Eustathius on Hom. *Il.* XIV.175–86, XVI.175.

<sup>9</sup> Contexts: J.-P. Vernant, "À la table des hommes", in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *La cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris 1979) 37–132; F.I. Zeitlin, *Playing the Other* (Chicago 1996) 53–86 = (abbreviated and adapted) "Signifying difference: the myth of Pandora", in R. Hawley and B. Levick (eds.), *Women in Antiquity: new assessments* (London and New York 1995) 58–74. Socio-economic implications: F.I. Zeitlin, "The Economics of Hesiod's Pandora", in Reeder, *Pandora*, 49–56, whose equivalence of Pandora's jar with the uterus need not be believed.

<sup>10</sup> For the date of the *Catalogue* see most recently J.N. Bremmer, "Myth as Propaganda: Athens and Sparta", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997) 9–17 at 11; R.L. Fowler, "Genealogical Thinking, Hesiod's *Catalogue*, and the Creation of the Hellenes", *Proc. Cambridge Philol. Soc.* 44 (1998) 1–19 at 1 note 4.

present world and its order, over which Zeus presides. In the center of this grand scheme Hesiod put the origin of sacrifice, fire and women, since these elements define the *condition humaine* after man's definitive separation from the world of the gods.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding sacrifice, Hesiod relates how the culture hero Prometheus, a son of a Titan with the curiously Hebrew sounding name Iapetos (Japheth?),<sup>12</sup> tried to deceive Zeus. Having slaughtered an ox, he set out meat and innards covered in skin and paunch for Zeus, but the bones covered with fat he put aside for the mortals. When Zeus protested at the unjust division of the portions, Prometheus invited him to choose between the two. Hesiod stresses that the god deliberately choose the wrong portion, thus establishing the Greek sacrificial custom of allocating the bones of the victim to the gods, but themselves eating its meat (535–57).<sup>13</sup>

The abrupt introduction of the town Mekone (535–6), where the scene is located, and the fact that Zeus' wrong choice is explained as deliberate, "for he brooded evil in his mind for mankind" (551–2), strongly suggest that Hesiod revised a pre-existing tradition in which the supreme god had been deceived by the clever Prometheus.<sup>14</sup> Such a tradition probably also underlies the consequence of Prometheus' deceit. Feeling duped, Zeus refused to give fire to mankind, but Prometheus stole the fire by hiding it in a hollow stalk of fennel (561–9). This episode, too, is probably hardly original, since elsewhere in Greece the invention of fire was ascribed to the Argive first man and culture hero Phoroneus.<sup>15</sup>

In reaction to this second defeat, Zeus "immediately made an evil for mankind" (570). On the basis of his plans, Hephaestus "fashioned from earth something resembling a modest virgin" (571–2).

<sup>11</sup> This has been expounded best by J.-P. Vernant: *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1974) 177–94 and "À la table des hommes".

<sup>12</sup> For the name see M.L. West, *The East Face of Helikon* (Oxford 1997) 289f.

<sup>13</sup> For Greek sacrifice see now F.T. van Straten, *Hiera kalá: Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Leiden 1996); J.N. Bremmer, "Modi di comunicazione con il divino: la preghiera, la divinizzazione e il sacrificio nella civiltà greca", in S. Settis (ed.), *I Greci I* (Turin 1996) 239–83 and *Greek Religion* (Oxford 1999<sup>2</sup>) 40–3, 101; N. Himmelman, *Tieropfer in der griechischen Kunst* (Opladen 1997).

<sup>14</sup> This has often been noticed, see, for example, P. Friedländer, *Studien zur antiken Literatur und Kunst* (Berlin 1969) 65; West, *Hesiod: Theogony*, 321: "It has long been recognized that in the original story Zeus did not see through the trick, but was thoroughly deceived"; C. Faraone, *Talismans & Trojan Horses* (New York and Oxford 1992) 100–2, whose comparison of Pandora with the Trojan Horse is hardly persuasive.

<sup>15</sup> First man: Akousilaos *FGrH* 2 F 23A. Fire: Pausanias 2.19.5.

West comments that “the fashioning of a figure of clay is naturally attributed to a potter’s god”, but Hephaestus never occupies such a position: he is only the god of the smiths and metallurgical workers.<sup>16</sup> It is more likely that the poet combined the notice from the *Iliad* (XVIII.417–20) that Hephaestus made some golden servant-girls with perhaps an allusion to the Akkadian *Atrahasis* (I.2) where clay is used in the formation of man (see also below).<sup>17</sup> However, if that is the case, the poet did not simply take over the motif from the Near East, but he adapted it to his own culture, since earth is the primeval substance in Greek thought. After all, everything descends from the goddess Gaia.<sup>18</sup>

Subsequently, the goddess Athena “endowed her with life” (573), just as Jahweh blew life into Adam (*Genesis* 2.7)—a motif perhaps also taken over from the Near East. Athena also “dressed her with a silver dress” (573–4) and “drew down a wimple over Pandora’s head and shoulders” (574–5), a common piece of clothing of Homeric women.<sup>19</sup> Finally, she put crowns of flowers of a “fresh-sprouting meadow” round her head (576–7). In archaic poetry, crowns of flowers are mentioned for Nymphs, Graces and Aphrodite (*Cypria* F 5 Davies), who are women in the bloom of beauty; for the same reason Sappho adorns her girls with flower crowns (94, 98 Voigt); in fact, the poetess even connects flower crowns with girls and Graces (81 Voigt). To top it all, the goddess placed a headband, *stephane*, on her head representing all kinds of wild creatures of land and sea, made by Hephaestus (578–84); similar funerary headbands have been found in eight-century Athens and Euboean Eretria, where Hesiod may have seen them when he travelled to Chalcis to recite his poetry.<sup>20</sup> The *stephane* made women look taller and thus helped them to conform to the contemporary beauty ideal of being “beautiful and

<sup>16</sup> On Hephaestus see most recently A. Hermay and A. Jacquemin, “Hephaistos”, *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (henceforth *LIMC*) IV.1 (Zurich 1988) 627–54; H.A. Shapiro, *Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens. Supplement* (Mainz 1995) 1–14; Bremmer, “Hephaestus sweats or how to construct an ambivalent god”, forthcoming.

<sup>17</sup> So, persuasively, Luginbühl, *Menschenschöpfungsmythen*, 216f.

<sup>18</sup> M.B. Moore, “Ge”, *LIMC* IV.1 (1988) 171–7.

<sup>19</sup> For this piece of garment see R. Janko on *Iliad* XIV.184.

<sup>20</sup> D. Ohly, *Griechische Goldbleche des 8. Jahrhunderts vor Chr.* (Berlin 1953) 68–82. I assume here that the author of our text really was Hesiod, but it is only fair to say that recently several scholars have argued that “Hesiod” was only a “persona”, cf. M. Griffith, “Personality in Hesiod”, *Class. Ant.* 2 (1983) 37–65; G. Nagy, *Greek Mythology and Poetics* (Ithaca NY 1990) 36–82; R. Martin, “Hesiod’s Metanastic Poetry”, *Ramus* 21 (1992) 11–33.

tall".<sup>21</sup> There can be little doubt, then, that the purpose of Athena's "exercise" was to make the first woman as attractive as possible. This conforms to the widespread Greek idea that beauty was typical of young women ready for marriage.<sup>22</sup> Hesiod thus has prepared the listener (or reader) for an oncoming marriage, since in archaic poetry and on vase-paintings type-scenes of adornment hardly ever occur outside the context of physical love.<sup>23</sup> And that is exactly what happens, if implicitly rather than explicitly, as we will see momentarily.

In this passage, then, the first woman is the fruit of a cooperation between Athena and Hephaestus. The prominent position of Athena in this "creation" is rather striking, since in general the goddess was not associated with marriage or the coming of age of girls. On the other hand, she was closely associated with Hephaestus in Athens: they were associated in myth, which related the birth of Athens' autochthonous ancestor Erichthonios from the only partially consummated union of the two divinities, and they had a communal temple;<sup>24</sup> Athena was worshipped with the epithet *Hēphaestia* (Hesychius s.v.) and, last but not least, Hephaestus' festival Chalkeia was called by some Athenaia (Suda s.v. *Chalkeia*) and there clearly was some discussion about the actual divinity of this festival.<sup>25</sup> Given that this close connection of the two divinities existed only in Athens, Hesiod may well have been influenced in some way here by a visit to Attica or, alternatively, in the course of the transmission of Hesiod's text Athenians may have inserted this *couleur locale*.

After her adornment, Athena led the first woman, "the beautiful evil", forth to the place "where all the other gods and mortals were" (586). This seemingly unobtrusive line is in fact rather dramatic, since with the arrival of women man is no longer alone, but at the same

<sup>21</sup> *Stephane*: Aelian, *VH* 1.18; M. Blech, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen* (Berlin and New York 1982) 34 note 49. Ideal: K. Jax, *Die weibliche Schönheit in der griechischen Dichtung* (Innsbruck 1933) 9; W.J. Verdenius, *Mnemosyne* IV 4 (1949) 294–5; J. Russo on *Odyssey* 18.195.

<sup>22</sup> C. Calame, *Chorusses of Young Women in Ancient Greece* (Lanham and London 1997) 199.

<sup>23</sup> Poetry: R. Janko on *Iliad* XIV.166–86, who compares *Odyssey* 8.362–6 and *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 58–66. Vase-paintings: J. Oakley and R. Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens* (Madison 1993) 16–20.

<sup>24</sup> Myth: *IG* I<sup>3</sup>.82; Plato, *Protagoras* 321D, *Timaeus* 23C, *Critias* 109C; Clemens Al., *Protr.* 2.28.2–3. Erichthonios: U. Kron, "Erechtheus", *LLMC* IV.1 (1988) 923–51; add J.H. Oakley, *Antike Kunst* 30 (1987) 123–30. Temple: Plato, *Laws* 920D; Pausanias 1.14.6; Augustine, *De civ. dei* 18.12.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Phanodemus *FGrH* 325 F 18; Apollonius *FGrH* 365 F 3; but also note *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 674.930.



time he no longer can share the company of the gods. Pandora rightly glories in the adornment of Athena and the gods are amazed at seeing this “irresistible deception against which men are helpless” (589). The scene is immediately closed with “for of her is the race of women” (590). This is the *gran finale*. We hear no more about the first woman, but in a subsequent, misogynistic passage Hesiod stresses female gluttony and wastefulness and thus leaves us in no doubt that the successful adornment by Athena had been utterly disastrous for the males (591–616).

In addition to the *Theogony*, Hesiod also treated the theme of the first woman and her prehistory in his *Works and Days*. The swindle over sacrifice is only passingly alluded to (48) and the section of the fire is only marginally more elaborate (49–59), but the birth of Pandora receives about equal attention as in the *Theogony* (60–105). At first sight it might seem strange that the poet first enumerates in some detail the orders of Zeus to various divinities as how to make the first woman before proceeding to their execution (60–8). Yet Near Eastern creation myths contain the same structure and may eventually have been Hesiod’s model.<sup>26</sup>

Zeus, then, once again orders Hephaestus to fashion the first woman, but now with earth and water (461). This procedure is clearly somewhat closer to the Akkadian *Atrahasis*, where man is formed by mixing clay with the blood and flesh of a killed divinity (Liv). Moreover, unlike in the *Theogony*, Hephaestus presumably also had to make the model alive, since he had to give her strength, the faculty of human speech and looks like those of goddesses (61–3). Although her beauty is thus stressed, she still was not a polished *debutante*, since Athena was ordered to teach her the “works (*erga*): to weave a richly wrought web” (64). Already in Homer, Athena was the goddess *par excellence* of spinning and weaving, the symbols of decent women’s industry. In fact, this was so evident, that Homer can refer to these activities by just saying *erga* (*Iliad* IX.390), and Athena was indeed widely worshipped with the epithet *Ergane*, “the workwoman”.<sup>27</sup> “Golden Aphrodite” had to pour charm, which the Greeks sometimes imagined as a kind of cream,<sup>28</sup> over her head, as is to be expected from the goddess of physical beauty. Finally, Hermes

<sup>26</sup> Luginbühl, *Menschenschöpfungsmythen*, 215.

<sup>27</sup> F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome 1985) 210–2; *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos* II (Göttingen 1991) s.v. *ergon*, 3b.

<sup>28</sup> Verdenius, *A Commentary*, 51.

had to put "an impudent (literally: dog-like) way of thinking and a habit of deceiving" into her (67). Like the author of *Genesis*, in his *Theogony* Hesiod had still limited himself to the exterior, but in the *Works* he shows an increasing interest in people's mental powers.<sup>29</sup> Once again Hesiod has selected a god fit for his task. Hermes was the "comrade of thieves" (Hipponax, fr. 2 Degani<sup>2</sup>) and the god of trickery.<sup>30</sup> As in the *Theogony*, the poet concludes by stressing that underneath their beautiful appearance women mean trouble to man.

From a literary point of view it would have hardly been satisfactory if the poet had only slightly varied his earlier lines. Instead, the poet more satisfactorily puts in a few surprises.<sup>31</sup> It is now Hephaestus who makes the first woman from earth, after all the primary substance, without mention of water. In the case of Athena, Hesiod just repeats line 573 from the *Theogony* (72) without going into detail about the exact nature of her adornment: it would surely have stretched the imagination if he had let the first woman weave or spin at this very moment. Instead of Aphrodite, he introduces other goddesses connected with erotic charms: Graces, Peitho and the Horai (73–5). The Graces and Peitho adorned her skin with golden necklaces because, as the ancient commentator (on 74) perceptively observes, "the woman, finely adorned, quickly persuades the man to have sex".<sup>32</sup> Necklaces were the traditional instruments for erotic enticement. Women put them on to seduce men, as in the case of Aphrodite and Anchises (*Hymn to Aphrodite* 5), and men corrupted women by giving them as presents, as in the case of Eriphyle.<sup>33</sup> The Horai crowned her with spring flowers, just as in the *Cypria* (fr. 4 Davies) the Graces and Horai dress Aphrodite in a garment dyed with spring flowers.<sup>34</sup> After Athena had added the finishing touch,

<sup>29</sup> Verdenius, *A Commentary*, 67.

<sup>30</sup> W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford 1985) 156–9.

<sup>31</sup> *Contra* Verdenius, *A Commentary*, 55 who explains the variation by assuming "the influence of writing on the technique of oral composition".

<sup>32</sup> On the connection between Aphrodite and the Graces see Johansen and Whittle on Aeschylus, *Supplices* 1039–40; H. Sichterman, "Gratae", *LIMC* III.1 (1986) 203–10. Peitho and Aphrodite: R.G.A. Buxton, *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1983) 30–3 and *passim*; N. Icard-Gianolio, "Peitho", *LIMC* VII.1 (1994) 242–50. For the absence of a real cult of Peitho note Archippus, fr. 46 K.-A. For the gold see also A.S. Brown, "Aphrodite and the Pandora complex", *Class. Quart.* 47 (1997) 26–47.

<sup>33</sup> See the fine observations in Buxton, *Persuasion*, 36–7; Hes. fr. 141.4 (?).

<sup>34</sup> For the erotic associations of the Horai see Headlam on Herondas 7.94–5; Diodorus Siculus 5.73.6; L. Robert, *Hellenica* I (Paris 1946) 15–6 and XIII (Paris 1965) 118; V. Machaira, "Horai", *LIMC* V.1 (1991) 502–10.

thus resuming her role in the *Theogony*, Hermes finally presented her with women's bad qualities, a resounding voice and a name (77–81).

Before coming to the name, let us make one final observation about Hesiod's composition, who, as we have seen, lets each divinity contribute a quality or object according with its nature. The immediate model may have been a scene in the *Odyssey* where the daughters of Pandareos also receive gifts characteristic of their divine donators, like tallness from Artemis and beauty from Hera (20.70–2). It is also possible, though, that behind both scenes there is a Near Eastern model, since in a New Babylonian myth of the beginning of the first millennium BCE after the creation of normal humans the first king is created by having the various gods donate him the qualities fitting to a king, like Anu the crown, Nergal the weapons and Belet-ili a handsome appearance.<sup>35</sup>

So what about the first woman's name? Hermes calls her "Pandora because all (*pantes*) Olympian gods gave her as a present (*dōron*), namely as a bane to barley eating males" (81–2). The name Pandora is formally parallel to the Homeric girls' name Polydore (*Iliad* XVI.178), which means "she who brings in many gifts", since in archaic Greece the bride's father gave his daughter many presents in order to show off his wealth and to seal the alliance with the family of his son-in-law.<sup>36</sup> Yet Hesiod clearly etymologises Pandora's name as "Present of all the gods". This Hesiodic interpretation already caused some confusion in antiquity, since an ancient commentator on line 79 of our passage wonders whether she got her name "since she received presents from all or since she was a present of all the gods". The latter interpretation is supported by the context, but the first possibility was endorsed by Hyginus (*Astr.* 2.637–8 Viré, *Fab.* 142), the late antique Olympiodorus in his commentary on Plato's *Gorgias* (48.7.6) and the scholiast on Hesiod's *Works* 71. Eustathius moved even somewhat further away from a literal translation and came up with "because she received many presents" (on *Iliad* II.339, III.830).

On the other hand, Philo's "she who gives all things" (*De aet. mundi* 63) is also a formal possibility, since Euphorion equally took the

<sup>35</sup> R. Mayer, "Ein Mythos von der Erschaffung des Menschen und des Königs", *Orientalia* 56 (1987) 55–68; Luginbühl, *Menschenschöpfungsmythen*, 217f.

<sup>36</sup> *Iliad* VI.394, XXII.88; *Odyssey* 24.294; E. Scheid-Tissinier, *Les usages du don chez Homère* (Nancy 1994) 104f.

name to be active, given his expression *Pandōra kakodōros* (*SH* 415 C ii.1). The same possibility may already be present in a corrupt passage of Hipponax (104.48 West<sup>2</sup> = 107.48 Degani<sup>2</sup>), which seems to mention the sacrifice of a certain Pandora during the Thargelia festival. As Anacreon (446 Page) calls a prostitute *pandosia*, “she who gives it all”, it has been attractively suggested that Hipponax here playfully conjures up the name of a “generous” harlot.<sup>37</sup>

It would be a misunderstanding of ancient etymologising practice to suggest that some of these interpretations are necessarily wrong. On the contrary. Unlike modern scientific approaches, the ancients often played with the various qualities evoked by the lexemes into which a name can be broken down, as in our case “all” and “gift”. Authors were less interested in the philological truth, but they liked to play with the syntactical and semantic associations of a name. The name Pandora, then, could mean different things to different authors, depending on the context of their narrative or argument.<sup>38</sup>

Having completed the first woman, Hermes brought her on the order of Zeus into the house of Epimetheus, the brother of Zeus’ opponent Prometheus. The clever Prometheus advised to decline the divine present, but Epimetheus accepted. West (on *Works* 86–7) observes that it is “a commonplace of storytelling that someone gets into trouble because he forgets or disregards a timely warning”. This is true, but does not go far enough. As in *Genesis*, man has had the opportunity to retain the primeval situation of staying in the company of the gods (God), but his own feeble-mindedness is the cause of his present none too happy situation.

Hesiod concludes his account of the creation of Pandora by illustrating her fatal stupidity. Whereas humans lived without evils, diseases and the obligation to work until her arrival (90–2), Pandora lifted the lid off a large storage jar (*pitthos*), which Erasmus in his *Adagia* (I.31, 235) wrongly interpreted as a “box”, thus giving rise to the expression “Pandora’s box”.<sup>39</sup> All evils flew away, but Pandora quickly closed the lid and *elpis* had to remain inside (96–8).<sup>40</sup> As the

<sup>37</sup> Cf. H. Degani, *Hipponax* (Stuttgart 1991<sup>2</sup>) 117.

<sup>38</sup> On this problem see the lucid observations by C. Calame, *The Craft of Poetic Speech in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca and London 1995) 174–85.

<sup>39</sup> D. and E. Panofsky, *Pandora’s Box* (London 1962<sup>2</sup>); R. Kannicht, “Pandora”, in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Antike Mythen in der europäischen Tradition* (Tübingen 1999) 127–51 at 134–6.

<sup>40</sup> For a possible representation on a Campanian redfigure amphora see M. Oppermann, “Pandora”, *LLMC* VII.1 (1994) no. 5, but the interpretation is hardly certain.

ancient scholiast on line 94 shows, antiquity already wondered about the exact meaning of this *elpis*, just as many modern scholars. In an early interpretation, Theognis opted for "good hope" (1135), but this meaning is hardly appropriate, since the previous lines only speak of bad things for mankind and the context stresses the revenge of Zeus. In the most lucid discussion of the problem, my compatriot Verdenius has therefore strongly argued that the context of a company of evils requires the equally possible meaning "expectation of evil", not that of "good hope".<sup>41</sup> Yet, however satisfactory this solution may be from a logical point of view, the problem remains that the "expectation of evil" was of course not absent from the ancient Greek world. One may see this "puzzling, provocative ambiguity" as the very power of this myth, but such a point of view seems typically modern.<sup>42</sup> As no wholly convincing solution has been offered so far, the feeling remains that the poet did not completely successfully integrate an existing story with perhaps a different moral.<sup>43</sup> The abrupt introduction of the *pithos* could indeed point into that direction, as does the explanation of her name, which is surely forced and fits only this version of the story: only in the *Odyssey* (18.134) we once more find the idea that the gods collectively inflict evil on men. A positive interpretation of Pandora's quick reaction at least finds a parallel in the version of the *Theogony*, where woman can still be useful in lifting male loneliness and producing an heir to tend him in old age. The, admittedly, relatively rare occurrences of Pandora as name for a ship and for women seem to support this interpretation: Hesiod's misogyny is not absolute, but somewhat mitigated.<sup>44</sup>

We do not know whether Hesiod derived this passage from an

<sup>41</sup> Verdenius, *A Commentary*, 66–71; see also Vernant, "À la table des hommes", 114–32; S. Noica, "La boîte de Pandore et l'ambiguïté de l'Elpis", *Platon* 36 (1984) 100–24; A. Spira, "Angst und Hoffnung in der Antike", in F.R. Harwig (ed.), *Ainigma. Festschrift für Helmut Rahn* (Heidelberg 1987) 129–81; J.-P. Vernant, "Les semblances de Pandora", in F. Blaise et al. (eds.), *Le métier du mythe* (Lille, 1996) 381–92.

<sup>42</sup> Contra R. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece* (Cambridge 1994) 212–3.

<sup>43</sup> According to Oldfather, "Pandora", 539, this "alte Sage" was preserved "am reinsten" in Babrios 58, but he totally overlooks the fact that we have no idea what the *Urfassung* was. For Babrius' version see also J. Rudhardt, "Pandora: Hésiode et les femmes", *Museum Helveticum* 43 (1986) 231–46.

<sup>44</sup> Ship: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1611.b.115 and c.163, 1622.b.231, 1631.d.479. Women: *IG* XIV.2054; *I. Prusa* 1059 (= *SEG* 42.1119); *TAM* III.702; *P. Giss.* I 117.181 (the same woman as in *P. Flor.* I 71.403); H. Solin, *Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom* I (Berlin and New York 1982) 555. Note also the name Pandoros: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2124.42.

earlier version or adapted an existing independent tale. In any case, the motif of the imprisonment of evil in jars seems to derive ultimately from Hittite magical ritual, in which harm and evil are locked up in closed vessels.<sup>45</sup> However this may be, the moral of the story is clear, since the poet concludes with the words: "so we see the principle confirmed that it is impossible to deceive the purposeful intelligence of Zeus" (105).<sup>46</sup>

## 2. *Literary, iconographical and philosophical representations*

The myth of Pandora was not particularly popular in antiquity and we have only a few later literary versions or representations on vase paintings. Sappho seems to have used the Hesiodic material (F 207 Voigt) and Aeschylus at least alluded to it (F 369 Radt). However, Sophocles actually wrote a satyr play *Pandora or the Hammerers* (F 482–6 Radt), of which a few fragments have survived. They speak about the kneading of clay (F 482), drinking from a horn and a soft arm (of Pandora?: F 483), "lewd handling" (F 484), "chamber pot" (F 485) and "awl" (F 486). Moreover, from a scholion on *Works* 89 we learn that Prometheus received the jar from the satyrs and gave it to Epimetheus, which probably also derives from the play, if possibly indirectly. These *membra disiecta* seem to suggest that Sophocles followed the text of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, with the addition of the common themes of sex, boozing and scatology of satyric drama, but such a conclusion could be too hasty.

From about 470–450 BCE we have various vases which display scenes from the Pandora myth, sometimes with satyrs, thus indicating a firm *terminus ante quem* for Sophocles' play. The oldest one displays Pandora with a kind of *stephane* in between Athena, who seems to

<sup>45</sup> As was first argued by M. Popko, *Meander* 27 (1972) 381–3 (in Polish), cf. V. Haas, "Ein hurritischer Blutritus und die Deponierung der Ritualrückstände nach hethitischen Quellen", in B. Janowski *et al.* (eds.), *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien und dem Alten Testament* (Freiburg and Göttingen 1993) 68–85 at 77–83. For the reception of the idea see K. Horálek, "Geist im Glas", in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 5 (Berlin and New York 1987) 922–8.

<sup>46</sup> I do not enter here into a discussion with the unpersuasive interpretations of the Elpis episode by E.F. Beall, "The Contents of Hesiod's Pandora Jar: Erga 94–98", *Hermes* 117 (1989) 227–30; D. Ogden, "What was in Pandora's box?", in N. Fisher and H. van Wees (eds.), *Archaic Greece: new approaches and new evidence* (London and Swansea 1998) 213–30.

arrange her clothes, and Hephaestus, who holds a hammer in his left hand.<sup>47</sup> However, above Pandora we read the name Anesidora. This is rather puzzling, since the name, “She who sends up gifts”, is attested as epithet of Demeter and in antiquity was already rightly explained from her sending up the fruits from the earth;<sup>48</sup> indeed, the verb *anhienai* is often employed, especially in comedy, of the dead who send up the goods from the underworld.<sup>49</sup> Admittedly, any explanation can only be speculative, but a possible clue derives from the combination of a redfigure volute krater from Oxford of ca. 450 BCE with a redfigure krater from Ferrara of ca. 445 BCE.<sup>50</sup> On the first we see Pandora rising from the ground, dressed as a bride, and Epimetheus with a hammer in his right hand running towards her, whereas on the second vase painting satyrs with hammers in their hand stand and move around Epimetheus (or Prometheus?) and Pandora, who rises from the ground, again dressed as a bride. Is it possible that, in a complete reversal of Hesiod’s interpretation, Sophocles’ play represented the arrival of Pandora among men as a very happy event? Can the vase painter have indicated this change by substituting the name Anesidora for Pandora? We will probably never know for sure, but the possibility may perhaps be taken into consideration.

The next treatment we find in the comedy *Pandora* of the Athenian Nikophon around 400 BCE (F 13–8 K.-A.). We hear of weaving (F 13), fish (F 14) a candle (F 15), a kiss (F 17) and young men (F 18). Sex, food and women are common elements of Old and Middle Comedy and these few snippets do not help us to reconstruct the plot even in a rough outline.

In addition to these plays, Athenian history related how the daughters of the first king Erechtheus gave themselves to be sacrificed for the sake of the city, a fairly well-known scapegoat pattern in Greek mythology.<sup>51</sup> For us it is interesting to note that these girls were called Pandora and Protogeneia. It seems that these names were a

<sup>47</sup> Oppermann, “Pandora”, no. 1, also represented and discussed in Reeder, *Pandora*, 279–81.

<sup>48</sup> Sophocles F 826, 1010 Radt.

<sup>49</sup> See A. Henrichs, “Namenlosigkeit und Euphemismus: Zur Ambivalenz der chthonischen Mächte im attischen Drama”, in H. Hofmann and A. Harder (eds.), *Fragmenta dramatica* (Göttingen 1991) 161–201 at 199.

<sup>50</sup> Reeder, *Pandora*, 284–6; ARV<sup>2</sup> 612, no. 1, cf. A.D. Trendall and T.B.L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama* (London 1971) plate II 7.

<sup>51</sup> For all sources and a discussion see E. Kearns, *The Heroes of Attica* (London 1989) 61–3, 202.

feeble Athenian attempt to also put in a claim for the first woman.<sup>52</sup> In Greek mythology the daughter(s) of the primeval king, such as the Proitids, Io, Auge and the Danaids, is (are) sometimes the model for all future maidens,<sup>53</sup> and we might find a trace of this idea here as well.

In Hellenistic Egypt, or perhaps even before, Pandora became equated, it seems, with Rhea, as appears from a quotation of the third-century BCE Dionysius Scythobrachion (F 6 Rusten) in Diodorus Siculus (3.57.3) that the two oldest daughters of King Uranus of the Atlantions were called "Basileia and Rhea, who some also named Pandora". The quote returns in, of all places, Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* (2.2.37), but we have no further information who these "some" are in this Euhemerizing myth.<sup>54</sup>

The last noticeable treatment of Pandora is in Irenaeus' discussion of the Valentinians in his *Adversus haereses*.<sup>55</sup> According to him, these gnostics made the Saviour into a kind of Pandora by letting each of the Aeons give him the best he had (2.14.5). Elsewhere, he compares gnostic *Pan* (*Omnia*) with Pandora, as being the fruit of a gift of all the Aeons and he quotes the line from Hesiod's *Works* where Hermes put into Pandora "wily ideas and a thievish disposition" in order to show that these heretics "would seduce fools so that they would believe their figments of the imagination" (2.21.2).

### 3. *The genealogy of Pandora*

How was Pandora integrated into Greek mythological genealogy? Although Hesiod does not say so, it was a logical step to make the first proper human couple, Epimetheus and Pandora, into the parents of Pyrrha or even into both survivors of the Flood. This indeed has happened in a considerable part of our tradition.<sup>56</sup> On the other

<sup>52</sup> W. Oldfather, "Pandora", *RE* XVIII.2 (Stuttgart 1949) 529–48 at 530 also adduces Philochoros FGrH 328 F 10, but as Jacoby (*ad loc.*) already saw, Pandora is a corruption of Pandrosos; see now also Theodoridis on Photius, ε 1490, 1496; *JG* II<sup>2</sup> 1039.58.

<sup>53</sup> K. Dowden, *Death and the Maiden* (London and New York 1989) 71–3, 124, 133, 147–8.

<sup>54</sup> J.S. Rusten, *Dionysius Scythobrachion* (Opladen 1982) 102–12.

<sup>55</sup> Note also Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 2.30.4.

<sup>56</sup> Pyrrha: Apollodorus 1.7.2; Hyginus, *Fab.* 142; Schol. Hesiod, *Works* 85; Schol. Pindar, *O.* 9.79–81; Schol. Plato, *Timaeus* 22a. Deukalion and Pyrrha: Schol. Hesiod, *Works* 156, 158.



hand, Pandora could be equally thought of as the daughter of Pyrrha (Eustathius on *Iliad* 1.39) There may have been a competing version of the first humans, since the *Catalogue* (F 2) lets Pandora and Prometheus, not Epimetheus, be the parents of Deukalion. However, this passage is considered corrupt by many,<sup>57</sup> since it is exceedingly odd that Prometheus and not his daft brother should take Pandora to wife in a work that purports to continue the original Hesiod (and once did). The version perhaps reflects an older tradition, since Prometheus seems to have been a much more important hero than the shadowy Epimetheus; from the late fifth century onwards he was even considered to be the creator of mankind.<sup>58</sup> Curiously, the *Catalogue* (F 5) also mentions a Pandora as daughter of Deukalion, who was the mother of Graikos, the ancestor of the northern tribe that gave the Greeks its present name. If this is not a corruption of the text, this Pandora must have been called after her grandmother in a somewhat clumsy attempt to incorporate the Graikoi also in this genealogy. In any case, it clearly connects Pandora with northern Greece.

Even if the various traditions clearly play with the names of the protagonists in different combinations, Pandora and Pyrrha remain fixed features of these genealogies. Now in a recent discussion of the Greek versions of the Flood, I concluded that the story of the Flood was indigenous to Locris, but “kidnapped” by Thessaly, since the name of Deukalion’s wife Pyrrha or Pyrrhaia is also a name for Thessaly.<sup>59</sup> In this respect a notice by Strabo is extremely informative. In his description of Thessaly he tells us that the southern part of Thessaly was called Pandora (9.5.23); the name derives, I presume, from its fertility, since we know that poets called the earth, as Philo says, “mother of all, fruitbearing and giver of all” (*panđōran*).<sup>60</sup> West concluded that the first human couple therefore must have

<sup>57</sup> For an unconvincing defence see P. Dräger, *Untersuchungen zu den Frauenkatalogen Hesiods* (Stuttgart 1997) 27–42.

<sup>58</sup> For earlier testimonies of Prometheus as creator see Aristophanes, *Birds* 686; Plato, *Protagoras* 320d; Philemon, fr. 93 and Adespota, fr. 1047 K.-A.; Menander, fr. 508 K.-A.; Heraclides Ponticus, fr. 66ab Wehrli; Callimachus, fr. 493 Pfeiffer; Herondas 2.28; Horace, *C.* 1.16.13–6.

<sup>59</sup> J.N. Bremmer, “Near Eastern and Native Traditions in Apollodorus’ Account of the Flood”, in F. García Martínez and G. Luttikhuisen (eds.), *Interpretations of the Flood* (Leiden 1998) 39–55 at 45–7; see also Fowler, “Genealogical Thinking”, 11.

<sup>60</sup> Philo, *De opif. mundi* 133; note also Philochoros *FGrH* 328 F 10 v.l.; Oppian, *Cynegetica* 1.12; *Vita Herodotea* 249; Homer, *Ep.* 7.1; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 6.39; Stobaeus, *Anth.* 1.5.3; Hesychius, s.v. *panđōra*; Scholion on Aristophanes, *Birds* 971.

been Prometheus and Pandora. This does not seem very likely. Prometheus has no ancient connections with Thessaly, but his roots lie in Central Greece, as is also shown by the location of the match between Prometheus and Zeus in Sicyon.<sup>61</sup> It seems more convincing that, like with Deukalion, Thessaly had also kidnapped Prometheus and coupled him to a local heroine, perhaps Thessaly's first woman. As with the story of the Flood, then, the powerful position of Thessaly in the seventh century also had influenced the content of the myth of the first woman. The hidden agenda behind this manipulation of myth is clear: eventually, the whole of Greece was not autochthonous as many local communities claimed to be, but descended from Thessalian ancestors.<sup>62</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

What can we conclude from this discussion? First, the myth of Pandora probably originated in Thessaly, reflecting that area's powerful position in seventh-century Greece. Secondly, unlike older Greek *Urmänner*, Pandora's genealogy already transcends the bounds of a single community and she is the ancestress of the whole Greek world. However, in this respect the Israelites were already more advanced, since Eve is the "mother of all living" (*Genesis* 3:20). Both communities, though, had overcome the thinking of their source of inspiration, the Ancient Near East, which only told myths about a first male.

Finally, like the male Israelites, the male Greeks ascribed the source of their present sorrow state to the creation of woman. Whereas before, men had shared the table of the gods, they now had to work for a living. Even though the arrival of woman was not totally bad, her contribution to the present state of the *condition humaine* was in their eyes not a particularly felicitous one. As such, these myths are just one example of the eternally difficult relationship between the sexes.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> For Prometheus see most recently P. Pisi, *Prometeo nel culto attico* (Rome 1990); S.R. West, "Prometheus Orientalized", *Museum Helv.* 51 (1994) 129-49; J.-R. Gisler, *LIMC* VII.1 (1994) s.v. Prometheus.

<sup>62</sup> For Thessaly's prominence and active genealogical manipulation see now Fowler, "Genealogical Thinking", 11-15.

<sup>63</sup> For various suggestions and corrections I am most grateful to Bob Fowler and André Lardinois.

## THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN EARLY JEWISH LITERATURE

J.T.A.G.M. VAN RUITEN

When one looks for quotations from and allusions to the biblical texts that refer to the creation of man and woman (Gen 1:26–27; 2:7, 18–24; 5:1–2) in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, it is surprising that in this huge field of early Jewish Literature only a relatively small number of texts contain a reference to sexual differentiation in the creation of either man and woman.<sup>1</sup> There are quite a number of texts that refer to the creation of Adam or man(kind) exclusively:<sup>2</sup> in the *Apocrypha*: Ben Sirā 15:14; 16:17–17:24 (esp. 16:26, 17:1); 17:25–18:14; 33:7–13; (33:10, 13); 36:26; 40:1–11 (40:11), 27; 49:16; Wisdom of Solomon 2:23–24; 7:1–6; 9:1–3; 10:1–2; 15:7–13; in the *Pseudepigrapha*: *Sibylline Oracles* 3:24; Pseudo-Philo, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 13:8–9; 26:6; 32:15; (37:3); 4 *Ezra* 3:4–11 (esp. 3:4–7); 4:30; 6:45–46, 53–54; (7:62–74, esp. 7:70); (7:116–31); 2 *Baruch* (4:1–7); 14:17–19; 48:42–47; *Greek Life of Adam and Eve* 33:5; 35:3; 37:3; *Latin Life of Adam and Eve (Vita Adae et Evae)* 13:2–3; 2 *Enoch* 44:1; 65:2; *Greek Apocalypse of Ezra* 2:10–11.<sup>3</sup> References to Gen 1:27b: זכר ונקבה

<sup>1</sup> I have excluded from my research the canonical books of the Hebrew Bible, the ancient Versions (Septuagint, Samaritan Pentateuch, Targums), the literature of Qumran, Philo and Josephus. The reader will take it for granted that I have excluded also the New Testament, Rabbinic Literature and Gnostic Literature.

<sup>2</sup> For previous research on the reception history of these texts, see: P. Winter, "Sadoquite Fragments IV 20, 21 and the Exegesis of Gen I 27 in Late Judaism", *ZAW* 68 (1956) 71–84; J. Jervell, *Imago Dei. Gen 1,26f in Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen* (FRLANT, 76), Göttingen 1960; J.B. Schaller, *Gen. 1.2 im antiken Judentum. Untersuchungen über Verwendung und Deutung der Schöpfungsaussagen von Gen. 1.2 im antiken Judentum*, Diss. Göttingen 1961; M. de Merode, "Une aide qui lui corresponde". L'exégèse de Gen 2,18–24 dans les écrits de l'Ancient Testament, du judaïsme et du Nouveau Testament", *Revue théologique de Louvain* 8 (1977) 329–352; J. Fossum, "Gen 1,26 and 2,7 in Judaism, Samaritanism, and Gnosticism", *JJS* 16 (1985) 202–239; J.R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism. From Sirach to 2 Baruch* (JSPSS, 1), Sheffield 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Among the documents found at Qumran, only a very few allusions to Genesis 1–3 can be found. In the following documents there are allusions to the creation of man: 4Q264; 4Q301 3:6; 4Q304–305 (*Mysteries of Creation*); 4Q381, frgm. 1; 4Q416–418, 423 (*Sapiential Work A*) [4Q423, frg. 2; cf. 4Q417 II, 1:8.]; 4Q422 (*Paraphrase on Genesis and Exodus*) [4Q422 I:8–11]; 4Q504–506 (*Words of the Heavenly*

כָּרָא אִתָּם (“male and female he created them”) and to the formation of the woman (אִשָּׁה) out of the rib of the man (צִנּוֹר), are not found in these texts. Most of the authors seem to have in mind human existence in general, i.e., mortality and immortality, sinfulness, the dominion of man over the other creatures. These aspects of human existence might go beyond the division of humanity in male and female, although everybody knows that for many of these texts it was Eve who was to blame mostly for the entrance of sin and death into the world.<sup>4</sup> However, when speaking about Eve, it was apparently not always necessary to speak about her *creation*.

Only a few texts speak about a sexual differentiation in the creation of either man and woman, mostly referred to as Adam and Eve: in the *Apocrypha*: Tobit 8:6;<sup>5</sup> in the *Pseudepigrapha*: *Jubilees* 2:14; 3:1–7, 8; 2 *Enoch* 30:8–18; *Sibylline Oracles* 1:22–37; *Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (*Apocalypse of Moses*) 7:1; 40–42; Pseudo-Philo, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 32:15.<sup>6</sup> I will restrict myself to some of these texts (Tobit, *Jubilees*, 2 *Enoch*, *Sibylline Oracles*).<sup>7</sup> I will examine them in chronological order, with a threefold question in mind: Which elements concerning the creation of man and woman of Genesis 1–2 are taken over? In which form are they taken over? Why are they taken over, or how are they interpreted?

---

*Luminaries*) [4Q504 frg. 8+9]. For a discussion of some of these texts, see E.J.C. Tigchelaar, “Eden and Paradise. The Garden Motif in Some Early Jewish Texts (1 Enoch and Other Texts Found at Qumran)”, in: G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Paradise Interpreted. Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (Themes in Biblical Narrative, 2), Leiden 1999, 37–62, esp. 49–56.

<sup>4</sup> According to Carol Meyer, it is difficult to read the story of Adam and Eve without being influenced by the predominant early Jewish and Christian interpretation of that story. According to her, it is not only in the Christian interpretation, but also in the early Jewish interpretation that Adam and Eve became the example of disobedience and punishment, and Eve especially was seen as the source of wickedness. See: C. Meyer, *Discovering Eve. Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, New York 1988, pp. 75–76. It should be said, however, that Meyer quotes Christian and Rabbinic literature extensively, but apart from *Ben Sira* and the *Life of Adam and Eve*, she hardly refers to early Jewish literature.

<sup>5</sup> According to Levison also Judith 16:14 contains an allusion to the creation of woman, esp. to Gen 2:22. See J.R. Levison, “Judith 16:14 and the Creation of Woman”, *JBL* 114 (1995) 467–9.

<sup>6</sup> Among the Qumran documents only in 4Q265, fr. 7, col. II, 11–13 and in the *Damascus Document* 4:21 can a reference to the creation of both man and woman be found. For a discussion of both texts, see: F. García Martínez, “Man and Woman. Halakah Based upon Eden in the Dead Sea Scrolls”, in: Luttikhuisen, *Paradise*, 95–115.

<sup>7</sup> For an extensive discussion of the creation of man and woman in the *Greek*

1. *The creation of man and woman in the Book of Tobit*

The first text that refers to the creation of man and woman (outside the book of Genesis) is the Book of Tobit. This book was written, most likely before the 2nd century BCE, originally in a Semitic language, probably Aramaic.<sup>8</sup> The complete text exists only in Greek. This version exists in a shorter text-form (G<sup>I</sup>), represented by the *codex sinaiticus*, and a longer one (G<sup>II</sup>), represented by the codices *Vaticanus*, *Alexandrinus* and *Venetus*. Recent studies on the text of Tobit prefer the longer text.<sup>9</sup>

The elements concerning the creation of man and woman can be found in Tobit 8:6, which is a part of the prayer of Tobias (8:4–9). He said the prayer on his wedding-night with Sarah. The text of Tobit 8:4–9 runs, in translation, as follows:<sup>10</sup>

- 4a Then they went forth  
 b and shut the door of the chamber.  
 c Thereupon Tobias arose from the bed  
 d and said to her:  
 e "Sister, arise.  
 f Let us pray and make supplication to our God  
 h that He enact mercy and deliverance for us".  
 5a Whereupon she arose  
 b and they began to pray and make supplication  
 c that deliverance might be vouchsafed for them;  
 d he commenced, saying:  
 e "Blessed are Thou, God of our fathers.  
 b and blessed is Thy name for ever and ever;  
 c let the heavens bless Thee, and all creation for all ages.  
 6a *Thou madest Adam*  
 b *and madest Eve his wife as helper and stay for him;*

---

and *Latin Life of Adam and Eve*, see: Levison, *Portraits*, 163–90; a discussion of the creation of man and woman in Pseudo-Philo can be found in: C.T.R. Hayward, "The Figure of Adam in Pseudo Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*", *JSS* 23 (1992) 1–20.

<sup>8</sup> One Hebrew and four Aramaic copies of Tobit have been found in Cave 4 at Qumran. See: J.T. Milik, "La patrie de Tobie", *RB* 73 (1966) 522–30. On the basis of the Aramaic text of the book at Qumran, some date the book even to the 4th or late 5th century BCE. See: J. Grintz, *Chapters in the History of the Second Temple Times*, Jerusalem 1969, 66, n. 46; D. Flusser, "Psalms, Hymns and Prayers", in: M.E. Stone (ed.), *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period. Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (CRINT II.2), Assen 1984, 551–71, esp. 556.

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., R. Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte des Buches Tobit* (MSU, 17), Göttingen 1984, 11–48.

<sup>10</sup> The translation is according to F. Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit. An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New York 1958, 93–95.

- c of them both there came the seed of men,  
 d and Thou didst say:  
 e 'It is not good that the man should be alone;  
 f let us make a helper like unto him'.  
 7a And now, I take not this my sister for lust, but in truth.  
 b Command that I and she may find mercy,  
 c and that we grow old together".  
 8a And they responded together:  
 b "Amen, amen".  
 9 Then they slept the night.

The reference of the creation of Adam and Eve is a combination of a quotation and an allusion: a *verbatim quotation* of Gen 2:18 in 8:6e–f ("It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper like unto him"); second, an *allusion* to Gen 1–3 in 8:6a–c ("Thou madest Adam and madest Eve his wife as helper and stay for him; of them both there came the seed of men").

As far as the quotation of Gen 2:18 is concerned, the text runs parallel to the text of LXX Gen 2:18:<sup>11</sup>

*LXX Gen 2:18*

- 2:18a Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός  
 18b Οὐ καλὸν εἶναι τον  
 ἄνθρωπον μόνον·  
 18c ποιήσωμεν αὐτῷ βοηθὸν κατ'  
 αὐτόν.

*Tobit 8:6def (G<sup>II</sup>)*

- 8:6d καὶ σὺ εἶπας ὅτι  
 6e Οὐ καλὸν εἶναι τον  
 ἄνθρωπον μόνον,  
 6f ποιήσωμεν αὐτῷ βοηθὸν  
 ὅμοιον αὐτῷ

*Cf. LXX Gen 2:20b*

- 20b . . . βοηθὸς ὅμοιον αὐτῷ

How should one interpret the difference between Tobit 8:6f (ὅμοιον αὐτῷ) and the LXX Gen 2:18c (κατ' αὐτόν)? It is possible that the translator of Tobit harmonises the quotation of Gen 2:18 with 2:20b where the same Hebrew expression (אֵלֶּיךָ) is rendered as ὅμοιον αὐτῷ. It is also possible that his translation came into being independently from the LXX. If this is true, we have here a witness of a Greek translation of Gen 2:18 prior to the LXX, which read possibly in both cases ὅμοιον αὐτῷ. The translators of the Septuagint of Genesis differentiate between Gen 2:18 and 2:20 because the expression ὅμοιον αὐτῷ was not appropriate with regard to animals, therefore

<sup>11</sup> The shorter text form (G<sup>I</sup>) of Tobit 8:6d–f runs as follows: σὺ εἶπας Οὐ καλὸν εἶναι τον ἄνθρωπον μόνον, ποιήσωμεν αὐτῷ βοηθὸν ὅμοιον αὐτῷ.

they use κατ' αὐτόν in 2:18c.<sup>12</sup> The verbatim quotation is introduced with σὺ εἶπας (“Thou didst say”). We should probably not consider these words as a quotation formula introducing a quotation from Scripture, but as part of the quotation, since Gen 2:18 begins with Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός (“And God says”).

As far as the allusion to the biblical text of Genesis 1–3 in Tobit 8:6a–c is concerned, it is clear that these phrases refer to the biblical text of Gen 1–3, but it is not possible to point out one single phrase in Gen 1–3 that is quoted here.<sup>13</sup> The first phrase (“Thou madest Adam”) could refer to the creation of man in the first account of creation (Gen 1:26–27), or to the creation in the second account (Gen 2:7), or to both. Some observations can be made. Both LXX and MT Gen 1:26–27 use the plural form of the verbs “to create”, “to make”. In LXX Gen 1:26–27; 2:7 the word ἄνθρωπος is used, and not Ἀδὰμ, as in Tobit 8:6a. Tobit 8:6a does not refer to the collective man or mankind, but to the individual Adam, that is to say the *male* Adam. The bisexual Adam (זכר ונקבה; “male and female”) does not play a part in Tobit. Tobit 8:6a does not refer either to the creation of man in the image and likeness of God, nor to his dominion over the animals. Therefore, we can conclude that the reference to the creation of man in Tobit 8:6a is reduced to the creation of the male Adam.

The second phrase (8:6b: “and [Thou] madest Eve his wife as helper and stay for him”) seems to refer to Gen 2:18c, which is quoted in Tobit 8:6f. However, the differences between Tobit 8:6b and Gen 2:18c point to the conclusion that the allusion is much broader. The proper name “Eve” and the word-collocation “Eve”

<sup>12</sup> Cf. M. Rösel, *Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung* (BZAW, 223), Berlin 1994, 69. It is also possible that the (final) translators of the LXX changed ὅμοιον αὐτῷ in Gen 2:18c of an earlier version into κατ' αὐτόν. However, it is not necessary to follow Schaller, who claims that the LXX is composed out of two translations. One of the proofs for this hypothesis is, according to Schaller, that the Hebrew expression מְנַחֵם is translated differently in LXX Gen 2:18c and 2:20b. See: Schaller, *Genesis*, 19–20. It is more likely that the Greek translators differentiated deliberately between Gen 2:18c en 2:20c.

<sup>13</sup> The shorter text-form (G<sup>f</sup>) of Tobit 8:6abc runs as follows: σὺ ἐποίησας Ἀδὰμ καὶ ἔδωκας αὐτῷ βοηθὸν Εὐαν στήριγμα τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ· ἐκ τούτων ἐγενήθη τὸ ἄνθρωπων σπέρμα. The longer text-form (G<sup>l</sup>) reads: σὺ ἐποίησας Ἀδὰμ καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτῷ βοηθὸν στήριγμα Εὐαν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων ἐγενήθη τὸ σπέρμα τῶν ἄνθρωπων.

and “his wife” occur in the massoretic text only in Gen 3:20 (“The man called his wife’s name Eve”), in the Septuaginta not before Gen 4:1. The expression “his wife” alone is not found before Gen 2:24, 25. In the LXX Gen 2:25 it is made clear that it is the wife of *Adam*, although she is yet not called Eve. Tobit 8:6b uses the word “for him” (αὐτῷ) and not the phrase of Gen 2:18c: “a helper fit for him” (or: “a helper like unto him”) (βοηθὸν κατ’ αὐτόν; cf. Gen 2:20c: βοηθὸς ὅμοιον αὐτῷ). The word στήριγμα (“stay”) does not occur in Gen 2:18c. The word “to make” is put in the singular and not in the plural, as in LXX Gen 2:18c. In the shorter text of **Γ** the verb “to give” is used (“And you gave to him Eve as helper and stay”). This could refer to Gen 2:22, although there the verb “to bring” is used and not “to give”. We can conclude that the making of the woman is summarised in a few words. It is not said that woman is made out of a man’s rib. The more general “man” and “woman” are made more concrete in the individuals Adam and Eve. It is stressed that the woman Eve is made to be the wife and helper of Adam.

The reference in the third phrase (8:6c: “of them both there came the seed of men”) is not quite clear. It seems to refer to human sexuality, especially the marital intercourse of Adam and Eve. However, Gen 2:18–25 does not speak about intercourse between Adam and Eve, neither in relation to their offspring. It is only in relation to the curse on the woman that in Gen 3:20 it is said that the woman is called Eve, “because she was the mother of all living”. The wording in Tobit 8:6c, however, is very different from Gen 3:20. It is not “Eve”, who became “the mother of all living”, but out of “them both” (Adam and Eve) came “the seed of men”. This could mean that the association of childbearing with the curse on the woman because of her behaviour in the Garden of Eden is ignored by the author of Tobit. Human sexuality and childbearing is seen as something positive.

The use of Genesis 2–3 by the author of Tobit makes it clear that according to him the rules that apply to Adam and Eve in Genesis would apply also to Tobit and Sara, because all “seed of men” came out of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve, as the first married couple, seems to function as example for all married couples after them. Marriage is anchored in the Creation. It stresses the fact that Tobias does not take Sara for lust (Tobit 8:7a), but that he is acting according to the order of Creation.



## 2. *The creation of man and woman in the Book of Jubilees*

The Book of Jubilees, written originally in Hebrew shortly after 160 BCE,<sup>14</sup> contains three statements concerning the creation of man and woman (2:14; 3:4–6; 3:8).<sup>15</sup> The first can be found in Jub 2:14, which is considered as a rewriting of the second part of the sixth day, and especially of Gen 1:26–28. It speaks about the creation of man and woman in the first week of creation.

---

<sup>14</sup> According to VanderKam, Jubilees can be dated to between 159–152, see: J.C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, Missoula 1977, 283; cf. O.S. Wintermute, “A New Translation and Introduction”, in: J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, II*, New York 1985, 44; K. Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen* (JSHRZ V.3), Gütersloh 1981, 300; E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–135 AD). Revisited and Edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman*, III. 1–2, Edinburgh 1986–86, 311. Nickelsburg suggests that Jubilees was written during the time of the Hellenistic reform close to 168 BCE. See G.W.E. Nickelsburg, “The Bible Rewritten and Expanded”, in: M.E. Stone (ed.), *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period. Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (CRINT II,2); Davenport distinguishes three stages in the composition of Jubilees. The first edition (an angelic discourse) was written either the late third or the early second century BC. A second edition took place during the Maccabean struggles (ca. 166–160 BC). Finally, a sanctuary-oriented redactor worked at Qumran during the rules of Simon and John Hyrcanus (ca. 140–104 BC). See G.L. Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (SPB, 20), Leiden 1971, 10–18.

<sup>15</sup> The discovery of at least fourteen fragments of the Book of Jubilees among the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran confirms the hypothesis that the Book of Jubilees was originally written in Hebrew. The Hebrew was first translated into Greek and Syriac. The Greek version became the basis for the Latin and Ethiopic versions. Only the Ethiopic version, a translation of a translation, is complete, whereas only fragments of the other versions exist. The published Hebrew fragments, although small in number and size, show that the Ethiopic version is a reliable one. The official edition of the Hebrew fragments is published by J.C. VanderKam and J.T. Milik, “Jubilees”, in H. Attridge et al., *Qumran Cave 4–VIII. Parabiblical Texts. Part 1* (Discoveries of the Judaean Desert XIII), Oxford 1994, 1–185. In 1989 VanderKam published a new critical edition and a English translation of the Ethiopic text of Jubilees on the basis of twenty-seven manuscripts: J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees, I–II* (CSCO 510–511, Scriptorum Aethiopicorum 87–88), Leuven 1989. The Latin fragments are published by Ceriani and Rönisch: A.M. Ceriani, “Parva Genesis”, in: *Monumenta sacra et profana*, Vol. 1, Fasc. 1, Milan 1861, 15–62. One can find a review of this edition in: H. Rönisch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen: oder die Kleine Genesis; unter Beifügung des revidirten Textes der in der Ambrosiana aufgefundenen lateinischen Fragmente*, Leipzig 1874 (reprint Amsterdam 1970), 96–168, 439–460.

Genesis 1:26-28

Jubilees 2:14<sup>16</sup>

26a	THEN GOD SAID:		
26b	"LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS;		
26c	AND LET THEM HAVE DOMINION OVER THE FISH OF THE SEA,		
26d	AND OVER THE BIRDS OF THE AIR,		
26e	AND OVER THE CATTLE,		
26f	<u>AND OVER THE ENTIRE EARTH,</u>		
26g	<u>AND OVER EVERY CREEPING THING THAT CREEPS ON THE EARTH."</u>		
27a	[ ] <i>God created man</i> IN HIS OWN IMAGE,	14a	[ ] AFTER ALL THIS, <i>he made mankind</i>
27b	IN THE IMAGE OF GOD HE CREATED HIM;		[ ]
27c	male and female he <i>created</i> them.		—AS ONE man and a woman he <i>made</i> them.
28a	AND GOD BLESSED THEM,		[ ]
28b	AND GOD SAID TO THEM:		
28c	"BE FRUITFUL		
28d	AND MULTIPLY,		
28e	AND FILL THE EARTH		
28f	and subdue it;		
28g	<i>and have dominion over the fish of the sea</i>	14b	<i>He made him rule EVERYTHING</i>
28h	<i>and over the birds of the air</i>		ON EARTH <i>and in the seas and over</i>
28i	<i>and over every living thing that creeps on the earth."</i>		<i>flying creatures, ANIMALS, cattle,</i> <u>everything that creeps on the earth, and the entire earth.</u>
		14c	OVER ALL THESE HE MADE HIM RULE.

As can be seen in the synoptic overview the rewriting is relatively short.<sup>17</sup> Several elements of Gen 1:26-31 are *omitted*: the creation of man in the image of God (Gen 1:26b, 27ab), the blessing of God (Gen 1:28a), the command to be fruitful (Gen 1:28b-e).<sup>18</sup> On the other hand Jubilees has a few *additions* with regard to the text of

<sup>16</sup> All translations from the book of Jubilees are taken from: J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees, II* (CSCO 511, Scriptorum Aethiopicorum 88), Leuven 1989, with slight modifications.

<sup>17</sup> In the synoptic overview I try to give a classification of the similarities and dissimilarities between Genesis and Jubilees. I put in *small caps* the elements of Genesis which do not occur in Jub 2:14, and vice versa, i.e., the omissions and additions. In *normal script* are the corresponding elements between both texts, i.e., the verbatim quotation of the source text in Jubilees. I put in *italics* the variations between Genesis and Jubilees, other than addition or omission. I *underline* those elements that show rearrangement of words and sentences.

<sup>18</sup> Also the designation of food (Gen 1:29-30) is omitted altogether in Jubilees. The author is primarily interested in the created objects. See, however, the end of

Gen 1:26–31 (see 2:14c; elements in 2:14a, b), whereas there are also some other *modifications* (elements in 2:14a, b). I will go into some of the differences between Genesis and Jubilees. First, the last act of creation is set apart from the other acts of creation by the words “after all this”. It is designated as the final act of creation. The description of this act concentrates on the making of mankind (2:14a) and the dominion of men on the earth (2:14bc). Second, the divine name is omitted in 2:14a. This also occurs elsewhere. Third, the verb “to make” is used twice instead of “to create”, which is used three times in Gen 1:27a–c. See, however, the divine command (Gen 1:26b), where the verb “to make” is used. Jubilees does not take over the plural form (“let us make”). It could suggest the idea that God was not alone in his creation. Jubilees put much emphasis on the fact that God alone created the world. Any possible collaboration of the earth on the third and fifth day, and of the waters on the fifth day, is ruled out. Although the angels are created on the first day, they are not active in the creation.<sup>19</sup> Fourth, the creation of man in the image of God (Gen 1:26b, 27ab) is omitted in Jubilees. This does not mean that the author of Jubilees rejects the conception of the creation of man in the likeness of God. Since in 6:8, which is a rewriting of Gen 9:6, it is said that the person who sheds the blood of man will have his blood shed by man “because

---

2:7a (“for enjoyment and for food”), although this phrase seems to reflect Gen 2:9 (“... pleasant to the sight and good for food”). It might have been omitted because Gen 1:29–30, which describes a vegetarian regimen, is in contradiction with Gen 9:2–3, which describes an omnivorous diet (the animals and the green plants). Jubilees takes over the omnivorous diet in 6:6, which is a rewriting of Gen 9:2–3. It might be an example of harmonising contradictions within the biblical text. However, we should not overemphasise this point since 3:16e–i seems to reflect the vegetarian regimen (“He would keep the garden against birds, animals, and cattle. He would gather its fruit and eat (it) and would store its surplus for himself and his wife. He would store what was being kept”).

<sup>19</sup> The grammatical explanation of the plural in Gen 1:26b is that of a *pluralis deliberationis*. God consults himself (see Ges.K, par. 124g; Joüon, par. 114e). However, the plural could also indicate a plurality of gods. In order to avoid polytheism, many interpreted the plural as if God spoke the words to the *angels*. The emphasis is on their role as counsellors not as creators. See GenR 8:4; NumR 19:3; MidrPss 8:2; EcclR 7:23, 1; BT Sanh 38b; Tg Ps-J Gen 1:26. According to the Fathers of the Church, the plural is an expression of the Trinity in the Old Testament. See: A. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch* (JSSM 15), Manchester 1991, 2–4; J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature. An Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Scripture*, Cambridge 1969, 106; P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, Berlin 1975, 88–89.

he made mankind in the image of God". It is difficult to guess the reason for the omission of the reference to the human likeness of God in 2:14.<sup>20</sup> It is noticeable that not only the conception of the creation of man in the likeness of God, but also other elements of Gen 1:26–28, which are omitted in Jubilees 2, do occur in the context of Jubilees 6.<sup>21</sup> Fifth, the formulation of the dominion of men over the animals (2:14bc) runs parallel to Gen 1:28g–i, the execution of the second part of the divine command, in which God promises that man will have dominion over all living creatures (Gen 1:26c–g).

The second statement concerning the creation of man and woman occurs in Jub 3:4–6, which is a very literally rewriting of Gen 2:18, 21–22. It speaks about the bone that is taken from the bones of Adam, and that is built into the woman. One striking element of the rewriting is that as soon as the woman is brought to Adam, they have sexual intercourse (Jub 3:4d: "he knew her").

---

*Genesis 2:18–24**Jubilees 3:1–7*

---

18a Then the Lord God said: "It is not good

18b that the man should be alone;

18c Let me make for him a helper like him."

19a SO OUT OF THE GROUND THE LORD  
GOD FORMED all animals OF THE FIELD  
AND all birds OF THE AIR,  
[ ]

19b *and he brought them to the man*

[ ]

[ ]  
1a ON THE SIXTH DAY OF THE SECOND  
WEEK

*we brought to Adam, ON THE LORDS  
ORDERS*

b all animals, ALL CATTLE, all birds,  
EVERYTHING THAT MOVES ABOUT ON

---

<sup>20</sup> VanderKam, "Genesis 1 in Jubilees 2", *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994) 314, suggests that the omission could be an example of the fact that already in the 2nd century BCE caution was being exercised in exegeting Gen 1:26–27 in public. He refers to Jervell, *Imago Dei*, 21. According to K. Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen* (JSHRZ, II.3), Gütersloh 1981, 328, it is possibly omitted because the image is limited to Israel. See, however, Jub 6:8.

<sup>21</sup> I refer to the command to be fruitful (6:5: "Now you increase and multiply yourselves on the earth and become numerous upon it"; 6:9: "As for you—increase and become numerous on the earth"; cf. Gen 9:1, 7), the blessing (6:5: "Become a blessing within it"; no parallel in Gen 9:1–7), and the designation of the food (6:6–7).

Genesis 2:18-24

Jubilees 3:1-7

- TO SEE WHAT HE WOULD CALL THEM;  
 and whatever *the man* called *every living creature*, became *its name*.
- 19c And the man named all cattle, the birds of the air, and all animals of the field;
- [ ]
- 20b *but for the man he did not find a helper* like him.
- 21a The Lord God imposed a sound slumber on *the man*,  
 21b and he fell asleep.  
 21c Then he took one *from* his bones [ ]:
- 21d *He closed up* its place with flesh;  
 22a and *the Lord God* built THE BONE, WHICH HE HAD TAKEN FROM THE MAN, INTO A woman  
 [ ]
- 22b and he brought *her to the man*.  
 [ ]  
 23a And *the man* said [ ]:
- THE EARTH, AND EVERYTHING THAT MOVES ABOUT IN THE WATER
- c IN THEIR VARIOUS KINDS AND VARIOUS FORMS:
- d THE ANIMALS ON THE FIRST DAY;  
 e THE CATTLE ON THE SECOND DAY;  
 f THE BIRDS ON THE THIRD DAY;  
 g EVERYTHING THAT MOVES ABOUT ON THE EARTH ON THE FOURTH DAY,  
 h AND THE ONES THAT MOVE ABOUT IN THE WATER ON THE FIFTH DAY.  
 [ ]
- 2a Adam named them all, EACH WITH ITS OWN NAME.  
 b Whatever he called them, became *their name*.
- 3a DURING THESE FIVE DAYS ADAM WAS LOOKING AT ALL OF THESE—  
 b MALE AND FEMALE AMONG EVERY KIND THAT WAS ON THE EARTH.  
 c BUT HE HIMSELF WAS ALONE;  
 d *there was no one whom he found for himself*  
 e *who would help him who* was like him.  
 4a Then the Lord said TO US:  
 b "It is not good that the man should be alone.  
 c Let us make for him a helper who is like him".
- 5a The Lord, our God, imposed a sound slumber on *him*  
 b and he fell asleep.  
 c Then he took one BONE *from among* his bones FOR A WOMAN  
 d THAT RIB WAS THE ORIGIN OF THE WOMAN, FROM AMONG HIS BONES.  
 e *He built up* the flesh in its place,  
 f and *he* built [ ] the woman.
- 6a THEN HE AWAKENED ADAM FROM HIS SLEEP.  
 b WHEN HE AWOKE, HE GOT UP ON THE SIXTH DAY.  
 c And he brought (*him*) to *her*.  
 d HE KNEW HER  
 e and *he* said TO HER:

*Genesis 2:18-24**Jubilees 3:1-7*

23b	"This is now bone of my <i>bones</i> and flesh from my flesh;	f	"This is now bone from my <i>bone</i> and flesh from my flesh.
23c	This one will be called <i>woman</i> ,	g	This one will be called <i>my wife</i> ,
23d	for she was taken out of <i>man</i> ."	h	for she was taken from <i>her husband</i> ."
24a	For this reason a man [ ]	7a	For this reason a man AND A WOMAN ARE TO BE ONE,
	leaves his father and his mother.	b	AND FOR THIS REASON HE leaves his father and his mother.
24b	And he associates with his wife,	c	He associates with his wife,
24c	and they become one flesh.	d	and they become one flesh

The third statement, finally, is found in Jub 3:8, which has no parallel in the text of Genesis: "In the first week Adam was created, and also the rib, his wife. And in the second week he showed her to him", and can be seen as an interpretation of the first and second statement.

The three statements concerning the creation of man and woman in the book of Jubilees, have been subject to some debate. Testuz postulates the idea that Jub 2:14 refers, originally, only to the creation of the male.<sup>22</sup> The phrase "as one man and a woman he made them" is, according to Testuz, to be considered as a later interpolation of one of the scribes who attempted to harmonise Jub 2:14 with Gen 1:27. His most important argument is that the number of 22 acts of creation are completed with the creation of the man, and the creation of the woman would surpass this number. The creation of man took place in the first week, and the making of woman in the second.

Levison stands up very strongly for the opinion of Testuz that Jub 2:14 originally included only the creation of Adam.<sup>23</sup> He gives several additional arguments in favour of this thesis. First, the author omits dual creations, omitting Gen 2:7 and adapting Gen 2:19 from the creation of the animals to their naming only (Jub 3:1). This suggests, according to Levison, "that also here in 2.14 he also omits one of the two creation accounts". The author of Jubilees simplifies the narrative by including only one account of the creation of man (Jub 2:14), the animals (Jub 2:11-13), and woman (Jub 3:4-7). Second, the plural pronoun, "them", conflicts with its context. Third,

<sup>22</sup> M. Testuz, *Les idées religieuses du Livre des Jubilés*, Paris 1960, 45.

<sup>23</sup> J.R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism. From Sirach to 2 Baruch* (JSPSS, 1), Sheffield 1988, 90-91, 214-215 (note 10).

the prerogative of dominion is granted to Adam alone (cf. Jub 3:2, 15, 16). According to Levison, this lends credibility to the suggestion that the author envisages only the creation of Adam in Jub 2:14. Fourth, 3:8 poses no exegetical solution to the problem of the two accounts of the creation of woman. It should be considered as an additional creation account which is integrally related to Jub 3:9–14. Its goal is to express the law of Jub 3:9–14, and it contradicts the other creation accounts.

The publication in 1994 of the Qumran-fragments of Jubilees from Cave 4, makes the suggestion of a later interpolation in Jub 2:14 unlikely. The text of 4Q216 (Col. VII) reads like Gen 1:27: עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים אָדָם זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה עָשָׂה אֹתָם (“After all these, he made mankind—male and fem[ale he made them]).<sup>24</sup> On the basis of palaeographical grounds, the manuscript can be dated between 125–100 BCE.<sup>25</sup> This means that the manuscript comes from a period not far removed from the time when Jubilees was written (middle second century BCE).<sup>26</sup> It remains, however, theoretically possible that a very early transcriber tried to adopt the text of Jubilees to the biblical text of Gen 1:27b. We should, therefore, add some additional arguments to reject the proposal of Testuz and Levison.

First, according to Jubilees, God finished all his works on the sixth day (cf. Jub 2:15–16, 23). Therefore Genesis 2 cannot be the second account of the creation. It is the chronological continuation (in the second week) of the creation (which took place in the first week). The plants and the animals were already created, so the plants are not mentioned again in Jubilees 3; neither the animals are created again, they are only brought to Adam in the second week. Therefore, also the formation of the woman in the second week should not be considered as an additional work of creation. She was already created in the first week, and in the second she is actually taken out of the man, and she is presented to him. So the formation of the woman in the second week is mainly a presentation of her to Adam. However, her creation in the first week should not be considered as

<sup>24</sup> J. VanderKam – J.T. Milik, “Jubilees”, in: H. Attridge et al., *Qumran Cave 4. VIII. Parabiblical Texts, Part 1* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, XIII), Oxford 1994, 19–21.

<sup>25</sup> VanderKam – Milik, *Jubilees*, 2.

<sup>26</sup> See note 13.

a separate work of creation. She is created as part of Adam and is not an additional work of creation. Second, the tension in the text of Jub 2:14 between the singular and plural pronoun reflects the same tension in the Hebrew text of Gen 1:26–27. This is no argument for neglecting the originality of the creation of man and woman in Jub 2:14. Third, it is possible to interpret Jubilees in that sense that the prerogative is granted to Adam alone. However, this is no argument for claiming that the author is envisaging only the creation of Adam in Jub 2:14. Of course, Jub 2:14 speaks about one figure. However, Eve is part, in one way or another, of this figure.

We should consider, therefore, the text of Jubilees with regard to the creation of man and woman as a (perhaps not completely successful) attempt to solve the tensions within the biblical text of Genesis 1–2. In Gen 1:27 it is stated that God creates man *male and female*. But if God did create man and woman on the sixth day of creation, how could it be stated in Gen 2:18–20 that man is alone, and the woman had to be formed (again)? Therefore, the author of Jubilees takes refuge in an alternative solution. The woman was already created in the first week, but as part of Adam, and she was taken out of him and presented to him in the second week. It would have been simpler if the author of Jubilees had stated that Adam (or man) was created in the first week. Then the statement in Gen 2:18–20 (that man is alone, and the woman is to be made) becomes understandable. However, this is in conflict with one of his points of departure, i.e., that the creation work is completed in the first week.

From the text we cannot obtain a clear impression of the first human being. The author of Jubilees seems to stress the twofoldness of man and woman, and also that the woman was created in the first week, but not as a full being, only as a principle. This is perhaps the reason that it is stated in Jub 3:5 that the rib was the *f<sup>r</sup>trata lab<sup>e</sup>esit*, which can be translated as “the origin of the woman”, but which can also mean “the principle of the woman”. It is unlikely that the author of Jubilees envisages the first human being as androgyne. It is mainly a male being, but with a female part. This female part is considered to be the wife of the male, but it has still to be formed into a concrete woman.

In the continuation of Jub 3:8 the author stresses that not only man, but also the animals and the woman are created *outside* the garden. The entrance of Adam and Eve into the Garden of Eden



is delayed by 40 days for Adam and 80 days for Eve. This delay is related to the *halakha* of the woman who is giving birth in Leviticus 12, for which he gives now an etiological reason. Moreover, the author considers the Garden of Eden as the prototype of the Temple. Since it was not permissible to enter the city of the Temple a certain period after having sex, the first sexual contact between Adam and Eve does not take place in the garden of Eden, but before they enter.

In conclusion, we can say that Gen 1:26–28 and Gen 2 are seen as separated episodes of the creation of mankind. Jubilees does not integrate the story of the Paradise into the description of the sixth day, nor does it integrate the first account of the creation of man into the story of the Paradise. The harmonisation of the two accounts of creation takes place by putting a chronological framework on the text. The first account of creation is the actual creation that took place in the first week, the second account is not a genuine creation, but a presentation of the animals and the woman. Moreover, both man and woman are created outside the garden, and had to wait respectively 40 and 80 days before they were brought into the Garden, in order to illustrate that the first marital relationship took place outside the garden, and to anchor a *halakha* in the creation.

### 3. *The creation of man and woman in the first book of the Sibylline Oracles*

The first two books of the *Sibylline Oracles* can be considered as an Jewish oracle with a Christian redaction.<sup>27</sup> The original Jewish oracle can probably be dated at about the turn of the era.<sup>28</sup> The first part of the first book (v. 5–64) is a poetic rewriting of Genesis 1–3. It precedes the description of the continuation of the history, which is divided into ten generations. Seven of them are described in the first book. The text of *OrSib* 1:5–64 retells the story of the creation quite freely, although the general structure of the passage follows the structure of Genesis 1–3 closely, as can be seen in the following synoptic overview.

<sup>27</sup> See: J.J. Collins, "Sibylline Oracles", in: J.H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I*, London 1983, 317–472, esp. 330.

<sup>28</sup> Collins, "Sibylline Oracles", 331–332.

---

*Genesis 1-3**OrSib 1:5-64*

---

*I. The first account of creation  
(Gen 1:1-2:4a)**I. The creation of the world until the creation  
of man (5-21)*

## Introduction (1:1-2)

1. 1st day: light, day and night (1:3-5)
2. 2nd day: firmament (1:6-8)
3. 3rd day (1st part): seas and earth (1:9-10)
4. 3rd day (2nd part): vegetation, plants yielding seed, fruit trees (1:11-13)
5. 4th day: greater light, lesser light, stars (1:16-18)
6. 5th day: great sea monsters, other marine creatures, flying creatures (1:20-23)
7. 6th day (1st part): cattle, creeping things, land animals (1:24-25)
8. 6th day (2nd part): creation of man (1:26-31)
9. 7th day: rest of God (Gen 2:1-4a)

## Introduction (5-8)

1. earth, Tatarus (9)
  2. light (10)
  3. heaven, sea (11)
  4. stars (12)
  5. plants (13)
  6. sea and rivers (13-14)
  7. clouds (15)
  8. fish; birds (16)
  9. wild animals; creeping serpents (17-18)
- Conclusion (19-21)

*II. The second account of creation (2:4b-25)**II. The creation of man and woman (22-37)*

1. Time before the creation of man (2:4b-6)
2. Creation of man and Garden (2:7-15)
  - a. creation of man (2:7)
  - b. creation of Garden (Gen 2:8)
  - c. description of the Garden (the trees [9], the rivers [10-14], the placing of man [15])
3. Prohibition against eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (2:16-17)
4. Creation of helper (Gen 2:18-24)
  - a. 2:18 plan (loneliness)
  - b. 2:19-20 creation of the animals, presentation to the man and naming
  - c. 2:21-24 building of the woman
  - d. 2:25: time in the Garden before temptation

1. Making of man as an image of God (22-23)
2. The man is put in the Garden (24-25)
3. Loneliness of the man causes the creation of the woman (26-37)

*III. Rejection from the Garden (Gen 3:1-24)**III. Life in the Garden (38-64)*

## 1. Temptation and transgression (3:1-7)

1. Prohibition against eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (38-39)
  2. Temptation and transgression (39-49)
-

*Genesis 1-3**OrSib 1:5-64*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Hiding from God and accusation (3:8-13)</li> <li>3. Judgement (3:14-29)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. serpent (3:14-15)</li> <li>b. woman (3:16)</li> <li>c. man (3:17-19)</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Conclusion (3:20-24)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. new name giving of Eve (3:20)</li> <li>b. second clothing (3:21)</li> <li>c. dismissing (3:22-24)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Anger of God and dismissing from the Garden (50-55)</li> <li>4. Judgement (56-64)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. man and woman (56-58)</li> <li>b. serpent (59-64)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The first part (5-21) of *OrSib* 1:5-64 is concerned with the creation of the world until the creation of man, and forms a parallel to the first account of the creation in Genesis (Gen 1:1-2:4a); the second part (22-37) is concerned with the creation of man and woman, and forms a parallel to the second account of creation (Gen 2:4b-25); and, finally, the third part (38-64) is concerned with the life in the Garden, and the rejection away from it, and runs parallel to the story of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3. As far as the general structure is concerned, it is striking that the first account of the creation of man is rearranged and integrated in the second account, although it is only one element of it (the notion of the image of God) that is put in the actual account.

I will concentrate on the second part of the creation story in the first book of the *Sibylline Oracles*, vss. 22-37. It describes the creation of man and woman, and can be divided into three stages. First, the making of the male man, as an image of God (22-23); second, the placing of the man in the Garden (24-25); third, the making of the woman as the result of the loneliness of the man (26-37).

In its wording the rewriting differs quite substantially from the text of Genesis. Hardly any verbatim quotation of more than one word can be found. However, the sequence of the events runs very much parallel to the sequence in Genesis. In the following synoptic overview, I put the parallel phrases of both texts side by side.

<i>Genesis 1:27a; 2:7, 15</i>		<i>Or Sib 1:22-25<sup>29</sup></i>
2:7	<i>The Lord God formed man OF DUST FROM THE GROUND, AND BREATHED INTO HIS NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF LIFE; AND MAN BECAME a living being.</i>	(22) <i>And then later he again fashioned an animate object, (23) making A COPY from his own image, YOUTHFUL man, (24) BEAUTIFUL, WONDERFUL.</i>
1:27a	<i>God created man in his own image . . .</i>	
	Cf. Gen 2:8-14	
2:15	<i>The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it</i>	<i>He bade him live in an (25) ambrosial garden, so that he might be concerned with beautiful works.</i>
<i>Genesis 2:18-25</i>		<i>Or Sib 1:26-37</i>
18a	THEN THE LORD GOD SAID: "IT IS NOT GOOD	
18b	that the man should be alone;	26 But he being alone IN THE LUXURIANT PLANTATION OF THE GARDEN (27) desired conversation,
18c	<i>Let me make for him a helper like him."</i>	<i>and prayed to behold another form (28) like his own.</i>
19a	SO OUT OF THE GROUND THE LORD GOD FORMED ALL ANIMALS OF THE FIELD AND ALL BIRDS OF THE AIR,	
19b	AND HE BROUGHT THEM TO THE MAN TO SEE WHAT HE WOULD CALL THEM;	
19c	AND WHATEVER THE MAN CALLED EVERY LIVING CREATURE, BECAME ITS NAME.	
20a	AND THE MAN NAMED ALL CATTLE, THE BIRDS OF THE AIR, AND ALL ANIMALS OF THE FIELD;	
20b	<i>but for the man he did not find a helper like him.</i>	
21a	THE LORD GOD IMPOSED A SOUND SLUMBER ON THE MAN,	
21b	AND HE FELL ASLEEP.	
21c	<i>Then he took one from his bones.</i>	<i>God himself indeed took a bone from his (29) flank</i>
21d	HE CLOSED UP ITS PLACE WITH FLESH;	

<sup>29</sup> The translation of the First Book of the Sibylline Oracles is taken from Collins, "Sibylline Oracles", 335. For the Greek text, see: J. Geffcken, *Die Oracula Sibyllina* (GCS, 8), Leipzig 1902.

22a	<i>and the Lord God built the bone, WHICH HE HAD TAKEN FROM THE MAN, INTO A WOMAN</i>	<i>and made Eve, A WONDERFUL MAIDENLY (30) SPOUSE,</i>
22b	<i>and he brought her to the man.</i>	<i>whom he gave to this man TO LIVE WITH HIM IN THE GARDEN.</i>
23a	AND THE MAN SAID:	
23b	<i>"This is now bone of my bones and flesh from my flesh;</i>	(31) <i>And he, when he saw her, was suddenly greatly</i>
23c	<i>This one will be called woman,</i>	(32) <i>amazed in spirit, rejoicing, such a corre- sponding copy did he see.</i>
23d	<i>for she was taken out of man."</i>	(33) <i>THEY CONVERSED WITH WISE WORDS WHICH FLOWED SPONTANEOUSLY, (34) FOR GOD HAD TAKEN CARE OF EVERYTHING.</i>
24a	FOR THIS REASON A MAN LEAVES HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER.	
24b	AND HE ASSOCIATES WITH HIS WIFE,	
24c	AND THEY BECOME ONE FLESH.	
25a	<i>And the man and his wife were both <u>naked,</u></i>	(35) <i>FOR THEY NEITHER COVERED THEIR MINDS WITH LICENTIOUSNESS <u>nor felt</u></i>
25b	<i>and they were not ashamed.</i>	<i>shame, (36) BUT WERE FAR REMOVED FROM EVIL HEART; (37) AND THEY WALKED LIKE WILD BEASTS with <u>uncovered limbs.</u></i>

---

I point to the following similarities. The first phrase (*OrSib* I:22–24) refers both to Gen 2:7 and Gen 1:26–27. The phrase “he fashioned an animate object” runs parallel with “he formed man. . . and man became a living being” of Gen 2:7. The phrase “making a copy from his own image” runs parallel with Gen 1:27a (“he created man in his own image, in the image of God”). The second phrase (*OrSib* I:24–25) refers to the description of the Garden in Gen 2:8–15, especially to the last phrase (Gen 2:15). The ambrosial garden and the luxuriant plantation of the garden in *OrSib* I:26 refers to the whole passage Gen 2:8–15. The third phrase (*OrSib* I:26–28) runs parallel with Gen 2:18, which is concerned with the loneliness of man. The fourth phrase (*OrSib* I:28–30) describes the actual making of the woman, and runs parallel with Gen 2:21–22. The fifth phrase (*OrSib* I:31–32) can only be a variation of Gen 2:23. The next phrase (*OrSib* I:33–34) seems to be an addition if the biblical text is considered, although it might refer to the second part of Gen 2:24 (“And he associates with his wife, and they become one flesh”). The last phrase (*OrSib* I:35–37) has some elements in common with Gen 2:25.

Despite the similarities between Genesis and the *Sibylline Oracles*, there are also several omissions and additions. First, with regard to

the creation of the male man the reference to Gen 1:26–28 in the *Sibylline Oracles* is only concerned with the image of God (23). The differentiation of man in male and female, and the dominion of man over the animals are omitted. The blessing in connection with the command to be fruitful is disconnected from the creation of the male man, and is combined with the expulsion from the Garden in *OrSib* I:57, where it is linked up to the curse on man and woman: a clear example of rearrangement.

Second, if Gen 2:7 is considered the aspect of the formation of man out of the dust and the breathing activity of God are omitted in the *Sibylline Oracles*. Compared to these omissions, there is an addition: man is created “youthful, beautiful, and wonderful” (23–24: νέον ἄνδρα καλὸν θεσπέσιον). If the biblical text is considered, this is a somewhat peculiar addition, which is probably influenced by a Hellenistic portrayal of man.

Third, as far as the placing of the man in the Garden is concerned, the creation and description of the Garden (Gen 2:8–15) is reduced to the words “an ambrosial garden” (25) and “the luxuriant plantation of the garden” (26). It is interesting that the words of Gen 2:15 “to till it and keep it” are interpreted as: “that he might be concerned with beautiful works”. Elsewhere in early Jewish and in Rabbinic literature this phrase is either interpreted literally, or related to the works of the Torah.<sup>30</sup>

Fourth, with regard to the creation of the woman, several alterations in *OrSib* I:26–28 can be observed. The divine initiative to remove the loneliness of Adam (Gen 2:18) is not mentioned. It is Adam himself who experiences loneliness, and he himself “prayed to behold another form like his own”. The loneliness of Adam is interpreted as the desire to have conversation with someone. The formation of the animals and the name giving by Adam (Gen 2:19–20) is omitted altogether. It is not a mistaken attempt to find somebody who is like him. Moreover, the cutting away of the creation of the

<sup>30</sup> Adam as the model of the farmer does occur in one of the interpretations of Philo of this verse, see: Philo, *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim* I:14. Otherwise an allegorical interpretation prevails: Adam labours in the law and keeps the commandments, see: Philo, *Legum allegoriae* I:55 (doing the good and keeping the commandments); Tg N and Tg Ps-J to Gen 2:15 (“... to labour in the Law and to observe its commandments”); *GenR* 16:5 specifies the commandments in two ways. First, it is a precept to keep the Sabbath, second it is an allusion to sacrifices. Cf. also: *Siphre Deut* 11:13; *ARN B* 21 (131); *PRE* 12 (84–85); 2 Enoch 31:1.

animals out of the context of the creation of man and woman stresses the fact that the creation of men is seen as a separate stage. With regard to the actual fabrication of the woman, it is interesting to see that the aspect of the “sound slumber” is omitted by the author of the *Sibylline Oracles*. With regard to the woman it can be observed that she is called from the beginning “Eve”, and that she is called “a wonderful maidenly spouse” (*OrSib* I:29–30: Εὖαν ἀγαπητήν, κουριδίην ἄλοχον). As I said before, the aspect of sexuality is completely disconnected from the creation of men. It enters the life of the first couple only with regard to the curse, after eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The spiritualization in *OrSib* I:35–37 of the nakedness can be seen in the same line. Although their relationship is asexual, man and woman are depicted as the complete equivalent of each other. She is not only a corresponding copy of him (ἀντίτυπον μίμημα), but it is also said that “they conversed with wise words which flowed spontaneously” (33).

Summarising, I point to the following conclusions. First, the first account of the creation of men is rearranged and integrated in the second account of the creation. In the *Sibylline Oracles* the creation of man and woman is set apart from the rest of the creation. Second, the description of the creation of man and woman runs very much parallel with the description in Genesis as far as the sequence of the events is concerned. With regard to the actual wording, both texts differ substantially. Third, the creation is valued as something positive. Eve is not created so that sin and death might come to Adam or to mankind. Eve is created as a partner equal to Adam. Although later on in the story she is the one who persuades Adam to eat from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, it is the serpent who is seen as the first responsible. He is in fact the only who is to be cursed, whereas the curse on Adam and Eve is lightened very greatly because it is connected with the blessing of God. Fourth, in connection with the positive evaluation of the creation of men, the prohibition to eat from the Tree of Knowledge (Gen 2:16–17) is also rearranged, and forms the direct introduction to the story of the temptation and transgression. Finally, sexuality is disconnected from the creation of Adam and Eve. Before the eating from the Tree of Knowledge, they seem to have a sort of Platonic relationship. Only after this does sexuality enter their life.

4. *The creation of man and woman in 2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch*

The second book of Enoch is also called the Slavonic Apocalypse of Enoch, and was written probably in the 1st century CE, originally possibly in Greek, but was passed down only in the Slavonic language.<sup>31</sup> It is possibly of Hellenistic Jewish origin, because time and again the author tries to mediate between the Jewish tradition and Hellenistic philosophy.<sup>32</sup> The work can be considered as an amplification of Gen 5:21–32. It describes events from the life of Enoch until the coming of the Flood. The first part describes the ascension of Enoch to Heaven, and is followed by the revelation of God, which can be divided in three parts: a. The history preceding the first week of Creation (24–27); b. The first week of Creation (28–32); c. The eschatological conclusion (33–36).<sup>33</sup>

<i>Genesis 1:1–2:4</i>	<i>2 Enoch 24–36</i>
	24–27 History preceding the first week of Creation
	24:4–5 decision
	25–27 creation of the material requirements
	25 Adoil
	26 Archas
	27:1–3 Universe, circles, “firmament”
	27:4 light and darkness
1st day: light, day and night	28 1st day: seas and earth
2nd day: firmament	29 2nd day: fire, angels, fall of Satan
3rd day: separation of earth and sea, flora	30:1 3rd day: surface of the earth, flora, Garden of Eden

<sup>31</sup> F.I. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch”, in: J.H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I*, London 1983, 91–213, esp. 94–97; C. Böttrich, *Das slavische Henochbuch* (JSHRZ, V.7), Gütersloh 1995, 807–813. For the complicated textual transmission of the text, see: Anderson, *Enoch*, 92–94; Böttrich, *Henochbuch*, 788–799.

<sup>32</sup> For the Alexandrine Hellenistic Jewish background of 2 Enoch, see: Böttrich, *Henochbuch*, p. 811. Some have pleaded for an Iranian provenance of the work. See, e.g., D. Winston, “The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha, and in Qumran. A Review of the Evidence”, *History of Religions* 5 (1966) 183–216, esp. 196–199; M. Philonenko, “La cosmogonie du ‘Livre des secrets d’Hénoch’”, in: *Religions en Egypte Hellénistique et Romaine. Colloque de Strasbourg 16–18 mai 1967*, Paris 1969, 109–116.

<sup>33</sup> For the following scheme, see also: Böttrich, *Henochbuch*, 907.



<i>Genesis 1:1-2:4</i>	<i>2 Enoch 24-36</i>
4th day: sun, moon and stars	30:2-6 4th day: 7 planets, zodiac, stars, sun and moon
5th day: fauna (birds and aquatic animals)	30:7 5th day: fauna
6th day: fauna (land animals), man	30:8-32:1 6th day: Adam and Eve, fall and expulsion
7th day: God rests	32:2 7th day: God rests 33:1-2 8th day: symbol of the beginning of a new era 33:3-36:2 eschatological prospect

The description of the creation follows more or less the account of the creation in Genesis 1, although there are many differences between both texts. Within the scope of this paper I will restrict myself to the 6th day of creation, the creation of Adam and Eve, which can be found in 2 Enoch 30:8-32:1. The most striking element in the rewriting is that the whole story of Genesis 2-3 is integrated into the description of the sixth day of Creation. On this day Adam and Eve were created, they were placed in the Garden of Eden and on this very day they were driven away from the Garden.

It is clear that 2 Enoch 28-32 forms a counterpart of the account of the Creation in Genesis, but it may become clear from the text of the description of the sixth day that both texts differ remarkably. Many new elements, especially derived from 1 Enoch, Ben Sira and Hellenistic philosophy are interwoven in the text, and it is not easy to identify the elements of Genesis 1-3. In the following translation of 2 Enoch 30:8-32:1, which follows the longer recension of the text,<sup>34</sup> I put in italics those elements that refer in one way or another to the creation of man in Genesis 1, whereas I underline those elements that refer to Genesis 2-3.

*2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch 30:8-32:1*

30:8a *And on the sixth day* I commanded my wisdom *to create man* out of the seven components:

- b first, his flesh from earth; second, his blood from dew and from the sun; third, his eyes from the bottomless sea; fourth, his bones from stone; fifth, his reason from the mobility of angels

<sup>34</sup> I used the translation of Andersen, *Enoch*, pp. 150-154. For the German translation, see: Böttrich, *Henochbuch* (JSHRZ, V.7), 914-928.

and from clouds; sixth, his veins and hair from grass of the earth; seventh, his spirit from my spirit and from wind.

9a And I gave him seven properties:  
b hearing to the flesh; sight to the eyes; smell to the spirit; touch to the veins; taste to the blood; to the bones—endurance; to the reason—sweetness.

10a Behold, I have thought up an ingenious poem to recite:

b “From invisible and visible substances *I created man*.

c From both his natures come both death and life.

d And (as my) *image* he knows the word like (no) other creature.

e But even at his greatest he is small,

f and again at his smallest he is great”.

11 And on earth I assigned him to be a second angel, honoured and great and glorious.

12a *And I assigned him to be a king,*

b *to reign on the earth,*

c and to have wisdom.

d And there was nothing comparable to him on earth, even among my creatures that exist.

13a And I assigned to him a name from the four components:

b from East—(A); from West (D); from North (A); from South (M).

14 And I assigned to him four special stars, called his name Adam.

15a And I gave him his free will;

b and I pointed out to him the two ways—light and darkness.

c And I said to him:

d “This is good for you, but that is bad”;

e so that I might know whether he has love toward me or abhorrence,

f and so that it become plain who among his race loves me.

16a Whereas I have come to know his nature,

b he does not know his own nature.

c That is why ignorance is more lamentable than the sin such as it is in him to sin.

d And I said:

e “After sin there is nothing for it but death”.

17a And I assigned a shade for him;

b and I imposed sleep upon him,

c and he fell asleep.

d And while he was sleeping,

e I took from him a rib.

f And I created for him a wife,

g so that death might come (to him) by his wife.

18 And I took his last word,

b and I called her name Mother, that is to say, *Euva*.

.....

31:1a Adam—Mother; earthly and life.

1b And I created a garden in Eden, in the east,

- 1c so that he might keep the agreement  
 1d and preserve the commandment.  
 2a And I created for him an open heaven,  
 2b so that he might look upon the angels, singing the triumphal song.  
 2c And the light which is never darkened was perpetually in  
 paradise.  
 3a And the devil understood how I wished to created another world,  
 3b *so that everything could be subjected to Adam on earth,*  
 3c *to rule and reign over it.*  
 4a The devil is of the lowest places.  
 4b And he will become a demon,  
 4c because he fled from heaven;  
 4d Sotana, because his name was Satanail.  
 5a In this way he became different from the angels.  
 5b He did not change,  
 5c (but) his thought did,  
 5d since his consciousness of righteous and sinful things changed.  
 6a And he became aware of his condemnation and of the sin  
 which he sinned previously.  
 6b And that is why he thought up the scheme against Adam.  
 6c In such a form he entered Paradise  
 6d and corrupted Eve.  
 6e But Adam he did not contact.  
 7a But on account of (her) nescience I cursed them.  
 7b *But those whom I had blessed previously, them I did not curse;*  
 7c *(and those whom I had not blessed previously, even them I*  
*did not curse)—*  
 7d neither mankind I cursed, nor the earth, nor any other crea-  
 ture, but only mankind's evil fruit-bearing.  
 8a That is why the fruit of doing good is sweat and exertion.  
 32:1a After Adam's transgression, Gods expels him into the earth  
 from which he had been taken . . .

Elements of Gen 1:26–28 can be found mainly in chapter 30. I point to v. 8a: “on the sixth day”, and “to create man”; v. 10b: “I created man”; v. 10d: “as my image”; v. 12ab: the assignment of man to be a king, to reign on the earth, which refers to the dominion of man over the animals in Genesis 1. The same sort of reference can be found in chapter 31, in v. 3bc: “so that everything could be subjected to Adam on earth, to rule and reign over it”. Finally, there is some sort of reference in chapter 31, v. 7b (“But those whom I had blessed previously”). This refers to the blessing of man in Gen 1:28, although this element is not used elsewhere in 2 Enoch. Some elements of Gen 1:26–28 are not taken over, for example the creation of man as “male and female”, and the command to be fruitful.

The most extensive reference to the creation of the woman in Genesis 2 is found in chapter 30, v. 17, which can be considered as a verbatim quotation of Gen 2:21–22 with some additions and omissions. I refer to the additions in the beginning (“And I assigned a shade for him”) and, especially, at the end (“so that death might come [to him] by his wife”). Also other elements of the Genesis 2–3 are integrated in the description of the sixth day. In chapter 30 the following elements can be found: v. 8b (“from earth”), which echoes Gen 2:7 (the formation of man of dust from the ground) and perhaps also the curse of 3:19 (“you are dust and you shall return to dust”); v. 15d (“This is good for you, but that is bad”), which refers in some way to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; v. 18b (“I called her name Mother, that is to say, Euva”), which rewrites Gen 3:20 with some modifications, although there it is Adam who gave the name and not God. In chapter 31, I point to the following elements of Genesis 2–3: v. 1b (“And I created a garden in Eden, in the east”), which refers to Gen 2:8; v. 1cd (“so that he might keep the agreement and preserve the commandment”), which refers to Gen 2:15), and finally, 32:1a (“After Adam’s transgression, God expels him into the earth from which he had been taken”), which refers to Gen 3:23–24.

A striking element in the description of the creation of the woman in 2 Enoch is that the creation does not take place in Garden of Eden, as in Genesis, but outside the Garden, before both Adam and Eve enter the Garden. Moreover, the verses that precede and follow the creation of the woman in Genesis are omitted altogether in 2 Enoch. The text does not refer to the creation of the animals and their name-giving, nor to the loneliness of Adam, and the designation of Eve as his “helper”, as someone who is “like him”. As a consequence, the man does not recognise Eve as part of himself, and nothing is said of a special union of man and woman. This can be seen to be in one line with the omission of the command to be fruitful from Genesis 1. The marital relationship between Adam and Eve is left out. Instead, sexuality is introduced in the story as the intercourse of Eve with Satan, who entered Paradise as a demon (31:6: “In such a form he entered Paradise and corrupted Eve”). The point of the story of the creation of Eve is that she has brought death to Adam: “so that death might come to him by his wife” (3:17g). And death comes by sin, as it is said in 30:16e “After sin there is nothing for it but death”.

In 2 Enoch, sin is not the transgression of the prohibition to eat from the fruit of the tree. In the biblical text, the knowledge of good and evil is the result of the eating of the forbidden fruit, and, therefore, “in the day that you eat of it you shall die” (Gen 2:17). The result of the eating is that man has become like God (cf. Gen 3:22). This Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is omitted altogether in 2 Enoch. Instead, God has endowed man beforehand with knowledge (30:12: “I assigned him to be a king, to reign on the earth, *and to have wisdom*”). The knowledge of good and evil can be considered as part of his being as the image of God. In short, God made known to man, before they entered the Paradise, what is good and what is evil (30:15b–d: “I point out to him the two ways—light and darkness. And I said to him: this is good for you, but that is bad”). However, man is also endowed with free will (30:15a), God gave him the choice between good and evil. In this way man could show God whether he loved him or not. In 2 Enoch, the transgression of Adam seems to be that he does not use his freedom and his competence. The transgression of Eve seems not to be that the serpent persuades Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, but his “misleading” of Eve to have intercourse with him. This difference between 2 Enoch and Genesis 3 with regard to the transgression of Adam and Eve, can be considered as a major alteration of the biblical text. I would speak here of a distortion of the biblical text, for which I do not see a clue in the biblical text itself.

Finally, another example of distortion of the biblical text can be found at the end of the rewriting in 31:7. The curse that is put on Adam and Eve in Gen 3:14–19 is greatly softened here. In 2 Enoch it is said that because of the ignorance of Adam and Eve, God cursed them. However, the writer immediately adds that none of the creatures of God will be hit by a curse. This might be in line with Gen 1:28 where God blesses mankind, but it is in contrast with Gen 3:14–19. In 2 Enoch, God curses only the produce of men.

Summarising, we can say that the creation of the woman is integrated in the description of the 6th day. The creation took place outside the Garden of Eden, before both Adam and Eve entered it. Eve was created so that death might come to Adam, although it is also stated that both life and death are part of his nature (30:10c). All elements in the text of Genesis that refer to a marital relation between the first man and woman are omitted altogether. The first sexual relationship took place between Eve and Satan.

5. *Conclusion*

I finish with some general conclusions. The investigation has shown that the reception of the narrative of the creation of man and woman in Early Jewish literature has been diverse. The references to the creation of man and woman are integrated three times in a broader rewriting of the biblical text, either of Genesis 1–3 (*Sibylline Oracles*, 2 *Enoch*) or of the whole Book of Genesis and part of Exodus (*Jubilees*). In Tobit there are quotations from and allusions to isolated phrases from the creation account. But here also there is a tendency to embed the isolated quotation in a broader allusion to the whole text of Gen 1–3.

The three documents that rewrite the whole of Genesis 1–3, and which all fall to a certain extent within the same sort of genre, rewrite the Bible quite variously. The *Book of Jubilees* follows the text of Genesis quite closely, also as far as the wording is concerned, although there are some omissions and extensive additions. The *Sibylline Oracles* recast the biblical phrases poetically, but although the actual wording is very different, the rewording can be followed phrase by phrase. The situation is quite different in the second book of Enoch. Here we find a completely revised account of the creation with very few quotations and allusions. However, as far as the general structure is concerned it is clear that the second book of Enoch intends to follow the biblical text. The three examples of rewritten Bible deal differently with the tension between the two accounts of the Creation in the biblical text. The *Book of Jubilees* does not integrate one account into the other, but both are taken as separated stages in the creation of mankind (in the first week the creation, in the second week the presentation). In the *Sibylline Oracles* the first account of the creation of men is integrated in the second account of the creation, whereas in 2 *Enoch* the creation of the woman of the second account is integrated in the description of the 6th day. The three books differ also with regard to the place where Eve was created. In the *Book of Jubilees* (cf. 4Q265) and the second book of Enoch, both Adam and Eve are created outside the Garden, before they enter it, whereas in the *Sibylline Oracles*, Eve is created inside the Garden.

All texts refer to the creation of the first man and woman as to the creation of Adam and Eve, with the exception of the first statement in *Jubilees* (“God made mankind”). All texts stress the marital

relationship between Adam and Eve. Sometimes they refer to their sexual union (*Tobit*, *Jubilees*), sometimes their union is depicted as being totally asexual. In the latter case, sexuality is connected with the events that take place later in the Garden. In the *Sibylline Oracles*, sexuality starts with the curse on man and woman, although this curse is connected with a blessing, whereas in *2 Enoch* it is Eve who has intercourse with Satan. As far as the sexual union is concerned, in the *Book of Jubilees* they have intercourse before they enter, in the *Sibylline Oracles* after they leave the Garden.

ENDOWED WITH REASON OR GLUED TO THE SENSES:  
PHILO'S THOUGHTS ON ADAM AND EVE\*

ANNEWIES VAN DEN HOEK

*Preliminaries*

Philo presents his thoughts on the creation of the world and of human beings mainly in three of his works, *About the Creation of the Cosmos* (*De Opificio Mundi*), *Allegories of the Laws* (*Legum Allegoriae*), and *Questions and Answers on Genesis* (*Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesisin*). In *About the Creation of the Cosmos*, Philo gives a cosmological account following the sequence of the seven days, while in the other two books he interprets the Genesis story verse by verse.<sup>1</sup> He either retells the biblical myth in a straightforward way, or else develops the narrative with allegorical interpretations where he sees a necessity. Following the biblical text, he continues the creation myth with its sequel of the fall of mankind and expulsion of the first humans from paradise. In addition to these three major treatments, Philo scatters numerous references to the Genesis story throughout his works.<sup>2</sup>

Proceeding through the biblical text verse by verse is typical of Philo's methods and puts recurring restrictions on his argument. While he did not intend to write *a* cosmology or *an* anthropology as such, he nevertheless interpreted the Genesis text or elaborated on it from cosmological and psychological perspectives. Thus, the biblical text provided the author with his point of departure and also guided the main direction of his thought. Yet it put a certain strain on his interpretation, since contradictions and inconsistencies were inherent in the underlying narrative. Philo sometimes acknowledged such difficulties but tried to turn them to his advantage; they

---

\* Many thanks go to the organizers and participants of the conference in Groningen for their helpful suggestions. The manuscript traveled with David Runia through four of the five continents and landed back at its homebase with his comments, which are always greatly appreciated.

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. I* deals with Gen 2:1–2:17; *Leg. II* with Gen 2:18–3:1; *Leg. III* with Gen 3:8–3:19; *QG I* with Gen 2:4–6:13.

<sup>2</sup> For example: *Heres*, *Plant.*, *Cher*, *passim*.



offered, as it were, an alibi to look for an underlying message that was more meaningful than the obvious and literal sense. His allegories do not adhere to a consistent program, since they sometimes were ad hoc inventions, concocted for his purpose at that moment. Different viewpoints emerge even when interpretations are based on the same biblical text. These considerations are worth keeping in mind before starting out to find patterns of interpretation, or before comparing various allegories with each other, even though they might be based on the same biblical text. One cannot simply make an equation between interpretation A and interpretation B or explain one through the other, since the interpretations first have to be seen in the context in which they were developed.

Philo's work is an important witness to the history of biblical reception. It represents not only the apex of Jewish allegorical interpretation in Greek but is also an early example of a Platonic way of thinking, usually called Middle Platonism. His genius took up biblical interpretations of earlier days, of which only fragmentary evidence has otherwise survived, created new explanations, and coated both with a heavy layer of Platonic thought. As is well known, Philo's ideas did not inspire his Jewish contemporaries or successors as much as they influenced Christian thinkers many decades later. Several aspects of Philo's thoughts on creation, for example, were adopted by Origen and diffused via him to an audience in both the eastern and western Christian world.<sup>3</sup>

Due to the limited amount of space here, an attempt will be made only to highlight some of Philo's main thoughts on the creation, and, especially, on the creation of man and woman. Others have done wonderfully detailed work on Philo's interpretation of individual passages of Genesis or on his indebtedness to Plato when dealing with the creation story. Their works have been very helpful and form the basis for my survey here.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Annewies van den Hoek, "Philo and Origen: A Descriptive Catalogue of Their Relationship," *The Studia Philonica Annual* (Brown Judaic Studies), vol. XII (2000), forthcoming.

<sup>4</sup> Editions of Philo's works: *Philonis Alexandrini Opera Quae Supersunt*: ediderunt Leopoldus Cohn et Paulus Wendland: Berolini 1896-1930. *Philo of Alexandria*. The Loeb classical library (v. 1-10, Suppls. I-II), Cambridge, Mass., London 1929-1962. *Les OEuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* (R. Arnaldez, J. Pouilloux, C. Mondésert eds.), 35 vols., Paris 1961-. On the creation of man in Philo: Charles Kannengiesser, "Philon et les pères sur la double création de l'homme", *Philon d'Alexandrie* (Lyon, 11-15 septembre 1966. Colloques nationaux du Centre national de la recherche scientifique),

*Unity and diversity*

Any study of Philo's Genesis' interpretation, should be seen against a background of some of his prime speculative concerns. The concepts of unity and diversity or unity and duality are pivotal for him.<sup>5</sup> These issues not only occur on a broad cosmological level but also in connection with the smaller cosmos, which stands for the human being. This shifting from a cosmological to an anthropological context was, in fact, a fruitful interpretive method for him. Moreover, he internalizes unity and duality by applying these concepts to the human soul; this application may have been an innovation in the interpretation of the Genesis story.

Philo stresses that God alone is one and undivided. He links the personal God of Judaism to a philosophical concept of a supreme principle. He calls this divine principle the One, the Monad or That which truly exists. Sometimes the neutral philosophic terminology makes way for a personalized and more biblical vocabulary. *That which* is becomes *the One who* is.<sup>6</sup> The human, on the contrary, lacks unity. Whether Philo speaks about a generic human being or a specific human being, the duality of soul and body forms the backbone of his anthropological views.<sup>7</sup> Since a human being is primarily conceived as soul—and here Philo adapts a common Platonic scheme—the same division extends to the human soul; an indivisible rational part contrasts with a divisible irrational part. Sometimes this division emerges as a duality while at other times, in three or more parts, but this further fragmentation does not have to concern

---

Paris 1967. Thomas H. Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation* (Catholic Biblical quarterly Monograph series, 14), Washington D.C. 1983. On male and female in Philo: Richard Arthur Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female* (Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums, 3), Leiden 1970. Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason. Male and Female in Western Philosophy*, Minneapolis 1984, 22–28. Dorothy Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women* (Brown Judaica studies; no. 209), Atlanta, Ga. 1990.

Studies on the reception of the Greek text of Genesis: Marguerite Harl, *La Genèse* (La Bible d'Alexandrie, 1), Paris 1986. Monique Alexandre, *Le commencement du livre Genèse I–V: la version grecque de la Septante et sa réception* (Christianisme antique, 3), Paris 1988. For Philo and Platonism: John M. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (Rev. ed. with a new afterword), Ithaca, N.Y. 1996. David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, Leiden 1986.

<sup>5</sup> See Baer, *Philo's Use*, 16ff.

<sup>6</sup> See Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 155.

<sup>7</sup> Runia, *Philo and the Timaeus*, 262.

us here. The main division is between a divine upper part and a mortal lower entity. Although not negative in itself, the lower part of the soul—because of its connection with the body and the material world—contains negative potential, which motivates Philo’s ambivalence towards the bodily part of the soul.

Since ἄνθρωπος has a divine component—the rational soul or νοῦς—the soul contains a positive potential of becoming god-like and thus reaching its ultimate objective of true happiness or blissfulness (εὐδαιμονία); this again reflects common Platonic thought. The process goes through stages of reflection; the rational soul is able to reflect not only on its own nature and position but also on the nature of the divine.<sup>8</sup> In an upward movement, contemplation enables the rational soul to assimilate, as it were, the divine nature and become a god or god-like.

These speculative elements revolving around unity and diversity, rational and irrational, soul and body, true happiness and becoming god-like, are present in other parts of Philo’s work as well as in his treatment of the creation story. The elements, however, are not all brought together at the same time, since Philo does not present comprehensive treatises on the cosmos, on the soul, or on happiness. His objective is, after all, to explore and interpret the creation story according to Moses. In addition, it remains to be seen what his statements about being “god” or “god-like” mean for a law-abiding Jew.

### *ἄνθρωπος undivided and divided*

Let us now have a look at how this conceptual framework plays out in connection with the Genesis story. Commenting on Gen 1:26, Philo writes in *Opif.* 69:

Now after all the other creatures, as was said, he (sc. Moses) tells us that ἄνθρωπος came into being according to God’s image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Very well said, for nothing earth-born is more like God than the human being. Let nobody compare this resemblance to the form of a body, for God is neither human in shape nor is the human body like God. The word “image” was mentioned because of the leading part of the soul, the νοῦς. For after the single and universal νοῦς as an archetype, the νοῦς in each individual person has

<sup>8</sup> See *Opif.* 70–71 and passim.

been modeled, being in a way god for the one who bears and carries it as a cult statue. For the same role that the great ruler plays in the whole cosmos, the human νοῦς seems to play in the human being.<sup>9</sup>

This passage deals with what may well be the most commented biblical text in antiquity,<sup>10</sup> but only a few remarks can be made here. The anti-anthropomorphic tendency of the passage is striking: God is unlike any human being. As has been shown by others, anti-anthropomorphism is part of a pre-existing tradition that Philo inherited and that would have a long life after him among Christian exegetes.<sup>11</sup> Another characteristic is cosmological reductiveness: the macrocosmos is reflected in the microcosmos. This is a philosophical scheme, in which an animal or a human being is perceived as a microcosm.<sup>12</sup> Thus the exemplary human is modeled after the intelligible world or cosmic νοῦς, which in Platonic terms may have been the ideas taken as a whole. The ideas function as the thoughts of God,<sup>13</sup> which as active elements of God's creative thought establish a link with the rational mind of humans. Although here the emphasis is on the mind, the human as a whole is not absent; the text says that the human or perhaps the human body is carrying its mind as if it were a cult statue. So even though the body is not mentioned, it may be tacitly present.

<sup>9</sup> *Opif.* 69: μετὰ δὴ τὰλλα πάντα, καθάπερ ἐλέχθη, τὸν ἄνθρωπον φησι γεγενῆσθαι κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν (Gen 1:26)· πάνυ καλῶς, ἐμπερέστερον γὰρ οὐδὲν γηγενὲς ἀνθρώπου θεῶ. τὴν δ' ἐμφέρειαν μηδεὶς εἰκαζέτω σώματος χαρακτηρί· οὔτε γὰρ ἀνθρωπόμορφος ὁ θεὸς οὔτε θεοειδὲς τὸ ἀνθρώπειον σῶμα. ἡ δὲ εἰκὼν λέλεκται κατὰ τὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡγεμόνα νοῦν· πρὸς γὰρ ἓνα τὸν τῶν ὅλων ἐκεῖνον ὡς ἂν ἀρχέτυπον ὁ ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἀπεικονίσθη, τρόπον τινὰ θεὸς ὢν τοῦ φέροντος καὶ ἀγαλματοφοροῦντος αὐτόν· ὃν γὰρ ἔχει λόγον ὁ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν ἅπαντι τῷ κόσμῳ, τοῦτον ὡς εἴκοι καὶ ὁ ἀνθρώπινος νοῦς ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ·.

<sup>10</sup> *Biblia Patristica* shows many occurrences from Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:7 from an early time onward. In a recent article, Elaine Pagels pointed out the importance of the creation account for a variety of sources in addition to the Gospels of Thomas and John, the main focus of her study. She also alludes to the connection between baptismal ritual and the reading of Genesis; Elaine Pagels, “Exegesis of Genesis 1 in Thomas and John,” in *JBL* 118/3 (1999) 477–496.

<sup>11</sup> See Tobin, *Creation of Man*, 36–55.

<sup>12</sup> See Democritus, *fr.* 34 (τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ μικρῷ κόσμῳ ὄντι κατὰ τὸν Δημόκριτον ταῦτα θεωροῦνται. . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ζῶιον οἶον μικρὸν τινα κόσμον εἶναι φασιν ἄνδρες παλαιοὶ περὶ φύσιν ἰκανοί); see also Aristotle, *Physica* 252b; Galen, *De usu partium* 3,10. Philo expresses the idea rather frequently but uses a different adjective; he calls a human being βραχὺς κόσμος; and conversely he notes that some call the cosmos a big “fellow”, see *Her.* 155: μέγαν δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἔφρασαν τὸν κόσμον εἶναι; further: *Abr.* 71; *Migr.* 220; *Opif.* 82; *Post.* 58; *IM* II 127; 135. See also van den Hoek, “Philo and Origen,” forthcoming.

<sup>13</sup> Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 159.

Philo brings the second creation story as told in Gen 2:7, into the discussion when he writes later in the same book (*Opif.* 134) :

After this he (sc. Moses) says: ‘God formed the human being, taking a lump of earth, and breathed into its face breath of life’ (Gen 2:7). He also shows very clearly by this that there is a huge difference between the one modeled at present and the one who came into being after the image of God previously. For the modeled one is sense perceptible and by this time takes part in quality, put together from body and soul, man (ἀνὴρ) or woman (γυνή), and mortal by nature; the one after the image, however, is a sort of idea or kind or seal, thought perceptible, incorporeal, neither male (οὐτ’ ἄρρεν) nor female (οὐτε θῆλυ), and incorruptible by nature.<sup>14</sup>

The two creation stories are worked out here in a clear-cut fashion. That there were two different creation stories was an inevitable biblical fact, for which Philo and others had to find solutions.<sup>15</sup> Thus in the previous passage, Philo, stressing the divine aspect of ἄνθρωπος, applied Gen 1:26 to the creation of an undivided concept of human being, which he calls in this passage “a sort of idea (ιδέα τις)”, “a kind” (γένος), or “seal (σφραγίς).”<sup>16</sup> Philo then reverses the subsequent verse, Gen 1:27, in which the Septuagint text says that God made ἄνθρωπος “according to his image, male and female” (ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ), pronouncing that they were *neither male nor female* (οὐτ’ ἄρρεν οὐτε θῆλυ).<sup>17</sup> The wording is revealing, since Philo takes the words ἄρρεν and θῆλυ directly out of Gen 1:27 but turns the sentence on its head by making it negative.<sup>18</sup> In the positive formula, in which male and

<sup>14</sup> *Opif.* 134: Μετὰ δὲ ταυτὰ φησιν ὅτι “ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν λαβὼν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, καὶ ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς” (Gen 2:7). ἐναργέστατα καὶ διὰ τούτου παρίστησιν ὅτι διαφορὰ παμμεγέθης ἐστὶ τοῦ τε νῦν πλασθέντος ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα θεοῦ γεγονότος πρότερον· ὁ μὲν γὰρ διαπλασθεὶς αἰσθητὸς ἦδη μετέχων ποιότητος, ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς συνεστώς, ἀνὴρ ἢ γυνή, φύσει θνητός· ὁ δὲ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα ἰδέα τις ἢ γένος ἢ σφραγίς, νοητός, ἀσώματος, οὔτε ἄρρεν οὔτε θῆλυ, ἀφθαρτος φύσει.

<sup>15</sup> See Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 176; Dillon terms the ambiance in which these creation stories circulate the “underworld” of Middle Platonism.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of Philo’s terminology in this passage, see Baer, *Philo’s Use*, 29ff.; Runia, *Philo and the Timaeus*, 336–337.

<sup>17</sup> Philo mentions that human beings participate in “quality” which means probably that they have distinguished characteristics. For the difference between ἄρσεν and ἄρρεν, see the very informative commentary of Monique Alexandre, *Commencement*, 195.

<sup>18</sup> An explanation for this strange reversal may be found in an earlier passage, *Opif.* 76, in which Philo anticipates the line of thought seen here, making a distinction between the human being in its generic and in its specific configurations (as γένος and εἶδος). Philo explains that the genus was called human being (ἄνθρωπος) and that the species were distinguished as male and female, even though they had

female are distinguished, he then uses the nouns man and woman (ἄνθρωπος ἢ γυνή) instead of the adjectival forms male and female. In their gendered format, man and woman now are placed within the creation of earthly humans, here connected to Gen 2:7.

It would be satisfying if Philo had used this interpretative scheme consistently throughout his works, but unfortunately he did not. The division between Gen 1:26 and Gen 2:7 does not always correspond to a distinction between a heavenly and earthly ἄνθρωπος. In other instances Philo links Gen 2:7 to the heavenly aspect of ἄνθρωπος because of the infusion of divine breath. Combinations also occur in which both biblical texts reinforce either the spiritual and heavenly or the modeled and earthly human being.<sup>19</sup>

Another apparent inconsistency, which I only want to mention here, appears in *Opif.* 69, where the image of ἄνθρωπος seems to be taken directly from God; in most other Philonic passages, including a later text in the same work (*Opif.* 139), a multi-layered system exists, in which an intermediate has been placed between the highest God and the world. In this scheme, the image of God is the divine logos, from which the human image is made. Thus the human image forms the third tier of the construct, since it is the image of the image of God.

In his study on the creation of man, Thomas Tobin discusses reasons for Philo's variable positions. He sketches out different stages of interpretation from which Philo drew and which were not necessarily his own views. While these borrowed opinions can be buried deceptively, a careful reading shows that Philo reports them confidently as part of a venerable tradition and incorporates them into his own work in spite of their non-congruence with his views as expressed in other passages.<sup>20</sup> This then would explain the inconsistencies or even contradictions within Philonic interpretation itself. It seems

---

not yet received a specific shape. Thus both γένος and εἶδος are conceptual categories and do not represent the ultimately created entities. Although the word γένος is part of the vocabulary of Genesis, εἶδος is not, at least not in the sense, in which Philo uses it; the word does occur in Genesis but merely to describe the shape or appearance of people or animals (whether beautiful or ugly). By his whole manoeuvre, Philo superimposes upon the biblical text his philosophical scheme of γένος and εἶδος, for which there seems to be little justification, and which, in fact, contradicts the biblical text.

<sup>19</sup> See Tobin, *Creation of Man*, 56ff.; 102ff.

<sup>20</sup> Previous interpretations were taken seriously and stood in high regard, see Tobin, *Creation of Man*, 100.

important, therefore, to try to distinguish which interpretations were carried over from earlier traditions and which may have been innovations made by Philo himself.

*ἄνθρωπος divided: man and woman*

One of the allegorical devices that Philo introduced to the interpretation of the creation story is the allegory of the soul. Philo scarcely uses the device when dealing with the creation story proper, that is up to the second creation of ἄνθρωπος in Gen 2:7. From Gen 2:8 onwards, in the story of paradise and the fall, however, this kind of allegorical interpretation starts to develop fully.<sup>21</sup>

In the first part of his cosmological description of the creation of the human being, ἄνθρωπος stood for the upper part of the human soul, the νοῦς, in direct reflection of the upper part or the νοῦς of the cosmos. This generic human being was said to be "neither male nor female."<sup>22</sup> It does not seem that Philo speaks here about a mixture of male and female, something that, if visualized, would result in a kind of hermaphrodite. On another occasion when he uses the

<sup>21</sup> This is from *Opif.* 134ff.; a transitional passage, which leads up to the subject, starts in *Opif.* 128.

<sup>22</sup> There exists a considerable bibliography on this subject, particularly in connection with Paul, Nag Hammadi, and martyr acts and passion stories. Kerstin Bjerre-Aspegren, *The Male Woman: a Feminine Ideal in the Early Church* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis), Uppsala 1990; Kari Vogt, "Becoming Male," *Concilium* (1985), 95–107; see also Kari Elisabeth Børresen (ed.), *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaean-Christian Tradition*, Minneapolis 1995; Elizabeth Castelli, "I will Make Mary Male; Pieties of the Body and Gender Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity" in: Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub (eds.), *Body Guards: the Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, New York 1991; Dennis McDonald, *There is No Male and Female*, Philadelphia 1987; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, New York 1983; Ben Witherington, "Rite and Rights for Women-Galatians 3, 28", *NTS* 27 (1981), 593–604; Hartwig Thyen, "... nicht mehr männlich und weiblich ...," in: Frank Crüsemann and Hertwig Thyen, *Als Mann und Frau geschaffen*, Gelnhausen 1978, 107–168. Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity", *History of Religions* 13 (1974), 165–208. Madeleine Boucher, "Some unexplored parallels to I Cor 11, 11–12 and Gal. 3, 28: the NT on the role of women", in *CBQ* 31 (1969), 50–58; Antti Marjanen, "Women Disciples in the Gospel of Thomas," in Uro Risto (ed.), *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Studies of the New Testament and its world), Edinburgh 1998. Marvin W. Meyer, "Making Mary Male: the Categories 'Male' and 'Female' in the Gospel of Thomas," *NTS* 31 (1985), 554–570. For Martyrdom, see the unpublished article of Kenneth Fisher, "Transsexual or gender Themes in the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitas?" Harvard Divinity School, 1/24/99.

words “neither male nor female”, he refers to the cup-bearer of Pharaoh, who was a eunuch. In a derogative way Philo describes him as someone who is between the two yet of no gender, a falsely stamped coin; Philo has him suffer a harsh punishment; he is excluded from immortality and cut off from the community.<sup>23</sup> In the passage from *Opif.*, however, “neither male nor female” seems to have positive connotations and it may be that Philo had in mind a concept that was not gendered, thus an a-sexual or maybe pre-sexual being.<sup>24</sup>

The generic, non-gendered concept of ἄνθρωπος is then followed by a more specific human being, who is distinguished along sexual lines. In the Septuagint version of the bible, a specific name for ἄνθρωπος is introduced only after the creation story proper. Not until Gen 2:16, does Adam come on the stage, and not until Gen 3:20 does Eve appear, first called “Zoe”, and then as “Eve” in Gen 4:1. Both of these naming texts also connect her with her fundamental sexual role of giving birth and motherhood. In the rendering of the Greek biblical text, therefore, ample justification seems to exist for the particular sequence from a generic to a specific human being.<sup>25</sup>

For Philo the adventures of the now gendered ἄνθρωπος in the account of paradise and the fall no longer take place in a cosmological but in an anthropological environment—conditioned by the allegory of the soul and powerful moral directives. The story of paradise and fall is mainly developed in the same three works previously mentioned; it forms the final section of *Opif.*, it extends across *Leg.* like a saga, and turns up as snippets in *QG.* The passages in *Opif.* again offer a good example of the gist of Philo’s thought (*Opif.* 151–152):

<sup>23</sup> See *Somm.* II 184.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of a-sexuality or bi-sexuality in Philo, see Baer, *Philo’s Use*, 20ff.; 83; 87. Genderless anthropomorphic images, of course, are less unusual in non-Mediterranean civilizations. On a recent trip to Japan, we saw a Buddhist image of a Bodhisattva (Kannon Bosatsu) in the Miho Museum near Kyoto. In our guidebook the divinity had been referred to as female, but this image did not have any female characteristics. When we expressed our surprise, perhaps related also to our heavily gendered language, the Japanese curator of the collection, had no problem in assuring us that the divinity was indeed not gendered. Since genders apparently play a vastly reduced role in Japanese (the language that is), this may have something to do with her easy assimilation of the concept.

<sup>25</sup> For the naming of Adam for the first time, see also Philo, *LA* I 90.



Since none of the things created are steady, and mortal things necessarily move and change, the first human being also had to have the pleasure of some misadventure(s). Woman becomes for him the beginning of a faulty life. For until now he was one person alone; in his solitude he was made like the cosmos and God, and his soul was stamped with the impressions of the nature of each—not all of them but as many as a mortal constitution can hold. But after woman too had been modeled, he, gazing at her sisterly shape and kindred form, accepted the sight with gladness and went up to greet her. She, seeing no other creature more similar to herself than he, is delighted and returns his greetings respectfully. Love befalls them and brings and fits together two divided halves of one creature, as it were, establishing in each a longing to be together with the other for the procreation of their like. This longing also produces bodily pleasure, which is the beginning of wrong-doing and violations of the law, through which they exchange their immortal and blissful life for a mortal and ill-fated one.<sup>26</sup>

In spite of his philosophic intentions, Philo reveals the skills of a great story-teller when he elaborates on this first encounter of man and woman. He narrates the drama with keen psychological insight, using a variety of rhetorical tools, which are hard to catch in translation. At times he is ironic, at other times comic: man has to *enjoy* the pleasure of misfortune, but what a dubious pleasure it is! He drops his jaw, *gazing at* his new counterpart and *enjoying* what he sees. Some priggish overtones are not missing either: it is with the proper respect that Philo has her respond to his greetings, and their being together is after all for the purpose of procreation. But what starts out as a real romance quickly turns into a series of misadventures, in which the woman is to blame from the onset.

Somewhat later, after the episode with the serpent in the garden, Philo moves on to an allegorical extension of the story (*Opif.* 165):

<sup>26</sup> *Opif.* 151–152: Ἐπει δ' οὐδὲν τῶν ἐν γενέσει βέβαιον, τροπὰς δὲ καὶ μεταβολὰς ἀναγκαίως τὰ θνητὰ δέχεται, ἐχρῆν καὶ τὸν πρῶτον ἄνθρωπον ἀπολαύσαι τινος κακοπραγίας. ἀρχὴ δὲ τῆς ὑπαιτιῆς ζωῆς αὐτῷ γίνεται γυνή· μέχρι μὲν γὰρ εἰς ἡν, ὁμοιοῦτο κατὰ τὴν μόνωσιν κόσμῳ καὶ θεῷ καὶ τῆς ἐκατέρου φύσως ἐναπεμάττετο τῇ ψυχῇ τοὺς χαρακτήρας, οὐ πάντας ἀλλ' ὅσους χωρῆσαι δυνατὸν θνητὴν σύστασιν· ἐπει δ' ἐπλάσθη καὶ γυνή, θεασάμενος ἀδελφὸν εἶδος καὶ συγγενῆ μορφήν ἡσμένισε τῇ θεᾷ καὶ προσῶν ἡσπάζετο. ἡ δ' οὐδὲν ἐκείνου προσβλέπουσα ζῶον ἐμπερέστερον ἑαυτῇ γάνυται τε καὶ ἀντιπροσφθέγγεται μετ' αἰδοῦς· ἔρωσ δ' ἐπιγενόμενος καθάπερ ἐνὸς ζώου διττὰ τμήματα διεσπικτότα συναγαγὼν εἰς ταῦτόν ἀρμόττεται, πόθον ἐνιδρυσάμενος ἐκατέρῳ τῆς πρὸς ἕταρον κοινωνίας εἰς τὴν τοῦ ὁμοίου γένεσιν· ὁ δὲ πόθος οὗτος καὶ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἡδονὴν ἐγέννησεν, ἧτις ἐστὶν ἀδικημάτων καὶ παρανομημάτων ἀρχή, δι' ἣν ὑπαλλάττονται τὸν θνητὸν καὶ κακοδαίμονα βίον ἀντ' ἀθανάτου καὶ εὐδαίμονος.

Pleasure does not venture to offer its spells and guiles to the man, but to the woman and through her to him, most firmly and well-targeted; for in us the νοῦς corresponds to man and sense-perception to woman. Pleasure converses and gets acquainted with the senses first, through which it deceives the sovereign νοῦς as well.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, this is only the beginning and it gets steadily worse, particularly, for the woman. Sense-perception, which is neutral in itself and necessary for the mind to function in the body, becomes fully entangled in sensuality and sexual pleasures. These then receive a heavy dose of negative attention from Philo, who continues the allegory with a mixed metaphor, that combines prostitution with a fishing expedition; pleasure and lust are represented by girls of easy virtue, who attach themselves to their clients like fishhooks to their baits (*Opif.* 166):

On the whole it should be acknowledged that pleasure, since she is a whore and a slut, clings to her lover and searches for go-betweens, through whom she can catch him on her hook. The senses now act as panders for her and introduce the lover; after catching the senses, she easily brings the mind under her power . . .<sup>28</sup>

Woman's introduction to the scene was, as we saw, the beginning of all misfortune. Although an attractive relationship between man and woman seemed to develop in the narrative, the tone of the relationship is reversed in the allegorical section. The allegory concentrates on the hapless senses, which woman exploits and also embodies and which are virtually identical with sensuality and wrongly directed sexuality. The issue of procreation disappears, and attention turns entirely to bodily pleasures, for which there is no positive role in Philo's system.

Given this negative context, the question arises whether there is any hope for Eve and, in her wake, all other women? As Dorothy Sly has shown, women are the hallmark for Philo of everything undesirable:<sup>29</sup> pleasure, wickedness, defilement, corruption, unsteadiness,

<sup>27</sup> *Opif.* 165: Τὰς δὲ γοητείας καὶ ἀπάτας αὐτῆς ἡδονὴ τῷ μὲν ἀνδρὶ οὐ τολμᾷ προσφέρειν, τῇ δὲ γυναικὶ καὶ διὰ ταύτης ἐκείνω, πάνυ προσφωῶς καὶ εὐθυβόλως· ἐν ἡμῖν γὰρ ἀνδρὸς μὲν ἔχει λόγον ὁ νοῦς, γυναικὸς δ' αἴσθησις· ἡδονὴ δὲ προτέρας ἐντυγχάνει καὶ ἐνομιλεῖ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι, δι' ὧν καὶ τὸν ἡγεμόνα νοῦν φενακίζει·

<sup>28</sup> *Opif.* 166: συνόλωσ γὰρ οὐκ ἀγνοητέον ὅτι οἷα ἑταιρίσ καὶ μαχλάσ οὔσα ἡδονὴ γλίχεται τυχεῖν ἐραστοῦ καὶ μαστροποῦσ ἀναζητεῖ, δι' ὧν τοῦτον ἀγκιστρεύσεται· μαστροπεύουσι δ' αὐτῇ καὶ προξενούσι τὸν ἐρῶντα αἰσθήσεις, ἅσ δελεάσασα ῥαδίωσ ὑπηγάγετο τὸν νοῦν . . .

<sup>29</sup> See Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women*, 216; also Lloyd, *Man of Reason*, 25.

multiplicity, irrationality, lack of understanding and good sense, inferiority, passivity, weakness, and mortality. Not surprisingly, the male side consists of more laudable components: virtue, fairness, purity, incorruptibility, firmness, unity, reason, understanding, superiority, activity, strength, and immortality.

Philo's conceptual scheme of ἄνθρωπος had not been gendered, and theoretically woman should have had an equal chance with man. The theory, however, does not correspond with Philo's practice, at least, not linguistically. The language that he employs to express the basic condition of being human is decidedly male-oriented;<sup>30</sup> women seem to be envisioned only when he speaks specifically about them. Even when Philo discusses humankind in general terms, he does not seem to include women and he tends to use masculine metaphors. The language, therefore carries a more powerful message than the theory.

The answer to the question whether there is any hope for Eve in Philo is clear: basically there is none. Her only hope is to change, either to become a man, or to become a virgin, no matter how much offspring she may have had. Whatever she becomes, she has to leave womanhood behind to become a unity again, undivided, siding with the mind rather than the body. Since she represents the senses and the bodily aspects of humanity, she has an extra obstacle to overcome. Man starts from a better position. Being stamped with the image, he is endowed with reason by nature.<sup>31</sup> Although he has the potential to become glued to the senses, he is not identified with them in the way woman is.<sup>32</sup>

The Platonic scheme with its contrast of reason and sense has found a most fertile ground in Philo's allegorizations. Philo even accentuates more than his model the adversity of the realms of reason and sense, giving a very negative twist to the senses. As Genevieve Lloyd pointed out and as we saw in the examples above, it is particularly in these allegories that Philo exploits all the negative connotations of femaleness.<sup>33</sup> His characterizations, however do not stop at the level of biblical interpretation, whether literal or allegorical. His symbolic intentions should be viewed and interpreted against the background of his time and circumstances, whose culture they express

<sup>30</sup> See Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women*, 63.

<sup>31</sup> See above Philo, *Opif.* 151; *VM* I 159; II 76.

<sup>32</sup> See Philo, *Leg.* II 50.

<sup>33</sup> Lloyd, *Man of Reason*, 25.

and whose gender relationships they reflect. Although it is too simple to equate literary reflection directly with social and cultural reality, Philo's passages form a kind of blueprint that can help to understand the relationships between the sexes in Jewish Alexandria in the first century.

Jewish writing of the time shows that Philo is not alone in this rather harsh depiction of male and female relationships.<sup>34</sup> There are, however, other voices in Antiquity. Clement of Alexandria, for example—who owes much to Philo and often follows him in his biblical and philosophical tracks—offers a ray of hope. Although he inherits some of the same ideas, such as the identification of male with mind and female with senses, he still visualizes women as endowed with the ability to pursue virtue equally with men. Following Stoic writers, such as Musonius Rufus, and Jewish-Christian missionaries, such as Paul, Clement makes a special point of saying that no distinction should be made on the basis of gender or social status.<sup>35</sup> Later Platonism too shows that women and men can be ranked equally even starting from a philosophical position similar to that of Philo.<sup>36</sup>

Philo's social horizon, however, was more tradition-bound and one-sided. Strong women do appear in his writings but they happen to have lost their essential features as women. Only denying their femininity can they gain credit in his pervasively male world view.

---

<sup>34</sup> See Adamantius, *Physiogn.* II 2, and Flavius Josephus, *JW* II 121.

<sup>35</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* IV 58, 2ff.

<sup>36</sup> Dorothy Sly refers to Plotinus, *Enneads* 5, 5, 2; see Sly, *Philo's Perception of Women*, 105 and note 32.

# MAN, WOMAN, AND THE ANGELS IN 1 COR 11:2–16

L.J. LIETAERT PEERBOLTE

In 1 Cor 11:2–16 Paul discusses a problem that apparently occupied the Corinthians to a high degree: the need for men to uncover their heads and for women to cover theirs while prophesying or praying.<sup>1</sup> In this famous *crux interpretum* Paul treats the problem from the perspective of creation. This article proposes an interpretation of the passage in which Paul's view on the creation of man and woman is brought into relation with his reference to the angels in 11:10. It argues that Paul refers to the creation of man and woman as a legitimisation of the social distinction between the two during prayer or prophecy. This social distinction should be maintained during the acts of prophesying and praying in order to prevent the angels from being seduced.

The present article consists of three sections that relate to each other as concentric circles do. The first section offers a brief survey of Paul's views on creation and on the relationship of man and woman elsewhere in his letters. The second section deals with the immediate context of the pericope under discussion here, and the third treats Paul's presentation of the creation of man and woman within the pericope itself as well as his reference to the angels in 11:10.

## 1. *Paul on creation, man and woman*

Paul does not seem to have been very interested in creation as an independent topic. In Rom 5:12–17 Paul juxtaposes Adam and Christ in such a way as to point out that Christ marks the beginning of

---

<sup>1</sup> A survey of publications on 1 Cor 11:2–16 is given by J. Delobel, "1 Cor 11:2–16. Towards a Coherent Interpretation", in: A. Vanhoye (ed.), *L'apôtre Paul. Personnalité, style et conception du ministère* (Leuven 1986), 369–389, 369 n. 1. For a recent discussion of the pericope, see J.D. DeDuhn, "'Because of the Angels': Unveiling Paul's Anthropology in 1 Corinthians 11", *JBL* 118 (1999), 295–320. Although BeDuhn's article contains a number of fine observations, his solution to the problem is far-fetched. In his BeDuhn's eyes "Paul is attributing the separate formation of woman from man to a creative act of angels, not of God" (308). Unfortunately, BeDuhn fails to mention any evidence to support his view other than references to Gnostic sources.

the "new creation". Furthermore, he explicitly mentions the Christian congregation as the "new creation", the *καινή κτίσις* (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). Creation as an independent issue, however, apparently did not matter much to Paul. Nevertheless it is of great interest for the understanding of the passage under discussion in this article to take a short look at some of the other texts where Paul mentions the topic.

a. *Paul on creation*

In Gal 6:15 Paul speaks of the Christian congregation as of a new creation. While discussing the problem of circumcision Paul has made abundantly clear that according to him, this is a habit of the past. Paul argues that in Christ the newness of eschatological re-creation has already begun. Paul's apocalyptic interpretation of the Christ-event led him to regard the coming of Christ as the beginning of the final newness of life, the commencing of the new *aeon*. For his followers, their community embodied this new *aeon*, and it is for this reason that Paul can equate the community with the new *aeon* itself by calling it a "new creation": οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστὶν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινή κτίσις. Paul uses the same terminology in 2 Cor 5:17, when he explicitly describes the new life in Christ as the "new creation": ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινή κτίσις.

The examples of Gal 6:15 and 2 Cor 5:17 point out why Paul was not really interested in the topic of creation for its own sake. The creation of heaven and earth, man and woman, was the beginning of the old *aeon*. What really interested Paul was the beginning of the new. Another illustration of this point is given in Romans 5:12-17. Here Paul speaks of the contrast between Adam and Christ. He mentions Adam as a *pars pro toto* for the whole of mankind before Christ. Paul presents Adam as the one by whom sin and death have come into the world: "just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, so also death spread to all because all have sinned—" (5:12). In reaction to Adam's sin, God has eventually sent Christ: "If the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many" (5:15). Although the specific terminology is lacking, Paul more or less juxtaposes Adam and Christ as the old and the new creation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the Adam-typology, see J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making. An Enquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London 1980), 98-128.

In 1 Cor 8:6 Paul describes Christ in terms reminiscent of the role that in wisdom-literature is sometimes ascribed to σοφία: all things are “through him” (δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα).<sup>3</sup> In a number of parallels in Jewish contemporary literature Wisdom is said to have been present at the creation and to have mediated between God and creation.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, in the doxological confession of 1 Cor 8:6 Paul ascribes the same function to Christ. Christ not only began the new creation. According to Paul he must have been present at the first as well.

The three passages mentioned have in common that Paul makes a statement on creation, but in none of them the creation of man and woman plays a part. Time and again Paul’s focus is on the new creation, the new aeon, that had already begun in Christ. It appears that 1 Cor 11:2–16 is indeed the only passage in which Paul explicitly mentions the creation of man and woman as a theme. Before looking into that pericope, however, some attention will have to be given to Paul’s views on man and woman as far as we can trace them in his letters.

#### b. *Paul on man and woman*

In his letter to the Galatians Paul mentions the unity of the faithful in Christ. In 3:28 he describes this unity by stressing the fact that divisions no longer matter: “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δούλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). This phrase has parallels in Rom 10:12 and 1 Cor 12:13. It is important to note that in both parallels the third couple of opposites are lacking: Rom 10:12 mentions only Jew and Greek, and 1 Cor 12:13 Jews and Greeks, slaves and free. The third pair of Gal 3:28, ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ, is omitted in these two cases—hardly by accident.<sup>5</sup>

According to Dunn “the Adam motif is a substantial strand in the warp and woof of Paul’s theology” (107).

<sup>3</sup> M. de Jonge, *Christology in Context. The Earliest Christian Response to Jesus* (Philadelphia 1988), 48, summarises Paul’s views on Jesus in this respect: “He is the agent, the mediator of creation, not the creator himself, and at the same time he is the agent of redemption.”

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Job 28:24–27; Prov 8:22–31; Philo, *Fug.* 109; *Quod det.* 54.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. J. Jervell, *Imago Dei. Gen. 1,26f. im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen* (Göttingen 1960), 294: “Daß Paulus 1 Kor 12,13 ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ ausläßt, hängt natürlich mit den Schwierigkeiten zusammen, die Paulus mit der ‘Frauenemanzipation’ in Korinth hat.”

The thought Paul expresses by means of his description of the unity in Christ in Gal 3:28 is the fact that fundamental differences, even biological differences, no longer matter in Christ.<sup>6</sup> The terms he uses for "man and woman", ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ, verbally correspond to the LXX of Gen 1:27: ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς. In his use of the words here Paul does *not* argue that there are no longer any differences between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female. Paul's argument is, that these differences no longer matter *in Christ*: the members of the Christian congregation are all united in Christ and within this Christian community social differences no longer matter.<sup>7</sup>

The observation that for Paul the former social order no longer matters in Christ is important, for it corresponds to his idea that in Christ the new creation has already begun.<sup>8</sup> The relations between the members of the Christian community should, in Paul's eyes, reflect the new creation God began in Christ. It is in Christ that God rules the new community, the new creation, and thus the new *aeon* should be visible in a new definition of human relations as well.

In chapter seven of 1 Corinthians Paul offers his advice to the congregation in Corinth on the relationship of husband and wife. In his discussion of the issue Paul appears to have his values determined by his expectation of the coming *parousia*. It is no longer necessary for man to marry a woman: καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι (7:1). These words may, as the New Revised Standard Version for instance has it, form a quotation of a phrase in the letter Paul had received from the Corinthians. If not, they should probably be interpreted as a confirmation by Paul of the Corinthians' view that it is no longer necessary to marry, since the end was thought at hand. Paul subsequently mentions and rejects the result of such a radical point of view, viz. πορνεία. To avoid the kind of debauched behaviour that was apparently being practised among the Corinthians, Paul recommends that people should still marry: διὰ δὲ τὰς πορνείας

<sup>6</sup> K. Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women. A Case Study in Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia, 1966), 32, argues that Gal 3:28 is "directed against what we call the order of creation".

<sup>7</sup> H.D. Betz, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1979), 181-201, correctly points out that the baptismal context is constitutive for Paul's description of the unity of the faithful in Christ.

<sup>8</sup> M. Parsons, "The New Creation", *ExT* 99 (1987), 3-4, correctly argues that "the new creation is crucial to the apostle's thought" (3), but overlooks the apocalyptic/eschatological meaning of the terminology Paul uses.



ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἔχέτω καὶ ἑκάστη τὸν ἴδιον ἄνδρα ἔχέτω (7:2). Paul thus describes the need for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Marriage, in the eyes of Paul, is a necessary condition to avoid sexual misconduct.

It is perhaps by no accident that Paul wrote these admonitions exactly to the Corinthians. In antique literature the verb κορινθιάζομαι is found occasionally: “to practice fornication”.<sup>9</sup> Apparently Paul saw the need to point out to the Corinthians that this kind of behaviour is best avoided by marriage. In his description of the advantage of marriage, Paul mentions the fact that within marriage the husband rules the body of his wife and the wife that of her husband. The verb Paul uses here is ἐξουσιάζω, which will prove to be an important parallel to 1 Cor 11:10: ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει ἀλλὰ ἡ γυνή (7:4). Paul makes it no secret that he prefers the unmarried state of life (7:8), but accepts the fact that not everyone can live that kind of life. For those with lack of self-control, marriage is the better alternative. Thus, Paul defends the bonds of marriage in the remaining part of chapter seven. Throughout that part Paul points out that because of the short period still left, people should dedicate themselves to God rather than to marriage, but to marriage rather than to adultery.

## 2. *The context of 1 Corinthians 11*

In the previous section it was argued that Paul considered his own generation to be experiencing the great breakthrough of the new *aeon* in Christ. Paul appeared to have seen a sharp contrast between the old *aeon* and the new, and the creation of Adam was thought to belong to the old *aeon*. By the dawning of the new age, the relations between husbands and wives, between men and women, virtually no longer mattered. Paul defended marriage as a necessary means of preventing sexual misconduct. But in fact, all social distinctions had become meaningless in Christ—also that between man and woman.

Before 1 Cor 11:2–16 can be discussed, some attention should be paid to the context of that passage. Paul has written his first letter

<sup>9</sup> LSJ, s.v. κορινθιάζομαι, mentions Aristophanes, *Fr.* 354. See also κορινθιάστης: “whoremonger”.

to the Corinthians in response to a letter he had received from the congregation in Corinth, and in reaction to the news that reached him through the members of Chloe's household, who had perhaps carried the letter.<sup>10</sup> The chapters preceding ch. 11 are dedicated to a problem that seems to have been very difficult for the Corinthians to solve: the possibility of eating meat sacrificed to idols. Paul starts the discussion of the topic in ch. 8 to continue the same issue in cc. 9 and 10. The main argument Paul makes here is the unity of the faithful in Christ, which should not be disturbed by exercising one's own freedom at the cost of a brother or sister in Christ. In this respect the résumé of 10:23-24 is an important maxim in Paul's view of Christian ethics: Πάντα ἔξεστιν ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα συμφέρει· πάντα ἔξεστιν ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα οἰκοδομεῖ. μηδεὶς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητεῖτω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἐτέρου.

In the passage immediately following on 1 Cor 11:2-16 Paul again speaks of the unity of the congregation. This time, however, the topic is treated from the perspective of the Lord's supper. The Corinthians appear to have celebrated the table of the Lord in a way that denied the fundamental equality of all members within the congregation. With regard to this equality Paul argues in 11:17-34 that the celebration of the Lord's supper implies a sharing of food brought in by the various members of the congregation.<sup>11</sup>

The chapters following on Paul's defence of a sharing of food at the Lord's supper more or less continue the same discussion. In cc. 12-14 Paul gives another defence of fundamental unity within the congregation. Each and every individual has his or her own task, because there is a variety of gifts and services. And yet the community should be one in Christ.

It thus appears that 1 Cor 11:2-16 is surrounded by a long defence by Paul of the unity of the congregation. Time and again Paul insists that members of the community could perhaps exercise their rights, but should abstain from doing so if this is found necessary for the defence of their brother or sister. Life in Christ causes a new freedom, but this freedom should not be used at the cost of a weaker brother or sister. A second observation that may be important for

<sup>10</sup> If Chloe's people (1:11) did not carry the Corinthians' letter to Paul, they at least helped him understand its content—see G.D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids 1987), 7.

<sup>11</sup> See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 531-534.

understanding 11:2–16 is the fact that Paul in the immediate context of this passage treats a number of problems within the Corinthian congregation. Within his treatment of these problems, Paul presents human relations as re-defined by Christ, but adds that the newness of life should not be enjoyed at the expense of fellow Christians. Time and again Paul urges the Corinthians that they should be aware of the consequences of their acts.

Both elements from the context re-appear in 1 Cor 11:2–16: Paul treats a problem that had arisen among the Corinthians, and his answer to the situation is that the Corinthians should be careful not to behave inappropriately, because this might have unwanted consequences.

### 3. *1 Cor 11:2–16: the creation of man and woman as a social model*

In 1 Cor 11:2–16 Paul argues that a man should have his head uncovered when prophesying or praying, while a woman should have hers covered.<sup>12</sup> Since the immediate context speaks of the problems that appeared in the Corinthian congregation, it may safely be assumed that there were apparently men among the Corinthians who covered their heads while praying or prophesying, whereas some women did the reverse.<sup>13</sup> After the introductory remark of v. 2, and the opening statement of v. 3, Paul describes his own view of the matter in vv. 4–5: “Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered, is a disgrace to his head. Yet every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered, is a disgrace to her head; it

<sup>12</sup> The present author considers the passage as genuinely Pauline. For arguments against the Pauline authorship, see Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 491–530; W.O. Walker, Jr., “The Vocabulary of 1 Corinthians 11:3–16: Pauline or non-Pauline?”, *JNTS* 35 (1989), 75–88; also: W.O. Walker, Jr., “1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and Paul’s Views Regarding Women”, *JBL* 94 (1975), 94–110. The arguments mentioned by these authors, however, fail to convince since they do not show a compelling need for regarding 1 Cor 11:2–16 as non-Pauline. For an analysis of the structure of the passage, see J. Murphy O’Connor, “1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Once Again”, 265–274, esp. 274.

<sup>13</sup> The question as to what problem Paul addresses in the pericope under discussion has been the subject of many articles. R. Oster, “When Men wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11:4”, *NTS* 34 (1988), 481–505, gives an analysis of the religious context in which Paul wrote. In Oster’s view the problem in Corinth was, that “while praying and prophesying some men were wearing head coverings and some women were not. According to Paul these practices should be reversed (. . .)” (504); cf. also Murphy O’Connor, “Once Again”.

is one and the same as one having her head shaved." In v. 3 Paul had referred to Christ as the head of a man, man as the head of a woman, and God as the head of Christ. Here, in v. 3, the meaning of κεφαλή is most likely "authority or supremacy over someone else".<sup>14</sup> For this reason vv. 4-5 point out, that a man covering his head while praying or prophesying is a disgrace to Christ, whereas a woman doing so with her head uncovered is a disgrace to man.

This thesis is supported by the argumentation of vv. 7-9, and its second part is restated in v. 10: διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. In translation, the vv. 7-9 go as follows: "For a man should not cover his head, being the image and glory of God; woman, however, is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man; and man has not been created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man." Here Paul uses the word κεφαλή in a literal sense. Paul explains the difference in need for covering or uncovering the head of a man or a woman by referring to the story of their creation. He clearly points at the creation of man and woman by two elements of these verses: firstly, he describes man as the image and glory (εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα) of God; secondly, he refers to the fact that woman has been created ἐξ ἀνδρός and διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα. Finally, as will be pointed out below, Paul warns the Corinthians that their women's refusal to cover their heads may have unpleasant consequences with regard to the angels (διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους, v. 10).

a. εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ: *man as the image and glory of God*

The description Paul gives of man as God's image and glory evidently refers to Gen 1:26-27. As far as the use of εἰκὼν is concerned, this is clear. In the LXX version Gen 1:27 reads: καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν· ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς. The previous verse, 1:26, contains the announcement by God of the creation of man, in which God speaks to himself: ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμέτεραν καὶ κατ' ὁμοίωσιν. There are, however, two differences between the passage in Genesis and Paul.

<sup>14</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer, "Another Look at κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11:3", *NTS* 35 (1989), 503-511. See also W. Grudem, "Does *kephale* ('head') Mean 'Source' or 'Authority over' in Greek Literature: A Survey of 2,336 Examples", *Trinity Journal* ns 6 (1985), 38-59; A.C. Perriman, "The Head of a Woman: the Meaning of *Kephale* in 1 Cor 11:3", *JThS* ns 45 (1994), 602-622.

The first difference is, that Paul speaks of man as the image of God, whereas Genesis describes how man was created *κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ*, i.e. “after the image of God”. Parallels in the works of Philo of Alexandria, for instance, show that Gen 1:26–27 did not lead to a uniform idea on the character of man as the “image of God”.<sup>15</sup> In dealing with the creation of man in *Opif.* 6, for instance, Philo explicitly states that man as part of the creation as a whole, is “an image of an image” (*τὸ μέρος εἰκὼν εἰκόνας*). This observation causes Philo to regard the whole creation, the entire world, as a copy of the Divine image. In other passages, Philo describes the *νοῦς*, the divine element within the *ἄνθρωπος*, as the image of God.<sup>16</sup>

A second difference between Paul and Gen 1:26–27 is, that Paul speaks of the *δόξα θεοῦ*, whereas the LXX of Genesis reads *ὁμοίωσις*. Students of this passages cannot reach a *communis opinio* on the origin of *δόξα* here. It is, however, very likely that *εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα* is a translation of the Hebrew of Gen 1:26, which reads *בצלמנו כדמותנו*. In a number of other passages the LXX translates this *דמות* with *δόξα*.<sup>17</sup>

By describing man as the *εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ* Paul therefore refers to Gen 1:26–27. But how does the creation of Woman fit in this picture?

b. *ἐξ ἀνδρός and δια τὸν ἀνδρα: the creation of woman as secondary to that of man*

Perhaps the most important difference between Genesis and Paul is the fact that LXX Gen 1:26–2:18 speaks of the creation of an *ἄνθρωπος*, whereas Paul speaks of an *ἄνθρωπος*. An *ἄνθρωπος* is a human being in general, without specification of gender; an *ἄνθρωπος* is a man. The LXX of the passage mentioned translates the Hebrew *אדם* as *ἄνθρωπος*, whereas from Gen 2:19 onward the same *אדם* is rendered as a male name: *Ἀδάμ*. The LXX of Genesis 1 thus appears to describe the origin of the species *ἄνθρωπος* whereas LXX Genesis 2 would describe the origin of man and woman.

Paul interprets the creation of the *ἄνθρωπος* as that of *ἄνθρωπος*, and for this reason he can juxtapose man and woman in a hierarchical relationship. Seen from this perspective woman had been formed from the rib of man. Paul speaks of man, *ἄνθρωπος*, as the image and

<sup>15</sup> See Jervell, *Imago Dei*, 52–70.

<sup>16</sup> See e.g. *Opif.* 69; cf. above, A. van den Hoek, pp. 66ff.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Num 12:8: *דמות ידוהי*—*δόξα θεοῦ*; Ps 17:15 (LXX 16:15).

glory of God, and in an analogy to this relation of God and man, Paul signifies the woman as the “glory of man” (ἡ γυνὴ δὲ δόξα ἀνδρός ἐστίν). To account for this state of affairs, the next verses explicitly state that woman has been created “out of man” (ἐξ ἀνδρός) and “for the sake of man” (διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα).

Paul’s use of ἀνὴρ for the Hebrew אָדָם becomes even more remarkable when it is compared to Philo’s *Opif.* 76.<sup>18</sup> Here Philo presents the creation of man as that of the species ἄνθρωπος, which is to be divided into ἄρρεν τε καὶ θήλυ: “And when Moses had called the genus ‘man’, quite admirably did he distinguish its species, adding that it had been created ‘male and female’, and this though its individual members had not yet taken shape.”<sup>19</sup> In *Opif.* 134 Philo explicitly distinguishes between man as created after the image of God (as described in Genesis 1) and man that is formed by God from the clay of the earth (Genesis 2). After citing Gen 2:7, Philo adds: “By this also he shows very clearly that there is a vast difference between the man thus formed and the man that came into existence earlier after the image of God (κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα θεοῦ): for the man so formed is an object of sense-perception, partaking already of such or such quality, consisting of body and soul, man or woman (ἀνὴρ ἢ γυνή), by nature mortal; while he that was after the (Divine) image was an idea or type or seal, an object of thought (only), incorporeal, neither male nor female (οὐτ’ ἄρρεν οὐτε θήλυ), by nature incorruptible.”<sup>20</sup> Paul evidently followed another interpretation of the creation of man and woman. In his perception woman had been created from man, and this accounts for the social difference between the two. Apparently Paul legitimises an existing social distinction by his interpretation of Gen 1:27.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of Philo’s views on the creation of man and woman, see above pp. 63–75, A. van den Hoek, “Endowed with Reason or Glued to the Senses: Philo’s Thoughts on Adam and Eve”.

<sup>19</sup> Πάνου δὲ καλῶς, τὸ γένος ἄνθρωπον εἰπὼν, διέκρινε τὰ εἶδη φήσας ἄρρεν τε καὶ θήλυ δεδημιουργησθαι, μήπω τῶν ἐν μέρει μορφὴν λαβόντων . . . Text and translation F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker, in LCL 226. For this description see also e.g. *Leg.all.* 2:13 where Philo speaks of the species ἄνθρωπος, which is to be divided into man and woman.

<sup>20</sup> Ἐνναργέστατα καὶ διὰ τούτου παρίστησιν ὅτι διαφορὰ καμμεγέθης ἐστὶ τοῦ τε νῦν πλασθέντος ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα θεοῦ γεγονότος πρότερον· ὁ μὲν διαπλασθεὶς αἰσθητός ἤδη μετέχων ποιότητος, ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς συνεστῶς, ἀνὴρ ἢ γυνή, φύσει φνητός· ὁ δὲ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα ἰδέα τις ἢ γένος ἢ σφραγίς, νοητός, ἀσώματος, οὐτ’ ἄρρεν οὐτε θήλυ, ἀφθαρτός φύσει. Text and translation F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker, in LCL 226.

## c. ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους

The reason for Paul to defend the social difference between man and woman with regard to the acts of praying and prophesying is stated in v. 10: διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. Two elements in this verse are unclear: the meaning of the words ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς, and the reference of διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους.

If v. 10 is interpreted within its immediate context, its meaning is indicated by the vv. 5, 13 and 16: according to Paul it should not be a Christian habit that a woman prophesies or prays with her head uncovered. But how should the expression ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς be interpreted if it should coincide with this intention?

Many translators and commentators interpret ἐπί as local: “on top of the head”. The result is a ridiculous translation: woman should *have a power on her head*.<sup>21</sup> The Vulgate, at first sight, appears to support this interpretation: *ideo debet mulier potestatem habere supra caput propter angelos*. In classical Latin the object of the *potestas* would have been mentioned with a genitive construction, and therefore the intended meaning of the present formulation would seem to be “an authority on the head”. Yet the Vulgate of Rev 14:18 shows that *potestatem habere supra* is merely a vulgar Latin translation of the Greek ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί. It translates ἄγγελος (. . .) ἔχων ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός, as *angelus (. . .) qui habet potestatem supra ignem*. The Vulgate, therefore, does not support the local translation of ἐπί.

An ingenious attempt to solve the problem led G. Kittel to the well-known suggestion that ἐξουσία should be interpreted as a translation of the Aramaic שְׁלִטְנָה, derived from שָׁלַט, which can mean *veil*, but also *power*.<sup>22</sup> But why would Paul, whose Greek is usually fine, all of a sudden have used such an Aramaism in a letter to a Greek congregation in Corinth? To translate ἐξουσία as an object placed on the head simply makes no sense, and therefore there has to be a better solution to the problem.

The expression ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί is used a number of times in

<sup>21</sup> See e.g. the *Revised English Bible* (“the sign of her authority on her head”), the *Good News Bible* (“a covering over her head”), the *New Revised Standard Version* (“a symbol of authority on her head”), and the *New Oxford Annotated Bible* (“a veil on her head”).

<sup>22</sup> G. Kittel, “Die ‘Macht’ auf dem Haupte”, *Arbeiten für Religionsgeschichte des Urchristentums* I.3 (Leipzig 1920), 17–30.

writings of the New Testament with a fixed meaning: "to have authority over something".<sup>23</sup> If the words in v. 10 are understood in this way, they state that a woman should have authority over her own head.<sup>24</sup> This interpretation, however, is not easily combined with the context. It would lead to a sharp contrast with this context if v. 10 would leave the choice of covering her head entirely to a woman herself. Vv. 5, 13 and 16 leave no room for doubt in this respect: Paul wants a woman to cover her head while praying or prophesying. If, however, the words ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί are understood as "to have control over something", the problem is solved.<sup>25</sup> This meaning of the words also corresponds to the use of ἐξουσιάζω in 7:4.<sup>26</sup> What Paul states here, then, is that a woman should have control over her own head, should control her head. Apparently she does so by covering it.<sup>27</sup>

The interpretation proposed here is grammatically the better choice. Yet in order to make sense those final words (διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους) should point out the need for a woman to cover her head. They should point to an unwanted consequence of women's refusal to cover their heads. This raises the important question: what have angels got to do with women's heads?

In Jewish sources of the Graeco-Roman period a tradition is found on a forbidden liaison of angels and women: the legend of the fall of the Watchers. Already Tertullian interpreted 1 Cor 11:10 as referring to this tradition, and most likely he was right in doing so.<sup>28</sup> *Jub.*

<sup>23</sup> Luke 19:11; Rev 11:6; 14:18; 16:9; 20:6; see also LXX Dan 3:97. See also Luke 9:1; 10:19; Rev 2:26; 6:8; 13:7 (ἐξουσία ἐπί).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. M.D. Hooker, "Authority on her Head: an Examination of 1 Cor 11:10", *NTS* 10 (1964), 410-416. Many students of the passage followed Hooker's interpretation; for a survey of interpretations see W. Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther (1 Kor 6,12-11,16)*, vol. 2 (EKK; Neukirchen-Vluyn, Solothurn, Düsseldorf 1995), 512. Schrage considers the expression ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί as an expression of the newly obtained freedom of Christians Paul describes in 6:12 and 10:23 (514).

<sup>25</sup> Delobel, "Coherent Interpretation", 387; cf. C.L. Thompson, "Hairstyles, Head-Coverings, and St Paul: Portraits from Roman Corinth", *Bib Arch* 51 (1988), 99-115.

<sup>26</sup> As was said above, in 7:4 Paul has argued that a woman should have control over her husband's body and *vice versa*.

<sup>27</sup> The fact that a woman should cover her head is stressed by the analogy with nature Paul refers to in vv. 14-15. See Delobel, "Coherent Interpretation", 375-376: "... nature *teaches* how women should behave concerning their head: in line with this teaching, they should cover their head" (ital. Delobel).

<sup>28</sup> Tertullian, *Orat.* 22,5-6; *Adv. Marc.* v,8,2; *Corona* 14,2; *Virg. Vel.* 7,2; 17,2. These references have been taken from R. Roukema, *De uitleg van Paulus' eerste brief aan de Corinthiërs in de tweede en derde eeuw* (Kampen: Kok 1996), 171-172. Roukema shows



4:22 speaks of the “Watchers, who had sinned with the daughters of men—for these had begun to form unions with the daughters of men and so defile themselves.”<sup>29</sup> *Jub.* 7:21 mentions these forbidden marriages as the cause of the great Flood: “For it was because of these three things, Noah told them, that the flood came on the earth—because of the fornication of the Watchers, who, contrary to the law of their nature, lusted after the daughters of men and took for themselves such wives as they chose: that was the beginning of uncleanness.”<sup>30</sup> Subsequently, the writing continues with a description of moral disorder and bloodshed evoked by the trespassing of the Watchers. *Jubilees* 10 even mentions the Watchers as the actual origin of all evil demons.

The legend of the Watchers is also found in *1 Enoch* 7:7, where they are accused of corrupting the entire earth by revealing mysteries to the sons of men that should have been kept hidden. *1 Enoch* 12:4 subsequently describes what had happened: “the Watchers of heaven (. . .) have left the high heaven and the holy eternal place, and have corrupted themselves with the women, and have done as the sons of men do, and have taken wives for themselves, and have become completely corrupt on the earth.”<sup>31</sup> A fragment from Qumran, 4Q180 Fr.1, li. 7–8, describes how Azazel and his angels had intercourse with the daughters of men, thereby disturbing the cosmic order: “7[And] interpretation concerning ‘Azaz’el and the angels wh[*o* came to the daughters of man] 8 [and] sired themselves giants”.<sup>32</sup>

The description found in 1QapGen (= 1Q20) ii:12–17 points out that the fall of the Watchers was regarded as something that might re-occur. When asked, Bitenosh answers Lamech, her husband: “I swear to you by the Great Holy One, by the King of the hea[ven]s . . . [. . .] that this seed comes from you, that this pregnancy comes from

---

that Clement of Alexandria, too, interpreted 11:10 as an instruction for woman to wear a veil in order not to be seductive. Clement, however, considers the “angels” as “righteous men within the congregation”—*ExcTheod* 44; cf. Ireneaus, *AdvHaer.* 1,8,2; 1,4,5.

<sup>29</sup> Translation by R.H. Charles and C. Rabin, in H.F.D. Sparks (ed.), *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford 1984), 23.

<sup>30</sup> Translation Charles & Rabin, in Sparks, *Apocryphal Old Testament*, 33.

<sup>31</sup> Translation M.A. Knibb, in Sparks, *Apocryphal Old Testament*, 198.

<sup>32</sup> [תפטר על עזאזל והמלאכים אשר באו אל בנות האדם] 8 [וי]לדו להם נברים ועל [. . . כתיב] עזאזל Text and translation taken from F. Garcia Martinez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden 1997), vol. 1, 370–373.

you, that the planting of [this] fruit comes from you, [. . .] and not from any foreigner nor from any of the watchers or sons of heaven."<sup>33</sup> Apparently the thought that an angel or Watcher could cause a pregnancy with a human woman was not rejected as ridiculous.

If these parallels in older Jewish pseudepigrapha were the only ones, it might have been doubtful whether Paul would have known this legend. The Christian *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, however, contains the same legend. In *T.Reub.* 5:6 Reuben hints at the legend, while warning his sons of the wiles of women. In a piece of unsurpassed misogyny, this admonition starts with the following remark: "Evil are women, my children, because, having no power or strength over man, they use wiles trying to draw him to them by gestures" (5:1).<sup>34</sup> Reuben mentions the fate of the Watchers as an illustration of the way in which women trap men: "For thus they (= women; LP) bewitched the Watchers before the flood; as these looked at them continually, they lusted after one another, and conceived the act in their mind, and they changed themselves into the shape of men, and they appeared to them when they were together with their husbands. And they, lusting in their minds after their appearances, bore giants; for the Watchers appeared to them as reaching unto heaven" (5:6-7).<sup>35</sup>

The parallels mentioned point out three things, viz. (1) that the legend was apparently wide-spread that angels, also known as "the Watchers", had fallen from heaven as a result of their lusting after human women; (2) that the alleged result of their fall was moral disorder and bloodshed; and (3) that at least in *T.Reuben* the women

<sup>33</sup> 14 אַמִּיאָ אַנְהָ לָךְ בְּקִדְשֵׁי רַבָּא בְּמִלְךְ שְׁמַיָּא [ . . . ] 15 דִּי מִנְךְ זִדְעָא דִּן וּמִנְךְ דִּן הֲרִיזִינָא דִּן וּמִנְךְ נִשְׁבַּח פְּרִיאָ[ דִּן . . . ] 16 וְלֹא מִן כּוֹל זִר וְלֹא מִן כּוֹל עִירְדִּין וְלֹא מִן כּוֹל בְּנֵי שְׁמַיָּא [ . . . ]  
Text and translation taken from García Martínez, Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*, vol. 1, 28-31.

<sup>34</sup> Translation by H.W. Hollander, M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Commentary* (Leiden 1985), 101. In Greek: Πονηραί εισιν αἱ γυναῖκες, τέκνα μου, ὅτι μὴ ἔχουσαι ἐξουσίαν ἢ δύναμιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, δολιεύονται ἐν σχήμασι . . .—text taken from M. de Jonge, *Testamenta XII Patriarchum* (Leiden 1964), 4. Note the use of ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν . . . ἐπὶ in this passage!

<sup>35</sup> Translation by Hollander, De Jonge, *Testaments*, 101-102. In Greek: Οὕτως γὰρ ἔθελξᾶω τοὺς Ἑγγρηγόρους πρὸ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ· κάκεινοι συνεχῶς ὀρώντες αὐτάς, ἐγένοντο ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἀλλήλων, καὶ συνέλαβον τῇ διανοίᾳ τὴν πρᾶξιν καὶ μετεσηματίζοντο εἰς ἀνθρώπους, καὶ ἐν τῇ συνουσίᾳ τῶν ἀνδρῶν αὐτῶν συνεφαίνοντο αὐταῖς· κάκεινοι ἀπιθυμοῦσαι τῇ διανοίᾳ τὰς φαντασίας αὐτῶν, ἔτεκον γίγαντας. Ἐφαίνοντο γὰρ αὐταῖς οἱ Ἑγγρηγορες ἕως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ φθάνοντες—M. de Jonge, *Testamenta XII Patriarchum*, 4-5.

are blamed with causing the trouble, because they were continually visible to the Watchers.

The terminology used for the Watchers in the various sources indeed supports the idea that they could be referred to as “the angels”, and thus that Paul refers to this tradition. In Hebrew the Watchers are described as the עִירֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם or simply as עִירִים (Aram.: עִירִין).<sup>36</sup> Usually the Greek equivalent for this Hebrew noun is ἄγγελοι (e.g. *T.Reub.* 5:6). LXX Dan 4:13, 23, however, translates עִיר וְקִדְרִין as ἄγγελος ἐν ἰσχύϊ (Theod.: ἱρ καὶ ἅγιος). Furthermore, the LXX translates the expression בְּנֵי-הַאֱלֹהִים of Gen 6.2 as οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ. Finally, the creatures that fell from heaven are mentioned in 4Q180 as הַמַּלְאָכִים (“angels”). This material proves that the legendary fall of the Watchers was understood as a fall of angels. Paul’s words διὰ τοὺς ἄγγελους may therefore indeed refer to the legend of the Watchers.

In order to find out why Paul would refer to the legend of the Watchers within this context, two more things should be established. Firstly: why does Paul want women to cover their heads? And secondly: why should they do so while prophesying or praying?

Rabbinical parallels, quoted by Strack-Billerbeck, suggest that the covering of a woman’s head is related to her married state of life: an uncovered head apparently counted as a sign of virginity. “Nimmt man hinan, daß das unbedeckte Haupt sonst als Sinnbild der Freiheit galt, so bedeutete das Erscheinen der Braut mit entblößten Kopf, daß sie eine Jungfrau sei, die bisher noch nicht der Macht רִשׁוּן eines Mannes unterstanden habe.”<sup>37</sup> It is indeed likely that Paul refers to the need for a woman to cover her head because of the social sign given by this covering. Women should apparently cover their heads because this would point out their married state to the angels.

With regard to the fact that Paul considers this covering of the head a necessity during the acts of prophesying and praying a glimpse at contemporary Jewish sources may be illuminating. Often the angels are described as continually celebrating a heavenly worship around God’s throne. In the literature of Qumran, for instance, this idea is

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. CD II:18; 4QpsJub<sup>c</sup> (4Q227), fr. 2, li. 4; 4QEn<sup>a</sup>ar (4Q201) I:6; 4QEn<sup>b</sup>ar (4Q202) IV:6-7; 4QEn<sup>c</sup>ar (4Q204) v:19; 4Q534 II:18.

<sup>37</sup> H.L. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (München 1926), vol. 3, 435.

found in 4Q405 Fr. 19 A-D.<sup>38</sup> Fr. 23 I,8-10 describes how the angels enter and exit their domain to bring heavenly knowledge to man or to transmit man's prayers to God. Closely related to this view is the idea that angels are considered present within the congregation celebrating its worship. This was the reason for the congregation of Qumran to ban all those crippled or sick from these meetings: CD xv:17; 1QS<sub>a</sub> ii:3-9.<sup>39</sup> According to 11Q14 Fr. 1-2, li. 13-14, God and his holy angels actually attend the worship of the congregation themselves.

In the *History of the Rechabites* 16:18a-d the angels are described as the messengers who take man's prayers to God.<sup>40</sup> And also the reverse action is described in contemporary literature: it is a standard feature of many apocalypses that angels are the interpreters of the visions a man receives.<sup>41</sup>

The parallels mentioned indicate that, in Paul's day, angels were thought to perform a specific task in the acts of praying and prophesying. These two acts, therefore, bring women into close contact with the angels. It was with regard to this close contact that Paul was afraid of a repetition of the problem with the Watchers. This observation is less strange than might appear at first sight. In apocalyptic writings of Paul's day a parallel between *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* is often made. It is not unlikely that Paul the apocalyptic used an apocalyptic argument in his attempt to point out that women should cover their heads. Furthermore, Paul's reference to the creation of man and woman also points back to an event in the earliest period of history.

### *Conclusion*

In 1 Cor 11:2-16 Paul argues that men should uncover their heads and women should cover theirs when prophesying or praying. As a result of this view, Paul has to account for a social difference between man and woman. He does so by referring to their creation. In his

<sup>38</sup> See also 1QM xii:1; 4Q504 vii:6-9; 11Q17 v:5-7.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. 1QM vii:5-6 where angels are said to fight alongside the Children of Light. It is for this reason that disabled or sick people are not allowed to join the fight.

<sup>40</sup> See also *Ladder of Jacob* Fr. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. the examples mentioned by P.G. Davis, "Divine Agents, Mediators, and New Testament Christology", *JTS* ns 45 (1994), 479-503.

perception, woman was created out of man, and this accounts for the social difference between the two. Paul uses the narrative of creation as an argument in favour of a hierarchic relationship between man and woman. Paul needs the argument out of fear for cosmic disorder: unlike men women should cover their heads so as not to evoke feelings of lust among the angels.

If the words *διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους* in 11:10 indeed refer to the legend of the Watchers, they show that for Paul the eschatological era in which he thought to be living was related to the primordial times before the Great Flood. It is not by chance that Paul speaks of the new age that had already begun in Christ as of a new creation. In Paul's perception the great change of the *aeons* his generation was witnessing may have revived the dangers of primordial times. This is why Paul urges the Corinthian women to cover their heads. Within the congregation the social distinction between man and woman had become irrelevant. When it came to the acts of praying and prophesying, however, the cosmic order would be endangered. It is for this reason that Paul thought that women should not be exposed to angels with their heads uncovered and to argue this, Paul refers to the creation of woman as secondary to that of man.

KEEPING MARRIAGE OUT OF PARADISE:  
THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN  
PATRISTIC LITERATURE

H.S. BENJAMINS

In a short treatise entitled *Vom ehelichen Leben*, Martin Luther, the Father of the Reformation, repeatedly calls on the texts of Genesis 1:27 and 2:18 to defend married life. God created man as both male and female (1:27), saying "it is not good that the man should be alone" (2:18): "Siehe, mit diesem Spruch Gottes stopfet man das Maul allen, die über die Ehe klagen und schelten".<sup>1</sup> Many preachers would not nowadays even feel that it was necessary to show their support for marriage and they would certainly not challenge the validity of the reformer's application of these texts. The Fathers of the Early Church, on the other hand, might well be very surprised by this. To their mind, and in the context of their times, these texts from Genesis were largely eclipsed by the seventh chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In this letter Paul clearly shows a preference for celibate life.<sup>2</sup> He does not want to condemn marriage, "since it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion" (1 Cor 7:9), but "he who refrains from marriage will do better" (7:38).

Paul's reflections on marriage are characterised by being a compromise. On the one hand, he denies the importance of married life, since the end of this world is near (7:29) and men should be free to please the Lord (7:32). On the other hand, he does not want to support those radical groups which were probably in Corinth that tried to impose celibate life. The Early Church never overcame these conflicting needs.<sup>3</sup> The Gospel proclaimed that since the the Kingdom

---

<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther, *Vom ehelichen Leben* (1522) WA 10,2,275-304. In: *Martin Luther, Ausgewählte Schriften*, herausgegeben von Karin Bornkamm und Gerhard Ebeling, Band 3 (Frankfurt am Main 1982) 166-199. Quotation on p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> On 1 Cor 7 and other relevant texts from the New Testament see Kurt Niederwimmer, *Askese und Mysterium. Über Ehe, Ehescheidung und Eheverzicht in den Anfängen des christlichen Glaubens* (Göttingen 1975).

<sup>3</sup> See Kurt Niederwimmer, op. cit., 124: "Eben in diesem Kompromißcharakter erweist nun der ganze Ansatz auch eine Zukunftsmächtigkeit. Paulus nimmt darin im Grunde bereits die Lösung der Zukunft vorweg, er erscheint an dieser Stelle als Wegbereiter des Frühkatholizismus".

of God was at hand, all human ties had to be severed,<sup>4</sup> and various ascetic groups or movements have always tried to remain faithful to this radical requirement. It was hard to refute these groups, but flat denunciations of marriage, such as “heretics” like the Marcionites, the Encratites or some of the Gnostics made, was countered by the opinion that this boiled down to showing contempt for God’s creation.<sup>5</sup> Over time, the Church has had to find some balance between the radical and eschatological requirements of the Gospel, and daily life arrangements in this world, where people work, eat, marry, produce children, and are still considered to be Christians.

Various voices have contributed to the issue.<sup>6</sup> In some letters of the New Testament marriage is valued positively.<sup>7</sup> In the Revelation to John<sup>8</sup> and the second letter of Clement,<sup>9</sup> ascetism is highly appreciated. In the first letter of Clement,<sup>10</sup> Ignatius<sup>11</sup> and Hermas<sup>12</sup> marriage is recognized, but celibate life is valued more highly.<sup>13</sup> There is likewise also ambivalence towards marriage in the works and thoughts of individuals like Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria. The first, a passionate defender of sexual continence,<sup>14</sup> occasionally writes about marriage with rare affection.<sup>15</sup> The other, who is usually seen as supporting marriage, also gives serious warnings about marital appetite.<sup>16</sup> The obvious way for the Church to deal with this ambivalence was a two-pronged approach towards marriage in which a distinction was made between an ascetic elite and the mass of believers. “Two ways of life were thus given by the Lord to His

<sup>4</sup> See for example Mat 10:37–39.

<sup>5</sup> See Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I.28.1: “Springing from Saturninus and Marcion, those who are called Encratites preached against marriage, thus setting aside the original creation of God, and indirectly blaming Him who made the male and the female for the propagation of the human race”.

<sup>6</sup> See H. Preisker, *Christentum und Ehe in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten. Eine Studie zur Kulturgeschichte der alten Welt* (Berlin 1927) and Peter Brown, *The Body and Society. Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York 1983).

<sup>7</sup> See for example Eph 5:22ff.; Tit 1:6 and 1 Tim 2:11–15.

<sup>8</sup> 14:4.

<sup>9</sup> 12:2–5; 14.

<sup>10</sup> 30; 35.2; 38.2. See H. Preisker, *op. cit.*, 157–8.

<sup>11</sup> *Ad Polyc.* 5.2.

<sup>12</sup> *vis.* II.2; *sim.* V.7; IX.11.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. K. Niederwimmer, *op. cit.*, 162–176.

<sup>14</sup> See Claude Rambaux, *Tertullien face aux morales des trois premiers siècles* (Paris 1979), 204–262: “Mariage et Virginité”.

<sup>15</sup> *Ad Uxorem* II.9.

<sup>16</sup> See *Strom.* II.23 (140.1; 143.1) for both the good of marriage and against indulgence.

Church”, Eusebius writes. “The one is above nature, and beyond common human living; it admits not marriage, child-bearing, property, nor the possession of wealth . . . And the more humble, more human way prompts men to join in pure nuptials, and to produce children . . . it allows them to have minds for farming, for trade and for the other more secular interests as well as for religion”.<sup>17</sup>

Marriage was not wrong, but celibate life was preferred.<sup>18</sup> Such being the case, an explanation of Genesis 1:27 and 2:18ff. was needed, for, after all, God had created man as both male and female, and he had said that “it was not good that the man should be alone”. Early Christian exegesis had to account for these verses and bring them into line with the ascetic lifestyle.

### *Allegorical interpretations*

A useful foundation for Christian interpretation had already been laid by Philo. In all his exegetical works on Genesis he made a basic distinction between the stories of creation in Gen 1:1–2,4a and 2:4b ff.<sup>19</sup> The Early Church Fathers gladly borrowed this interpretation, since it suggested that sexual differentiation belonged to a second, and therefore subordinate phase of creation. They concentrated on mankind’s essential nature after the image and likeness of God,<sup>20</sup> and made light of the accidental creation of male and female sexes.

In *De Opificio Mundi* Philo says with respect to the man that was formed from clay, that love is the origin of his ill-fortune. Love brings together the divided halves of the original androgynous man, created “after the image”, and sets up a desire for fellowship. This aspect of love is a valuable one, but the desire for fellowship also sets up a desire for bodily pleasure, which is the root of wrong and of mortality.<sup>21</sup> Philo’s notion of the union of the halves is clearly

<sup>17</sup> *Demonstratio Evangelica* 1.8. See P. Brown, op. cit., 205–9.

<sup>18</sup> In the course of time, the clergy became bound to celibate life. Cf. R. Gryson, *Les origines du célibat ecclésiastique, du premier au septième siècle* (Gembloux 1970), C. Cochini, *Origines apostoliques du célibat sacerdotal* (Paris 1981), R. Cholij, *Clerical celibacy in east and west* (Leominster 1988) and S. Heid, *Zölibat in der frühen Kirche. Die Anfänge einer Enthaltenspflicht für Kleriker in Ost und West* (Paderborn 1997).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. The contribution in this volume by A. van den Hoek.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. P. Hubert Merki, *Homoiosis Theoi, Von der platonischen Angleichung an Gott zur Gottähnlichkeit bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Freiburg in der Schweiz 1952).

<sup>21</sup> *De Op.* 152.



taken from Plato's *Symposium*.<sup>22</sup> It is interesting to note that Christian exegesis did not take over this interpretation, but developed a different concept of union, one which was related to conjunction with Christ.

The letter to the Ephesians says that Christ is the head of the Church, which is his body (5:23). Christ and the Church thus constitute a complete man, like Philo's united halves.<sup>23</sup> This image could easily be used as an argument against sexual union, since men who are united to the Lord should not pollute his body, which would be like drawing Christ into illicit sexual acts.<sup>24</sup> The first letter to the Corinthians says that the bodies of Christians are members of Christ. "Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, 'The two shall become one flesh' (Gen 2:24). But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him." (1 Cor 6:15-17). This language was, in fact, very effective in putting not only some but all sexual acts under a taboo and making the union with Christ incompatible with any other bodily union.<sup>25</sup>

An allegorical interpretation appeared on the basis of these New Testament texts. This tried to bring the creation of Eve and the union of man and woman, "becoming one flesh", into conformity with exclusive union with Christ. According to this interpretation, the creation of woman from man's side during his sleep refers to the birth of the Church at the time of the passion of Christ.<sup>26</sup> The union of man and woman, then, refers to the union of Christ and his Church and is completely detached from any sexual connotation.

For Philo, the union of the divided halves by love is also risky, because it involves a dangerous desire for bodily pleasure. In *De*

<sup>22</sup> Speech of Aristophanes, 189a-193d.

<sup>23</sup> The motif of the *hieros gamos* can be traced in the background. See K. Niedermayer, op. cit., 134-151.

<sup>24</sup> In Ephesians this motif is used, however, to defend marriage: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (5:25), but the image could easily acquire the opposite meaning.

<sup>25</sup> According to R. Gryson op. cit. the clergy's obligation to celibacy arose from the thought that the ministry of the cult and prayer, i.e., the contact with the sacred, are incompatible with impure sexual acts (pp. 42-4, 203-4). This notion first arose in Origen and Tertullian (p. 43).

<sup>26</sup> This interpretation can be found in the works of Tertullian, Methodius of Olympus and Hilary of Poitiers. See J. Daniélou, *Sacramentum Futuri. Études sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Paris 1950), 37-44: "Le sommeil d'Adam et la naissance de l'église".

*Opificio Mundi* Philo explains how the story of the Fall deals with pleasure (represented by the snake), dominating over reason (i.e. Adam) by means of the senses (symbolized by Eve).<sup>27</sup> In *Legum Allegoriae* Philo uses the same allegory to explain the creation of woman from man. Mind, that is man, needs a helper, namely sense-perception, that is woman, in order to know whether an object is white or black, or whether perfumes are pleasant or disagreeable. Gen 2:18 thus says that "it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him".<sup>28</sup>

### *Origen and Theophilus of Antioch*

Philo's interpretations are largely shared by Origen. Unfortunately, Origen's *Commentary on Genesis* is now lost, but the first *Homily on Genesis* includes a short interpretation of the creation of man as male and female.<sup>29</sup> Like Philo, Origen postulates a first creation of spiritual beings endowed with reason and free will. The material world was created and man was formed from clay only after the Fall of these spiritual beings, who had turned away from God. This creation took place in order to give rational beings a body and a place for repentance and education, providing them with an opportunity to return to their former state.<sup>30</sup> Origen therefore says that "we do not understand, however, this man indeed whom Scripture says was made 'according to the image of God' to be corporeal. For the form of the body does not contain the image of God, nor is the corporeal man said to be 'made' but 'formed'".<sup>31</sup> This distinction between the man created after the image and the physically formed man is reminiscent of Philo.

With regard to Gen 1:27-28, "male and female he made them, and God blessed them saying: 'Increase and multiply and fill the earth and have dominion over it'", Origen remarks that man is called male and female, which anticipates the future creation of woman, "since, indeed, man could not otherwise increase and multiply

<sup>27</sup> *De Op.* 157ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Leg. All.* II.4-8.

<sup>29</sup> Origen, *Homélie sur la Genèse*, nouvelle édition, introduction de H. de Lubac et L. Doutreleau; texte, traduction et notes de L. Doutreleau, SC 7 (Paris 1976).

<sup>30</sup> See especially *De Principiis* (II.9; III.6).

<sup>31</sup> *Hom. Gen.* I.13; translation R.E. Heine (Washington D.C. 1982).

except with the female".<sup>32</sup> Origen next turns to an allegorical interpretation of these verses, whose literal meaning can only be an anticipation. "Our inner man consists of spirit and soul. The spirit is said to be male; the soul can be called female".<sup>33</sup> They increase and multiply, that is, they produce good inclinations and understandings or useful thoughts, by which they fill the earth and have dominion over it. A soul that turns to bodily pleasure, however, forsaking the conjunction with the spirit, is properly said neither to increase nor to multiply.<sup>34</sup>

It seems that Origen recognized the good of procreation at least at a certain time in the history of mankind, but it does not seem likely that he saw this procreation taking place in man's paradisaical state of incorporeality. The allegorical interpretation, moreover, obviously implies that the proper meaning of the creation of male and female can be found in the asexual realm of virtue. In this way, the interpretation of Genesis 1:27 is brought in line with a preference for celibate life.

Theophilus of Antioch achieves the same thing in a completely different way in his treatise *To Autolytus*.<sup>35</sup> In the second book of this treatise, Theophilus very subtly retells the story of creation. He firstly describes the creation of the world in six days (II.12ff.). He next turns to the creation of man after the image and likeness of God (II.18). Then he describes Paradise and the Fall of man (II.20ff.). The creation of woman is reported only after the Fall: "It was when Adam had been cast out of Paradise that he knew his wife Eve, whom God had made out of his side to be his wife" (II.28). Theophilus thereby suggests that there was a different order of events: Eve had been created only after the Fall. Only after he was expelled from Paradise Adam was told explicitly to have intercourse with Eve. Theophilus does not give a reason for giving this interpretation, but it is likely that he has Gen 4:1 in mind. After the report of Adam's expulsion out of Eden, it is written in Gen 4:1 that "now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain". This verse probably means that Adam did not know Eve before.<sup>36</sup> Theophilus

<sup>32</sup> *Hom. Gen.* I.14.

<sup>33</sup> *Hom. Gen.* I.15.

<sup>34</sup> *Hom. Gen.* I.15.

<sup>35</sup> Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolytum*, text and translation by Robert M. Grant (Oxford 1970).

<sup>36</sup> This is the meaning of Gen 4:1 according to John Chrysostom and Augustine, see below.

does not however seem to disapprove of marriage completely (II.28), but his interpretation fitted the ascetic line very well, since marriage and intercourse appeared to have been instituted after the Fall only.

*Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom*

Ascetic tendencies and preferences became stronger than ever in the third and fourth centuries, and they figure largely in the thought of Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom. The exegetical methods of these theologians are different indeed, yet they deal with the creation of male and female in a similar way, using arguments that were already familiar.

In *De Opificio Hominis*,<sup>37</sup> Gregory of Nyssa deals with the creation of man in order to complete the *Hexaëmeron* of Basil the Great. From chapter XVI onwards, Gregory reflects on the divine utterance "Let us make man after our image and likeness". These words cause two difficulties. Firstly, how can mortal and passible man be described as being the image of an immortal and pure nature (180b–c)? Secondly, how can man, who is in the image of God, have been created as male and female, since this does not belong to the godhead (181b)? According to Gregory, the solution to these problems can be found by recognising the twofold creation of our nature (181cff.). The nature of man is a compound of an intelligent part akin to the divine and an irrational part, related to our bodily form and divided into male and female, akin to animality.

Gregory explains that God created a human nature that participates in all good. Human nature is therefore like the deity, since the deity is the fulness of good (184b), but it is like the deity only and not identical with it, because human nature is created, therefore mutable, and endowed with a will of its own in order to acquire the good voluntarily (184c–d). When man after the image was created, God did not create an individual or a single man, but mankind in general. "... I think that the entire plenitude of humanity was included by the God of all, by his power of foreknowledge, as it were in one body, and that this is what the text teaches us which

<sup>37</sup> Migne PG 44. Translations in: *Grégoire de Nyssa, La création de l'homme*, introduction et traduction de J. Laplace S.J., notes de J. Daniélou S.J., SC 6 (Paris 1943) and by H.A. Wilson in: *Gregory of Nyssa, select writings and letters*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, volume V. Quotations are according to Wilson's translation.

says ‘God created man, in the image of God he created him’” (185c).

When God created man after the image, he saw beforehand, by reason of his foreknowledge, that man was going to sin. He therefore added the animal part to the man made after the image, “implanting in mankind, instead of the angelic majesty of nature, that animal and irrational mode by which they now succeed one another” (189d). The creation of male and female, therefore, is an accommodation to the foreseen Fall of man from his angelic state. If man had not fallen, he would have stayed in an angelic state and he would not have needed marriage to multiply (189a). But since God foreknew that man was going to transgress, he provided him with that part of his nature that is not in the image of God. By means of an animal nature and animal generation, a full number of men, pre-conceived by the operation of foreknowledge, will come into life (205b–c). Only when a foreknown number of souls is reached will time stop and men will return to uncorruptibility, as was intended from the beginning (205c).

Gregory of Nyssa’s interpretation of Gen 1:27 is closely related to the interpretations of Philo and Origen. The differences between them largely result from Gregory’s notion of a twofold creation instead of two creations.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, Gen 1:27 does not anticipate the future creation of male and female, but it denotes the animal part of our nature, made necessary by God’s anticipation of the future. In both cases, however, the creation of male and female does not belong to the creation after the image of God. Gregory’s interpretation of Gen 1:27 does not thus view marriage badly, since it is the method needed to produce a foreknown number of human souls. On the other hand, he clearly says that marriage belongs to the state of man after the Fall, and his interpretation fits in with ascetic preferences, since our animal nature is an improper addition to our essential nature, and we have to leave this behind.

A remarkable interpretation of the creation of male and female is reported in the homilies *In verba: “Faciamus hominem”*, attributed to Gregory of Nyssa by some scholars, but probably written by Basil the Great as a completion of his own work on the six days of creation.<sup>39</sup> The first of these homilies, which bear a strong resemblance

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *La création de l’homme*, SC 6, introduction 23ff. and 48–59.

<sup>39</sup> For the text and a discussion of the complicated questions concerning text and author of these homilies, see A. Smets and M. van Esbroeck, *Basile de Césarée, Sur l’origine de l’homme (Hom. X et XI de l’Hexaéméron)*, introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes, SC 160 (Paris 1970).

to *De Opificio Hominis*, says that it is written that man was created after the image, as male and female, in order to prevent the misconception that only the male sex was created after the image of God. "The virtuous woman holds what is after the image. Don't pay attention to the exterior man. That was only created to envelope it".<sup>40</sup> Male and female become similar to God by means of virtue.

John Chrysostom's approach to the creation of male and female is very much the same as Gregory of Nyssa's. It was not meant that there be sexuality at the time of creation, and marriage was only instituted after the Fall. Man lived the life of angels in paradise and this angelic life is nowadays restored by those who follow their vocation in virginity.<sup>41</sup> In comparison with Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom seems to be a hardliner, though. To Gregory of Nyssa, procreation was useful for the production of a preconceived number of men. To Chrysostom, however, procreation may have been useful in the past, but it is not necessary any longer.<sup>42</sup> Chrysostom cannot disapprove of marriage on principle—it would make him liable to be suspected of heresy—but his depictions of the horrors of married life are deterring enough to stay away from it on practical grounds.<sup>43</sup> In his interpretations of the biblical text Chrysostom repudiates speculations on a double or twofold creation and on the foreknowledge of God, but his plain treatment of Gen 1:27–28 and 2:18ff. likewise confirms the priority of celibate life.

In the *Homilies on Genesis*,<sup>44</sup> Chrysostom explains that biblical authors often describe that which has not yet been created as though it were already created (X, 86a). Such was the case when the creation of male and female was reported in Gen 1:27. Chrysostom says that an explanation of the manner of how man and woman were formed is only given in Gen 2:7ff., since it is at this point that Scripture comes back to the point of our creation (XII, 103b). This makes clear that in Chrysostom's opinion the two biblical reports of creation refer to the same and single act of creation.

After the creation of male and female, God blessed them, saying "be fruitful and multiply . . . and have dominion . . ." (1:28). Of the

<sup>40</sup> Homily I,18 (276c).

<sup>41</sup> *De Virginitate* XI.1.

<sup>42</sup> *De Virginitate* XVI.1,2; XLIV.1.

<sup>43</sup> See especially *De non iterando coniugio* (IV).

<sup>44</sup> Migne PG 53. Translations in *Saint John Chrysostom, Homilies on Genesis*, The Fathers of the Church, a new translation, volume 47 (1–17) and 82 (18–45) (Washington D.C. 1985/1990). Quotations are from this translation by R.C. Hill.

words “be fruitful and multiply”, Chrysostom says that “anyone could see [that these] are said of the brute beasts and the reptiles alike, whereas ‘gain dominion and have control’ are directed to the man and woman” (X, 86a). This convenient if unlikely interpretation of course denies marriage and multiplication by intercourse in Paradise.

In Gen 2:18 God says that man needs a helpmate “like himself”. Chrysostom explains that the brute beasts could help Adam in his labours, but there was nothing yet equivalent to a woman, “possessed as she was of reason” (XIV, 116b). Woman was created “capable both of speaking and of providing much comfort to man by a sharing of her being” (XV, 122a). These few words betray a sense of friendship that is rarely heard in patristic literature. Even so, Chrysostom is hardly willing to recognize equality of the sexes, “for it was for the consolation of this man that this woman was created” (XV, 122a).<sup>45</sup> This consolation does not include the consolation of carnal love. In relation to Gen 2:25: “they were both naked, Adam and his wife, without feeling shame”, Chrysostom refers to “the transcendence of their blessed condition, how they were superior to all bodily concerns, how they lived on earth as if they were in heaven, and though in fact possessing a body they did not feel the limitation of their bodies” (XVI, 126b). For Chrysostom, as also for the other Fathers of the Early Church, this angelic condition excludes the kind of consolation that is not limited, but made possible by the body.

When God fashioned the rib from Adam into a woman, he acted like any good surgeon and anaesthetised the patient, causing drowsiness to come upon Adam (2:21) “Lest the experience cause him pain and afterwards he be badly disposed towards the creature formed him from his rib . . .” (XV, 120d). In spite of his sleep, Adam immediately recognizes the woman brought to him: “Now there is someone bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (2:23). This proves that Adam spoke under the influence of the prophetic grace and inspiration of the Holy Spirit (XV, 122c–d). Under the influence of grace Adam also said that “therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh”

---

<sup>45</sup> Chrysostom is usually very unfriendly to Eve and to women. Chrysostom says that Eve shared Adam’s blessing and his dominion over the animals (X, 86a). She presumably had equality of status, and that was only taken from her after the fall: since she abused it, she was subjected to her man (XVII, 144d). Chrysostom’s present utterance, that Eve was created for the consolation of Adam, hardly corresponds with her equality of status before the Fall.

(2:24). Genesis does not really say that this was an utterance of Adam, but it is convenient for Chrysostom to think so: "Where, tell me, did these things come from for him to utter? From what source did he gain knowledge of future events and the fact that the race of human beings should grow into a vast number? Whence, after all, did he come to know that there would be intercourse between man and woman? I mean, the consummation of that intercourse occurred after the Fall . . . Surely, it's obvious that before his disobedience he had a share in prophetic grace . . ." (XV, 123b–c).

Gen 4:1 demonstrates there had been no intercourse before the Fall since it says that "now, Adam had intercourse with his wife Eve": "Consider when this happened. After their disobedience, after their loss in the garden, then it was that the practice of intercourse had its beginning (XVIII, 153a)". Virginitly departed after the Fall because man was unworthy of such a good thing: "Accordingly, consider, I ask you, dearly beloved, how great the esteem of virginitly, how elevated and important a thing it is, surpassing human nature and requiring assistance from on high". (XVIII, 153a).

Chrysostom's homilies show a charming way, and one which is close to the biblical text, of making the creation of man and woman match celibate life. Still, his interpretations are not wholly convincing. Chrysostom can explain the biblical text by saying, for example, that woman was created as a helper because of her rationality, not because of her complementary sex. But he cannot explain why God did not create another man for that purpose. Gregory of Nyssa does answer these speculative questions; John Chrysostom did not even want to do so. But they both tried to achieve the same goal—keeping marriage and intercourse out of paradise—albeit in different ways.

### *Augustine*

In the Latin West these interpretations were largely shared by Ambrose, Jerome and the young Augustine.<sup>46</sup> But these interpretations were now also challenged for the first time by Jovinian. According to Jovinian, celibate life was not superior to marriage, heavenly rewards were the same for ascetics as for others, and all who had been

<sup>46</sup> See E.A. Clark, "Heresy, Ascetism, Adam, and Eve: Interpretations of Genesis 1–3 in the Later Latin Fathers", in: E.A. Clark, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith. Essays on Late Ancient Christianity* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter 1986) pp. 353–385.



baptized were of equal merit.<sup>47</sup> It seems that Jovinian based his defence of married life on Gen 1:28: 'be fruitful and multiply'.<sup>48</sup> It also seems that Jovinian proposed the possibility that man and woman could have had union without sin: before they had actually sinned.<sup>49</sup> Jovinian was refuted by Jerome's *Against Jovinian*, but Jerome's defence of the celibate life and virginity was so vehement that it discredited the ascetic movement: it seemed to imply a Manichean attack on married life.<sup>50</sup>

Augustine wrote about marriage and virginity in the context of this debate, and he defended marriage, though he came out with a preference for virginity. At the same time, he came to abandon his former spiritual interpretation of the creation of man and woman. In the ninth book of *De Genesi ad Litteram* Augustine began to defend the possibility of procreation in Paradise by intercourse. There was no sin in the union of man and woman if intercourse took place without lust. Augustine outlined this position in the Jovinian debate and elaborated it in the Pelagian debate. He defended marriage, even as a possibility in Paradise, in opposition to the so-called "Manichean tendencies". Against the Pelagians he would work out the impossibility of sinless sex in our present condition, because sex entailed lust.

The way that Augustine developed his ideas and his position has been studied often, and good surveys exist.<sup>51</sup> A discussion of his interpretation of the creation of man and woman can therefore be confined to two important innovations.

Firstly, like Philo, Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine reflected on a double creation. In contrast with these theologians, Augustine does not defend two creations, nor a twofold creation, but rather postulates two moments of creation.<sup>52</sup> The first creation is the estab-

<sup>47</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*. Cf. E.A. Clark, "Heresy . . .", p. 358.

<sup>48</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum* I.3.

<sup>49</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum* I.29. Cf. E.A. Clark, "Heresy . . .", pp. 359-361.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. E.A. Clark, "Heresy . . .", pp. 361-2.

<sup>51</sup> E.A. Clark, "Heresy . . ."; E.A. Clark, "'Adam's Only Companion': Augustine and the Early Christian Debate on Marriage" in: *Recherches Augustiniennes XXI* (1986), 139-162; M. Müller, *Die Lehre des hl. Augustinus von der Paradiese. Und ihre Auswirkung . . .* (Regensburg 1954); P. Brown, op. cit., 387-427; P. Agaësse and A. Solignac, *La Genèse au sens littéral en douze livres*, bibliothèque augustinienne vol. 48-49, vol. 49 additional note on pp. 516-530; J.M. Rist, *Augustine. Ancient thought baptized* (Cambridge 1994), 112-121: "Humanity and sexual differentiation".

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *De Genesi ad Litteram* IX.17.32-18.35.

ishment of the whole universe according to principles of development; the “causal reasons”. The second moment of creation consists of the development of what is potentially present already in the causal reasons of the *primo conditio* by God’s *providentia* or *administratio*, which governed the development.<sup>53</sup> Accordingly, Gen 1:27 reports that the potential man was created male and female, and Gen 2:7ff. refers to the formation of the actual man, who came into existence in the course of history.<sup>54</sup> This interpretation of course excludes the possibility of thinking of a man of an androgynous nature, after the image, or, taking the reference to the female in Gen 1:26 as being an anticipation, treating sexual differentiation as a secondary issue.

Secondly, and more importantly, Augustine accepted the possibility of marriage and intercourse in paradise. “I do not see”, he says, “in what other way the woman was made to be the helper of the man if procreation is eliminated, and I do not understand why it should be eliminated” (IX.7.12).<sup>55</sup> Woman was created as a helper to the man. If the man had needed a help to till the earth, another man would have been more useful; if he needed comfort, male friendship would have been more agreeable. Competitive quarrels between two men could have been settled by hierarchical relations, and God was surely able to create another man from Adam’s rib. “Consequently, I do not see in what sense the woman was made as a helper for the man if not for the sake of bearing children” (IX.5.9).

The woman would have been of no use if intercourse was not allowed in Paradise. Those who deny this “perhaps suppose that all union of the sexes is sinful” (IX.8.13). “But if the earth was to be filled by two human beings, how could they carry out this obligation to society except by procreation?” (IX.9.14). Paradisal procreation would be sinless, because man and woman would have complete control over their bodies and could have union without desire, using their genital organs like raising their hands (IX.10.18): “they did not have an appetite for carnal pleasure such as our bodies, sprung from mortal stock, today possess” (IX.10.16).

It is important to notice that Augustine only claims that there is a hypothetical possibility of intercourse in Paradise, for Adam and

<sup>53</sup> See P. Agaësse and A. Solignac, *La Genèse . . .*, vol. 48, additional note on pp. 653–668.

<sup>54</sup> See P. Agaësse and A. Solignac, *La Genèse . . .*, vol. 48, additional note on pp. 680–682.

<sup>55</sup> Translations are from J. Hammond Taylor, ACW 42 (New York 1982).

Eve only had union after they were driven out. Perhaps there was only a short period of time between the creation of Eve and the expulsion, perhaps God gave no order to be united (IX.4.8). But still, the crux of the matter is that Augustine did admit the possibility of marriage and intercourse in Paradise, keeping only concupiscence out.

Augustine's interpretation became important in Western theology and became a useful tool for the interpretations of the Reformation theologians. They took the creation of man and woman as a proof of the legitimacy and desirability of marriage. They of course faced the problem of bringing this interpretation in line with Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, in the same way as the Fathers of the Early Church had tried to bring their ascetic notions in line with the first chapters of Genesis.

# THE CREATION OF THE HUMAN IN RABBINIC INTERPRETATION

L. TEUGELS

## *Introduction: Midrash and the Dual Creation Account*

The Hebrew Bible is full of textual inequalities, doublets and contradictions which need to be explained and interpreted. As if to show that the presence of such “gaps”<sup>1</sup> is a main feature of the Book, it sets out with a formidable example: two different accounts of the creation of humankind. This paper discusses the way the rabbinic Sages dealt with the double account of human creation in their characteristic way of biblical interpretation: midrash.<sup>2</sup> In the “rabbinic mind”,<sup>3</sup> as in any pre-critical view of the Bible, God is the “implied author”<sup>4</sup> of the text and the events in the Bible; and if two versions

---

<sup>1</sup> The concept “gap” has been introduced into biblical studies—as far as we can trace it—by Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature), Bloomington 1985, 186–229. The procedure of “gap filling” in midrash is discussed extensively by one of the most important contemporary theorists of rabbinic midrash, namely Daniel Boyarin, in his book *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, Bloomington 1994. Boyarin defines a “gap” as “any element in the textual system of the Bible which demands interpretation for a coherent construction of the story, that is, both gaps in the narrow sense, as well as contradictions and repetitions, which indicate to the reader that she must fill in something that is not given in the text in order to read it” (p. 41).

<sup>2</sup> The rabbinic period is usually defined from the second until the eighth century CE—allowing some transgression of these chronological borders from both sides. Rabbinic literature includes the Mishnah, the Tosefta, the Palestinian and the Babylonian Talmuds and various Midrashim. For a description of the individual works we refer to G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, Edinburgh 1996. We use “midrash” with a small letter to denote the literary genre, the process, or the result of rabbinic commentary on the Hebrew Bible. As such, midrash is found in all the rabbinic works just mentioned. Midrash with a capital (plural Midrashim), refers to works which entirely consist of midrash, such as *Genesis Rabbah* and *Midrash Tanhuma*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the classic work of Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind*, New York 31972.

<sup>4</sup> The expression “implied author” is used by Boyarin, *Intertextuality*, 40, and means that the Bible presents itself as a divinely inspired work, or in any case that the rabbis believed it to be such. He adds that, to understand God as the implied author of the Torah, “is not a theological or dogmatic claim but a semiotic one. That is to say that it does not matter for our purposes here if the inscribing of God as author of the Bible is a product of human work and therefore a fiction or an effect of actual divine authority”.

of an event are given, this must entail a hidden meaning which needs to be revealed by interpretation.<sup>5</sup> The double creation account is one of the “gaps” gratefully taken up in rabbinic midrash, and filled in with explanations that became legends. The sequence of these words is not arbitrary: Because midrash presents itself mainly as hermeneutics and not, e.g., as homiletics or story-telling,<sup>6</sup> the process of the interpretation of the biblical text should be scrutinized first, even though its solutions may have gone and led a separate life as legends, as aggadah.<sup>7</sup> This is not to deny that sometimes already existing legends, e.g. the Greek myth of the hermaphrodite to be discussed further, are taken over by the rabbis, remolded, and used in their own way in midrash to explain a biblical “gap”. On the contrary: here, interpretation is also at the heart of the matter.

In this paper, both the process of interpreting the double creation account (midrash) and the process of the history of motives and legends (aggadah), inextricably interrelated in rabbinic literature, will be demonstrated by means of selected passages. In the wake of the discussion, a third question will arise, i.e. the rabbinic understanding of the creation and relation of man and woman—if any.

*Male and female He created them: the androgyne*

The earliest and best-known Midrash on the Book of Genesis, *Genesis Rabbah*, confronts us with two problems: Not only is the first account of human creation, which is found in Gen 1:26, in need of elucidation, especially in view of the almost-parallel in Gen 5:2 to this verse; also the relation with the second creation account in Gen 2, particularly when it deals with the creation of the woman, is problematic:<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> About the presuppositions behind the rabbinic interpretation of Scripture, especially in midrash, see e.g. A. Goldberg, “Die Schrift der rabbinischen Schriftausleger”, *FJB* 15 (1987) 1–15; A. Samely, “Scripture’s Implicature: The Midrashic Assumptions of Relevance and Consistency”, *JSS* 37 (1992) 167–205.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Boyarin, *Intertextuality*, 3–5 and passim.

<sup>7</sup> “Aggadah” is usually defined as all the narrative parts of Jewish literature, thus distinguishing it from halakhah, i.e. legal material. As such, “aggadah” is a broad term, including the interpretation of narrative biblical texts, or the narrative interpretation of any biblical text, but not restricted to biblical interpretation. Aggadah is therefore a much broader category than midrash. Nevertheless, both terms are often incorrectly confused, even in recent studies.

<sup>8</sup> The translations from *Genesis Rabbah* are from H. Freedman and M. Simon, *The Midrash Rabba*, 10 Vol., Vol. 1: Genesis, London 1977. Quotations from the Bible in the Midrash are given in italics according to the translation of the Jewish

*And God said: Let us make a human (adam)*<sup>9</sup> (Gen 1:26). (. . .). R. Jeremiah b. Leazar said: "When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He created him androgynous,<sup>10</sup> for it is said, *Male and female He created them (. . .) and He called their name: Adam* (Gen 5:2)." R. Samuel b. Nahman said: "When the Lord created Adam He created him double-faced,<sup>11</sup> then He split him and made him of two backs, one back on this side and one back on the other side." To this it is objected: But it is written, *And He took one of his ribs (tsela)* (Gen 2:21). This means: one of his *sides*, replied he, as you read, *And for the other side (tsela) of the Tabernacle* (Exod 26:20). (GenR 8:1)

The myth of the primeval androgyne split in two is not a rabbinic invention, as the use of two Greek loan words in the above passage already signals. It circulated in various forms in the Hellenistic world in which rabbinic Judaism emerged. Its origins can be traced back far into Greek mythology. It is, for example, adduced as an old legend in Aristophanes' eulogy on Eros in Plato's *Symposium*. The rabbis used this myth in their own way: they found it a useful hermeneutic tool to solve textual problems in the first account of human creation and to harmonize it with the second account. For this purpose, they adapted it to their own views: the existence of male-male (and female-female) androgynes, explaining the love between two persons of the same sex is, among other things, silently passed over in the midrash.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the Rabbis adopted the myth in view of their own hermeneutic purpose: the explanation of textual problems in the dual creation account.

---

Publication Society, as are all the biblical quotations in this paper. When required for the exposition, the translations are slightly adapted. Hebrew words are added between brackets when necessary to clarify the interpretation.

<sup>9</sup> The translation of the Hebrew *adam* is problematic. We have tried to render the form according to the meaning it has in the biblical or the midrashic text at hand. In most cases it can be rendered with "a human" or we just give the transliterated Hebrew word: *adam*. When the form is defined (*ha-adam*), we render it as "the human" or "the *adam*". Sometimes, the text seems to understand the undefined form as a personal name: then we render it as "Adam".

<sup>10</sup> A Greek loan-word is used here: *andrognos* (אנדרוגניס).

<sup>11</sup> A Greek loan-word is used here as well: *diprosopon* (דיפּרוּסופּוֹן).

<sup>12</sup> D. Boyarin, *Carnal Israel. Reading Sex in Talmudic Literature*, Berkeley 1993, esp. 31–46, presents the rabbinic use of the myth of the primeval androgyne as a transformation, and even a conscious resistance to its Hellenistic use. He especially underscores the corporeal and non-dualistic use of the myth by the rabbis, in contradistinction to its spiritual, dualistic treatment in Hellenistic and Hellenistic-Jewish (Philo) literature. The treatment of the myth is part of a larger discussion of the differences between the rabbinic and the Hellenistic(-Jewish) and Christian views on sexuality. Despite Boyarin's efforts to demonstrate the opposite, his radical distinction between "rabbinic" and "Hellenistic" views on sexuality entails the same danger of dualism

The first difficulty is found in Gen 1:26, the verse on which the midrash draws, in combination with the following verse 27, not quoted in the midrash but clearly presupposed:

And God said, 'Let us make a human in our image, after our likeness (. . .)'. And God created the human in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.

The double switch from singular to plural in these verses, describing God as "us" and "He" and the human as "him" and "them", has always been problematic for readers and interpreters of the Bible, and many solutions have been proposed, differing according to the tradition, time and view of the reader.<sup>13</sup> We will not deal extensively with the problem of God's plural speech; one example of a midrash that draws on this problem may suffice here:

The heretics asked R. Simlai: 'How many deities created the world?' 'I and you must inquire of the first day,' replied he, as it is written: *For ask now of the first days* (Deut 4:32). Not, 'Since the day gods created (*baru*) man' is written here, but *God created (bara)* (ib.). Then they asked him a second time: 'Why is it written, *In the beginning Elohim [plural] created* (Gen 1:1)?' 'In the beginning *baru* Elohim is not written here,' answered he, 'but *bara Elohim the heaven and the earth.*' R. Simlai said: 'wherever you find a point [apparently] supporting the heretics, you find the refutation at its side'. They asked him again: 'What is meant by, *And God said, Let us make a human?*' 'Read what follows,'

---

against which rabbinic Judaism is said to have been safeguarded. It is typical that Boyarin, for example, who is otherwise so sensible to the question, keeps silent about the rabbinic neglect of the "homosexual" possibilities of the myth. This naiveté is disappointing in view of Boyarin's major contribution to midrash study in general (in e.g. *Intertextuality*). Moreover, the sharp opposition the author makes between "rabbinic" and "Hellenistic" seems to overlook the efforts to reduce the opposition between Judaism and Hellenism in contemporary research.

<sup>13</sup> An interpretation that is found in many variations in rabbinic literature is that the plural refers to God and the angels, with whom He discussed the creation of the *adam*. See e.g. BT Sanh 38b; GenR 8:3-4. Often, this interpretation is found in a context of a (fictive?) debate with *minim*, sectarians, who found in the plural speech (and in the plural name of God: Elohim), a reason to accuse the Jews of polytheism or rather to convince them that even the Bible contains a "proof" for more than one divine entity (see also GenR 8:8). After the rabbinic period, Jewish scholars such as Saadiah Gaon distanced themselves from the idea that God discussed creation, or even created, together with the angels, because they saw in it indeed a dangerous, polytheistic, interpretation in view of Christian interpretations of the verse, who applied the "we" to God and his Son. See e.g. K. Middleton and M. Poorthuis, "Joodse kritiek op de christelijke triniteitsidee. De theologische vruchtbaarheid van het verschil", *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 37 (1997) 343-367, esp. 352.

replied he: 'not, "And gods created (*wa-yivru*) the human" is written here, but *And God created (wa-yivra)*' (Gen 1:27). When they went out his disciples said to him: "Them you have dismissed with a mere makeshift, but how will you answer us?" (GenR 8:9).

The answer of R. Simlai to his disciples will be mentioned later. But first we will focus on the fact that the *adam* is, in Gen 1:27, treated as a singular object ("He created him"), but in the same breath called "male and female". To complicate the matter even further, Gen 5:2, a close parallel to Gen 1:27, adds that God "called *their* name *adam*". The image of the androgyne, present in the *Umwelt* of the rabbis, offered the perfect solution for these textual problems: the singular language refers to the undifferentiated human of the first account and the plural refers to the situation after the division as related in the second account. We leave the question open whether the image of the creature that was sewn in two was treated by the rabbis as an actual fact or rather as a symbol (as it was by Aristophanes in the *Symposium*). Moreover, the androgynous *adam* has the advantage of keeping the female in the "image of God". That this is not a modern feminist reading, but an ancient rabbinic one, is demonstrated by the following text, which follows immediately on the previous quotation and which contains the answer of R. Simlai to his disciples:

Said he to them: 'In the past Adam was created from dust and Eve was created from Adam; but henceforth it shall be: *In our image, after our likeness* (Gen 1:26); neither man without woman nor woman without man, and neither of them without the Divine Spirit.' (GenR 8:9)

In his "real" interpretation of the plural speech of God—which is less literal but more philosophical—which R. Simlai only reveals to his disciples, he explains the plurality of God as referring to the presence of many aspects in the divine image: male, female, and divine. Similarly, in a further passage in GenR, after an enumeration of the reasons why it is not "good" that a man should be alone (Gen 2:18), follow these remarks:

R. Hiyya b. Gomdi said: He is also incomplete, for it is written: *And He blessed them, and called their name Adam* (Gen 5:2). Some say: He even impairs the divine likeness: thus it is written, *For in his image did God make the adam* (Gen 9:6), which is followed by: *Be fertile, then, and increase* (v. 7). (GenR 17:2)



And in the Babylonian Talmud it reads:<sup>14</sup>

R. Eleazar said: Any man (*adam*) who has no wife is no man (*adam*), as it is stated: *Male and female He created them (. . .) and He called their name: Adam* (Gen 5:2). (BT Jeb 63b)

*Adam* has been translated as “man” in this passage, because he is clearly distinguished from a woman here. On the other hand, the fact that *adam* has both a male and a female side—as is stressed in this passage—enables us also to draw the conclusion that a woman without a man is no *adam*.

Returning to GenR 8:1, the first quoted passage, the image of the androgyne served to solve yet another textual problem: the discrepancy between the two creation accounts. In the view represented by R. Jeremiah b. Leazar,<sup>15</sup> further elaborated or modified by R. Samuel bar Nahman, the first creation account referred to the androgyne, whereas the second to the division into male and female. Thus the problem seemed to have been solved; but it returns immediately in the anonymous “objection”: what about the story of the rib (Gen 2:21)? R. Samuel b. Nahman manages to integrate the “rib” in his version of the account: using the common rabbinic hermeneutic technique of putting two verses where the same word occurs side-to-side (*gezerah shavah*), he demonstrates that *tsela* need not mean “rib” but can also mean “side” as in Exod 26:20.<sup>16</sup>

The problem of the apparent creation of a second woman seems to be solved by this midrash. But, even though this seems to be often neglected, the existence of a second creation story is also problematic as to the creation of the man. If it has already been said that God created the human “male and female”—what can be the meaning of a creation of an *adam* from dust of the earth (Gen 2:7)?

<sup>14</sup> The translations from the Babylonian Talmud in this paper are our own.

<sup>15</sup> In this paper, we sometimes refer to the statement of a certain rabbi. This contains, however, no historical claims, but only refers to the way it is presented in the source. Attributions to named authorities in rabbinic literature are very problematic and should never be taken at face value. They are often pseudo-epigraphical or just corrupted in the history of transmission. Cf. J. Neusner, “Evaluating the Attributions of Sayings to Named Sages in the Rabbinic Literature”, in: J. Neusner (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism. New Series. Volume 7*, Atlanta, Georgia 1995, 125–141.

<sup>16</sup> The same explanation by R. Samuel b. Nahmani (probably the same Sage is meant) is found in the midrash on Gen 2:21 (“he took one of his ribs”), in GenR 17:6. There, however, it is followed by interpretation by (another) R. Samuel, who holds that a real “rib” is meant.

It should not surprise, therefore, to find another “androgynous” interpretation in the midrash on the *second* creation story. Also the first *adam* of Gen 2:7, was, according to R. Ḥuna’s view, not a “man” but rather a “human”:

*Then the Lord God formed the adam from the dust (afar) of the earth (adamah)* (Gen 2:7) (. . .) R. Ḥuna said: *afar* is masculine, while *adamah* is feminine: a potter takes male dust and female earth in order that his vessels may be sound. (GenR 14:7)

The fact that the rabbis “harmonised” the two creation accounts is, of course, a modern interpretation of their midrashic activities. For them, the existence of two separate, equally valuable creation accounts was unconceivable. In their view, both stories fused into one, each describing another aspect, or another phase of the creation of the human.

### *Lilith*

Another aggadic motif which touches upon the creation narratives is that of Lilith. The figure of Lilith as a female demon threatening celibate men and new-born babies goes back far into ancient near eastern history.<sup>17</sup> In rabbinic texts, as in the Hebrew Bible, she is only mentioned in a few passages in a very unclear way.<sup>18</sup> However, in medieval Judaism, starting with the *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, she is identified with a woman created before Eve, from the earth like Adam, and therefore claiming an equal status.<sup>19</sup> After she and Adam had a fight about who should lie below and who on top during intercourse, she uttered the divine name and flew away into the air,

<sup>17</sup> See G. Sholem, “Lilith”, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 11, col. 245–249; M. Hutter, “Lilith” in K. van der Toorn – B. Becking and P.W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons*, Leiden <sup>2</sup>1999, 520–21.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Is. 34:14; BT Git 69b, BT Shab 151b, BT Nidda 24b, BT Erub 100b, TgJob 1:15.

<sup>19</sup> The *Alphabet of Ben Sira* is dated between the 8th and 10th century CE. It has a satirical and very unorthodox character. The passage about the Lilith can be found in an explanation given by Ben Sira to Nebukhadnezar about the use of amulets. See E. Yassif, *The Tales of Ben Sira in the Middle Ages* (Hebr.), Jerusalem 1984, esp. 63–67. See his critical text of two versions of the passage on pp. 231–2, and an additional passage, only found in one version (B) on pp. 289–90. For a traditional edition of the text of the *Alphabet of Ben Sira* see J.D. Eisenstein, *Otsar ha-Midrashim*, New York 1928, 1:43–50 (= M. Steinschneider, *Alphabetum Siracides*, 1858).

refusing to come back to Adam, even after the intervention of some angels. Since then, she causes sickness to infants, and her damaging activities can only be prevented by the use of amulets. According to Gershom Sholem,<sup>20</sup> the figure of Lilith was, just as that of the androgyne, borne out of the need to harmonise the two creation accounts: Lilith was the woman of the first account, and Eve that of the second. This thesis can, however, be questioned, because in the *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, Lilith is said to have been “created from the earth”, when God saw “that it is not good for man to be alone”. These are references to the *second* creation story, and not to the first. The same can be said of two passages in rabbinic midrash that allude to a “first Eve” (GenR18:4<sup>21</sup> and 22:7<sup>22</sup>). Especially the first—which does not explicitly mention a “first Eve”, but refers rather to a female created before Eve—, seems to refer to a Lilith-like figure:

The *adam* said: *This time she (zot ha-pa'am) is bone of my bones* (Gen 2:23). R. Judah b. Rabbi said: ‘At first He created her for him and he saw her full of discharge and blood; thereupon He removed her from him and recreated her a second time (*pa'am shenu'ah*). Hence he said: *This time she is bone of my bones.*’ This time it is she of the previous time (*pa'am*). This is she who is destined to strike the bell and to speak [in strife] against me, as you read: *A golden bell (pa'amon)* (Exod 28:34). It is she who troubled me (*me-fa'amtani*) all night. All these remarks showed his amazement. (GenR 18:4)

The midrash in this passage is quite complicated and requires some explanation (which we only give with some reservation).<sup>23</sup> The expression *zot ha-pa'am* is the focus of the interpretation. The first ques-

<sup>20</sup> Cf. G. Sholem, *Zur Kabbala und ihre Symbolik*, Zürich 1960, 215–6.

<sup>21</sup> A variant of the same midrash is found in GenR 17:7, where it appears in a conversation between a rabbi and a Roman lady (*matrona*).

<sup>22</sup> The meaning of this passage is very unclear. Referring to Gen 4:8, Jehuda bar Ami explains that Cain and Abel had a fight about “the first Eve”, which is refuted by R. Ibu, because the “first Eve” had already returned to dust. Thus, they must have been arguing about somebody other than their own mother (who could otherwise have been called “the first Eve” just like Adam is often called “the first Adam”), because she was still alive at that time. Sholem, *Zur Kabbala*, 216, suggests that Cain and Abel fought about the possession of this woman, who was not related to Adam (because she was created separately from the earth and not from his rib), and therefore to neither of them. Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, 95 states about this passage that “this may be the trace of a longer narrative that contained the entire story of a woman who was created and rebelled, demanded sexual parity, and lives on as a demon. But the evidence for such a construction is meager indeed.”

<sup>23</sup> For some possibilities, see J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, *Bereshit Rabba mit kritischen Apparat und Kommentar*, 3 Vol., Jerusalem 1965 (= Berlin, 1903–1936), Vol. 1, 163–4 (notes).

tion is whether *zot* refers to the woman or to *pa'am*, "time". As far as the Hebrew is concerned, both options are possible.<sup>24</sup> The second question is the meaning of *ha-pa'am*. The passage can be divided in four interpretations, each giving a different answer on both questions. In the first interpretation, *zot* is read as defining *pa'am*: this time. This implies that there was a previous time. Hence the interpretation that "He created her a second time (*pa'am shenu'ah*)". This second creation was necessary because Adam refused to accept her because she was "full of discharge and blood". The second interpretation also reminds one of an earlier creation. It paraphrases the phrase *zot ha-pa'am* as "this time it is she of the previous time".<sup>25</sup> The difference with the first reading is that *zot* refers here to the woman; *ha-pa'am* is read as "the previous time", like in the expression *pa'am ahat*: once upon a time. In the third, less literal interpretation, *ha-pa'am* is associated with the word for bell: *pa'amon*.<sup>26</sup> *Zot* is again applied to the woman in this reading. The precise meaning of this midrash is not clear; but it seems to refer to making noise and being angry.<sup>27</sup> The fourth interpretation—or is it a specification of the third?—continues on this track and associates *pa'am* with the verb פָּעַם, which in the *pi'el* means "to beat, to perturb" (whence also *pa'amon*).

It is hard to say anything about the precise meaning of this passage. But the reference to the creation of a woman before Eve, and the connotations of noise and strife remind one of the nocturnal battle of Adam and Lilith in the *Alphabet*. We will not draw any further on this motif, because it is only developed extensively in post- or late rabbinic literature.<sup>28</sup> From the above passage, however, it appears that the motif of a first Eve, who was in conflict with Adam,

<sup>24</sup> In most modern translations, *zot* is read as referring to the woman. So e.g. JPS, NRSV and the German translation of Buber and Rosenzweig: "Diesmal ist sie!". See also C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11* (Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament, I/1) Neukirchen 1974, 315.

<sup>25</sup> Hebr.: וְזֹאת הַפְּעַם זֹאת הִיא שֵׁל אִתָּהּ הַפְּעַם.

<sup>26</sup> Note that verses from this chapter are also applied, in a very positive context, to the first woman in GenR 18:1 (see further in the section "He Made Her From a Modest Part").

<sup>27</sup> Problematic is, however, that it seems to refer to the woman who was created the second time: she is destined to strike the bell. But it cannot be excluded that the *darshan*, who already mentioned the first, discarded, creation, thinks of that one.

<sup>28</sup> An extensive study of the figure of Lilith, from Babylonian sources up to the *Alphabet of Ben Sira* has just been finished by Sil Timmerman in his final paper for the Faculty of Theology in Utrecht: S. Timmerman, "Lilith. De vroege geschiedenis van het nachtspook in joodse bronnen tot en met het Alfabeth van Ben Sira", Utrecht 1999. I want to thank Sil for his creative work and our interesting conversations about this fascinating motif.

was known to at least some of the rabbinic Sages. It cannot be excluded that these ideas were considered “unorthodox” and as much as possible banned from the midrash (as they were from the Hebrew Bible); which would explain the vague character of the passage.

The distinction between the two creation accounts does not appear to be the direct reason, neither in GenR nor in the *Alphabet of Ben Sira*, to invoke a first Eve/Lilith to solve the problem. On the other hand, the problem of the two creations of a woman (and a man) was probably present in the back of the minds of the rabbis. Applied in the context of either the first or the second creation account, which seem to have fused to one story in their perception, the Lilith/first Eve as well as the androgyne betray the efforts of the rabbis to cope with a two-step creation.

### *The creation of Adam from the adamah*

Even though the androgynous state of the “first adam” of Gen 1:26 (and Gen 2:7) is justified by the biblical text and thematized in the midrash (GenR 1:8 and 14:7), Adam is, in rabbinic literature, as in early Christian interpretation, more often than not conceived as male from the beginning. This phenomenon, together with a total conflation of the two creation accounts, is found in this passage from the Babylonian Talmud:

R. Johanan b. Hanina said: ‘The day has twelve hours. In the first hour his dust was gathered; in the second he was made into a formless mass (*golem*); in the third his limbs were extended; in the fourth, a soul was cast in him; in the fifth he stood on his legs; in the sixth he gave names; in the seventh Eve was given him as a mate; in the eighth they ascended in bed as two and descended as four; in the ninth he was commanded not to eat from the tree; in the tenth he sinned; in the eleventh he was sentenced; in the twelfth he was expelled and departed, because it is written: *A human (adam) cannot spend the night in honour* (Ps 49:13).’ (BT Sanh 38b)<sup>29</sup>

Ps. 49:13 is adduced here as a proof-text, because *adam* is the subject of this verse. The rabbinic reading of this verse, which is in fact a very literal reading, is somewhat different from the usual one.<sup>30</sup> Quoted

<sup>29</sup> The whole of BT Sanh 38b contains many traditions about the creation of the human. Some of them are also found (often with some differences) in other rabbinic sources.

<sup>30</sup> JPS has: “Man does not abide in honor”.

at the end of the passage, it reflects the condition of the (first) human: he could not even complete one day in "honour". That Adam was first made a "formless mass", as related with regard to the second hour, refers to a tradition which is also found in GenR 8:1, just after the passage about the androgyne quoted as the first text in this paper. There, it is presented as a midrash on Psalm 139:16: "Your eyes saw my unformed limbs" (גלמי ראו עיניך). The Jewish tradition puts this Psalm in the mouth of Adam:

R. Tanhuma in the name of R. Banayah and R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Leazar said: 'He created him as a lifeless mass (*golem*) extending from one end of the world to the other'; thus it is written: *Your eyes saw my unformed limbs (golmi)* (Ps 139:16). R. Joshua b. R. Nehemiah and R. Judah b. R. Simon in R. Leazar's name said: 'He created him filling the whole world.' How do we know [that he stretched] (. . .) from north to south? Because it says: *Ever since God created man on earth, from the one end of heaven to the other* (Deut 4:32). (GenR 8:1)

The "unformed limbs" or "mass" (*golem*), has tickled the imagination of many interpreters in the Jewish tradition. In later Jewish history, the idea of a human trying to create life starting from a *golem* and using magic to let the creature operate as a living being, comes back with regular intervals, culminating in the famous tradition about Rabbi Löw of Prague.<sup>31</sup> In the rabbinic tradition, represented by the texts just quoted, the image of an "unformed mass" was used to visualize the creation of the *adam* from earth: just as a potter forms a lump of clay into a distinct shape. The fact that the *golem* extended from one end of the world to the other is, in this midrash, supported by Deut 4:32. In GenR 14:8 another explanation why the *golem* had to be so large is given: his head needed to reach the heavens, from where his soul was infused into his nostrils.<sup>32</sup>

*He blew into his nostrils the breath of life* (Gen 2:7). This teaches that He set him up as a lifeless mass reaching from earth to heaven and then infused a soul into him. Because in this world [he was endowed with life] by breathing; but in the time to come he shall receive it as a gift, as it is written: *I will put My breath into you and you shall live again* (Ezek 37:14). (GenR 14:8 end)

<sup>31</sup> For the traditions about the *golem*, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 7, col. 753–756; Sholem, *Zur Kabbala*, chapter 5: "Die Vorstellung vom Golem in ihren tellurischen und magischen Beziehungen" (pp. 209–259).

<sup>32</sup> There are many other explanations for the enormous stature of the *golem*. See e.g. BT Sanh 38a and b.

Here, the image of the *golem* serves to distinguish the *adam* before and after he was endowed with a living soul, that enabled him to move and lead his own life. In another midrash, found in GenR 8:1, the living soul which was infused into the first human is identified with the “spirit of God hovering over the water” (Gen 1:2).

In the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, one of the Aramaic interpretative translations of the Pentateuch, various traditions about the creation of Adam—some derived from midrashic interpretations—were conflated in a very succinct way.<sup>33</sup> Its rendering of Gen 2:7 reads as follows:<sup>34</sup>

The Lord God created Adam with two inclinations. And He took dust from the site of the sanctuary and from the four winds of the world, and a mixture of all the waters of the world and created him red, black and white. And He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the breath became in the body of Adam a spirit capable of speech, to give light to the eyes and to give hearing to the ears.

We will only explain some of the interpretations in this targumic text. As in midrash, also in targum there is as a rule a “peg” in the text on which the interpretation “hangs”. One of the main differences between targum and midrash is that in targum (unlike midrash), the biblical text and its interpretation are fused into one “translation”, and hermeneutic moves are not made explicit.<sup>35</sup> As has already been said, however, targum and midrash share many common interpretations and sometimes it is possible to reconstruct the hermeneutics

<sup>33</sup> The Targumim, interpretative translations of the Hebrew Bible in Aramaic, are sometimes included in the “rabbinic literature” and sometimes not. In view of their time of origin, interpretative traditions and hermeneutics, there is no reason why they should not be treated as rabbinic literature. Because of their important interpretative character, they should not be considered as just “Bible translations”, but rather as “Oral Torah”. See, for an introduction in targum and the various Targumim: Ph.S. Alexander, “Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scripture”, in: M.J. Mulder (ed.), *Mikra. Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (CRINT II.1), Assen-Maastricht 1988, 217–253, or, more extensively, W. Smelik, *The Targum of Judges*, Leiden 1995, 1–112.

<sup>34</sup> Translation: M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (The Aramaic Bible, 1B), Edinburgh 1992, 22.

<sup>35</sup> Actually, this is not often the case in midrash either; but there it is usually easier to reconstruct the hermeneutic operation, because the distinction between the quotation from the Hebrew Bible and the interpretation is clear. In targum, everything is conflated in the Aramaic paraphrase. On the differences between targum and midrash, see A. Samely, “Is Targumic Aramaic Rabbinic Hebrew? A Reflection of Midrashic and Targumic Rewording of Scripture” *JJS* 45 (1994) 92–100.

underlying a targumic interpretation by means of a midrashic parallel. This is, for example, the case with the creation of Adam with two inclinations. The existence of two inclinations, the good inclination and the bad inclination, is a common rabbinic theme.<sup>36</sup> The fact that the human was already created with these two inclinations is arrived at by a midrashic interpretation which is, among others, found in GenR 14:4. The midrash draws on a double textual peg, found in the verb form וַיִּצַר : “and he formed”, which is spelled in Gen 2:7 with two “yuds”. This full spelling, differs from the defective spelling in v. 19 (וַיִּצַר), describing the creation of the animals. Moreover, the Hebrew word for “inclination” is יִצַר. These two textual data were combined and the form וַיִּצַר was interpreted as a hint of the original presence of two inclinations in the human: the *yetser ha-tov* and the *yetser ha-ra*.<sup>37</sup>

Creation from dust from the site of the sanctuary, mentioned in the targum, is arrived at in GenR 14:8 by means of a comparison with Exod 20:21. Here, Moses is instructed to make a sanctuary from *adamah* (earth).<sup>38</sup> Also the creation of the human in three colours is remarkable. In *Pirke de rabbi Eliezer* Chapter 11, four colours are mentioned: red, black, white and green, related to dust from the four corners of the earth. This corresponds to the “four winds” mentioned in the targum.<sup>39</sup> The most logical explanation seems to be that the various colours refer to different human races, the existence of which was known to the rabbis, and must therefore have raised questions about the skin colour of the original *adam*.

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. E. Urbach, *The Sages. Their Concepts and Beliefs*, 2 Vol., Jerusalem <sup>2</sup>1979, Vol. 1, 471–483.

<sup>37</sup> In GenR 14, other explanations of the two “yuds” can also be found: They are said to refer to the formation of Adam and Eve; to two kinds of humans: one viable at seven months and one at nine months; to two aspects of the human: one partaking of the celestial life and the other of the life of the animals; and to a formation in this world and one in the future world.

<sup>38</sup> In the Bible it is said that the *adam* was created from dust of the *adamah*; but nowhere is this name explained etymologically. Also in rabbinic literature, this etymology is not often explained, probably because it was so obvious. Only in GenR 17:4 it is stated that Adam, when he had to give himself a name as he had done with the animals, liked to be called “Adam”, because he was created from the *adamah*.

<sup>39</sup> Other traditions refer to other substances out of which Adam was formed, such as dust from the East, the West, the South and the North; or earth, water, air and fire. See L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 Vol., Philadelphia 1909–1938, Vol. V, 72–3.



*A helper corresponding to him*

We will now focus on the midrash of the creation of the woman according to Gen 2:18–24:

(18) The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the *adam* to be alone; I will make him a helper corresponding to him'.<sup>40</sup> (19) And the Lord God formed out of the earth all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky; and brought them to the *adam* to see what he would call them; and whatever the *adam* called each living creature, that would be its name. (20) And the *adam* gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to all the wild beasts; but for Adam<sup>41</sup> no helper corresponding to him was found. (21) So the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon the *adam*; and while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. (22) And the Lord God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the *adam* into a woman; and He brought her to the *adam*. (23) The *adam* said: 'This one at last/Is bone of my bones/And flesh of my flesh/This one shall be called Woman (*ishah*)/For from man (*ish*) was she taken.' (24) Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh.

Two elements stand out in this story: the woman is destined to be an *ezer kenegdo*—a helper corresponding to him—for the lonely Adam (v. 18, 20). And she is made from a rib (vv. 21–22). The first will be discussed now and the second in the next section.

The expression *ezer kenegdo* raises several difficulties. It is not a standard Hebrew expression and, whereas the meaning of *ezer* seems to be no problem,<sup>42</sup> the meaning of the apposition *kenegdo* is controversial. *Neged* can be translated as "opposite", but also as "opposed to" or "corresponding to". Some Bible translations construe it as "partner".<sup>43</sup> *Ke-negdo* means, depending on either of these translations: "as opposed to him"; "as a counterpart for him"; or "as a partner for him". Words with an uncertain, ambiguous or double meaning are treated by the rabbinic sages as interesting "pegs" on which to hang midrash. The exegetical problems afford good starting points for different interpretations that more often than not transgress the bor-

<sup>40</sup> Hebr: עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ. The JPS Translation has "a fitting helper"; but the current translation was chosen because it is more literal and fits better with the midrashic interpretations to be expounded.

<sup>41</sup> Here, the word *adam* is not defined, and can be considered as a name, as it is also translated in the JPS translation.

<sup>42</sup> As a matter of fact it means "help", but with respect to this verse it is usually construed as "helpmate", "helper".

<sup>43</sup> So e.g. the New Revised Standard Version.

ders of what would now be called “exegesis”. This is not meant in a derogatory way, because the aims and methods of midrash are essentially different from these of modern exegetes.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the multi-interpretable expression *ezer kenegdo* serves as a starting point for further reflection on the merits of Adam in the Babylonian Talmud:<sup>45</sup>

R. Eleazar said: ‘What is the meaning of the scriptural text: *I will make an ezer kenegdo*? If he is worth it, she is his helper, and if he is not worth it, she is against him.’ And there are others who say: ‘R. Eleazar raised a contradiction: It is written [as though it could be read]<sup>46</sup> *kenagdo* (opposing him) but we read *kenegdo* (corresponding to him):<sup>47</sup> when he is worth it, she is a counterpart for him, but when he is not, she chastises him (*menagado*).’ (BT Jeb 63a)

In this example of midrash found in the Talmud, two different interpretations are present. The first simply splits the expression *ezer kenegdo* in two and reads *ezer* as a positive term: helper, and *kenegdo* as a negative term, denoting opposition. The second reading focuses on the second term, *kenegdo*, and draws on the possibilities of the (unvocalised) Hebrew script; which is a very common hermeneutic procedure in midrash. The result of this reading, however, is very similar to the first.

The passage in Jebamot continues with some other speculations about the relation between man and woman based on the creation story in Genesis 2:

R. Jose met Elijah<sup>48</sup> and asked him: ‘It is written *I will make him a helper*. In which way is a woman a helper for a man?’ He said to him: ‘A man brings wheat, but does he eat wheat; and flax, but does he

<sup>44</sup> On the difference between “midrash” and “exegesis”, see A. van der Heyde, “Midrash and Exegesis”, in: J. Frishman & L. Van Rompay (eds.), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation. A Collection of Essays* (TEG, 5), Leuven, Peeters, 1997, 43–56, esp. 43–50. (What follows in the same article includes illustrations of “midrash”; but they seem to suggest a rather distorted image of midrash in which its hermeneutic function is neglected in favour of its so-called homiletical-rhetorical functions).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. also GenR 17:2.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. J. Neusner, *The Talmud of Babylonia. 13b: Tractate Jebamot chapters 4–6*, Atlanta, Georgia 1992, 142.

<sup>47</sup> The first form is spelled כנגדו and the second בניגדו. The first form is derived from the verb נגד: to oppose. See M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bawli and Yerushalmi and the Midrashic Literature*, 2 vol., New York 1950, col. 872b.

<sup>48</sup> An encounter between a Sage and Elijah is quite common in rabbinic literature. The tradition maintains that, after his translation into heaven, Eliah appeared frequently to intervene in human affairs, as a teacher and guide. See Ginzburg, *The Legends*, Vol. 4, 202–233.

wear flax? Does she not bring light to his eyes and put him on his feet? R. Eleazar further stated: 'What is the meaning of the scriptural text: *This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh* (Gen 2:23)? This teaches that Adam had intercourse with all the animals but found no satisfaction until he had intercourse with Eve.'

The first interpretation in this text draws on the word *ezer*. It is considered here on its own without reference to *kenegdo*. It is not a very sophisticated midrash (even though transmitted in the name of Elijah himself!), and expounds on the domestic and helping qualities of a woman. The second is based on Gen 2:23. Notwithstanding its crude character, it does make sense as an interpretation of the text: Why does Adam say "at last" (lit.: this time)? Because it had just been said that "God brought her to the man", it could be understood that they had sexual intercourse. The expression "flesh of my flesh", and the conclusion in v. 24 seem to point in this direction too. Hence the interpretation that "the former times"—i.e. when he had intercourse with the animals, who were at first destined to be his *ezer kenegdo* (vv. 18–20)—he did not find them to be "flesh of his flesh". The woman, however, made from his own "bone", did satisfy him as a "helper corresponding to him".

*He made her from a modest part*

Apart from "flesh of his flesh", the woman is also called "bone of his bone". In the story, this is not just an expression, because she is literally built from his bone: taken from one of his ribs. Despite the creative interpretation of R. Samuel in the first quoted text, we can safely translate *tsela* as "rib" in this section. To illustrate that rabbinic midrash is quite diverse in its judgment of the qualities of the woman, we quote again from Genesis Rabbah:

*And the Lord built (wqyyiben) the rib* (Gen 2:22).

A. R. Eleazar said in the name of R. Jose b. Zimra: 'She was endowed with more understanding (*binah*) than a man. For we learned elsewhere: The vows of an eleven-year-old maiden are subject to examinations; those of a twelve-year-old maiden are valid, and we examine her in the whole of the twelfth year. The vows of a twelve-year-old youth are subject to examination; those of a thirteen-year-old youth are valid, and we examine him in the whole of the thirteenth year.' R. Jeremiah said in the name of R. Samuel b. R. Isaac: 'Some reverse it, because a woman generally stays at home, whereas a man goes out into the streets and learns understanding from people.'

B. R. Aibu—others state the following in R. Bannayah's name, and it was also taught in the name of R. Simeon b. Yoḥai—said: 'He [God] adorned her like a bride and brought her to Him, for there are places where coiffure is called building.' R. Hama b. R. Ḥanina said: 'What think you, that He brought her to him from under a carob tree or a sycamore tree! Surely He first decked her out with twenty-four pieces of finery and then brought her to him!' Thus it is written: *You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your adornment: Carnelian, chrysolite, and amethyst; Beryl, lapis lazuli and jasper; Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald; And gold beautifully wrought for you, Mined for you, prepared the day you were created* (Ezek 28:13). (GenR 18:1)

C. R. Joshua of Shikhnin said in R. Levi's name: *wayyiben* is written, signifying that He considered well (*hitbonnen*) from what part to create her. Said He: 'I will not create her from [Adam's] head, lest she be swelled-headed; nor from the eye, lest she be a coquette; nor from the ear, lest she be an eavesdropper; nor from the mouth, lest she be a gossip; nor from the heart, lest she be prone to jealousy; nor from the hand, lest she be light-fingered; nor from the foot, lest she be a gad-about; but from the modest part of man, for even when he stands naked, that part is covered.' And as He created each limb, He ordered her, 'Be a modest woman.' Yet in spite of all this, *You spurned all my advice, And would not hear my rebuke* (Prov 1:25). I did not create her from the head, yet she is swelled-headed, as it is written, *They walk with heads thrown back* (Is 3:16); nor from the eye, yet she is a coquette: *With roving eyes* (ib.); nor from the ear, yet she is an eavesdropper: *Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent* (Gen 18:10); nor from the heart, yet she is prone to jealousy: *Rachel became envious of her sister* (Gen 30:1); nor from the hand, yet she is light-fingered: *And Rachel stole her father's household idols* (Gen 31:19); nor from the foot, yet she is a gadabout: *Now Dinah went out etc.* (Gen 34:1). (GenR 18:2)

Despite the considerable differences as regards to contents, the three interpretations to be distinguished in this passage (called A, B and C) are anchored in the same textual problem which they try to solve in different ways: The verb "to build" which is used to describe the creation of the woman—whereas Adam and the animals were "formed" from dust of the earth (v. 7. 19)—is unexpected. The first interpretation (A) plays, in a typical rabbinic way, on the likeness of two verbal stems: *banah* (to build) and *bin* (to understand), whence the noun *bina* (understanding). Thus: God made the rib into an understanding creature (unlike both former creations). The remark of R. Jeremiah does not belong to the midrash *stricto sensu*<sup>49</sup> because it does

<sup>49</sup> A. Goldberg calls a comment which does not explicitly refer to a quotation from Scripture "objectsprachlich", whereas midrash, which according to him should

not explain the use of the verb “to build”. It is, rather, a secondary comment<sup>50</sup> which reflects the view of those who disagree with the midrash of R. Eleazar.

The second interpretation (B) takes the verb “to build” literally, but applies it not to the act of creation, but rather to the adornment of the woman who was “built” like a beautiful construction with an especially elegant “tower” on top: her coiffure. The remarks of R. Hama b. R. Hanina are elaborations of the same idea, i.e. that the woman was made carefully and adorned beautifully before she was brought to Adam.

The third interpretation (C) draws on the literal meaning of “building”, which presupposes strong material. The rabbis made this the starting point (or excuse) for an exposition about the materials from which the woman was *not* made, thereby giving free rein to misogynist impulses. A second hermeneutic move, which reminds one of the one used in the first interpretation, is the “reading” of the word *wayyiben*, from the stem *banah* (to build), as “and he considered” (*hit-bonnen*), from the stem *bin*.

In the same Midrash, another text relating to the creation of Eve from the rib, sets out again in a very misogynist way. When the passage turns to procreation, however, it gets rather positive. This is in line with most rabbinic discussions on the topic which are, as a rule, positive about procreation and the role of women therein. We can quote this text here without explanation. Gen 2:21 is only the starting point of an extensive discourse which speaks for itself. Near the end, the passage also draws on some misogynist interpretations of the account of the “fall”, which takes us beyond the subject matter of this paper.<sup>51</sup>

Joshua was asked: ‘Why does a man come forth [at birth] with his face downward, while a woman comes forth with her face turned

---

always contain an explicit quotation from Scripture, is “subjectsprachlich”. See e.g. A. Goldberg, “Die funktionale Form Midrasch”, *FJB* 10 (1982) 1–45; “Midrashsatz. Vorschläge für die descriptive Terminologie der Formanalyse rabbinischer Texte”, *FJB* 17 (1989) 47–56 (both now included in A. Goldberg, *Rabbinische Texte als Gegenstand der Auslegung. Gesammelte Studien II.*, ed. M. Schluter & P. Schäfer, Tübingen 1999).

<sup>50</sup> This is not meant in any chronological or redaction-critical sense.

<sup>51</sup> On the rabbinic interpretations of the “fall” (Gen 3), see e.g. M. Poorthuis, “Sexisme als Zondeval. Rabbinse interpretaties van het paradijsverhaal belicht vanuit de verhouding tussen man en vrouw”, *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 30/3 (1990) 234–258; Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, 80–94.

upwards?' 'The man looks towards the place of his creation [viz. the earth], while the woman looks towards the place of her creation [viz. the rib],' he replied. 'And why must a woman use perfume, while a man does not need perfume?' 'Man was created from earth,' he answered, 'and earth never putrefies, but Eve was created from a bone. For example: if you leave meat three days unsalted, it immediately goes putrid.' 'And why has a woman a penetrating [shrill] voice, but not a man?' 'I will give you an illustration,' replied he. 'If you fill a pot with meat it does not make any sound, but when you put a bone into it, the sound [of sizzling] spreads immediately.' 'And why is a man easily appeased, but not a woman?' 'Man was created from the earth,' he answered, 'and when you pour a drop of water on it, it immediately absorbs it; but Eve was created from a bone, which even if you soak many days in water does not become saturated.' 'And why does the man make demands upon the woman, whereas the woman does not make demands upon the man?' 'This may be compared to a man who loses something,' replied he; 'he seeks what he lost, but the lost article does not seek him.' 'And why does a man deposit sperm within a woman while a woman does not deposit sperm within a man?' [He replied]: 'It is like a man who has an article in his hand and seeks a trustworthy person with whom he may deposit it.' 'Why does a man go out bareheaded while a woman goes out with her head covered?' 'She is like one who has done wrong and is ashamed of people; therefore she goes out with her head covered.' 'Why do they [the women] walk in front of the corpse [at a funeral]?' 'Because they brought death into the world, they therefore walk in front of the corpse, [as it is written]: *He is brought to the grave (. . .) everyone (all adam) follows behind him, innumerable are those who precede him* (Job 21:31-32).' 'And why was the precept of menstruation given to her?' 'Because she shed the blood of Adam, therefore was the precept of menstruation given to her.' 'And why was the precept of "dough" given to her?' 'Because she corrupted Adam, who was the dough of the world, therefore was the precept of dough given to her.' 'And why was the precept of the Sabbath lights given to her?' 'Because she extinguished the soul of Adam, therefore was the precept of the Sabbath lights given to her.' (GenR 17:8)

*Is there a rabbinic theology of the creation of the first humans?*

The juxtaposition of texts assembled in the preceding section demonstrates the absence of any systematic rabbinic "view" on the nature of women. The valuation of women depends on the tradition quoted or the rabbi speaking. Compared to Hellenistic-Greek literature, especially Philo, or most of patristic sayings about women, rabbinic literature in general—if one can generalize at all—is not the most

misogynist. In any case, condemnation of the woman because of her female "nature" or her second place in the order of creation, or her belonging to the realm of the "flesh" (whereas the male represents the pure spirit) is less prevalent in rabbinic literature than it is in Jewish Hellenistic and patristic texts.<sup>52</sup> As to the creation of the man and of the unspecified human, more or less the same conclusion can be drawn. There is no uniform rabbinic view on these matters. Here, we can only agree with Jacob Neusner who dismissed all efforts by scholars in the past to write a systematic overview of rabbinic ideas and concludes that "there is no theology of rabbinic Judaism".<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, such a "theology" cannot be found in any rabbinic work; not even in the Babylonian Talmud were Neusner does claim to find it. The absence of one authoritative interpretation *on anything* is perhaps the most characteristic feature of rabbinic literature, which is often described as "discursive" or "dialogical" in character. For practical reasons, of course, halakhic rules on legal problems had to be made. Most of them, however, are not unanimously found in the Babylonian Talmud. Rather, they are derived by means of "rules for halakhic decision-making" that were applied to the Talmud after its completion, such as: "the halakhah follows an anonymous mishnah"; "the halakhah is in accordance with the last saying"; or "the halakhah is according to the house of Hillel rather than the house of Shammai".<sup>54</sup> As regards aggadah, the narrative parts of rabbinic teaching, and especially midrash aggadah such as treated in this article, there were no such rules. Traditions and opinions are stated side-by-side; some contradict each other. This does not mean, however, that everything is possible in rabbinic interpretation; or that midrash is entirely open-ended. Midrash was subject to commonly-accepted views on the world, the human, and God (especially his unity and uniqueness). The boundary between what was acceptable

---

<sup>52</sup> This is the over all message of Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, and despite the criticism which one can have on the way he makes his point, he is correct that the dualistic way of thinking found in Hellenistic-(Jewish) and much early Christian thinking led to much disdain of the female. Rabbinic literature was at least partly saved from *that* pretext for misogyny. See also Poorthuis, "Sexisme als Zondeval". For examples of misogyny in rabbinic literature see e.g. T. Ilan, *Integrating Women into Second Temple History*, Tübingen 1999.

<sup>53</sup> J. Neusner, "The Documentary History of Judaism. Or: Why Schechter, Moore and Urbach are Not Relevant to Scholarship Today", in Id. (ed.), *Ancient Judaism. Debates and Disputes. Second Series*, Atlanta, Georgia 1990, 51-72.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. A. Steinsalz, *The Talmud. A Reference Guide*, New York 1989, 295-299.

and not acceptable was sometimes very thin; but there definitely was one.<sup>55</sup> The conclusion that there is no rabbinic view on the creation of the human may be disappointing. All the more fascinating, however, is the plurality of the interpretations of the dual creation account found in many midrashim—from which only a selection could be presented here.

---

<sup>55</sup> See, for a discussion of the unwritten rules governing midrash, the titles in note 5.



## EVE AND THE MATRIARCHS ASPECTS OF WOMAN TYPOLOGY IN GENESIS

WOUT JAC. VAN BEKKUM

### 1. *The example of Eve*

“A Roman lady asked Rabbi Jose: ‘Why (was woman created) by a theft (by stealing one of Adam’s ribs)?’ ‘Imagine,’ replied he, ‘a man depositing an ounce of silver with you in secret, and you return him a litre of silver openly; is that theft?’ ‘Yet why in secret?’ she pursued. He said to her: ‘At first He (God) created her for him and he saw her full of discharge and blood; thereupon He removed her from him (and destroyed this creation) and created her a second time.’ ‘I can corroborate your words,’ the lady observed. ‘It had been arranged that I should be married to my mother’s brother, but because I was brought up with him in the same house I was repellent in his eyes, and he went and married another woman, who is not as beautiful as I.’” (Gen 17:7). “And the man said: ‘This time’ (Gen 2:23). Rabbi Judah son of Rabbi said: ‘At first He (God) created her for him and he saw her full of discharge and blood; thereupon He removed her from him and created her a second time, as it is written: “This time”, this is her from that (first) time, this is the one who will be my companion.’” (GenR 18,4).

At first one wonders what the ‘biographies’ of Eve and the matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel have in common, but these women are the major personalities in the narratives of Genesis who have become the paradigms by which womanhood was evaluated for many generations.<sup>1</sup> The Sages were to say that four matriarchs were buried together in Hebron: Eve, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah, with the four righteous men: Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (GenR 58,4). Eve is the mother of all living, meaning, the mother of all life and associated with all living who was endowed with every

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gabrielle Oberhänsli-Widmer, *Biblische Figuren in der rabbinischen Literatur; Gleichnisse und Bilder zu Adam, Noah und Abraham im Midrasch Bereschit Rabba*, Judaica et Christina 17, Bern 1998, 131-147, 302-323.

attraction and more intellect (*binah*) than a man, as can be learnt from the passage from Gen 2:22: "And the Lord God built (*wayyiven*) the rib." On the other hand, she was also the woman (*ishah*) taken out of man (*ish*), who was cursed and punished in relation to her greatest and most fundamental power: to create life in her own body. The cosmic dimensions of human fertility and multiplication were reduced to a divine curse: "I will greatly *multiply* your pains in child-bearing; with pain you will give birth to children" (Gen 3:16). Midrashic exegesis summarizes the meaning of this verse: "Your pain refers to the pain of conception; your travail, to the discomfort of pregnancy; in pain, to the sufferings of miscarriages; shall you bring forth, to the agony of childbirth; children, to the suffering involved in the upbringing of children" (GenR 20,6).<sup>2</sup>

The human proportions of the Eve typology had a tremendous effect upon the religious judgment and the social status of women in both Jewish and Christian societies. Even within the book of Genesis as in all of canonical literature, a deliberate interactivity and allusive reciprocal discourse can be detected, when we consider important biblical figures like the matriarchs and particularly explore both how and why the matriarch narratives show a recurrent motif stamped with the features of Eve as the matriarch of the universe.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. *Divine power and the birth of man*

So far one aspect of the creation of the primordial woman is mentioned and the continuous reproduction of males and females ever since, but what can be learned from the absence of the ability to procreate, that is, infertility or sterility? In many ancient religious teachings and experiences, human birth is considered to be a reflection of a divine manifestation, and nothing has occupied the Semitic world more than the wish to understand the cosmos and the essential powers of nature, and the life cycle of the community and the individual. Mesopotamian and Egyptian religious thought offer central metaphors and important values for many variant images of sexuality, fertility, potency, conception, pregnancy and birth. Human

<sup>2</sup> John A. Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea*, San Francisco 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Pamela Norris, *The Story of Eve*, London 1998, 17–21, 44–50; Kristen E. Kvam *et al.*, *Eve & Adam, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender*, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1999, 48–107, 208–224.

and nonhuman imagery seem to compete to describe the creative power of fertility in hymns, myths, laments and rituals. There is every reason to assume that many phenomena and situations concerning the deities of the Near East were associated with the worship of the creative forces in nature, those powers which were important for human survival and upon which new life depended.

Views and beliefs concerning the highest among the individual gods of Egypt and Mesopotamia can easily be transposed to the unique masculine God of the Hebrew Bible. The God of Heaven as the ultimate source of fertility is a parental and personalized god, literally a father who makes the seed sprout, the engenderer of vegetation and all animal and human life, naturally attributed with paternal authority. Paternal authority means that God is the so-called 'founding father' of heaven and earth with supreme authority in heaven and earth, that is to say, exercising the general powers of kingship linked with his own cosmic functions. Thus the God of the Hebrew Bible may be understood as a 'lord' in the sense of 'productive manager'. Considering God to be the productive manager explains his actions with regard to climate and weather, plants and trees, wildlife and herds, and ultimately the power in giving birth, the power in the seed and in the womb. A God of birth in what in other religious systems is usually a goddess, is apparently part of the general tendency in biblical writings to refrain from the image of the divine or numinous power in human form. The role of the Hebrew male God as a birth-giver places him as a decisive power in the universe and the general scheme of things, as can be illustrated by an example in Jeremiah (1:5-6): "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; and before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

### 3. *The matriarchs in Jewish liturgy*

What are the biblical conditions for giving birth, and what does it mean when stories are told about women who seem to be dependent on a male God—one who decides whether to keep their wombs closed, or who opens them in accordance with his timing and preference for conception and birth? The circumstances of the four matriarchs from initial barrenness to the conception and bearing of children permit us to indicate a few distinctive features. Sarah is an old woman who indirectly receives an unlikely announcement of the

birth of a son, an annunciation which in its exemplary aspects is very telling and important as it underlies the later structure of annunciation stories such as that of Mary in the Gospels. The crucial passage is *w-Adonay paqad et Sarah ka'asher amar* (Gen 21:1), "And God visited Sarah as he had said." The verb *paqad* is translated in Targum Onkelos and Jonathan, and explained by Rashi and other medieval Jewish commentators as *dekhar* or *zakhar*, "to remember", implying God's fulfilment of the promise he gave one year earlier to give Sarah a son (Gen 18:10).

In the early Middle Ages the pericope of Gen 21 was included in the liturgy of the first day of New Year or Rosh Hashanah. It is at first not entirely clear why the Pentateuch reading of the day switched from Lev 22:27 to Gen 21:1. In Palestine in earlier times the reading of the sacrifice ritual on Pesach and Rosh Hashanah occupies a central position with particular law-giving with regard to animals: "And God said to Moses: When a calf, a lamb or a goat is born, it is to remain with its mother for seven days. From the eighth day on, it will be acceptable as an offering made to God by fire. Do not slaughter a cow or a sheep and its young on the same day." The connection with New Year seems to be that people have to show compassion for the animals, which are after all sanctified gifts for God.

Similarly, the story of *'aqadat Yizhaq*, the binding of Isaac, with regard to the ram's provenance as a sacrifice to God instead of Isaac has to be read on the second day of the festival. His horn is blown as a sign of future redemption and salvation. The opening lines of a composition by the sixth-century melodist Yannai are in full accordance with this idea:<sup>4</sup>

It is your custom to give us the benefit of our works  
 On this day you will fix it for us  
 The abomination with the golden calf we have already set aside by  
 the sacrifice of an ox  
 You have judged us and with the (red) heifer we received atonement

You bring forth all what is expected  
 You have warned us about the animals which expect calves  
 This is how we shall beget grace  
 When the new moon appears

<sup>4</sup> Z.M. Rabinovitz, *The Liturgical Poems of Rabbi Yannai according to the Triennial Cycle of the Pentateuch and the Holidays II*, Jerusalem 1987, 202.

You are pleased with your children like a father with his son  
 You will have compassion and your rage will be appeased  
 As from the eighth day onwards the sacrifice of a newborn animal is acceptable  
 So those who are signed by the covenant, You will accept them today

A close examination of the text shows that the motifs are inserted into a well controlled general context of New Year as the day of God balancing between the attribution of justice, *middat haddin*, and the attribution of mercy, *middat harachamim*, the two special value-concepts with profound significance in Jewish thought.

In the matter of the reading of the Pentateuch and Prophets, a more clearly defined lectionary was preferred during the eighth-tenth centuries. The annual cycle of the Babylonian Jews had by then virtually replaced all the others, in particular the triennial cycle of Palestinian Jewry. Readings of the Pentateuch on festive occasions were modified too, and the shift to Gen 21 provided both an additional and a new context for the concepts of *din* and *rachamim*. The story of Sarah who bore Abraham a son who was circumcised when he was exactly eight days old, and the story of the binding of Isaac, reveal a sequence of ideas and images pertaining to the balance of God's justice and mercy as a representation of his decisive intervention in human affairs. After all, *rachamim* is a *Leitwort* with an exegetically attractive semantical relation to *rechem* (etymologically, womb-feeling).

#### 4. *The miracle of birth*

Lifting the ban on Sarah's womb was an act of God's grace not taking place exclusively on the scale of one personal female figure, but in an encompassing cosmic action. A perfect combination of philological and deductive interpretation is to be found in GenR 47,2 and 53,5: "Rabbi Judah said: 'And God remembered Sarah as he had said' refers to the promises which were prefaced with the term 'saying' (*amar*); 'and God did unto Sarah as he had spoken' refers to the promises prefaced with the term 'speaking' (*dibber*). Rabbi Nehemiah said: 'And God remembered Sarah as he had said' refers to what he said to her through the angel, while 'God did unto Sarah as he had spoken' refers to what he Himself said to her. Rabbi Judah expounded: God visited/remembered Sarah, to give her a son, and God did unto Sarah as he had spoken, to bless her with milk.

Rabbi Nehemiah asked him a direct question: had she then already been informed about milk (see Gen 21:7 Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children)? This teaches us, however, that God restored to her the days of her youth. Old as Sarah was, she regained her youth. Her skin became soft, the wrinkles in her face disappeared, the warm tints of maidenly beauty returned, and in a short time she became pregnant. Rabbi Abbahu said: He inspired all people with fear of her, so that they should not call her 'sterile woman' (*'aqarah*, from a stem meaning 'being uprooted', 'being lamed'). Rabbi Judan said: she lacked a uterus, whereupon God fashioned a uterus for her." The conclusions of the three rabbis are deduced from an earlier passage which can be considered as the first annunciation to Abraham: "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her name Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her" (Gen 17:15-16).

In this first birth announcement, which evokes the same reaction from both Abraham and Sarah, that is disbelief expressed by laughter, the twofold blessing involves the ability of Sarah to beget a child even at the age of ninety, which is why the questions about the uterus and milk are brought up. Alongside the key terms saying, speaking and blessing, all suggesting future promise, laughter indicates a double understanding: *yizhaq li* (Gen 21:6) may be translated as "laughing over me" and "rejoicing with me" leading to the question of whether other women or other people are involved. A characteristic manoeuver in midrashic exposition is to extend the effect of divine mercy simultaneously from Sarah to many women in the world, as formulated in the commentary of Rashi (Gen 21:6): "Many other barren women (*'aqarot*) were remembered with Sarah and gave birth, many deaf gained their hearing, many blind had their eyes opened, many insane became sane, many sick were cured on the same day, many prayers were answered, and the world was filled with joyous laughter" (see GenR 53,8). What is regained by Sarah and by all those who have their disabilities restored is profitable to others. The words *heniqah vanim Sarah* (Gen 21:7) imply that Sarah will nurse children (*banim* is plural) and not just one child. This articulation of the text is elaborated in an aggadic statement about the uncovering of Sarah's breasts from which milk gushed forth as from two fountains: "Noble ladies came and had their children suckled

by her, saying: we do not merit that our children should be suckled with the milk of that righteous woman. The sages said: Whoever came for the sake of heaven so that her child might drink Sarah's milk and be imbued with a spirit of righteousness, became God-fearing. Rabbi Acha said: Even one who did not come for the sake of heaven but merely to see whether the miracle was really true, was given greatness in this world" (GenR 53,9). In constructing this artefact of womanhood, an image of the "good and righteous mother" is developed which offers some parallels with the Virgin Mary, whose legend was created from an equal welter of biblical and traditional popular sources. Certainly the lactation motif just mentioned appears in both Jewish and Christian traditions, for instance, in sermon tales and in the pictography of medieval Christian manuscripts, milk is shown pouring out of Mary's breasts into the mouths of clerical and monastic figures as a metaphor for divine inspiration.

#### 5. *The Sarah–Hannah parallel*

However, if the Talmuds and the midrashic books offer such a relationship between divine action and the character of Sarah, what is their further contribution to the main themes of the New Year holiday? In my opinion it is possible to discern two groups of aggadoth in which infertility plays an essential role. The first group includes comparisons between Sarah and Hannah, and the second group involves the parallel motifs of the Sarah biography and that of the other three matriarchs, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel. One clear example of the Sarah—Hannah equation on the basis of word analogy can be read in GenR 38,14: "Rabbi Levi said: Wherever 'she had not' is found, it means that eventually she did have. Thus: And Sarai was barren; she had no child: eventually she did have, as it is written: And God remembered Sarah. Also: Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none (1 Sam 1:2): eventually she did have, as it is written: And God visited/remembered Hannah; she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters (2:21)." The episode in I Samuel chapter 1 is much more explicit about the actions Hannah undertook in order to have children. Verse 5 mentions the standard expression: God had closed her womb, whereupon her rival Peninnah provoked her sorely, and irritated her. Every year she used to visit the sanctuary at Shiloh with her husband Elkanah, and there she is

described as whispering prayers and weeping in a state of desolation that led the priest Eli to take her for a drunken woman. It would appear from the plain meaning of the passage that Eli was not used to almost silent prayers, and this is exactly how Rashi and Gersonides comment on the wrong impression of Eli. Gersonides adds that Hannah stood up for prayer after eating and drinking. He says: "This is instructive for us because it is not clever to start to pray after eating and drinking because one can easily be mistaken for being drunk", so he advises not to take Hannah's choice of time to pray as an example. In Metzudat David it is even explained that a drunkard has a habit of moving his lips or mumbling, but nothing is really said. Nevertheless, Hannah is the example of a sterile woman who demonstrated the significance of petitionary prayer for the sake of change in her personal condition. In a manner of speaking, Hannah's prayers influenced God's rule over his creatures, thus having an effect on the personal well-being of one woman and on the life of an entire people because the new-born son Samuel was lent to God to serve as a prophet to the people of Israel.<sup>5</sup> The triumphant song of Samuel chapter 2 is therefore read as the *haftarah*, the additional Bible reading from the Prophets on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. The words of verse 5, *'aqarah yaldah shiv'ah werabat banim umlalah*—"She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many children pines away", are directly applied to Hannah and her rival Peninnah: when Hannah bore one child, Peninnah lost two. The song is also read as an allegory for the people of Israel or the city of Jerusalem, and the exegetes connect these words with the symbolism of the city as a woman, as in Lam 1:1: "How deserted lies the city, once so full of people!", and 1:16: "My children are destitute because the enemy has prevailed", against Isa 54:1: *Ronni 'aqarah*—"Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labour; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Leila Leah Bronner, *From Eve to Esther, Rabbinic Constructions of Biblical Women*, Louisville, Kentucky 1994, 93-105.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Callaway, *Sing, O Barren One: A Study in Comparative Midrash*, SBL Dissertation Series 91, Atlanta: Scholars Press 1986.



6. *Childbirth, an act of divine grace*

It is this hermeneutic of *rachamim* or mercy, the power of Hannah's prayer and the antithesis of the infertile woman and the woman with children, which has a dual function in the approach to the particular circumstances of the matriarchs, very much in accordance with the motif pattern of the younger one in continuous competition with the older. Two passages are crucial for understanding Rebekah's sterility, Gen 24:63, "And Isaac went *lasuach bassadeh* in the evening", and Gen 25:20–21: "And Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah . . . And Isaac prayed to God *lenokhach* his wife, because she was barren; and God granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived." Firstly, what does *lasuach bassadeh* mean? Most sources explain *lasuach* in the sense of "talking", "speaking" in relation to the noun *sichah* and state: *we-eyn sichah ella tefillah*, such a conversation or meditation is nothing else but prayer. The motif of Isaac praying is repeated, but what does the preposition *lenokhach* mean? One talmudic statement is of utmost importance for achieving a general answer to the question: "Why were the ancestors initially sterile?" BT Yeb 64a on the regulations of levirate marriage provides a suitable context for this discussion. The argument is that Isaac himself was also barren, for it is said: "And Isaac entreated God *lenokhach*, that is, opposite his wife. This teaches us that both were barren. If so, then the words 'and God let himself be entreated of him', should have read, 'and God let himself be entreated of them'. Why? Because the prayer of a righteous man the son of a righteous man (Isaac son of Abraham) is not like the prayer of a righteous man or woman the son or daughter of a wicked man (Rebekah daughter of Betuel who was a disbelieving Aramean)." Raba, the well-known fourth-century teacher from the city of Machoza on the river Tigris, said to his teacher Rab Nachman: "Let deduction be made from Isaac, concerning whom it is written 'and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah' (Gen 25:20), and it is also written in v. 26: 'Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to Esau and Jacob'. Rab Nachman replied: Isaac was infertile, if so, then Abraham was also infertile." This means that Rab Nachman did not believe that such a deduction could be made here, but he did accept the explanation of Gen 11:30, "Now Sarah was barren; *eyn lah walad*, she had no child": "Our mother Sarah was incapable of procreation, and as the second section of the verse is superfluous, the words *eyn lah walad*

refer to the foetus (the word is *walad* and not *yeled*): she had no place for a foetus, she had no uterus." The general question is repeated by Rabbi Isaac: "Why were our ancestors barren? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, longs to hear the prayer of the righteous. Why is the verb *'atar*, 'to entreat', of the same root as the noun *'atar*, a pitchfork? As a pitchfork turns the sheaves of grain from one position to another, so does the prayer of the righteous turn the dispensations of the Holy One, blessed be He, from the attribute of judgment (*din*) to the attribute of mercy (*rachamim*)."

The problem of infertility has now become a startling doctrine of personal request and divine preponderance between justice and mercy. When Rachel protested to Jacob and said, "Give me children, or I shall die" (Gen 30:1), Jacob's answer was: "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" (v. 2). It was the younger sister Rachel who through many prayers succeeded in preventing her older, rival, sister Leah from bearing more children (v. 9). Only after the quarrel about the mandrakes and Leah's recuperation, did God remember Rachel, listen to her, and open her womb (v. 22). An early tradition offers a simple commentary: "God remembered Rachel, for the sake of her sister Lea; God listened to her, for Jacob's sake; He opened her womb, for the sake of the matriarchs" (GenR 73,3). It is Rachel who sets the example for New Year's day which is called the Day of Remembrance, *Yom Hazikkaron*, an exquisite time of prayer during which God remembered (*paqad* meaning *zakhar*) the childless women Sarah, Rachel and Hannah (BT Yeb 64b). In expositions of the Rachel episode, theological elements are especially pronounced and symbolized by the three keys God has retained in his own hands and never entrusted to the hand of any messenger, that is, the key of rain, the key of the womb, and the key of resurrection: "The key of rain, as it is written: 'God will open the storehouse of his bounty, the heavens to send rain' (Deut 28:12). The key of the womb, as it is written: 'God remembered Rachel.' The key of resurrection, as it is written: 'Behold, I am going to open your graves' (Ezek 37:12; BT Taan 2a-2b; GenR 73,4).

### 7. Conclusion

To conclude, the issue of fertility and sterility is significantly presented in the Genesis narrative structures in order to reveal God's

individual providence, for everything resulted from Him.<sup>7</sup> Careful reflection leads to the discovery that sincere supplicatory prayer will lead to fulfilment of even such a basic wish as to have children. References to any fertility ritual, so common in ancient Near Eastern mythology, are limited to a minimum: only the *duda'im*, the mandrakes, are mentioned as a kind of stimulant. In numerical derashoth, the number of *'aqaroth* or barren women shifts from three (Sarah, Rachel and Hannah) to five (Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, Zion) or to seven (Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, Rachel, the mother of Samson, Hannah, Zion). A New Year's poem attributed to the seventh-century melodist Yehudah, offers a beautiful versification:

Truly, five barren women, their wombs were closed; a distress to them when they were young, when older, they were bursting on the birth stool; thus with four in the past, and with the fifth in the future with great pain: He will bring forth your vindication as the light, and your right as the noonday.

The first one reached ninety and to her was given a message; I shall return to you at the appointed time, and behold, a son was announced; she spoke: 'He has prevented me from bearing children', but ultimately it was straightened out for her: She said: 'who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would suckle children?'

The second one is the daughter of Betuel who was barren from bringing forth children, she was initially barren until the time that mercy reached her heart, he entreated for her and her loins filled with twins: God said to her: 'two nations are in your womb, two peoples.'

The third was the lovely one whom God had exalted, she spoke: 'please give me children,' but he silenced her with a reproach, she supplicated and the One took mercy on her, remembered her: God listened to her and opened her womb.

The fourth one was burdened with sighing because God had made her sterile, Eli thought her to be drunk when she supplicated in Bethel, God remembered to give her birth as she requested: The woman conceived and bore a son and she called his name Samuel.

The fifth barren woman is when redemption has come and His glory will be revealed, the barren woman of the house remains in mischief, the poor man impoverishes, at the time that He will judge, the One who brings down and raises up: You will say in your heart: 'who has borne me these?'

---

<sup>7</sup> Esther Fuchs, "'For I Have the Way of Women': Deception, Gender, and Ideology in Biblical Narrative", *Semeia* 42 (1988), pp. 68-83; *eadem*, "The Literacy Characterization of Mothers and Sexual Politics in the Hebrew Bible", *Semeia* 46 (1989), 151-66.

In view of all the above, one observation is needful. Implicit in the book of Genesis is the vision that the curse of Eve had its peculiar repercussions for the biography of the matriarchs. The Bible places these and other female biblical characters in a situation of dependence on God's plans and decisions. In the narratives we have discussed, prayer was the strongest means in putting an end to the state of childlessness. Rabbinic sources seem to adhere to this general idea, although differing attitudes towards the theme of the barren matriarchs can be observed among Jewish commentators in the Middle Ages in discussing the importance and status of prayer. Both communal and private prayers are acknowledged by Rabbinic sources as essential in daily life but the effects of prayers were considered doubtful within Medieval Judaism in its coalition with rationalism. It is possible to trace out in Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* that true worship is not exclusively characterized by the conventional patterns of prayer but by a kind of intellectual apprehension of God. Whether or not such a philosophical theory could have had any influence upon a shift in understanding the aspect of childbirth in the biographies of the matriarchs is questionable, but it is nevertheless true that the prayer motif of the barren matriarchs was subsequently superseded by the higher ethical and liturgical themes of Rosh Hashanah. Very few people these days are aware of the original reasons for including the pericope of Gen 21 into the New Year liturgy, and in reform communities this reading has been replaced by Gen 22 with the shift of the *'aqedah Yizhaq* text to the first day and the introduction of a new pericope, Deut 29, to the second day.

## THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN *THE SECRET BOOK OF JOHN*

GERARD P. LUTTIKHUIZEN

*The Secret Book (Apocryphon) of John*<sup>1</sup> contains a revelation allegedly granted by the exalted Christ to his disciple John. The first part of the revelation is devoted to the spiritual world of light. It unfolds the Gnostic truth about the supreme Deity and about the many aeons, or light beings, which had emanated from God's Fullness. The secret teaching takes a remarkable turn when it explains how the process of emanations eventually led to the coming into existence of an inferior and ignorant godhead called Jaldabaoth. Later on in the text, this inferior being, who is viewed as a planetary god, is made responsible for the creation of the dark material world. He will be identified with the creator-God of the Jewish Scriptures.

The second main part of *The Secret Book* discloses the true (i.e. the Gnostic) story of the creation and the history of the first generations of human beings (from Adam up to Noah and his family). This part of the revelation can be regarded as a thorough Gnostic revision of the first chapters of Genesis. On several occasions, Christ, the Gnostic teacher and Saviour, corrects the biblical report with the words: "It is not as Moses said (...) but (...)". In my contribution to this volume I will focus attention on the Gnostic retelling of the story of the creation of Adam and Eve. I shall argue that the information of the biblical story was subsumed entirely into a Gnostic mythical thought pattern. This thought pattern had its roots in pagan philosophical ways of thinking about God, man and world.

In the closing section of the first part, Christ reported that Jaldabaoth is an illegitimate son of Sophia, one of the light aeons (she had conceived him without the assent of the most high God and without the approval of her heavenly consort). Sophia cast him outside the

---

<sup>1</sup> This writing is preserved in four Coptic manuscripts: three of the thirteen volumes of the Nag Hammadi Library open with this text (codices II, III, and IV). It is also included in the so-called Berlin Codex (BG). In addition, a version of the first part of the text (without narrative framework) is quoted by Irenaeus in *Adversus Haereses* I,29 (written c. 180). See also below, n. 3.

divine world (BG 38,1-3; II 9,11-14). But before Jaldabaoth removed himself from his mother, he took "a great power" (i.e. divine light-substance) from her (BG 38,15-17; II 10,20-23).<sup>2</sup> This story of the removal of light-substance from the supramundane world serves to explain the presence of a portion of divine light in the inferior world.

Once he was outside the divine world, Jaldabaoth begot a number of cosmic powers: the other archons or planetary authorities and several ranks of angels. He gave them a share in his own "psychic" (i.e. ethereal, planetary) power but he did not give them any of the pure light-substance he had taken away from his mother, Sophia. This last information is not unimportant for it means that, for the time being, Jaldabaoth is the only one who possesses the light-element in the dark region outside the divine world.

The subsequent story of the creation and the early history of humankind discloses how the divine world endeavours to recover the light that Jaldabaoth had brought with him into the cosmic world. It also intimates that this is not an easy task. For, not surprisingly, Jaldabaoth and his cosmic forces try to thwart God's plan. Thus, the successive stages in the creation of human beings and their early history result from actions and reactions alternately undertaken by good and evil powers in their attempts to keep or to regain the divine light. In this struggle, the good and evil forces use different methods. Whereas the evil forces do not shrink from using violence, the true God and His emissaries try to outwit the adversaries by clever tricks and ruses.

### 1. *The creation of man*

#### a. *The creation of the psychic body (the soul)*

The Gnostic story of the creation of man begins when God, the blessed One, reveals his appearance in the cosmic water. This is the first step in His endeavour to trick Jaldabaoth out of the divine light he had taken away from the divine world:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In BG 51,1-4 and the parallel passage in cod. II (the relevant passages in cod. III and IV are damaged), we come upon a variant view: Sophia had *given* her power to Jaldabaoth.

<sup>3</sup> In the quoted passages Christ speaks to John. I follow the short recension of the Berlin Codex (BG) and use the translation by M. Waldstein and F. Wisse, *The Apocryphon of John. Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II,1; III,1; and IV,1 with BG 8502,2*

'The blessed One revealed His appearance<sup>4</sup> to them. And the entire array of rulers of the seven authorities<sup>5</sup> bent down, and they saw in the water the form of the image. They said to each other, "Let us create a man in the image of God and the likeness."<sup>6</sup> And they created out of each other and (out of) all their powers. They molded a form out of themselves and [each one] of the powers. [And] <out of their> power [they created the soul]. They created it after the image which they had seen by imitating the one who is from the beginning, the perfect Man. And they said, "Let us call him Adam, that his name and its power may become a light for us." (BG 48,4-49,9; cf. II 14,24-15,13)

*BG 49,9-50,11 (cf. II 15,13-19,10) reports what each planetary power contributed to the creation of Adam's psychic body.<sup>7</sup>*

According to our text, the psychic, or etherial, component of man, the soul, was created first. Note that this revision of the Genesis story offers a solution for a well-known exegetical *crux*, the plural form: "Let us create . . ." The present text suggests that the archontic rulers said this to each other. On the other hand, the Genesis quotation is freely adapted to the Gnostic story line: "Let us create man in *our* image"<sup>8</sup> has been changed into "Let us create man in the image of *God*".<sup>9</sup> (In the Gnostic story, it is essential that the true God takes the initiative: *He plans to recover the light-substance*. It will become more and more clear that God uses the being created by the archons as His instrument.)

---

(Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XXXIII), Leiden 1995, with small alterations. For convenience, I add the pages and lines of the long recension in codex II (the copy which is translated in J.M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, Leiden-New York 3d ed. 1988, 105-23). Square brackets -[ ]- indicate a lacuna in the manuscript; pointed brackets -< >- indicate an editorial correction; parentheses -( )- indicate material added by the translators for the sake of clarity.

<sup>4</sup> In codex III, p. 21,24 the Greek word *idea* is used to refer to God's appearance.

<sup>5</sup> The seven planetary archons.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gen 1:26 LXX κατ' εικόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν; for this construction see Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Göttingen, 14th ed. 1976, section 473, l. Cod. III reads "and according to *his* likeness"; cod. II: "and according to *our* likeness".

<sup>7</sup> Each power contributes to the composition of the human soul by giving it something of its own special substance. Therefore, the human soul shares the characteristics of each of the seven planetary rulers and is subject to their (astrological) influence. The description is based on Plato's *Timaeus* 73B-77E. Cf. M. Tardieu, *Écrits Gnostiques*, Paris 1984, 306-8, and R. van den Broek, "The Creation of Adam's Psychic Body in the Apocryphon of John", in: id., *Studies in Gnosticism and Alexandrian Christianity*, Leiden 1996, 67-85.

<sup>8</sup> LXX: κατ' εικόνα ἡμετέραν (cf. above, n. 6).

<sup>9</sup> But cf. Gen 5:1, "On the day when God created man he made him in the likeness of God" (LXX: κατ' εικόνα θεοῦ).

It is strange to find that God, the Father of the All, should have come into action Himself and revealed His appearance to the cosmic powers, for this information is at odds with the Gnostic thought system of *The Secret Book*, which stresses the absolute transcendence of the supreme Deity.<sup>10</sup> The author of the long recension in Nag Hammadi Codex II seems to have realized this. In the latter version, it is not the invisible God but Pronoia, His reflection or image (εἰκών), who reveals the divine appearance (14,18–24).<sup>11</sup>

We meet with another curious item in this story. In the passage quoted above, Christ reveals to John that the archons molded the human soul out of their own “psychic” power.<sup>12</sup> Later on we are told how man received his spiritual or divine element, and how the material body was finally created. The strange thing is that *the soul* was molded after the image of God. After all, in the anthropology of *The Secret Book*, the *pneuma* (the spiritual component) is the only godlike element in man. We could guess that the soul was given a godlike form because this makes it worthy to receive the divine *pneuma*.<sup>13</sup> But it should be noticed that the godlike form of the soul is not an object of speculation in *The Secret Book*.<sup>14</sup> Within the Gnostic storyline of this writing, the revelation of the divine image is nothing more than just a first step in God’s scheme: The revelation of His

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the “negative theology” in the first main part of the book (BG 22,17–26,14; II 2,26–4,18).

<sup>11</sup> The long recension reports that Pronoia showed the archons a masculine (ἀνδρέος) form of the image. The logic of the story requires this, for the human being created by the archons after a divine image is either male or androgynous.

<sup>12</sup> This passage is a retelling of Gen 2:7a, Καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς. According to a widespread belief in Antiquity, the soul is composed of ethereal substance (the Aristotelian *quinta essentia*) and subjected to the rule of planetary powers. Cf. above, n. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. H.-M. Schenke, *Der Gott “Mensch” in der Gnosis*. Göttingen 1962, 43: “Entsprechend dem Heilsplan der Lichtwelt soll der göttliche Inhalt eine göttliche Form haben”.

<sup>14</sup> Other mythological Gnostic texts affirm that the copy was imperfect (*The Letter of Peter to Philip*, Nag Hamm. Cod. VIII, 2 p. 136,13–15 tells how the mortal bodies molded by the cosmic powers were different from the “idea” that had appeared). In the subsequent section of the creation story of *The Secret Book* we hear that the psychic being formed after God’s image could not stand up. It was probably imagined as rather shapeless (see below). This is an odd feature of the story if the underlying idea would be that the psychic body created by the archons is a bearer of God’s *eikon*. In *The True Nature of the Archons* and *On the Origin of the World*, the archons make a copy of the luminous form hoping that the divine archetype will become enamoured of this figure. This implies that at that moment the divine light was not yet in their creature.



image was meant to empty Jaldabaoth of the spiritual power in his possession (see the next section of the story, quoted below).

It is tempting to find in the words of Jaldabaoth and his fellows, "Let us call him Adam, that his name and its power *may become a light for us*", a trace of an earlier version of the story (a version in which the biblical tradition of man being created in the image and likeness of God had not yet been incorporated).<sup>15</sup> When we try to read the opening lines of the creation myth without any allusion to Gen 1:26, we are likely to come upon a story to this effect: The demiurge tried to copy man *after a luminous archetype* that was shown to him from above.<sup>16</sup> In doing so, he hoped to gain control of this light. However, something quite different happened: the demiurge did not gain the light revealed to him but, ironically, lost the light-substance in his possession (which of course was anticipated and planned by the supreme God and His powers). The reference to the biblical text quite likely is a secondary element of the Gnostic creation story.

Incidentally, in the Greek language light and man could easily be associated because the normal word for "light" (φῶς) and one of the words for "man" (φῶς) were near homonyms. It is possible that a wordplay on these terms contributed to the idea that the archetypal model of man (a noetic or ideal man) was luminous in appearance.<sup>17</sup>

#### b. *The reception of the divine pneuma*

In the following section of the Gnostic creation story in *The Secret Book of John* Christ relates how the psychic or ethereal body of man received the divine *pneuma*:

"And the whole body was created, being fit together by the multitude of angels of which I (Christ) have spoken earlier. But it remained inactive for a long time because the seven authorities were not able to awaken it, nor were the other 360 angels who had arranged [the joined limbs].

And [she (Sophia, the Mother) wanted to retrieve] the power which she had given to the Ruler of<sup>18</sup> sexual desire. She came in innocence,

<sup>15</sup> A.H.B. Logan, *Gnostic Truth and Christian Heresy*, Edinburgh 1996, 183–8.

<sup>16</sup> In the tractate *On the Origin of the World* (NHC II, pp. 112f.), man is created according to the likeness of the Adam of Light. Cf. B. Layton, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7*, vol. II, Leiden 1989, 61; M. Tardieu, *Trois Mythes Gnostiques*, Paris 1974, 85ff.

<sup>17</sup> Logan, *Gnostic Truth*, 184

<sup>18</sup> The parallel text of cod. III 23, 21 has: "in sexual desire" (a Coptic adverb).

and petitioned the Father of the All, who is most merciful, and the God of light. He sent, by means of a holy decree, Autogenes with the four lights in the form of the angels of the <Chief> Ruler. They advised him so that <they> might bring forth from within him the power of the Mother. They said to him, 'Blow into his face something of your spirit (*pneuma*), and the artifact will arise.' And he blew at him, by means of his Spirit (*pneuma*), which is the power of the Mother into the body. And [in that moment] it moved."<sup>19</sup> (BG 50,11-52,1)

The creation of the (psychic) body was not very successful. In spite of the fact that the archons and the many angels gave their creature a share in their own ethereal powers, it could not move. It was a thing or artifact rather than a living creature.<sup>20</sup> We find interesting variants of this idea in other versions of the Gnostic creation myth. According to Irenaeus' account of the doctrine of Saturninus, this early Gnostic teacher described the human figure formed by cosmic angels as a crawling worm (*Adv. Haer.* I 24,1). Irenaeus reports further that the so-called Ophites imagined the creature of the cosmic powers as a figure of immense size that could merely wriggle on the earth (I 30,6).<sup>21</sup> The idea of the failed creation of a human being by cosmic powers is related to ancient speculations about the possibility of making a living creature in an artificial way. In Jewish lore, this fantasy is expressed in stories about the making of a *golem*.<sup>22</sup> It was associated with the belief in the creative power of speech and of the Hebrew letters. The attempt to create a living being had a somewhat different context in Greek traditions; here it was connected with astrological ideas about the possibility of drawing the power of

---

This reading is preferable to the genitive construction in the Berlin Codex. Cf. W.C. Till, *Die gnostischen Schriften des koptischen Papyrus Berlinensis 8502*, Berlin 1972 (2nd revised ed. by H.-M. Schenke), 143; A. Pasquier, "Prouneikos. A Colorful Expression to Designate Wisdom in Gnostic texts", in: K.L. King, *Images of the Feminine in Gnosticism*, Philadelphia 1988, 47-66, esp. 60; Logan, *Gnostic Truth*, 123f. and 243, n. 50.

<sup>19</sup> The long recension (Nag Hamm. Cod. II, 19,32-33 and IV, 30,17-18) reads: "The body moved and gained strength and it was luminous."

<sup>20</sup> It is possible that the negative Gnostic view of creation (in contrast to generation) is in the background of this report. The (Valentinian) *Gospel of Philip* (Nag Hamm. Cod. II) p. 81, explains that the one who creates (i.e. the demiurge), makes something that is inferior to himself, whereas the one who generates, produces something that is like himself. Cf. J.É. Ménard, *L'Évangile selon Philippe*, Paris 1967, 238.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *The True Nature of the Archons* (Nag Hamm. Cod. II), 88,3-6; Logan, *Gnostic Truth*, 209, n. 88.

<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of the *golem* tradition cf. the contributions to this volume by L. Teugels and S. Levy.

the stars to lower beings.<sup>23</sup> The Gnostic story deals with the transfer of ethereal or planetary substance to a creature.<sup>24</sup> Its astrological connotations cannot be overlooked. This is one reason for assuming that the Gnostic myth draws on pagan Greek speculations about the creation of a living being rather than on the specifically Jewish variant of this idea.

The failure of the demiurge and his fellows was anticipated by the powers of the meta-cosmic world and leads to their action to deprive the demiurge of the light-power he had removed from the world above. The initiative is taken by Sophia, the Mother (who is held responsible for this loss of pneumatic substance).<sup>25</sup> After her request, the Father of the All, the God of light, sends five emissaries—Autogenes/Christ and his four lights<sup>26</sup>—disguised as cosmic angels to the Chief Archon. At this point, the myth once more incorporates biblical information, viz. the story of God's breathing the breath of life into man (Gen 2:7b LXX, "the Lord God [. . .] breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul".<sup>27</sup>) In the Gnostic story, the Chief Ruler is misled by the emissaries of the true God. It is on their advice that he breathes his "spirit" into man's face.<sup>28</sup> The ruse works: when he did what the meta-cosmic powers had suggested him that he do, he was emptied of the light-substance, and the psychic body of man began to move (thereby manifesting that it had become a *living* soul). The lacunous parallel passage in Nag Hamm. Cod. III adds: "[and it became stronger] than he".<sup>29</sup> In the next section of the story (quoted below), the spiritual superiority of man after the reception of the light-power will be stated explicitly: "His intelligence was greater than (that of) all of them,

<sup>23</sup> Art. "Golem", *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 7, Jerusalem 1972, 753.

<sup>24</sup> It explains why cosmic powers have a controlling influence on human beings. Cf. above, n. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Here the theme of the misbehaviour and the repentance of Sophia, the Mother of the creator and the created world, is resumed (cf. BG 36–38 and 45; II 9–10 and 13).

<sup>26</sup> Autogenes and his four lights are introduced in the first part of the myth. For a discussion of the somewhat complicated relations of these and other pleromatic beings see R. van den Broek, "Autogenes and Adamas", in: id., *Studies in Gnosticism*, 56–66; Logan, *Gnostic Truth*, 218f.

<sup>27</sup> LXX: ἐνεφύσεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχὴν ζώσαν.

<sup>28</sup> Instead of his πνοὴ ζωῆς (LXX), the creator breathed into man his πνεῦμα, specified as the power from his Mother.

<sup>29</sup> According to the long recension in Nag Hamm. Cod. II and IV, the body gained strength *and became luminous*.

and greater than (that of) <the> Chief Ruler" (BG 52,8–11). This part of the story can be read as a mythological explanation of the self-confidence of the Gnostics who felt spiritually exalted above the rulers of the cosmic world.

As the long recension explicates (II 19,27v), the demiurge acted in ignorance<sup>30</sup> when he breathed the light-power into man. The *pneuma* did not originate from him but merely was mediated by him. The divine element in man is regarded as a reality essentially different from the psychic nature human beings share with the cosmic powers. It was not *created* but *received* from above.

Here I have to point to what might seem to be an inconsistency in Gnostic anthropology. On the one hand, the light power from above is something man needs; without it, one is not able to move and to stand up as a human being.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, *The Secret Book of John* and related Gnostic texts maintain that a limited group of people (the descendants of Seth, the people of the immovable race) possess the divine *pneuma*. Simone Pétrement tries to solve this apparent contradiction by assuming that holding oneself upright was meant figuratively: "In a figurative sense one could say that not all hold themselves upright, but only those who have received the Spirit; the others bustle around upon the earth like animals."<sup>32</sup> Alistair Logan proposes a more convincing solution. He defines the Mother's light-power, which was breathed into man by the demiurge, as a "precondition", a "possibility of (or capacity for) salvation".<sup>33</sup>

This solution gains in clearness and cogency if we assume that the Gnostic idea of a divine faculty in man that needs to be developed, had its roots in Hellenistic philosophical traditions influenced by Aristotle's anthropology. According to Aristotle, the *nous*, or intellect, is a divine potential (a *dunamis*) innate in man.<sup>34</sup> The *nous* needs

<sup>30</sup> He must have possessed the divine power as an unawakened potential; see below.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. BG 67,4–7: "For the power enters into every man, for without it they would not be able to stand (II 26,12–14)."

<sup>32</sup> *A Separate God. The Origins and the Teachings of Gnosticism*, New York 1990, 105.

<sup>33</sup> *Gnostic Truth*, 221, 239, 262ff., 282; p. 266: "The Mother's light-power represents (...) the *capacity* for salvation." Cf. also M.A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism"*, 195: "the *potential* to belong to the spiritual race is imagined as having been present at birth for all humans." Williams refers to this potential as a "seed" in man and observes that *The Secret Book* imagines this seed as a kind of universal potential that will come, however, to perfection within only a few; p. 196: "not all will actualize this potential or eventually achieve salvation".

<sup>34</sup> Aristotle describes the intellect as a potential of the soul (*Anim.* II 2, 413b24–27;

to be developed (“actualized”) in order to be able to return to the divine realm from where it originated. During the postmortal ascension, it frees itself from its etherial vehicle, the psychic body.<sup>35</sup>

The Gnostic story about the creation of human beings and the earliest history of humanity gives a characteristically religious turn to this philosophical view of man. *The Secret Book of John* contends that in the situation in which humans are bound to live, the light-power of the Mother is covered by darkness until it is awakened by a call from above—the Spirit sent by God as a helper, who reveals the true knowledge to man, see below. Furthermore, it claims that it is by responding to this saving call that one can bring one’s pneumatic potential to perfection.<sup>36</sup> A later section of *The Secret Book* deals with the destiny of the Gnostics compared to that of other categories

---

*Gener. Anim.* II 3, 736b27–29). Before the intellectual activity is realized, the soul with its *nous*-potential is in a condition of “sleep” (*Anim.* II 1, 412a10–11 and 412a22–27).

<sup>35</sup> This summary of Aristotle’s views about the destination of the *nous*, man’s real essence, is based on Abraham P. Bos’ recent proposal that Aristotle, in his preserved tractates, basically defends the same anthropological concept as in the surviving fragments of his dialogues: After the death of the human individual, the soul first leaves the material body (*Eudemus* fr.1 and 6 W.D. Ross; 56 and 65 O. Gigon); eventually, the actualized *nous* will leave the etherial soul, its instrument (*organon*) and vehicle (*ochêma*); freed from the etherial soul (“unclothed”) it can be united with the universal Intellect while the soul will be dissolved in the cosmic ether (cf. Hippolytus, *Ref* I 20,4 and 6). Bos, “Aristotle’s psychology: diagnosis of the need for a fundamental reinterpretation”, *Amer. Cath. Philos. Quart.* 73 (1999), 309–31; “Aristotle’s doctrine of the instrumental body of the soul”, *Philosophia Reformata* 64 (1999), 37–51; “Aristotle’s *De anima* II 1: the traditional interpretation rejected”, scheduled to appear in: D. Sfendoni-Mentzou, J. Hattiangadi, D. Johnson (eds), *Aristotle and Contemporary Science*, vol. II, New York (P. Lang) 2000. Bos points to the possible implications of his reinterpretation of Aristotle’s psychology for the study of Gnostic ways of thinking in “Cosmic and meta-cosmic theology in Greek philosophy and Gnosticism”, in: W.E. Helleman, *Hellenization Revisited*, New York-London 1994, 1–21; and in “Basilides as an Aristotelianizing Gnostic”, to be published in *Fig. Chr.* 53 (2000). Cf. his earlier study *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology in Aristotle’s Lost Dialogues*, Leiden 1989.

<sup>36</sup> Gnostics did not claim that they were saved “by nature” (viz. because they possessed the light-substance), as their heresiological opponents (Clement of Alexandria, *Exc. ex Theod.* 56; *Strom.* IV 89; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* I 6) and some modern scholars (e.g. R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 10th ed. Göttingen 1964, 96f.) argue. Louise Schottroff probably was the first to reject this polemical interpretation of Gnostic soteriology (“Animae naturaliter salvandae, zum Problem der himmlischen Herkunft des Gnostikers”, in: W. Eltester, *Christentum und Gnosis*, Berlin 1969, 65–97). Cf. the chapter of Williams’ *Rethinking* (above, n. 33) devoted to this issue (“Deterministic Elitism? Or Inclusive Theories of Conversion?”, 189–210). Cf. also *Corp. Herm.* I (*Poimandres*) 21f and Logan’s comment, *Gnostic Truth*, 212: “the saving revelation is only near to those who by their conduct deserve it, and who are thereby enabled to perceive the truth”.

of people. There, the Saviour states explicitly that only those persons are "worthy to ascend to the great lights" who live in conformity with the divine knowledge revealed to them and who, thanks to their *gnosis*, are strong enough to resist the temptations by the evil spirit<sup>37</sup> and to make themselves immune to all passions and greeds.<sup>38</sup>

The transfer of the Mother's light-power to man marks the beginning of a whole series of moves and countermoves by the powers of good and evil. The divine element in man is continually threatened.

### c. *The creation of the material body*

"Immediately [the rest of the] authorities [became jealous], because he had come into being through all of them, and they had given their inner powers to the man, and he possessed the souls of the seven authorities and their powers. His intelligence was greater than (that of) all of them, and greater than (that of) <the> Chief Ruler. Now, they recognized that he was free from wickedness, because he was wiser than they, and that he had entered into the light. They took him and brought him into the lowest regions of all matter. (BG 52,1-17; II 19, 34-20,9)

*Here the reaction of the archons is interrupted by a countermove of the Father: He sends a good Spirit as a helper (boëthos) to Adam. Adam calls her 'Zoe' (cf. Gen 2:18 and 3:21 LXX).*<sup>39</sup> (BG 52,17-54-4; II 20,9-28)

And the man shone because of the shadow<sup>40</sup> of the light which is in him. And his thinking was superior to those who had made him. And they bent down. They saw the man. He was superior to them. They took counsel with the whole array of angels of the rulers and (with) the rest of their powers.

Then they mixed fire and earth with water and flame. They seized them, and the four winds, blowing with fire, were joined with each other and caused a great disturbance. They brought him (Adam) into the shadow of death. They made a form once more, but from earth and water and fire and spirit, that is, from matter and darkness and desire and the contrary spirit. This is the fetter. This is the tomb of the form of the body with which they clothed the man as the fetter of matter. This is the first one who came down and the first separation." (BG 54,5-55,15; II 20,28-21,14)

<sup>37</sup> I.e. the "counterfeit spirit", cf. below, n. 45.

<sup>38</sup> BG 65-69; II 25-27.

<sup>39</sup> We will refer to this section of the narrative below, in connection with the creation of Eve.

<sup>40</sup> Tardieu, *Écrits*, 320, suggests that the Greek original did not mention the shadow (*apaskiasma*) but the particle (*apospasma*) of the light in man. He renders BG 54,5-7 as follows: "Et l'homme resplendit à cause de la particule de lumière qui était en lui".

The archontic authorities became jealous of their creature for two reasons. First, they now realized that they had given Adam a share in their own etherial substance.<sup>41</sup> But they also perceived that, as a result of the breathing of the Mother's light-power into Adam, he was superior to all of them, the Chief Ruler included. Their jealousy prompted them to take action: they brought the psychic-pneumatic Adam down into the lowest region of the cosmos. Adam is "the first who came down." He was bound to live fully separated from the divine world.

We already noticed that the battle between the powers of good and evil about the divine light in the cosmic world is the central topic of the myth of origins in *The Secret Book*. This might explain why, after the report of the action of the archons, Christ immediately speaks about God's countermove.

Christ resumes his revelatory teaching about the imprisonment of man in matter.<sup>42</sup> He tells how the archons and their angels created for Adam an earthly, mortal body composed of the four elements. The words, "they made a form (πλασις) once more, but from the earth . . .", contain a clear allusion to the second biblical account of the creation of man in Gen 2:7a, "the Lord God formed (ἔπλασεν) man of the dust of the ground". But the teaching about the composition of the human body from four physical elements as well as the evaluation of the body as a prison or even a tomb for the soul draws on Greek traditions. The first idea had its background in (allegorical interpretations of) the mythical story of the creation of the human body in Plato's *Timaeus*,<sup>43</sup> the latter in Orphic views which were given their most famous expression in another of Plato's Dialogues, the *Phaedo*.<sup>44</sup> Despite the fact that this part of the story is focused

<sup>41</sup> As W.C. van Unnik has demonstrated in several studies, in the Greek language *phthonos* can express the affect of one who has vis-à-vis one who has not: the jealous person does not want to share his material or spiritual possession with someone else. ΑΦΘΟΝΩΣ ΜΕΤΑΔΙΔΩΜΙ, *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Brussel 1971; "Der Neid in der Paradiesgeschichte nach einigen gnostischen Texten", in: M. Krause, *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in Honour of A. Böhlig*, Leiden 1972, 120-32.

<sup>42</sup> The words about the casting down of Adam to the lowest region anticipate and even imply a casting down into the prison of the material body. S. Giversen, *Apocryphon Johannis*, Copenhagen 1963, 257.

<sup>43</sup> *Tim* 42<sup>E</sup>-43<sup>A</sup>. The *Timaeus* was Plato's best known work in Antiquity. Cf. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 2nd ed. 1977, index; D.T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, Leiden 1986, 353-62 and 412.

<sup>44</sup> For the profound influence of these ideas in various ancient traditions see P. Courcelle, "Gefängnis (der Seele)" and "Grab der Seele", *RAC* 9, cols. 294-318, and 12, cols. 455-67.

on the material component of man, the four elements are explained allegorically as matter, darkness, desire, and "the contrary spirit".<sup>45</sup> The divine light-substance was encased in a material frame composed of hostile elements.

The creation of man was completed. According to Christ's revelation in *The Secret Book*, man consists of three components: a spiritual element which has come down from the meta-cosmic world, a complex soul made out of the ethereal substance of the seven cosmic powers, and a material prison: the body. Fully separated from its homeland, the divine element in man, the *pneuma*, is bound to live in an alien environment, the territory of wicked planetary powers.

## 2. *Eve's separation from Adam*

Finally, we come to the most complicated part of the Gnostic creation story in *The Secret Book of John*. In this section, reference is made to two feminine powers: the Mother's light-power and "the Reflection of the light" (Epinoia) given to man as a helper from above. The Epinoia-episodes that *precede* the story of the creation of Eve are summarized in italics.

*The first section dealing with the female helper sent to Adam was already summarized above. (This passage interrupts the story about Adam's transfer to the lowest region of the cosmos and the subsequent creation of his material body.) Adam calls his helper "Zoe". She was hidden in Adam so as to escape the notice of the archons. (BG 52,17-54-4; II 20,9-28)*

*The story of the creation of Adam's material body concludes with the remark that the Reflection of the light which was in Adam awakened his thinking. (BG 56,15-18; II 21,14-16)*

*The teaching about the creation of Adam's material body is followed up with a paraphrase of the biblical Paradise story.<sup>46</sup> Although as yet there has been no mention of the earthly Eve, this story ends with the observation that the serpent taught "her" (apparently Eve) about sexual desire, pollution and destruction. (BG 58,4-10; II 22,12-15)*

'And he (the Chief Ruler) wanted to bring out the power which had been given to him (Adam) by him. And he cast a "trance" over

<sup>45</sup> The "contrary" or "counterfeit" spirit is given to man by the cosmic rulers in imitation of the spirit sent into man by God (BG 52,17-54,4, summarized above). Cf. A. Böhlig, "Zum Antimimon Pneuma in den koptisch-gnostischen Texten", in: id., *Mysterion und Wahrheit*, Leiden 1968, 162-74.

<sup>46</sup> In this paraphrase, the tree of knowledge of good and evil is identified as the Reflection of the light, and the commandment by the biblical God not to taste of it is reinterpreted as a commandment by the demiurge not to obey her.



Adam.' I (John) said to him, 'Christ, what is the trance?' And he said, 'It is not as Moses said, "He put him to sleep", but it was his perception that he veiled with a veil. He made him heavy with lack of perception. For indeed he said through the prophet, "I will make the ears of their hearts heavy that they may not understand and may not see" (Isa 6:10).

Then the Reflection of the light hid herself in him (Adam). And in his desire, he (the Chief Ruler) wanted to bring her out of the rib. But she, the Reflection of the light, since she is something that cannot be grasped, although the darkness pursued her, it was not able to catch her.<sup>47</sup> He wanted to bring the power out of him in order to make a form once again, in the shape of a woman.<sup>48</sup> And he raised <her> up before him, not as Moses said, "He took a rib and created the woman (Gen 2:21c) beside him."

Immediately he (Adam) became sober from the drunkenness of darkness. The Reflection of the light lifted the veil which lay over his mind. Immediately, when he recognized his essence, he said, "This is indeed bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Therefore the man will leave his father and his mother and he will cleave to his wife and they will become one flesh. (. . .) Therefore Adam gave her the name "the Mother of all the living".' (BG 58,10-60,16; II 22,18-23,25)

*The story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, which follows next, begins with the observation that Reflection taught Adam about knowledge so that he might remember his perfection. (BG 60,16-51,5; II 23,25-26)*

In spite of his imprisonment in a material body deep down in the cosmos, Adam still possessed the Mother's light-substance. Apparently the biblical story about the creation of Eve was used by Gnostic myth-tellers to explain how the demiurge tried to empty Adam of his spiritual element. But once again, what actually happened was different from what the demiurge and his fellows intended to achieve. The demiurge tried to bring the divine power out of Adam (so as to regain it for himself) but the result was that Adam had a consort of the same spiritual "essence" as his.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Also the Coptic sentence (BG 59,9-12) is syntactically unclear. Cf. the parallel passage in cod. II, 29-32: "And the Chief Ruler wanted to bring her out of his rib. But the Reflection of the light cannot be grasped. Although the darkness pursued her, it did not catch her (allusion to John 1:5?)."

<sup>48</sup> Cf. below, n. 55.

<sup>49</sup> As the conclusion of this section of the narrative affirms, Adam recognized in the woman created by the demiurge his equal. Although the biblical passage quoted here speaks of bones and flesh, it is clear enough that the *spiritual* equality of Eve is meant. Eve was created from the Mothers's light-power which was breathed into Adam.

The Gnostic myth of origins in *The Secret Book* tells how the ancestors of the Gnostics received and preserved the light-substance of Sophia, while the ancestors of other categories of people, sooner or later, fell victim to the attacks of the powers of darkness. This focus on the spiritual lineage of the Gnostics explains the interest of the narrators in the spiritual “essence” of Eve (and the accompanying desinterest in the earthly Eve). Both Adam and Eve possessed the Mother’s light-element. It was from this couple that the Gnostics had inherited it (among other people the spiritual power was covered or mixed with darkness).<sup>50</sup>

The story is complicated by the fact that the feminine helper, the Reflection of the light or Epinoia (sent to Adam by God when the archons brought their creature down into the lowest parts of the cosmos), is also connected with the biblical Eve. Note that Epinoia is designated a “helper” to Adam (Gen 2:18) and that she is called by Adam “Zoe” and “Mother of all the living” (Gen 3:20 LXX).<sup>51</sup> Obviously the myth-tellers of *The Secret Book* imagined Eve as a helper in the full Gnostic sense of that term, as a bringer, that is, of the divine truth to Adam. She is considered the mother of all those humans who are living (i.e. spiritually living) because she awakened their light-power.

Of course, there is a difference between the light-power in Adam and his spiritual helper, Epinoia. First of all, the light-power is a potential, a “seed”, in Adam that must be developed, whereas the Reflection of the light is a bringer of revelation. Furthermore, the light-substance is inside Adam, whereas Epinoia could be as well outside as inside him.<sup>52</sup> If we bear these distinct features of the two feminine powers in mind, the story of the creation of Eve becomes more transparent.

The demiurge wants to bring the Mother’s light-power out of Adam. Therefore, he covers Adam’s mind with a veil so that he

<sup>50</sup> Cf. my article “Biblical Narrative in Gnostic Revision: The Story of the Flood in Classic Gnostic Mythology”, in: F. Garcia Martinez and G.P. Luttikhuisen, *Interpretations of the Flood* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 1), Leiden 1998, 109–123, esp. pp. 118ff.

<sup>51</sup> καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Ἀδὰμ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ Ζωή, ὅτι αὐτὴ μήτηρ πάντων τῶν ζώντων.

<sup>52</sup> She hid herself in Adam but also in the tree of knowledge (BG 57,10–15). Epinoia can move and speak. Logan does not sufficiently consider this feature of Epinoia in his somewhat laborious analysis of the story of Eve’s creation, *Gnostic Truth*, 227f.

could not perceive what happened to him.<sup>53</sup> At that moment, Epinoia hastens to help Adam. Although we are told that she hid herself in him, the story implies that the demiurge sees Epinoia. In his desire, he wants to bring Epinoia out of Adam. This is a slightly confusing detail because shortly before he was trying to bring the Mother's light-power out of Adam. It is confusing, too, that allusion is made to Adam's rib (Gen 2:21) in connection with the creator's attempt to bring Epinoia out of Adam.<sup>54</sup> But the demiurge does not succeed in bringing Epinoia out of Adam. She remains in him and so can help him in his perilous situation.

The narrator repeats that the Chief Ruler wanted to bring the power (of the Mother) out of Adam. But now he has a different motive. Whereas initially he just wanted to regain the light-power which he had breathed into Adam, he now wishes to make a female form out of this power—a form which he might use as a bait for Epinoia. Apparently he now is more interested in Epinoia than in his lost light-power.

The attempt fails halfway. The demiurge made a form in the shape of a woman and brought the Mother's power into this form, but he did not succeed in luring Epinoia out of Adam. Instead, Epinoia lifted the veil which the demiurge had laid on Adam's mind. This enabled Adam to perceive the spiritual "essence" of the new creature, his female consort.<sup>55</sup> The biblical report of Eve's being made out of one of Adam's ribs is explicitly rejected. From a Gnostic point of view, this would mean that woman is just a fleshly, material being.

Eve was just as much a spiritual being as Adam. This is the positive side of the story. The negative side is that, by this action of the creator, the light-power in Adam was divided. With her creation

---

<sup>53</sup> The subsequent quotation of Isa 6:10 suggests that this is what could be expected from the creator. For a discussion of the critical use of biblical texts in *The Secret Book* cf. my forthcoming article "Early Christian Debates about the Revelation of the Old Testament and the Problem of Gnostic Origins".

<sup>54</sup> A few lines earlier, reference was made to another detail of Gen 2:21 (Adam's sleep, interpreted as trance or oblivion) in connection with the creator's attempt to bring the Mother's light-power out of Adam.

<sup>55</sup> The story implies that the creator did not use all the light-substance in Adam. Cf. the version in cod. II 22,32–23,2: "And he brought a *part* (μέρος) of his power out of him. And he made another form in the shape of a woman according to the likeness of Reflection which had appeared to him. And he brought the *part which he had taken from the power* of the man into the female form, and not as Moses said 'his rib.'"

begins a process of generation and progressive dispersion of divine light in the cosmic world. Of course, propagation and its moving force, sexual desire, were rated negatively. Even before the story of Eve's creation was told, Christ revealed to John that it was the serpent who taught "her" (Eve) about "sexual desire, about pollution and destruction, because these are useful for him (the serpent)".<sup>56</sup>

The negative aspect of Eve (the woman) in *The Secret Book* and in similar Gnostic texts is closely related to the biblical tradition about the creation of Eve out of Adam. After all, it was a consequence of her separation from Adam that man was split into two sexual halves.<sup>57</sup> Birth and death came into the world when Eve was created.

But if we abstract Eve from the story of her creation (her separation from Adam), we find remarkably positive statements about the prototypal woman. First of all, she possesses the same divine *pneuma* as the man. She is even likely to have had earlier and closer relations to the spiritual world of the true God than the man.<sup>58</sup> She is a bringer of help (i.e. saving knowledge) while Adam needs this help. The Gnostic Eve represents the principle of continuous revelation,<sup>59</sup> the one who awakens man's capacity for knowledge and salvation.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> BG 58,4–10 (summarized above).

<sup>57</sup> The negative view of the creation of woman is connected with (if not a derivative of) the utterly negative evaluation of sexuality in this and in many other late classical (Gnostic and non-Gnostic) texts.

<sup>58</sup> This is explicitated in the opening lines of *The Revelation of Adam*: "The revelation which Adam taught his son, Seth, in the sevenhundredth year, saying: 'Listen to my words, my son Seth. When god had created me out of the earth along with Eve, your mother, I went about with her in a glory that she had seen in the aeon from which we had come forth. She taught me a word of knowledge of the eternal God'" (Nag Hamm. Cod. V,5 pp. 64,2–14; translation G.W. MacRae in D.M. Parrott, *Nag Hammadi Codices V,2–5 and VI*, Leiden 1979, 155).

<sup>59</sup> Logan, *Gnostic Truth*, 222.

<sup>60</sup> I thank Dr. A. Hillhorst for his many valuable suggestions.

"TWO OF FAR NOBLER SHAPE":  
MILTON'S RE-CREATION OF EVE AND ADAM

HELEN WILCOX

What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason,  
how infinite in faculties, in form and moving,  
how express and admirable in action, how like an  
angel in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty  
of the world; the paragon of animals; and yet to  
me what is this quintessence of dust?<sup>1</sup>

These lines from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* offer an appropriate starting-point for an essay concerning a seventeenth-century English literary account of the creation of man and woman. Hamlet's haunting sense of the nature of humankind, as admirably godlike and yet utterly mortal, epitomises the early modern paradox of confident melancholy concerning the human creation. Newly inspired by the humanism of the Renaissance, the writers and thinkers of the seventeenth century were at the same time undermined by what John Donne called "the new Philosophy" which called "all in doubt", including the capacity and significance of the human race.<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare's vision of the angelic and earthly elements harnessed disconcertingly together in "man" recurs in English literary texts throughout the early modern period. It is picked up, for example, by the poet George Herbert in his troubled description of his own self as "A wonder tortur'd in the space / Betwixt this world and that of grace", while the dramatist John Webster presents his tragic character the Duchess of Malfi as both a dignified heroine and "a box of worm-seed".<sup>3</sup>

This uncomfortable perception of the transitoriness and vulnerability of even the best human lives is notably absent from the Psalm

---

<sup>1</sup> William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (c. 1601), *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans *et al.*, Boston 1974, II.ii.303-308.

<sup>2</sup> John Donne, "The First Anniversary", *The Complete English Poems of John Donne*, ed. C.A. Patrides, London 1985, 335.

<sup>3</sup> George Herbert, "Affliction" (IV), *The English Poems of George Herbert*, ed. C.A. Patrides, London 1974, 105; John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. John Russell Brown, London 1964, 123 (IV.ii.124).

text which lies behind the opening of Hamlet's meditation on the "piece of work" which is "a man". Psalm 8 asks, in similar vein to Hamlet, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?", but replies with praise for God the creator: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour".<sup>4</sup> There is no mention of "dust" here—simply of a position which is "a little lower" than heavenly. The following verse goes on confidently to promise man "dominion over the works of thy hands". In the Psalm, the whole creation is the magnificent work of God's "hands"—and, even more delicately, of his "fingers".<sup>5</sup> In the texts of the seventeenth-century English writers, however, God's handiwork cannot be seen without an accompanying sense of its subsequent imperfections and limitations.

The common metaphors of creation in our culture are deeply revealing of our communal visions and values. One of the most familiar ways of understanding the divine act of creation is to liken it to the work of an inspired craftsman or sculptor, using his hands and fingers, as in Psalm 8, to shape life itself just as a potter gives form to clay. The frequently-used image of the gardener suggests that the creator is one who controls and reveals the beauty of nature; the metaphor of the architect implies a design and purpose in creation. All of these conceptual metaphors convey an idea of the creator as an artist of one sort or another. The creator-God is also often referred to as an author, as in the famous Wesley hymn "Author of life divine",<sup>6</sup> highlighting the function of God as the originating source of all that is, the one who begets and "authorises" life itself. The coincidence that the term "author" is also used for the writer of a work of literature is no mere accident. Sir Philip Sidney explained in his sixteenth-century *Apology for Poetry* that the name "poet" actually means "maker", a title which he calls "high and incomparable". Paralleling the work of the writer to that of the "heavenly Maker" whose creation is honoured in art, Sidney suggests that the poet uses the "zodiac of his own wit" to create an alternative or imaginary globe, a "golden" world peopled through the "vigour of his own

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 8:4,5.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 8:3—"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained."

<sup>6</sup> Charles Wesley, "Author of life divine", *The English Hymnal*, London 1933, 303; see also *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, ed. Ernest R.J. Rattenbury, London 1948.

invention".<sup>7</sup> The work of the poet, then, is a form of re-creation, a *mimesis* of (and in) the spirit of the original creation.<sup>8</sup>

When we come to consider how the seventeenth-century English poet John Milton represented the creation of humankind in his epic work, *Paradise Lost* (1667), we need to bear in mind these two fundamental factors. Firstly, Milton was, like his contemporaries, drawn to the wonder of creation but perplexed by the tension between beauty and fallenness in the human beings whom he saw around him (who were, inevitably, his model for "our Grand Parents"<sup>9</sup> Adam and Eve as described in his epic poem). Secondly, as an imaginative author Milton was also by nature a creator, and thus his account of the first human beings is not a direct analysis or treatise on the topic, as in the case of many of the commentaries considered elsewhere in this volume. Milton's thoughts on the making of Eve and Adam take the form of a re-creation, using elements of fiction and drama, of the first creation which used flesh and blood. Milton's stated general aim in his poem was to understand the creation, fall and redemption of humankind, in order to "assert Eternal Providence / And justify the ways of God to men" (I.25–6). His attentiveness to the detail of the creation of man and woman was fundamental to this grand task and the philosophical and poetical challenge it contained.

## I

The reader's first encounter with Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost* does not take place, as one might expect, at the moment of their creation by God; epics do not work with conventional chronology, and Milton's is no exception. Not only does the poem as a whole begin *in medias res*, but its constituent elements also plunge into the midst of things, only later to glance back at how they came to be. So we meet Adam and Eve when they are already fully formed and in the midst of their paradisaical garden; in subsequent passages, spread over

<sup>7</sup> Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, Manchester 1973, 99–101.

<sup>8</sup> For further consideration of this point, see Bernhard F. Scholz (ed.), *Mimesis: Studies on Literary Representation*, Frankfurt 1998, and in particular my essay "‘An Art of Imitation?’ The Challenge of Representation in English Renaissance Devotional Poetry", 229–44.

<sup>9</sup> Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667), ed. Christopher Ricks, Harmondsworth 1968, I.29. All subsequent references are to this edition.

several books of the poem, we learn of their original creation. It is also crucial to Milton's design that the first human beings are initially presented from the perspective of the intruding and threatening Satan; readers, too, are fallen beings, located outside paradise, struggling to comprehend the perfection of Eden and all that it contains. By means of this implicit parallel between the devil and the reader, Milton is enabled to reconstruct the purity of the newly created couple even while hinting, by means of the narrative framework, at their vulnerability and potential mortality. As we approach Adam and Eve in their "Assyrian Garden, where the Fiend / Saw undelighted all delight," we look over Satan's shoulder, so to speak, at "all kind / Of living Creatures new to sight and strange" (IV.285-7), and prominent among them are

Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,  
 Godlike erect, with native Honour clad  
 In naked Majesty seem'd Lords of all,  
 And worthy seem'd, for in their looks Divine  
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
 Truth, Wisdom, Sanctitude severe and pure,  
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plact;  
 Whence true authority in men;

(IV.288-95)

It is clear, even to Satan, that the human beings, God's newest creation, are of a higher order than all the other creatures in the garden: they are of "far nobler shape" and stand "erect and tall". Like the "man" of Psalm 8, these are figures "crowned . . . with glory and honour" and ready for "dominion" over the rest of nature; just as in Hamlet's account, they are the "paragon of animals" and "like a god"—as Milton puts it, "Godlike erect". However, the description is not without a certain unease: they "*seem'd* Lords of all, / And worthy *seem'd*" might suggest that we should question whether they really were "Lords", and whether they will remain "worthy". The shadow of the impending fall hovers over even this freshly-created perfection. These "noble" beings, an adjective used by both Milton here and Shakespeare in Hamlet's speech, will indeed become the "quintessence of dust" as paradise is lost.

In the light of the contradictory double account of creation in Genesis, discussed throughout this volume, it is important to point out that Milton's first description of Adam and Eve makes clear that they were both made in the image of God, as Genesis 1:27 states.



Echoing the biblical vocabulary, Milton insists that the "image of their glorious Maker shone" in their "looks Divine" (IV.291–2). They both, female and male, also share in the "authority" of God, granted to them by means not only of their creation by God, the true author, but also the gift of "freedom" given to them. This is a significant feature of Milton's interpretation of the creation story; authority rests not only in the line of power from God, but in the freedom which is the defining characteristic of being human. The fact that this freedom led to the fall gives an ironic edge to this celebratory account of the beginning of human life. Unfortunately Milton knew all too well from his own political experience how freedom was both essential and dangerous.<sup>10</sup>

After introducing the two noble creatures—as yet unnamed—seen by Satan, and grounding their presentation in a sense of their mutual reflection of God's image, only then does Milton begin to differentiate between the sexes. It is particularly interesting to note the differences between Adam and Eve's hair as emblematic of their specific attributes and status:

though both

Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;  
 For contemplation hee and valour form'd,  
 For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,  
 Hee for God only, shee for God in him:  
 His fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd  
 Absolute rule; and Hyacinthine Locks  
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:  
 Shee as a veil down to the slender waist  
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
 Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd  
 As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd  
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,  
 And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,  
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.

(IV.295–311)

---

<sup>10</sup> Milton played a leading part in the English Revolution (1642–9) and the subsequent period of Commonwealth government, but lived to see his spiritual and political hopes dashed with the Resoration of the monarchy in 1660. See Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, London 1977.

Adam's hair is symbolically short—"not beneath his shoulders broad"—and tightly curled, drawing attention to his head in its association with the reason, "contemplation" and leadership emerging from behind that "fair large Front". Eve's hair, by contrast, is long and "dishevell'd", drawing attention to her body which it simultaneously highlights and veils; as St. Paul commented in 1 Corinthians 11:15, "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering". At this point, however, there is nothing about Eve which should need covering since there is no sense of nakedness or shame in prelapsarian Eden. In anticipation of the fall, Eve is linked not only with "sweet attractive Grace" and amorousness, but potentially with a wantonness which will require containment.

The created pair are thus introduced by Milton in a descriptive passage full of complexity and ambiguity. They both gleam with perfection, and the light of God's image shines in their looks; they stand higher than the rest of creation and exude majesty and authority in their naked sanctity. They are, however, distinct in their physical and mental qualities, and there is an undoubted hierarchy in their relationship: "Hee for God only, shee for God in him". Eve's access to God is indirect, through Adam, recalling the Pauline instructions to wives,<sup>11</sup> while Adam's link is direct and concentrated ("for God only"). However, once again Milton unsettles the reader with the inconclusiveness of the Satanic view of the couple: "their sex not equal seem'd". How much of this description can we be sure of? To what extent is the interpretation of the hierarchy of the sexes Satan's erroneous reading of the scene which he surveys "undelighted"? In the divine scheme of things, is not "Grace"—the characteristic of Christ as well as Eve—just as significant as the "valour" identified with Adam? Though Milton apparently presents the completed Adam and Eve in this passage, his exploration of their natures, in all their differences and subtleties, is at this point only just beginning.

## II

As book IV of *Paradise Lost* unfolds, the reader is taken back in time to piece together retrospectively the actual creation of the earliest

---

<sup>11</sup> See 1 Corinthians 14:35 ("And if [women] will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home") and 1 Timothy 2:12 ("I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence").

human lives. Two aspects are of key significance in Milton's process of re-creating "Adam first of men" and "first of women Eve" (IV.408–9): he describes life's origins from the point of view of the one created rather than the creator, and he begins not with Adam but with Eve. The poet's imagination allows us to enter the subjective experience of the newly created woman, radically presented as the primary account of individual human experience in the epic.<sup>12</sup> In conversation with Adam, Eve recounts the beginning of her existence as follows:

That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
 I first awak't and found myself repos'd  
 Under a shade on flow'r's, much wond'ring where  
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread  
 Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd  
 Pure as th'expanse of Heav'n; I thither went  
 With unexperienc't thought, and laid me down  
 On the green bank, to look into the clear  
 Smooth Lake, that to me seem'd another Sky.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite,  
 A Shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd  
 Bending to look on me, I started back,  
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon return'd,  
 Pleas'd it returned as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathy and love, there I had fixt  
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,  
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me, 'What thou seest,  
 What there thou seest fair Creature is thyself . . .'  
 (IV.449–68)

This non-biblical adventure on the part of Milton's Eve is one of the most striking, and justifiably famous, passages of *Paradise Lost*. The poetry is exquisite—the syntax, for example, mirrors itself as Eve sees herself reflected in the water—while the feminising and reworking of the Narcissus myth is subtle and sympathetic. But most significant to our concerns is Milton's imaginative entry into Eve's experience of just having been created. The state of uncreatedness is likened to sleep, and the moment of becoming is a form of awakening, full of wonder as to "where / And what I was". She ven-

<sup>12</sup> The sequence of names in the subtitle of this essay is, therefore, a deliberate reflection of Milton's own poetic priorities.

tures out with “unexperienc’t thought”—a vivid phrase capturing the almost impossible innocence of the newly-made mind—and begins, unknowingly, to contemplate her own self. Once again Milton leaves us to puzzle out the moral implications of this account: does the watery mirror suggest vanity or a glimmering of self-knowledge? Does her “vain desire” imply an unfortunate self-love on Eve’s part, or simply a desire which would be literally “in vain” since the person to whom she is attracted is a mere “wat’ry image”? Is the beginning of Eve’s subjective experience the first glimpse of full humanness, or the first stage of the fall?

This is a remarkable and suggestive moment in Milton’s epic, conveying at once the human capacity for both private intimacy and curious enquiry. But Eve’s self-absorption is as short as it is intense. Briefly echoing Genesis, Milton shows Eve being led by God to Adam.<sup>13</sup> However, unlike the biblical account, Milton’s immediately informs us that this was something of a disappointment for Eve:

... I espi’d thee, fair indeed and tall,  
 Under a Platan, yet methought less fair,  
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
 Than that smooth wat’ry image; back I turn’d,  
 Thou following cried’st aloud, ‘Return fair Eve,  
 Whom fli’st thou? whom thou fli’st, of him thou art,  
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent  
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart  
 Substantial Life, to have thee by my side  
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
 Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 My other half.’ With that thy gentle hand  
 Seiz’d mine, I yielded . . .

(IV.478–89)

As if to counter some of the reluctance among narrators and biblical commentators concerning the creation of woman,<sup>14</sup> Milton here depicts the reluctance of that first woman to leave her “soft” and “amiably mild” companion—her own self—in order to join Adam. Standing under a plane tree (“Platan”), Adam is shown from Eve’s perspective to be less than overwhelmingly attractive; the associations

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 2:22—“And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and *brought her unto the man*” (my italics).

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, E. Noort’s essay in this collection, pp. 1–18.

of Adam's setting have been much debated, but one of the known characteristics of this tree (itself newly introduced into England in the late sixteenth century) was its barrenness.<sup>15</sup> Despite the affection of Adam's "claim" on Eve, the verb chosen to express his first contact with her, "seiz'd", is set prominently, with almost violent effect, at the start of the line. The reader is reminded that, as in the first description of the created couple, Eve is put in the position of having to "yield", a term associated here with fruitfulness as well as submission.<sup>16</sup> Adam, it is clear, has need of Eve, and Milton draws attention here not just to her *creation* but her own potential *creativity* as a woman.

At this point in his epic, Milton ceases to explore Eve's first moments any further and instead advances his narrative of life in Eden, leaving the reader with the memory of Eve's subjective experience of awakening to life. Three books later, Milton returns briefly to Adam and Eve's creation, as recounted to Adam by an onlooker, the archangel Raphael:

This said, [God] form'd thee, Adam, thee O Man  
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd  
 The breath of Life; in his own Image hee  
 Created thee, in the Image of God  
 Express, and thou becam'st a living Soul.  
 Male he created thee, but thy consort  
 Female for Race . . .

(VII.524–30)

This cursory account, closely modelled on Genesis 1:27, seems curiously at odds with the more profoundly imagined and psychologically plausible narrative of book IV. At any rate, Raphael's words in book VII were not Milton's last words on the creation of Eve and Adam, for he resumed the topic in the following book, complementing Eve's subjective recollections in book IV with an equivalent meditation by Adam in book VIII:

<sup>15</sup> As pointed out by Ann Torday Gulden, *Milton's Eve and the Pursuit of Wisdom in "Paradise Lost"*, Oslo 1999, 75–7.

<sup>16</sup> Some critics have seen this turning point in the epic as Eve's compulsory description into heterosexuality; see, for example, Janet E. Halley, "Female Autonomy in Milton's Sexual Politics", in: Julia M. Walker (ed.), *Milton and the Idea of Woman*, Urbana 1988, 233. For further discussion of this topic, see Mary Nyquist, "The genesis of gendered subjectivity in the divorce tracts and in *Paradise Lost*", in: Mary Nyquist and Margaret W. Ferguson (eds.), *Re-membering Milton: Essays on the texts and traditions*, London 1988, 99–127.

For Man to tell how human Life began  
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?  
     . . . As new wak't from soundest sleep  
 Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid  
 In Balmy Sweat, which with his Beams the Sun  
 Soon dri'd, and on the reeking moisture fed.  
 Straight toward Heav'n my wandering Eyes I turn'd,  
 And gaz'd awhile the ample Sky, till rais'd  
 By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,  
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright  
 Stood on my feet; about me round I saw  
 Hill, Dale, and shady Woods, and sunny Plains,  
 And liquid Lapse of murmuring Streams; by these,  
 Creatures that liv'd, and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,  
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd,  
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.  
 Myself I then perus'd, and Limb by Limb  
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran  
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:  
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,  
 Knew not;

(VIII.250-1, 253-71)

At last, almost two thirds of the way through Milton's epic poem, we are taken back to the very first moment of Adam's created consciousness. The opening question, "who himself beginning knew?", honestly draws attention to the difficulty of accurate re-creation of the experience. Typically, Milton's syntax allows for two interpretations here: who has ever known personally what it is like to come into being, or, who could ever understand his own freshly-minted being? Both meanings are fundamental to Milton's whole enterprise of understanding creation.

Inevitably, there are overtones of a natural birth in Adam's description of divinely created physical life. When Adam becomes conscious of his own being, for example, he finds that he is wet with a "Balmy Sweat", as though just delivered from the womb. But as Adam perseveres with his account of his earliest experiences, the most striking feature is the many parallels with Eve's reminiscences. Both speak of their coming into existence as if it were an awakening from sleep, both are struck by their lush natural surroundings, both are drawn to moving water, and both accounts are framed by a sense of mystery, not knowing "who I was, or where, or from what cause". Further, they both appear to seek for heaven—a part of their prelapsarian instinct—but while Adam stands and looks upwards to the

“ample Sky”, Eve finds her heaven reflected in the “Smooth Lake”. The consequence of this difference is that Eve’s self-discovery is achieved by looking into that apparent heaven and focusing her attention ostensibly outside herself (on the “Shape within the wat’ry gleam”) whereas Adam turns away from heaven to explore himself deliberately “Limb by Limb”. The contrasts are instructive. Eve is inclined to see herself as part of the overarching sky (or its reflection), whereas Adam knows himself to be distinct from it. Eve sees herself whole, though shadowy and without conscious self-recognition; Adam discovers his body in a more fragmented fashion, carefully and consciously bit by bit. Eve is drawn to her reflection by “sympathy and love”, while Adam displays a physical delight in his “supple joints”, together with a proprietary fascination suggested by the verbs “perus’d” and “survey’d”. His body, like the rest of creation, is his to measure, name and own.

Unlike Eve, the emerging Adam quickly discovers that there is no “contentment” in “solitude” (VIII.364–6) and asks God for a “human consort”, an equal with whom he might find “fellowship” (VIII.389–92). The creator willingly undertakes to make for Adam “Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self” (VIII.450), whose creation Adam proceeds to describe. Bearing in mind that we have already heard of Eve’s original experience from her own perspective, in book IV, it is notable that here in book VIII Adam recounts her creation from his perspective, and not once but twice—first in his dream, and then in paradisaical reality:

Mine eyes he clos’d, but op’n left the Cell  
 Of Fancy my internal sight, by which  
 Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,  
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape  
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;  
 Who stooping op’n’d my left side, and took  
 From thence a Rib, with cordial spirits warm,  
 And Life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,  
 But suddenly with flesh fill’d up and heal’d:  
 The Rib he form’d and fashion’d with his hands;  
 Under his forming hands a Creature grew,  
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,  
 That what seem’d fair in all the World, seem’d now  
 Mean, or in her summ’d up, in her contain’d  
 And in her looks, which from that time infus’d  
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before . . .  
 She disappear’d, and left me dark, I wak’d

To find her, or for ever to deplore  
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:  
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,  
 Such as I saw her in my dream . . .  
 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her Eye,  
 In every gesture dignity and love.  
 (VIII.460-75, 478-82, 488-9)

The creation of Eve—"Heav'n's last best gift" (V.19)—was clearly a source of fascination for Milton, repeatedly exercising his poetic invention, or what Adam termed his "Fancy", his "internal sight". Laying one version upon another as the epic unfolds, Milton allows the reader to share Satan's view of the created woman, followed by Eve's own perception of her awakening, later Raphael's brief description of their joint creation, then Adam's dreamlike observation of her metamorphosis from his rib under God's "forming hands", and finally his encounter with her. Two features of the above extract (comprising the last two versions) are particularly interesting. Firstly, we are made to feel the importance and newness *to Adam* of the experience of Eve's creation. Not only is a new life herself being given shape, from his body; she brings with her a "sweetness . . . unfelt before" by Adam. She enables him to discover new emotions, and gives him a standard for beauty: "what seem'd fair in all the World . . . in her summ'd up". Eve's creation redefines his sense of humanity, too, since she is "manlike, but different sex", and his existence becomes mutually dependent upon hers, for without her he is left "dark". From this we learn that creation is a continuing and reciprocal experience. Secondly, Milton's vivid reconstruction of precisely how God took a rib from Adam's side, fleshing out (as it were) the simple narrative of Genesis 2:21-2, further extends the symbolic power of this element of the creation story. In the earlier accounts in *Paradise Lost*, as we have seen, the rib is used to suggest the partnership between Adam and Eve and the companionate sense of woman's place at man's "side", nearest to the "heart" (IV.484).<sup>17</sup> This latest version, however, with its references to a "wound" from which "cordial spirits" and "Life-blood" stream, implies a specific parallel

<sup>17</sup> Many early modern commentators drew attention to God's choice of the rib, rather than the head or foot, seeing it as an emblem of equality between man and woman; see Katherine Usher Henderson and Barbara F. McManus (eds.), *Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640*, Urbana 1985.



with the pierced side of the crucified Christ. This typological reading allows Adam to foreshadow Christ, a connection made explicit by St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15:45-7), but it also strengthens the association of Eve with grace, the redemptive gift which flows from the side of Christ. Milton's first presentation of Eve highlights her "sweet attractive Grace" (IV.298) and this final creation account concludes that Eve has "Grace . . . in all her steps" and "Heav'n in her Eye".

### III

As we might expect of an epic poem, Milton's *Paradise Lost* expands its biblical source to build an imaginative narrative on a complex, grand scale. Taking a closer look at his re-creation of the first human couple, we have seen the rhetorical skill with which Milton envisaged "the loveliest pair" (IV.321), not only in his descriptive lines themselves but also in the playful structure of repetition. It is to be expected of an epic that its chronology will not be straightforward, but Milton's chosen sequence of creation accounts is especially revealing. It suggests fundamentally that there was not one moment of creation, but that it is a continuing process. The poet thereby releases the grandeur of the creative act from the constraints of history; the divine creation, he implies, is timeless, and may be palely but recognisably reflected in the ongoing process of poetic creativity. The way in which Milton allows the creation of human life to unfold as the poem goes on further emphasises the interdependence of man and woman, as Eve describes her first sight of Adam, and Adam recalls the creation of Eve. The subjectivity of the accumulated creation accounts, too, is particularly striking. Even when the perspective offered is not that of Eve or Adam, *Paradise Lost* presents the formation of man and woman as seen from the point of view of an identified individual, whether Satan or Raphael. Nowhere in the poem do we hear an "objective" account of the creation of Adam and Eve.

A reading of Milton's re-creation of Eve and Adam has revealed that Milton gave priority to Eve, by presenting her first in the sequence of creation passages as well as supplying several different records of her earliest moments. One could argue that, in attempting to understand how and why paradise was lost, and in drawing on the Genesis story with its stress on the primary vulnerability and culpability of Eve, Milton needed to understand the psychology of

Eve more profoundly than that of Adam—thus giving more attention to her awakening identity. One could also claim that Milton was simply more interested as a writer in the challenge of depicting that which was “other”, representing the greater test of his imaginative powers. It is also possible to see symmetries in Milton’s restructured chronology: the first human being introduced in the poem is the first to fall; or, the last product of creation is presented first, in the biblical tradition that the “first shall be last” (Mark 9:35). However one interprets it, Milton’s evident and sympathetic interest in the creation of Eve is an important counter-weight to the critical temptation to see Milton as the “first of the masculinists”.<sup>18</sup>

As our study of Milton’s creation passages has shown, the accounts are notable for their suggestion of contrasts between Eve and Adam, from the very beginning of their existence. Among the most unusual of these is the implication that, while Adam was lonely before the subsequent creation of Eve, she herself had no sense of loneliness before she encountered Adam. Indeed, it is suggested that she preferred her own company at first to that of Adam, and had to be persuaded by a divine warning voice as well as Adam’s desperate cry to her to “return” (IV.481). Adam, it seems, needs Eve, but not, at first, vice versa. A second contrast, present in all the different accounts, is that Adam senses his separateness from the created world around him, whereas Eve is continuous with it. Adam contemplates and rules, while Eve with her “golden tresses” is likened to the curling “Vine” and other elements of that nature which must be ruled (IV.297–307). Eve immediately finds “answering looks” in her natural surroundings (IV.464), while Adam’s “quick instinctive motion” is to distinguish himself from that setting and the other “Creatures that liv’d” (VIII.259–264). The centuries-old identification of woman with nature and man with civilisation is sketched in from the very moment of creation in these accounts. However, it is vital to point out that, in Milton’s representation, the difference between the sexes is complementary in pre-lapsarian Eden; only after the fall does misogyny rear its ugly head.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, London 1953, entry for 10 September, 1918. Among critics who have echoed this view, see Christine Froula, “When Eve reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy”, *Critical Enquiry* 10 (1983) 321–47, and Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property*, New York 1987.

<sup>19</sup> For extensive and balanced discussion of this topic, see Diane McColley, *Milton’s Eve*, Urbana 1983.

The issues raised by Milton's poetic representation of the beginnings of human life are in many ways a continuation of dilemmas and debates found in the earlier texts and commentaries discussed in this volume. However, the element of subjectivity in creation seems to be unique to Milton. His poetic and psychological instincts led him to offer the reader the inside view of creation: not the view of God or the theologians, but of the characters themselves. We do not witness the creation of objects, but of subjects—indeed, the human subject itself. By means of his narrative exploration of the creation of Adam and Eve, Milton suggests what it means to be human. Everything, including our own creation, can only be seen and understood from an individual, gendered point of view—hence Milton's use of the personal voice or an identifiable perspective in all his various presentations of the creation. The accumulated impression, of course, is social and shared, but that sense of mutuality comes from the mingling of personal identities, suggested poetically by Milton in echoes and recurring vocabulary. What we see in the coming into being of Adam and Eve is the emergence of subjectivity.

The hallmark of the human subject, as depicted by Milton in all his works, is freedom, which may be discerned in *Paradise Lost* from the very beginning of Adam and Eve's existence. Freedom for Milton meant the potential to choose, and in the accounts of their creation Eve and Adam both introduce elements of choice—how to understand themselves, where and at whom to look, and whose company to keep. This is the natural consequence of Milton's radically internal perspective; we are not so much shown what Adam and Eve looked like from the outside, but what was going on inside their minds. This inner reality, inevitably, involves reactions, choices and decisions. As we saw in the description of Eve's first moments by the lake, such uncertainties can often anticipate the fall; that potential, too, is the inevitable result of freedom. In attempting to get behind the masks of Eve and Adam, Milton supplies the first humans with the characteristic subjectivity which would be termed post-lapsarian. His account of human creation, by looking from within, is clouded by the prospect of fallenness; Adam and Eve were "the only two of Mankind" in Eden, but in them Milton anticipates "the whole included Race" (IX.415-6). We are reminded that the "piece of work", in Hamlet's words, was always made from "dust".

Finally, Milton's method of re-creating Eve and Adam, namely from their subjective perspective, draws attention to the way in which

individual identity is constructed. God made the first two human beings, according to Genesis, but in *Paradise Lost* they subsequently make themselves through language and memory. Indeed, because of Milton's reversed chronology in the epic, he apparently gives greater precedence to Eve and Adam's versions than to God's initial creative act. Remembering becomes an act of creation in itself, a remembering or re-construction of past experience into a present whole. "That day I oft remember", begins Eve (IV.449), and proceeds to narrate the first moments of her life, which prove crucial to her entire personality. Echoing the imaginative creativity of the poet, the character "makes up" an identity through recollection turned into story. This passage appears to be offered by Milton as a creation account, but what he is actually doing is presenting Eve's *self-creation*, a process achieved by means of memories given shape and expression in words. The same is true of Adam's reminiscences in book VIII; "who himself beginning knew?" is the rhetorical question of all those who attempt to understand and recount their own lives. Milton's chosen mode of creation narrative is, in fact, autobiography, embedded within an epic. Writing in the seventeenth century, the era in which memoir and autobiography began to make their mark in English culture,<sup>20</sup> he cast Adam and Eve in the role of fledgeling autobiographers. This inner perspective offered Milton the most imaginative and convincing way in which to come to terms with created identity, as it was in the beginning and in the centuries of human experience still to come beyond the walls of Eden.

---

<sup>20</sup> See Michael Mascuch, *Origins of the Individualist Self: Autobiography and Self-Identity in England, 1591-1791*, Oxford 1997, and Henk Dragstra, Sheila Ottway and Helen Wilcox (eds.), *Betraying Our Selves: Forms of Self-Representation in Early Modern Texts*, London 2000.

# THE CREATION OF EVE AND THE AMBIVALENCE BETWEEN THE SEXES

P.E. JONGSMA-TIELEMAN

## *Introduction*

Our subject here is Genesis 2, the myth about the creation of Adam and Eve. I relate this to the sequel of the story: Genesis 3, the Fall. My frame of reference is psychology of religion, in which religion is seen as human behaviour. My focus of attention is on human emotions, needs, emotional conflicts and the god-image, which are expressed in religious texts. Here I make use of psychoanalytic theory. With its help I analyse the content of these chapters.<sup>1</sup> For this method a universal human structure is presupposed, although we have to take account of great cultural differences.

A first question is what emotional problem of living is at stake in this myth, and what solution is offered? This myth undoubtedly makes a patriarchal impression: the male comes first, and after him the woman as a helpmeet for him. Patriarchal societal structures have been sanctioned with an appeal to this myth (1 Timothy 2:8–15). The emotional problem here is the relation between the sexes.

Sometimes patriarchy is seen as a kind of primeval datum, an “original sin”, inherent in men. Psychoanalysis offers a view of the emotional conflict at the root of patriarchy. Dorothy Dinnerstein<sup>2</sup> argues that patriarchy is a reaction to “matriarchy” in early childhood. This “matriarchy” is not a societal structure, but an emotional domination of the mother over her child and her partner. This theory is supported by some studies. According to these the early history of humanity also included matriarchy, probably not as a societal

---

<sup>1</sup> Content analysis is one method of psychoanalytic text-interpretation. H. Raguse, *Psychoanalyse und biblische Interpretation. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Eugen Drewermanns Auslegung der Johannes-Apokalyps*, Stuttgart 1993, 33–129 offers an overview of current methods. Cf. also P.E. Jongsma-Tieleman, *Godsdienst als speelruimte voor verbeelding*, Kampen 1996, 2nd ed., 1998, 162–204.

<sup>2</sup> D. Dinnerstein, *The mermaid and the Minotaur. Sexual arrangements and human malaise*, New York 1977.

structure, but only on an experiential level with respect to fertility. In the beginning fertility was attributed exclusively to females. With respect to fertility men feel inferior to women. The exercise of power over women, patriarchy, is seen as a defence against these inferiority-feelings.<sup>3</sup> Patriarchy as a societal structure possibly has its origin in an *emotional* matriarchy.<sup>4</sup> Here, then, is the link with Genesis 2 and 3: this patriarchal text could have a “matriarchal” background. Reading this text in a “matriarchal” context possibly makes this patriarchal text more understandable. And perhaps with the help of this insight we can derive a meaning from it that is of value for both sexes.

In this paper I start with Dorothy Dinnerstein’s theory. Thereafter we look for traces of “matriarchy” and of ambivalence between the sexes in some Sumerian myths and in Genesis 2 and 3. Then we take a “matriarchal” background of our text as a *working hypothesis* and read our text in that way, curious to know if it makes sense. At last a conclusion is drawn with respect to exegesis and reception of the text.

I would like to underline that my argumentation is *psychological*, and conclusions are drawn on the basis of *psychological* evidence. This is no substitution for the work of biblical scholars, but a supplement. I hope biblical scholars are inclined to take my study into consideration.

### *Patriarchy as sanctuary from the omnipotent mother*

Dorothy Dinnerstein’s theory is based on an analysis of the consequences of the role division, common until recently, between fathers and mothers, in which baby- and childcare were exclusively the mother’s task. What is the influence of this practice of exclusively female child-rearing?

With this role division, the mother, a female person, is not only responsible for taking care of small children, but she is also the only person who is seen as capable of doing so. Only mothers, women, are able to handle the very little, dependent baby, to give it bodily care, to handle its emotions and to empathise with the child’s needs

<sup>3</sup> B. Bettelheim, *Symbolic wounds: Puberty rites and the envious male*, London 1955. G. Zillboorg, “Masculine and feminine”, *Psychiatry* 7 (1944) 257–296. Reprinted in J.B. Miller (ed.), *Psychoanalysis and women*, New York 1973, 96–131.

<sup>4</sup> To underline this I use quotation marks when using forms of the word “matriarchy”.

and feelings. But not only that: mothers, women, are seen as the caretaking sex in general. According to the "classic" role division, mother also takes care of father. With respect to caretaking, the mother, the woman, is almighty, omnipotent. Some men themselves address their wives as "Mom". She is "the wife", "the missus".

However, for a little, totally dependent child, it is very difficult to experience ambivalence towards such an almighty parent. Mother, for the child, is "all I have"; he cannot risk losing her. This risk is greater to the extent that father himself is also dependent on mother's care, unable to take an independent position towards her and to have a stand of his own. In this case for the child there is no model for the possibility of disagreeing with and rebelling against mother while still maintaining the relationship with her. Thus, the practice of exclusively female "mothering" gives the mother an almighty position. Instead of solving the ambivalence-conflict by way of a "mourning process", father and fatherly omnipotence (patriarchy) are used as a surrogate solution: father as a sanctuary from maternal authority.

How can this happen? In a family in which the caretaking comes exclusively from the mother, the child enters a relationship with the father at an age at which the child is already more individuated, more reasonable, more "humane". In the case of the father not sharing in childcare, the child never has a *symbiotic* relationship with the father. Thus, the father is experienced as a separate person: not invested with the all-penetrating omnipotence that the mother has for the child. Because of this difference, father and "father's world" can become a sanctuary for the child who wants to flee from the mother's ambivalently experienced omnipotence.

This fatherly sanctuary, however, can only be perceived as safe on two conditions:

- that Father, and his masculine world, should be clearly different from Mother and her female world; and

- that Father and his masculine world should be a match for Mother and her female world. Father should be as omnipotent as Mother.

For these reasons, as a counterforce against an *almighty mother* at home, the *inner* world of care and feelings, an *outer* world with an *almighty father* is necessary. And as long as the mother's omnipotence is not limited by the father as a partner in caretaking, it is not safe to give up the father's omnipotence in the outside world. Men and women, fleeing towards the father and his world, will always be afraid of the return of the almighty mother.

The more women are representatives of the world of gratification of emotional needs, the more men are in danger of perceiving women as overpowering "great mothers", even in adult relationships. On this basis men can also, in sexual relationships, perceive female sexual attractiveness as irresistible; confronted with an attractive woman they feel again like a little child. This is mirrored in legends and folksongs, for instance the legend of *Die Lorelei*. She only has to sing a song (like a mother sings a lullaby for her little baby) and to comb her long golden hair, and the boatman is totally lost.

We stated that as a defence against men's feelings of powerlessness in the realm of caretaking and emotions, domination by men in the outside world of work, business and society is needed. In this realm women have no say. Each sex is excluded from the territory of the other sex. This gives rise to feelings of ambivalence and rivalry between the sexes. Freud postulated *penis envy* in women. This is paralleled by *womb envy* in men.<sup>5</sup> Because both patriarchy and matriarchy for men and women are needed as a defence, men and women remain mutually dependent on each other.

This mutual dependence is maintained among generations via the *Oedipus complex*. For a father who experiences his wife as "mom", the almighty mother, a daughter can be a "better"—i.e. a controllable—woman. A mother, by patriarchal domination doomed to be only a housewife, can find in her son a controllable man, and somebody to realise *for her* her own masculine aspirations: "my son is a doctor". In this way parents take advantage of the child's dependence and of his unconscious Oedipal *wishes*. This is, however, the opposite of the child's real *need* for *limitation* of Oedipal wishes. The child's *omnipotence fantasies* are reinforced, so that men stay omnipotent "patriarchs", women omnipotent "matriarchs".

#### *Parallel between ontogenesis and phylogenesis*

Freud postulated a parallel between the development of the individual ("ontogenesis") and that of mankind ("phylogenesis"). According to several authors the above-described genesis of patriarchy also holds for the history of mankind.

It starts with "the great Mother". The survival of mankind is

<sup>5</sup> Bettelheim 1955; F. Sierksma, *Religie, seksualiteit en agressie*, Groningen 1979.



dependent on fertility, and in the beginning fertility was not recognised to be a consequence of sexual intercourse. This means that the role of the masculine seed was not seen, and fertility was exclusively attributed to women.<sup>6</sup> This is mirrored in religion. The Great Mother-goddesses, who gave birth to everything, appeared in the beginning of the history of religion. The Great Mother-goddess is the “mother of all living”. She is almighty, omnipotent and autarchic, not in need of a male partner. Much later in history the role of the masculine seed in fertility was recognised. This meant that the autarchy and omnipotence of the mother could be limited and denied. A crucial question is then: how would the almighty mother react to this development, in reality or in the fantasies of men and women? Would she be willing to accept limitation and to share her power with the male, or not?

Several authors<sup>7</sup> describe as a next phase in the religion of the Mother-goddess the veneration of the Great Mother along with her son-lover. Often this “son”, chosen by the goddess, is a mortal man who fertilises her. Thereafter the son-lover dies and then is raised to life again by the goddess. Instances of this are Kybele and Attis or Ishtar and Dumuzi (Tammuz). In the myths of the goddess and her son-lover no father is mentioned. The role of the masculine seed is indeed recognised, but masculine fertility is “son” of the goddess, which means that ultimately *she* produces it. Masculinity only has a function in fertilization. After this is done he can die, as with the queen-bee and the drone.<sup>8</sup> The great mother brings him back to life: she remains “mother of all living”. Masculinity is here only an attribute of the almighty mother.

In this respect the serpent is pre-eminently an important symbol, connected with the veneration of the Great-Mother-goddess.<sup>9</sup> As a symbol it has many aspects and meanings. It is, for example, seen

<sup>6</sup> Zilboorg 1944. Zilboorg and Bettelheim (1955) conclude that woman-envy in men, in combination with woman-hatred, precedes penis envy in women.

<sup>7</sup> A. Baring and J. Cashford, *The myth of the goddess. Evolution of an image*, London 1993; M.E. Harding, *Woman's mysteries. Ancient and modern*, second edition, London 1977; E. Neumann, *Die grosse Mutter. Eine Phänomenologie der weiblichen Gestaltungen des Unbewussten*, 9. Auflage, Olten, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. E. Weigert-Vohwinkel, The cult and mythology of the Magna Mater from the standpoint of psychoanalysis, *Psychiatry* 1 (1938) 347–378; in the Bronze Age (±3500–1250 BC) the myth of the son-lover is also connected with human or animal sacrifice.

<sup>9</sup> Baring/Cashford 1993; M. Stone, *The Paradise Papers. The suppression of women's rites*, London 1976.

as an autarchic being; it renews its own life by casting off its old skin. In psychoanalytic and in Jungian psychology the serpent is also often seen as a phallus-symbol.<sup>10</sup> But, in the case of the goddess-with-serpents, she *usurps* masculinity as an attribute of her own. In this way she is also very threatening to males. She is not only a lover, but also the “terrible mother”. Erich Neumann<sup>11</sup> states that this threatening, terrible woman always manifests herself as the *ouroborus*, the primal serpent (like the *Leviathan*), the phallic woman. The symbol of *castration* is an essential symbol in the representation of the terrible, threatening mother. According to some authors the symbol of the serpent is often also connected with the symbol of the “tree of life” or the “tree of knowledge of good and evil”. “Tree-serpent-Goddess belonged together as a fixed motif”.<sup>12</sup>

*Traces of ambivalence between the sexes in Sumerian mythology*

We came to our working hypothesis of a “matriarchal” background of the biblical creation myth on psychological grounds. This could seem very unlikely, because the Great Goddess is totally absent in the god-image of the Old Testament. One could conclude that in the Old Testament the problems around the Great Mother do not exist. However, from a psychological viewpoint another possibility is that the problem is repressed and “works” on an unconscious level.

Among biblical scholars it is common to view the culture and religion of ancient Mesopotamia as an integral element of the context of Scripture. On many points similarities between Mesopotamian and Israelite cultures exist, but on several points the Old Testament also seems to be in discussion with the religion of its cultural context; they have their questions in common, but the biblical answer is different. Traces of an ambivalence-conflict between the sexes originating from fear of the Great Mother in Mesopotamian myths would support our hypothesis, while its absence would make our hypothesis very unlikely. What do Sumerian and Akkadian myths tell us?

<sup>10</sup> A. Fodor, “Der Sündenfall im Buch Genesis”, in: Y. Spiegel, *Psychoanalytische Interpretationen biblischer Texte*, München 1972, 167–173.

<sup>11</sup> Neumann 1989, 166, 265.

<sup>12</sup> H. Schüngel-Strauman, “On the creation of man and woman in Genesis 1–3: the history and reception of the texts reconsidered”, in: A. Brenner (ed.), *A feminist companion to Genesis* (Vol. 2), Sheffield 1993, 68. Cf. also Stone 1976, 231, and Baring/Cashford 1993, 209.

As I will show, in some older Sumerian myths an attitude of ambivalence between man and woman is obvious. In later Akkadian myths and in the Gilgamesh-epos this conflict emerges in a more hidden way: as aggression against goddesses. Gilgamesh refuses to be Ishtar's lover because she treated her former lovers very badly. In *Enuma Elish*, Tiamat is killed by her children. Her lover Qingu is the one who is killed to give his blood as material for the creation of man. Here the ambivalence-conflict is in a later developmental stage, in which the Great Mother is repressed more and more and aggression towards her dominates. In *Enuma Elish* mother-goddesses no longer play a role in the creation of mankind.

Here I prefer the older Sumerian myths as material to demonstrate the ambivalence-conflict, because here the conflict is so clearly visible. An attitude of ambivalence and rivalry between man and woman can be seen especially in myths concerning Enki, Ninhursag and Inanna.

Enki as a god is not easy to categorise. Two important items characterise him: water and wisdom (or cunning). "Water" has a double sense. It is the sweet water beneath the earth—the great abyss—and it is the water of the rivers, which are seen as Enki's ejaculations.

Ninhursag is the mother-goddess pre-eminent. She was regarded as the mother of all living things.<sup>13</sup> She was also known, for example, as "supreme lady", "Mamma", "womb-goddess" and "mother of the gods".<sup>14</sup>

Inanna is the goddess of passionate love and war. In psychoanalytic terms she is the goddess of the love and aggression drives. Inanna makes people lose their heads. She overthrows order and reverses societal roles. In her temples orgiastic feasts were held; there men wore women's clothes and vice versa. She has a lust of power. Inanna and Enki were the most beloved Sumerian gods.

### *Enki and Ninhursag*

The myth is situated in Dilmun, the Sumerian paradise.

Enki impregnates Ninhursag, 'the mother of the land',<sup>15</sup> who, after nine *days* of pregnancy gives birth, without pain and effort, to the god-

<sup>13</sup> S.N. Kramer, *The Sumerians. Their history, culture, and character*, 2nd ed., Chicago 1964, 122.

<sup>14</sup> S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia. Creation, the flood, Gilgamesh and others*, Oxford 1991, 326.

<sup>15</sup> Ninhursag is not Enki's wife. In the first part of the myth Ninsikilla is spoken of as Enki's wife.

dess Ninmu. Enki then proceeds to impregnate his daughter Ninmu, who in the same way as her mother Ninhursag, gives birth to the goddess named Ninkurra, and the latter gives birth to the goddess Uttu. Enki is now evidently prepared to impregnate his great-granddaughter Uttu when Ninhursag, the great-grandmother, intervenes and offers the latter some pertinent advice. Unfortunately the relevant passage is almost completely destroyed. But to judge from the passage that follows Uttu may have been instructed by Ninhursag not to cohabit with Enki until and unless he brings her a gift . . . Enki brings this gift to Uttu, and the latter now joyfully receives his advances and cohabits with him.

But of this union probably no new goddess is born. Instead, Ninhursag seems to utilise Enki's semen in a way, which leads to the sprouting of eight different plants . . ., and now Enki commits a sinful deed. As he looked about him in the marshland, he noticed the eight plants and probably determined to decide their fate. But first, it seems, he had to *know* their heart, that is, he probably had to taste what they were like . . . Angered by this act, Ninhursag . . . utters a curse against Enki, saying that until he dies she will not look upon him with the 'eye of life'. And, as good as her word, she immediately disappears.

Whereupon, Enki no doubt begins to pine away, and the Anunnaki, the 'great' but nameless Sumerian gods, sit in the dust. The fox brings Ninhursag back to Enki. Ninhursag then seats the dying Enki in her vulva. Eight times Ninhursag asks Enki where he feels pain. Eight times Enki names an organ of the body, and Ninhursag then informs him that she has caused a certain deity to be born for him. The implication is that the birth of the deity will result in the healing of the sick member. Finally, probably at the request of Ninhursag, Enki decreed the fate of the new-born deities . . .<sup>16</sup>

In this myth a very striking feature is Enki's sexual lust for the mother-goddess and her female offspring. What is Enki after? In the course of the narrative it becomes clear that it is not sexual gratification. Sexual intercourse for him is a way of incorporating ("eating") the power of the mother-goddess. Behind his insatiable sexual lust is womb envy. However, his attempt at incorporating the plants, to let them grow inside his belly as if he were a mother, is a mortal sin. For him, being a man, these plants are "forbidden fruit". To survive he needs the mother-goddess and her female organs. And after accepting her help he is allowed to fulfil his own task: to decree the fate of the newborn deities.

"Forbidden fruit" evokes associations with Genesis 2:17: "in the

<sup>16</sup> J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., Princeton 1955, 37.

day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die". Thus a parallel is drawn with the biblical paradise myth.<sup>17</sup> Kramer mentions further an interesting viewpoint with respect to the background of Genesis 2 and 3. He draws attention to the way in which goddesses give birth in the Sumerian myth. Goddesses give birth "without pain or travail". A mortal woman in childbirth, on the contrary, is called in Sumerian "the screaming one".<sup>18</sup>

*Enki and the world order and Inanna and the "me"*

Both myths deal with the "me": the "government departments" of the world government. However, they offer a different view about who or what rules the world. *Enki and the world order* tells how Enki allots the "me" to the different gods and goddesses; the government of the world is well ordered. But in the last part of the poem an angry Inanna appears on the scene. She feels neglected and left out: "Me, the woman, [wh]y did you treat differently? I, the holy Inanna,—where are [my prerogat]ives?"<sup>19</sup> Enki answers her that she has no reason to complain: she has in her own right a number of attributes such as war, sexual jealousy, contradiction, lawlessness, and so on. In Enki's well-ordered world Inanna has no place.<sup>20</sup>

*Inanna and the "me"*, to the contrary, tells a different story. The beginning lines of the myths are too fragmentary for a line-by-line translation, but the following is clear:

Inanna, wearing the turban head-dress known as 'the crown of the steppe' went forth in the steppe to visit and have sexual intercourse with the shepherd, probably Dumuzi, in his sheepfold. There, as she bent over, presumably for a coitus a tergo, she was so taken with her 'wondrous to behold' vulva, that she broke out into a song of self-glorification, closing with her resolve to journey to the Abzu in Eridu to honour Enki and offer him a prayer. Enki welcomes her with great gladness, and offers her food and drink. Enki and Inanna then settle down to a prolonged drinking bout, competing with each other in the draining of many a liquor-filled bronze vessel of its contents. In his drunken state, Enki becomes expansively generous, and proclaims that he will present, cluster by cluster, all the precious "me" in his keep,

<sup>17</sup> Pritchard 1955; Kramer 1964, 147-149.

<sup>18</sup> E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben nach der Vorstellungen der Babylonier*, 1. Teil, Berlin/Leipzig 1931, 177: "die Kreisende".

<sup>19</sup> Kramer 1964, 182.

<sup>20</sup> H. Vanstiphout, *Helden en goden van Sumer. Een keuze uit de heroïsche en mythologische dichtkunst van het Oude Mesopotamië*, Nijmegen 1998, 202.

to his daughter Inanna. When the party is over Inanna takes the “me” to her city Erech (Uruk). When Enki is sober again he regrets his generosity, but it is too late.<sup>21</sup>

The meaning of these two myths is self-explanatory. Inanna rules the world; Enki, in spite of his wisdom and cunning, is no match for Inanna’s sexual attractiveness.

*Traces of a “matriarchal” background in Genesis 2:7–3:20?*

Are there traces of a “matriarchal” context to be found in Genesis 2 and 3 besides the above-mentioned symbols of the serpent and tree? With respect to this question several points deserve attention. First, in general, Adam, as first-created man, is seen as “lord of the creation”. But in this Bible-section he does not behave like that. After falling in sin he shelters himself behind his wife. Further, in Genesis 3:20, Eve is called “mother of all living”, a title of the great mother-goddess.<sup>22</sup>

*The narrative of the creation of Eve and the Fall read in  
“matriarchal” context*

The above mentioned is not an exhaustive argument to *prove* a “matriarchal” context for the first chapters of Genesis. But in my opinion it is *enough* to use it as a *working hypothesis*. Thus we investigate what it means to read this narrative in a “matriarchal” context.

In a “matriarchal” context, in the same way as in a patriarchal one, the two sexes are not equal: one sex is dominant, the other subordinate. The subordinate sex does not have an autonomy and identity of its own. Autonomy belongs to the dominant sex, and the identity of the subordinate sex is derived from the dominant sex. In a “matriarchal” context the female sex is dominant; the male sex is subordinate. Thus, when we read this narrative, we should read “subordinate” where “man” is written, and “woman” should be translated as “dominant”. Let us start our reading.

<sup>21</sup> S.N. Kramer and J. Maier, *Myths of Enki, the crafty God*, New York/Oxford 1989, 57–59.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. M. Dijkstra, “Mother” in: K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P.W. van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of deities and demons in the Bible*, 2nd ed., Leiden 1999.

Genesis 2:15: The *subordinate* man is created first; he is put into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. God addresses the subordinate sex as “man”, human being.

16/17: These verses are difficult to understand. Here the subordinate sex is threatened with death. But, to the contrary, in 2:7 man is said to be created of the dust of the ground, and 3:19 refers to that. Here mortality is linked to creation. One possible explanation could be that mortality becomes a threat when mortal man transgresses her/his God-given limits. It is also possible to hear in these verses an echo of the Sumerian paradise myth. Using elements of this myth the myth-teller speaks the language of the cultural background of his time: eating of the forbidden fruit is usurpation of forbidden power, a *mortal* sin.

18: The subordinate sex needs help. This also means that one sex cannot be autarchic, self-sufficient. N.B.: The Hebrew word *ezer* should not be read as a subordinate help, without autonomy or identity of his own. *Ezer* is also used as a name for God.<sup>23</sup>

19: The subordinate sex is called to give names to the animals: to define them. But animals are not equal, fitting partners, “a helper who is a counterpart”<sup>24</sup> for man, the human being.

21–22: God creates the *dominant* sex out of the subordinate. She is bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh, and as a consequence of that the dominant sex is named—defined—after the subordinate one.

24: Refers to the contemporary marriage practice. The bridegroom went to the house of the bride’s parents and there the marriage was consummated. Only after a certain amount of time (sometimes months) would the bride leave her house to join her husband in a house in the neighbourhood of her husband’s family.<sup>25</sup>

25: Both the dominant and the subordinate sex were naked, and not ashamed. In the Christian tradition, and also in psychoanalysis,<sup>26</sup> very often *shame* and *nakedness* are related to sexuality. But that needs further specification. In Erikson’s lifecycle psychology an attitude of *shame* is the negative outcome of the emotional conflict of

<sup>23</sup> Schünger-Strauman 1993, 66.

<sup>24</sup> Ph. Tribble 1979, Eve and Adam: Genesis 2–3 reread, in: C.P. Christ and J. Plaskow (eds.), *Womanspirit rising. A feminist reader in religion*, New York 1979, 74–83.

<sup>25</sup> K. van der Toorn, *Van haar wieg tot haar graf. De rol van de godsdienst in het leven van de Israëlitische en de Babylonische vrouw*, Baarn 1987, 56, 57.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. J. Smit and H. Stroeken, *Lotgevallen. De bijbel in psychoanalytisch perspectief*, Amsterdam 1993, 42.

the second life-stage, that of *autonomy*. It is in origin the conflict of the toddler who, outgrowing the early symbiosis with the mother, comes to master his own body. He derives from that a sense of autonomy and of the possibility of having a will of his own. He starts to experiment with that new-found will, for instance, in the conflict around toilet training. But this sense of autonomy is still very vulnerable! In this first use of his own will the toddler also exposes himself and lays himself open. In Dutch we speak of “*blootgeven, -stellen*” (*bloot* means naked). He is at risk of being laughed at, and when this happens he feels ashamed: a feeling of not daring to show oneself because one feels ridiculous and worthless. On an adult developmental level this returns in shame of sexual organs. Sexuality also has much to do with autonomy. Sexual organs cannot be autonomously mastered: one *falls* in love, *gets* sexually aroused, and men *get* an erection, whether they want it or not. Read in this sense this verse means that the subordinate and the dominant sex recognize and approve each other's autonomy, they feel safe with each other, they can expose themselves to each other in their mutual vulnerability.

Genesis 3:1–5: Now the *serpent* appears on the scene. As we have seen the serpent can be a symbol of the omnipotent mother, who usurps male potency as an attribute of her own. The serpent is the embodiment of the temptation to be as God. And this is a temptation for the dominant sex. “To know good and evil” also means to be as God, because it means to define, to decide what is good and what is evil.<sup>27</sup> And this is what in reality happens in society: the dominant sex or party defines good and evil.<sup>28</sup> To be as God also has as a consequence the denial of one's own mortality.

6: The dominant sex tempts the subordinate “to eat the forbidden fruit”, to be as God. One can ask: does this make sense? Why should the dominant party share godliness with the subordinate? In my opinion this could make sense in different ways. First, feelings of guilt about committing a crime often give rise to the search for an accomplice. But this sharing of the “forbidden fruit” could also be an image for what happens in reality. The dominant sex or party makes the laws for society, defines its ideals, and passes them on to

<sup>27</sup> K.-W. Merks, De boom der kennis van goed en kwaad in eigen tuin. Fundamentalistische argumentaties in de katholieke moraaltheologie, in: H.L. Beck and K.-W. Merks (eds.), *Fundamentalisme*, Baarn 1994, 42–59. Cf. also the comment in the (Dutch) Willibrord-translation of the Bible.

<sup>28</sup> J.B. Miller, *Toward a new psychology of women*, Boston 1976.



the subordinate party. Subordinates want to be like dominants. The almighty mother passes the wish for almightiness to her children: they want to be omnipotent mothers or fathers.

7: After eating of the “forbidden fruit” the eyes of man and woman are opened, they know that they are naked and they cannot bear that any longer. When both sexes want to be like God, and no longer know their own limits, they no longer respect each other’s limits and it is no longer safe to expose themselves to each other.

8: They also no longer feel safe in the presence of God.

9: Then the Lord comes and he calls the subordinate and asks him: “Where art thou?”. The Lord calls the *subordinate* back to his original destination to be a human being.

12: But the subordinate hides behind the dominant sex: “it is her fault!”

13: The dominant sex also hides her responsibility, but her hiding place is different. The dominant sex attributes omnipotence to the temptation.

14: God’s first curse strikes the tempter. Here the primal antithesis for mankind is also defined: to be a mortal creature, accepting God as creator, as opposed to wishing to be like God.

16–19: The woman is punished with *multiplication* of the sorrows of giving birth. Seen against the background of the above-described Sumerian myth, this stresses that the woman is a mortal, not a goddess. The same is true of the punishment of Adam: in *Enuma Elish* mankind is created to release the gods from toil. Woman and man are creatures, mortals, and this is underlined by aggravation of their “jobs”, because by eating the forbidden fruit they wanted to be like God. And the domination of men over women is also seen as punishment, which means that the domination of men over women, patriarchy, is not according to God’s intention of the world.

20: Adam calls the name of his wife, as he earlier gave names to the animals. Man rules over woman *after* the Fall. And Adam calls his wife “mother of all living”, a name of the great mother-goddess. The history that started with the Fall goes on.

*Mind the context!*

We took a “matriarchal” context of this part of Genesis as a working hypothesis, and we made an application of it. What is the outcome? In my opinion, this working hypothesis works. It makes sense, and

the details of the narrative fit with each other like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. It also makes sense of details often neglected in exegesis.

By reading this text in a certain context we were able to extract a meaning from it. We ask now: is this meaning patriarchal? Is this a patriarchal text? Is patriarchy ordained by creation, as 1 Timothy 2:11–15 suggests? In my opinion this myth is not patriarchal *as long as* the “matriarchal” background is taken into consideration; i.e. as long as the male is seen as the subservient party. In that case this myth is the primeval version of the Song of Hanna (1 Samuel 2) and the Magnificat (Luke 1:52,53): “He has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away”. The meaning of the myth is clear when read against a “matriarchal” background.

However, this myth becomes patriarchal when self-evidently read against a patriarchal background. Then figure and background fuse, and its original meaning disappears. In a patriarchal background the male is dominant and the woman subordinate. Read against this patriarchal background, the creation of the male as “man” and woman as his helpmeet reinforces male domination over women. This happened in the reception history of this text. As a matter of course we usually read texts against our own background, i.e. a patriarchal societal structure and culture. The emotional problem concerning the omnipotent mother, however, has not disappeared. Emotional problems do not disappear *unless* they are solved. When it is not possible to solve the problem it is repressed. It survives on an unconscious level. The repressed ambivalence-conflict with respect to women comes to the fore, for example, in a hidden way in legends about Lilith, Adam’s first wife, who refused to lie under in sexual intercourse, and who became a terrible demon. In our time it can be seen, for example, in jokes about mothers-in-law. Most of the time, however, we are not conscious of ambivalent feelings with respect to motherly dominance and conflicts connected with them. For that reason the “matriarchal” context of this text is not seen and neglected.

However, to keep the meaning of this text (“God reverses roles”) in a *patriarchal* context, the *literal* version of the text should be changed. Then the narrative should be translated, so that it would run as follows:

The *woman* is created first as “the” human being, and man (the

male) is created as a helper who is a counterpart for her. The male is created out of the woman and is named after her. And it is man, the male, who yields to the temptation to be as God. When God comes into the Garden of Eden he ignores the male, but calls the woman back to her original destination to be a human being. But the woman hides behind the man, and does not take up her responsibility.

This makes sense. To me this is very recognizable. For example, very often I have heard women refuse to take responsibility for their own lives, saying: "I would like to do it, but my husband does not want it" or "If only my husband would change, then . . ." In our patriarchal society I see the narrative of the Fall happen again and again.

But in my psychotherapeutic practice I also see the original, the "*matriarchal*" version of this myth happen: the almighty mother and the absent father. Then males need limitation of the power of the great mother and affirmation of their own potency.

Therefore, reading this text in the right context is crucial. The importance of the context is twofold. First, it offers a background in which the meaning of the text becomes clear. Second, it limits the *literal* meaning of the text. In the case of Genesis 2, Adam comes first *only* in a "*matriarchal*" context. It is not an *absolute* truth; it has no absolute validity. The literal text is of *relative* value: it gains meaning in *relationship* to the context. Neglect of the context can entail the reversal of the original meaning of the text. Then a myth of liberation changes into a text of oppression.

## THE PERFORMANCE OF CREATION, CREATION IN PERFORMANCE

SHIMON LEVY

This discussion deals with the theme of divine and human creativity from three thematically inter-related perspectives. One is metaphorical; another is that of self-affirmation or self-constitution; the third is artistic or artificial, and relates to creating golems. The Old Testament creation stories of human beings, I contend, have influenced all three in regard to our images and concepts of artistic creation. In the first part, I explore from a theatrical perspective the “God created Man” interpretation in the Genesis creation stories. The second part examines artistic ramifications of the “Copernican Revolution” in 17th century art, in which the “Man Creates Himself” version is emphasized. The third part deals with ancient and modern Golem-stories, in which a “Man Creates Man” concept is dominant.

In the biblical creation stories, humans are portrayed as initially creative beings who, almost as soon as being created, are creative themselves. The very realisation by humans that they are created at all, whether by divine or any other force must in itself be considered a creative act. The notion of creation in the human mind is inseparably linked with both the passive and the active aspects of the word, regardless of whether we accept that God created us or that we created a “creating God”. Creativity, moreover, is also linked to the theological problematic of whether one or several Gods created humans in his, her or their own image, or vice versa. From a predominantly theocentric point of view, God created Man in His own image. However, already in the 6th century BCE, Xenophanes argued that it was Man who created his God(s) in his own image: “Horses, if they could, would create their gods in equestrian shape”. [Diels, K Fr.15] Montesquieu changed the Greek horses into French geometric forms: “if triangles invented a God, they would make him three sided.” [*Lettres Persains*]

Whereas Man has traditionally been considered the crest of Divine Creation, a Man creating Man is regarded as the crest of human creativity, and almost always described as challenging the notion of

divine creation. The performative arts, particularly, do not describe things but “make” them.<sup>1</sup> Observed from the performative as well as performance-oriented point of view, there is a direct link between the divine biblical “in His likeness,” and the variety of materials as well as the type of energy that constitute the overall “image” with which humans wish to create their likes. Man has been creating under the dialectical discrepancy between continuing God’s work on the one hand, and rebelling against the divine creator on the other. In both the religious option of “God created Man” and the secular option of “Man created God”, Man is described as created creative, as the biblical creation myths themselves indicate.

Later on in history, Man not only reshaped his notions on creativeness but also attempted to create Man himself. In accordance with the advancing scientific developments of the period, a variety of materials as well as different sources of energy were used: alchemist, chemical, mechanical, biological, electric and electronic. Not only are the materials for creating humans noteworthy, but so too are the different sources of animating energy. The different materials and energies reflect historical developments and cultures, as well as changes in the very concept of Creation itself, and how it has been perceived, conceived and expressed. In 20th century art, Man is definitely portrayed as, primarily, a creator of and by him/her-self.

### *The performance of creation*

The first two chapters in Genesis include three human-creation stories. In the first, God creates both the human male and female: “. . . Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over [. . .] all the earth [. . .]. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created He him; male and female created He them.” (Gen 1:26–27)

[ויאמר אלהים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו, ויִרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְבְהֵמָה וּבְכָל הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל הָאָרֶץ. וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ, בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אוֹתוֹ, זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אוֹתָם.]

Here God expresses in the plural His intention to create Man for the first time in the Old Testament. The *pluralis majestatis* is a monothe-

<sup>1</sup> J.L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, Oxford 1970, 233–252.

ist explanation for this usage of the plural and the Talmudic sages indeed interpret this as God's consultation with the angels. From a theatrical perspective, however, God is portrayed as needing an audience ("we") to witness the creation of Man. This "audience" is absent or deliberately ignored in the text describing the previous five days of creation. Nevertheless, God performs the actual creation act of both male and female in the third person singular.

In the second creation story, it is not Elohim who forms the human male, but JHWH Elohim: "... then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living soul." (Gen 2:7) [וַיִּצַר ה' אֱלֹהִים אִתּוֹ (Gen 2:7)]

הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן הָאָדָמָה, וַיִּפֶּחַ בְּאַפָיו נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים, וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה . . . ]

According to the first version, Man was created in a single act, *ex nihilo*. The second version tells of a two-step process, one relating to the material, "dust of the ground"; the other—to the energising spark, the breath of life. The reason to create Man in the first story is complex. God apparently wanted to have a (vice) ruler in His own image and likeness to have dominion over what He had created. In the second, more retrospective story, "there was not a man to till the ground", an anticipating motivation for this particular creation of Man: "to dress it [the Garden of Eden] and to keep it."

The third story is traditionally interpreted as a continuation of the second, but it is an independent literary unit nevertheless. It is also a superb piece of the theatricality, gradually developed through the previous two versions: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the place with flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said: 'This is now bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh.' For this shall be called Woman, because this has been taken out of Man." (Gen 2:21-24)

וַיִּפַּל ה' אֱלֹהִים חֲרָדְמָה עַל הָאָדָם וַיִּשָּׁן, וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצְלָעוֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֵּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתּוּהָ. וַיִּבֶן ה' אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִן הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה, וַיְבַאֲנָה אֵל הָאָדָם. וְאָדָם: נָאָת הַפֶּעַם עֵצָם מִעֲצָמֵי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי; לְזָאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִשׁ לִקְחָהּ זֹאת.

The biblical text chooses different verbs in the three respective stories, suggesting hierarchically linked types of creation: "create" בָּרָא in the first, "form" יָצַר in the second, and "build" בָּנָה in the third. The first creation story, reinforced by the mysterious בָּרָא tends to imbue the act with a mystic quality. Both the divine image involved

and the unique creating of something out of nothing have been perceived as wondrous. Interestingly, unlike the rest of Creation, the pattern “and God said . . . and it was so” changes, and Man was not created in a word. In the second story, God is clearly engaged in a more physically concrete, perhaps more easily understandable type of work, in which He forms a living being from inanimate matter, and then breathes life into him. In the third story, God creates a living being from another living being, and does so in a manner yet more “biological” than before, a combination between giving-birth and surgery. Still passive and asleep while God takes one of his ribs, Adam himself is the material from which Eve is taken. He, rather than God, gives the woman her name, and thus begins to participate in the creation qua naming of the woman who is flesh of his flesh, having already practised this kind of creation in naming the animals. As a vice-creator he uses a creative technique similar to God’s, thereby imitating God’s first creation. Giving a name, especially in the Old Testament, is a performative creative act. “Co-cre-active” Adam can therefore be regarded as an assistant-creator, or director.

Especially in the first creation story, God is portrayed as a director who creates images, plots, sets and characters (*personae*). His (stage-) instructions to the two humans in the second story are “Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth,” etc. In the second creation story Adam is told not to eat from “the tree of knowledge of good and evil [. . .] for on the day that you eat of it you shall die.” (2:15) This warning against independent action (or indeed creativity) turns out to be false, or, at the very least, imprecise. After the third creation story no instructions are given, and the concluding verse, in counter-distinction to the theocentric previous ones, is certainly more anthropocentric: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.” (2:24)

The biblical narrator presents God as a frustrated theatre director, dissatisfied with his actors who do not properly perform their roles, yet he does not seem to know in advance the final format of the play. The right play in the Bible, theocentrically, is much more than simply the obligation for human kind to keep God’s rules: Humankind must become God’s image.<sup>2</sup> The link the Bible itself makes between Divine and human creativity is delivered in Gen 5:1:

<sup>2</sup> Jack Miles, *God, A Biography*, N.Y. 1996, 28–38.

“On the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them”. Adam too (pro-) created “in his own image”, that is God’s to begin with: “And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image”. (Gen 5:3) “Is procreation not a means of achieving an independent value, but the very image of God himself”?<sup>3</sup> David Heyd argues that Man becomes God’s only partner in this sort of creating *ex nihilo*, and is therefore God’s image in being a vital rather than a minor partner in the task of creation. Heyd sees the creating of Adam’s son Seth “in his likeness, according to his image,” not only as a continuation and a distribution of God’s image. Procreation itself *is* the divine image, as the very ability to create. The concept of creating humans has been closely associated with human creativity itself. But human beings have long proved to be dissatisfied with their pro-creative function alone, in merely distributing their creator’s godly image.

*Creative self-reference—the 17th century*

In our exposure to movies, theatre, dance performances, art-galleries, poetry and prose, music, television and video-clips, personal website and virtual-reality interactive games, we cannot avoid noticing the blatant intensity of ars-poetic self-referentially, intertextuality and use of meta-languages. All these are indicators of creative self-awareness (and praise), deeply steeped in most artistic genres and communications media, in a growing meta-post-modern highly self-conscious fashion. The compulsive expression of (self-) creativity is closely linked with human creativity, and is as old as art, philosophy and religion. Known from Zenon’s paradoxes to Aristophanes’s satires and medieval plays, this mode of auto-reference underwent a major shift in the 17th century. Creation is a fundamental idea, underlying in all its human manifestations: art, metaphysics, technology, re/presenting our capacity and interest in self-transcendence, in going beyond ourselves but without losing this self.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> David Heyd, “Divine Creation and Human Procreation: Reflections on Genesis in the Light of Genesis”, in Nick Fotion and Jan C. Heller (eds.), *Contingent Future Persons*, Dordrecht 1997, 57–69.

<sup>4</sup> I owe this observation (and much more) to David Heyd, who carefully read this article.



Contemplating the movement of heavenly bodies, Nikolaus Copernicus (1473–1543) realised that it was not the sun revolving around our planet Earth, but the other way round. In his *De Revolutionibus* (1543), Copernicus corrected the mistake regarding the observed objects, and radically changed our mode of looking at the relative movements of heavenly bodies, revolutionising the observation of observation itself, as a creative, highly self-referential act. In losing his physically central position in the cosmos as a God-created being, Man must have felt cast out, “howling and grinding of teeth” into outer space (Luke 13:28). This realisation was perceived as threatening even to God’s unique position as the absolute creator, in the eyes of both the Catholic Church and the Lutherans,<sup>5</sup> since in his observations, Copernicus employed pure reason, unadulterated by sense data.<sup>6</sup> The Ptolemaic system had been functioning pretty well, and there was no pressing practical need to change it. Furthermore, bereaving humanity of its alleged centrality in the universe was religiously and institutionally unpopular, and psychologically almost inconceivable.

To believe in being created is a comfort of sorts, especially if one of the benefits is to feel in the centre. As a compensation for losing this security, however, humankind was offered the possibility of treating consciousness itself, insecure, non-material and doubting as it is, as the very focus of any perceptive consciousness. Within one century after Copernicus, some of the most outstanding and influential composers, dramatists, painters and poets are characterised by their artistic, equally creative “Copernican shift”. From using the well-known device of flaunting the artifice in exposing their artistic process at the fringe of their creations, major artists now place their highly creative self-consciousness at the core of their works.

Philosophy too assisted the newly developing sensitivity. Descartes published his *Discourse on Method* in 1637, in which he ventured to offer a science that would embrace all knowledge. His *Cogito, ergo sum* expresses Copernicus’s revolution in philosophical terms. Since thinking precedes doubting, even a doubting mind must be conceived as at least undoubting its own doubt. After Descartes, the thinking Self became the cornerstone of modern philosophy. Some critics in the 20th century have shown that the *Cogito, ergo sum* should not be

<sup>5</sup> Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Discoverers*, N.Y. 1983, 239.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Kuhns, *Structures of Experience*, N.Y. 1970.

regarded as inference, but as a performative act: "This performance could be described only by a 'verb of intellection' like *cogitare*."<sup>7</sup> The *cogito* is hence self-supportive only if and when it really thinks itself. From now on, Man may create his own Archimedean lever in relation to his innermost and truest self. Descartes created a self-creating Man, a potential rebel who, in order "to be", must say "I" to himself.

Shakespeare, Cervantes, Rembrandt, Donne and later even Bach were certainly not directly influenced by Copernicus or Descartes. But in many of their works they implicitly replace the Cartesian *Cogito* with variations of "I create, ergo I am," such as "I paint, ergo I am," "I compose, ergo I am," etc. They often employ an artistically creative Copernican shift of focus, from the theocentric "God created Man" to a more anthropocentric approach, which later leads to a "Man creates Man" formula. I do not propose a "metaphysical Copernican revolution" regarding these creators in a Kantian sense, but a medium and message oriented creative and artistic one.

The 17th century artistic emphasis on the self must still be conceived as aligned with (if not harnessed to) Christian beliefs and institutions. However, now the sensitivity of the divine ensued and was expressed from "within" rather than accepted from "outside". "Great art" was dedicated to God, to a Patron, to a friend or a beloved, and, more often than not, to the Catholic Church. A major trend in the overall "message" of great art-works in the 17th and 18th century was no longer a mere adoration of an outside divinity which revolves around our planet like the sun, but an inwardly addressed gaze, sound or presence. As such, admittedly, it is not necessarily less "religious"—but the focus shifts.

The pre-modernists of the 17th century certainly did not cast away the "outside" or divine meanings and references of their predecessors. Rather, they created them internally through the structures and textures of their works. They brought the specific techniques of their media closer to the creative self-referential "message". The expressive means of the artistic media become the focus of their own as well as their public's self-conscious attention. In making art on paper,

---

<sup>7</sup> Jaaco Hintikka, "*Cogito, ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?*", in Alexander Sesonke and Noel Fleming (eds.), *Meta-Meditations: Studies in Descartes*, California 1965, 75. Hintikka's performatives "chain" words beyond mere description. If Hintikka and Descartes are right and the *ambulo* (I move, therefore I am) argument cannot work, and the *cogito* is unique in being able to constitute the idea of the self, my argument on Rembrandt's works should be regarded as an extended metaphor.

on canvas and on stage, these artists did not paint, compose or write *about* something, but did that something itself. The Copernican-Cartesian transformation implies paying a more intensive attention to the creative processes. Rembrandt's portraits and self-portraits, the self-reference in *Don Quixote*, in Bach's *Ricercar* and in *Hamlet's* "Mousetrap" by Shakespeare, indicates that it is the spectator's, listener's or audience's actual first person present and actual self that is extended the invitation to fill in the work of art with their selves and "make sense".<sup>8</sup> These artists must logically assume a real self of an Other in order to participate and posit a self in their work of art, to become another self-consciousness. The self-reflexive quality of their works becomes hence the artistic mediation between their selves and those of the receivers. Therefore, some of these new works of drama, music, poetry or painting do not require an appreciation *qua* result, but as an actively conscious participation in a mutual creation. No work of art is complete without a receiver, but in these works the receiver is built in.

When Johann Sebastian Bach arrived at the court of Friedrich the Great in Potsdam, on May 7th 1747, the King immediately sat down to play a tune. About two months later Bach's *Musical Offering* was ready. Based on the simple Royal theme, he composed a most sophisticated self-referential six-part self-sustaining fugue, and added: "At the King's Command, the Song and the Remainder Resolved with Canonical Art". The pun on "canonical" was certainly intended. This amazing piece is a musical Copernican revolution, as well as a sophisticated musical fable on creativity. Although using the King's original notes, Bach completely changed the way of hearing them. The canons in the *Ricercar*, for example, are based on a typical "round", a copy of the melody in the same key; which changes not only the timing of entering the second, third etc., voice, but on changing the pitch as well. One of the canons is called *Quaerendo invenietis*—"By seeking you will discover"—originally a piece of religious advice, ironically applied here so as to find religion in and through the musical theme, as well as a teaser to find Bach's revolutionary creativity behind the King's.

The Canon per Tonos is particularly fascinating because of its

---

<sup>8</sup> The interest in the self underlies both the widespread appeal to self-referential techniques in the arts as well as the popularity of self-portraits, autobiographies, etc. Like self-portraits, acting is self-referential only in a wider, non-technical sense.

endlessly rising modality.<sup>9</sup> Its structure suggests a never-ending Chaos system<sup>10</sup> that pulls itself up by its own strings. The musical loop returns to its own beginning like a Moebius strip. Bach wrote in the margin: "As the modulation rises, so may the King's Glory" (like the observed sun . . .). But in addition to being another subtly ironic line, the *Quaerendo invenietis* is also a good piece of advice to the listener. Not only in painting or poetry but even in music, the least referential of all the arts, one cannot make out the creative meaning without positing one's own creativity for the "creative self" of the composer. The divine element even in the *Musical Offering* does not contradict the intellectual sophistication, but complements it. This piece certainly differs from Bach's Masses, for instance, in the mode of religiosity. I suggest, however, that the loop inward is as spiritual—or divine—as the loop outward. In fact, they are interchangeable.

Moving from music to painting we realise that no artist to date has painted himself with the intensive frequency of Rembrandt. Almost 100 paintings, drawings and etchings portray the many ways in which he relentlessly created his own biography, from the age of 22 until his death 41 years later. "Rembrandt was haunted by his own face, which he portrayed under many guises—not, as some have thought, to make it interesting, but to multiply its intonations."<sup>11</sup> The light may be said to reflect the painter's intentions and ingenious craftsmanship in portraying his/him-self, the result of the artist's brush, paint and canvass. The question arises also whether the light comes from elsewhere "outside" or indeed from "inside"? Arnheim notes on this typically Rembrandt "beyond": "Divine light is no longer an ornament but the realistic experience of radiant energy . . . The objects are seen as passively receiving the impact from an outer force, but at the same time they become light sources themselves, actively irradiating energy."<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, if this painter's self-portraits were "Golems", their matter and their "spark" would be the same. The medium itself, I suggest, is an inevitable component of a three-fold hermeneutic circle, linking painter, picture and spectator in a self-referential performative act. As a Copernican revolutionary

<sup>9</sup> Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Goedel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*, Harmondsworth 1979, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Heinz-Otto Peitgen and Peter H. Richter, *The Beauty of Fractals*, Berlin 1986, v–ix.

<sup>11</sup> Andre Malraux, *The Voices of Silence*, N.J. 1978, 473.

<sup>12</sup> Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception*, Berkeley 1971, 314.

painter, Rembrandt shifts the spectator's conscious reception of the picture from a result-oriented to a process-oriented view. Only as a process can the performative self perceive itself in "supplying the light". Alternatively, as a Cartesian-painter, Rembrandt replaces the *Cogito, ergo sum* with "I paint myself ergo I am." The spectator may respond with "I see a self, which as a self can only be my own". Malraux notes: ". . . His painting . . . does not illustrate his poetry but expresses it".<sup>13</sup> Bockemuehl too saw the connection between Rembrandt's painted light and his highly self-reflexive mode: "Das Wirken des Lichts in Rembrandts spaeteren Malerei ist die der gegenstaendlich-abbildlichen Vorstellung vom Licht objectivierte Anschauungstaetigkeit selbst." Moreover, he maintains that Rembrandt's light is never perceived as a "result" but as "Wirken", an active process: "das abbildlich Gegenstaendliche ist nur im Prozess des aktuellen Anschauens zu fassen."<sup>14</sup> Consciousness, as Merleau-Ponty, Steiner, Hintikka and others observed in Descartes's *Cogito*, is an act performed rather than an inference, and valid only if and when performed by a first person singular in any given present. Whatever is in a process of becoming (self-) conscious while observing a Rembrandt self-portrait, must by definition be a self, which cannot be any other but the observer's own.

In the second volume (Ch. 3) of *Don Quixote*, Master Sanson Carrasco tells the hero that 12,000 copies of the (very same . . .) book have already been printed and soon all nations and languages will read these now happening adventures in translation. Elsewhere, the entire novel is attributed to an Arab author (vol. II, Ch. 27), and to a long list of fictitious pseudo-editors and translators. One hardly needs to re-emphasize the self-referential qualities of this first modern novel, in which the second part feeds on the first.<sup>15</sup> However, the intentional, consistent exposure of the artifice so meticulously carried out through the entire novel, permits the observation that *Don Quixote* is a prototype of Baron von Muenchhausen, who extricated himself from the swamp by pulling on his own hair. By clutching his horse with his feet, Cervantes manages to extricate his literary medium as well.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Beckett, "Dante . . . Bruno. Vico . . . Joyce", in *Our Exagmination . . .*, London 1972, 14. Beckett wrote on Joyce: "His writing is not about something, it is that something itself."

<sup>14</sup> Michael Bockemuehl, *Die Wirklichkeit des Bildes, Bildrezeption als Bildproduktion*, Stuttgart 1985, 105-106.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Alter, "The Novel as Self-Conscious Genre: Reflections on *Don Quixote*", in *Hasifrut*, vol. III, nos. 3-4, Sept. 1972, 464.

*Don Quixote* is probably the deepest two-dimensional character in world literature and its author stands at the top of the Copernican revolution in the history of the novel.<sup>16</sup> *Don Quixote* invites a double self-reflection, extended by Cervantes's through his hero to all his implied readers. The hero himself is dangling between reality and fiction, suspecting in the novel that his self is nothing but fiction, a self-doubting literary Golem. Cervantes plays an ironic game in harnessing fictitious self-referential horses to his own self-referential carriage. But as long as self-reference is presented, only the reader can practice it while reading. Like Cervantes, Don Quixote loves naming, and thus creating in a typical performative act. Like his author, he too is a mock-divine creator of literary-within-literary "things". A parallel can therefore be drawn between the mimetic tradition and the performative, self-referential beginnings on the one hand, and the Earth-centred versus the heliocentric approach. In both, the self must now call itself into being. Whether fictitious or not, Cervantes's self is reflected by his hero's and found at the centre of the novel. Consequently, the reader is invited to supply not only his/herself, but to bring the necessary imagination as well.

Different from novels, theatre requires both sight and sound to be performed on stage by live actors. It is the nature of the actor's art to be and not to be in the role at one and the same time. Actors are "vice-existers", often in a typically theatrical heightened psychological state of self-referentiality, because they use their own bodies, voices and feelings in order to portray the characters of others. They perform under the scrutinising eyes and ears of an audience, and the attention raises their "proxy-self" consciousness. More than all the other arts live and immediate theatre acting is exposed to the "inclusive" quality, namely that of a person simultaneously experiencing him/herself and the plot as a fictitious theatrical event.

Shakespeare's "Mousetrap" play within his *Hamlet* was not a dramatic novelty. This meta-theatrical device had already been employed in English theatre. However, Shakespeare transformed meta-theatricality into new self-referential insights. Hamlet's stage directions to the actors, for example, concern the potential impact of theatre in general as well as the character Hamlet's intentions regarding the actors' expected show. *Hamlet's* "Mousetrap" contains a pantomime as yet another play within a play within a play. Hamlet, the inside

---

<sup>16</sup> Alter, 465.

director and theatre theoretician in *Hamlet*, directs “The Murder of Gonzago” as an evasive alternative to following his father’s ghost story. Hamlet may have used the same words his father’s ghost told him, for that “12 or 16-line monologue” he wants to add to his inner play. The impact of Hamlet’s ghostly father is masterfully balanced by Shakespeare against the equally theatrical internal “Mousetrap”. Instead of following the ghost’s warnings, Hamlet conjures him up as (in this case clearly!) a fiction in the play-within-the-play. Instead of acting in the *Hamlet* plot, Hamlet makes the in-plot actors do what he feels he should have done, using theatricality instead of his “life”. Moreover, the pantomime preceding the “Mousetrap” suggests that even those in-plot actors resort to Hamlet’s device, namely a fourth play-within-a-play. This Russian Matrioshka effect of a play-within-a-play-within-yet-another play may be further extended towards any real audience that experiences *Hamlet*, and it is equally effective towards Hamlet’s inner reflections. This theatrical construct behaves as a never-ending loop, a dramatic *Ricercar*. Hamlet’s answer to the question whether “to be or not to be”, can conveniently be interpreted as “to play-act”; which implies both “to be” and “not to be” without, however, assuming any real responsibility for either possibility.

Shakespeare’s theatrical self-reference, at roughly the same period as Moliere’s in France, Calderon de la Barca and Lope de Vega’s in Spain (who performed meta-theatrical feats for similar purposes), paved the way for Goethe, then Ibsen, Chekhov and later Pirandello, Beckett and Handke in the 20th century. Rothko, Topor, Escher, Magritte—to name but a few painters; Stockhausen and Berio in Music; Bergman, Tarkowski, Kubrik, Allen, Godard, Truffaut and so many other film-makers—have all made their self-referential creations an invitation to other selves.

Nowadays, Creation is extended, and noticeable in everything from business cards showing Michelangelo’s Adam at the moment of his creation by God (alternatively, by the artist) with a condomed finger, to posters showing cloned sheep, or pictures of cloned humans in advertisement. Obsessed with the theme of creation, contemporary art and communications deal with creativity and many of its components, such as the creative process, the self-referential creative mind, and the expressive means reflected in the artwork itself.

*Golem creations*

The Golem has been interpreted as a human being before receiving a soul or a spirit,<sup>17</sup> or as the astral wrapping of the human being. The first Golem appears in *Psalms*:

My frame was not hidden from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance [*golmi*]. And in Thy book were all written . . . [139:16]

[לא נכחד עצמי ממך אשר עושיתי בסתר, רקמתי בתחתיות ארץ. נלמי ראו עיניך ועל ספרך כלם יכתבו.]

The Old Testament, self-referentially, often returns to its own intra-textual creation allusions. The verse in *Psalms* can be read as the self-effacing declaration, a monologue of a person who recognises his “Golem-hood” and the vast gap between himself and the divine creator, or as Adam’s “speech.” The Talmud includes a number of Golem stories, reflecting an early Jewish “in his image” motif, often in rejecting the creation of a golem as overly daring, in a way commensurate with its dialectic of refuting and sustaining the rebellious element at one and the same time. One story tells of Rava who created a man, and sent him to Rabbi Zeera. The latter spoke to the man, but the man did not answer. He said to him: “you are from the friends (namely from among people engaged in mysticism and practical magic)—return to your ashes.”<sup>18</sup> The reader is not told how Rabbi Zeera identified the Golem for what—or who—he was.

One of the most theatrical and daring is the following story, found in one of the early sources about the Golem, a pseudo-epigraphic tale ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah, who was studying alone the well-known Kabbalist text *The Book of Creation* [ספר יצירה]. A voice from heaven (“Bat-Kol”) told him to study this mystical text with a companion. So he went to Sira his son, and they studied the book together for three years. Then they arranged the letters of the (Hebrew) alphabet according to Kabbalistic principles of combinations, editing and word-structure, and created a man on whose forehead

<sup>17</sup> Emily D. Bilski and Moshe Idel, “The Golem: An Historical Overview”, in Emily D. Bilski (ed.), *Golem! Danger, Deliverance and Art*, N.Y. 1988, 10–14.

<sup>18</sup> Gershom Scholem, *Explications and Implications*, Tel Aviv 1975, 84–90.



were written the letters יהוה אלהים אמת—God the Lord (is) Truth (Jeremiah 10:10). However, in the hands of this man, just created, there was a knife, and he erased the letter aleph from the word אמת [truth] and the word מת [dead] remained. Jeremiah tore his clothes, because the inscription now said that God is dead. He asked (the man): Why did you erase the aleph from the word “emet”? The man replied: I will tell you a parable: Once upon a time there was an architect who had built many houses, cities and squares, and no one could compete with his knowledge and proficiency. Until two people came up to him and convinced him to teach them the secrets of his trade. Once they had learned everything properly, they left their master and became architects by themselves. However, they demanded for every assignment only half the price their master had demanded. When people noticed it, they stopped appreciating the master. Instead, they commissioned his pupils with loads of work. This is how God created you, in his image and in his likeness. But now that you have created a man like him, people will say, there is no God in the land except for these two! Jeremiah said: What shall we do? And the created man said: Write the alphabet on the ground from the end back to the beginning, and do not mind the combinations of structuring, but the ones of deconstruction. This is what they did, and the man turned into ashes and dust in front of their very eyes.

In this story the Golem rebels against his human creators in a way similar to Man's rebellion against God. This particular Golem did not have to eat from “the tree of knowledge of good and evil”. He had that knowledge in his software, inscribed on his forehead. Yet, in this sophisticated tale it is the Golem himself who teaches his creators how to destroy him, not unlike Arnold Schwarzenegger in his film *The Terminator*, who also achieved a surprising degree of anthropocentric theological sophistication, as a suicidal being indeed.

This particular Golem is able to say “I”, thus reinforcing the notion that he too is endowed, albeit via the vicarious successful failure of his human creators, with the divine spark. Though being born with a God-effacing knife in hand, he is, nevertheless, depicted with humility uncharacteristic of normal human beings, and quite opposed to the *hubris* habitually associated with humans who try to create other human beings. This story, strongly based on the second creation story in Genesis, maintains a daring theological dialogue with its (divine) source.

Unlike later metamorphoses of the Golem motif, this early Jewish story does not indulge in giving full freedom to the myth of the creative artist who loses control over his creation. Instead, it emphasizes an ironically timid view from a religiously conservative perspective: even a Golem knows what his human creator is supposed to know, but does not. The failure of this “deed of creation” (מעשה בריאה) is implied in the Golem’s act of erasing the aleph from his forehead. He changes *Truth* into *Death*, and אמת becomes מות in relation to the one and only real creator, God himself. Consequently, we wonder whether this homeopathic (alias Golemo-pathic) revenge ensues from the utterly sacrilegious act of killing God, or does all this happen because of a faulty magic technique. Moreover, this dramatic story raises the initial problematic of creating an Other. There is a built-in dialectics between the extension of the divine image (or the human), and endowing the creature with real freedom. The Genesis creation stories emphasise this point, and so do most Golem stories. Gershom Scholem included this tale in his inauguration of the first computer at the Weizman Institute (1962). He also mentioned Nietzsche’s famous declaration “God is Dead” as echoing already in this early text which warns against making a Golem, associating God’s death with the actual materialisation of the idea of the Golem.<sup>19</sup> Scholem, moreover, called the first Israeli computer “The Golem of Rehovot.”

A later period tells of the famous Hispano-Jewish poet Ibn Gabirol, who due to a severe skin disease was prevented from normal social and sexual intercourse, and so built himself a female Golem from sticks and hinges to serve his hygienic and erotic needs. When the elders of the congregation found her with him, they demanded she be destroyed. Killing robots and other androids is the other extreme of giving them life. But since this woman-golem had no life-spark, her annihilation was not considered an offence. A feminist approach, nevertheless, may offer a different explanation.

The most famous Golem is that in the 16th century tale about Rabbi Loew from Prag. The rabbi moulded a human-like figure from the mud on the banks of the River Vlatava in his city, and wrote the holy letters of God’s explicit name (tetragrammaton) on a piece of paper. He then put the paper under the Golem’s tongue, and the divine name became the creature’s energy, and caused it to move, to act and to work. The Golem was very strong, and he

<sup>19</sup> Scholem, 89.

carried water, chopped wood and helped the Rabbi and the Jewish congregation against their foes. One Friday night (the eve of the Sabbath, the day of rest), the Rabbi forgot to take the piece of paper out of the Golem's mouth and the creature ran Amok and destroyed all that was on his way . . .<sup>20</sup>

The general notion of creation is hereby harnessed to specifically Jewish purposes, more directly conditioned upon historical and socio-economic circumstances than the previous Talmudic story. Here the wild, unleashed energy of the Prag-Golem is linked with the fact that he was forced by neglect to work on the holy Sabbath, thus disturbing the divine day of rest. On the one hand, this reflects a characteristically conservative approach associated with Rabbi Loew, a well-known miracle-worker of his time. Had the Golem not worked on the Sabbath, he would have served the Prag Jews for many more years. On the other hand, the notion of the Golem's sheer physical ability represents not only the artificial transference of the human creative spirit to a human-like figure. The Golem is also an *être manqué*, filled with the wishes and anxieties of the Jewish people of Prag. In a new creation by Man, the mystic achieved the peak of human ability.<sup>21</sup> However, the story about the Prag-Golem does not only prove Rabbi Loew's super-natural powers. He must also be seen as his *alter ego*, a Doppelganger, psychologically and sociologically. This Golem reflects a congregation's fears and aspirations for redemption, as well as a tensely ambivalent attitude toward the danger as well as advantage of violence and physical force.

The Prag-Golem story has been rewritten, staged and filmed. Arthur Holitscher wrote a play called *The Golem Legend in Three Acts* (1908) in which the Golem falls in love. (See also Meierinck's novel, Johannes Hess etc.) In the 20th century, the Golem ceased to represent the human (and religious in its very attempts to rebel against God) *hubris*, becoming, in complete contrast, the epitome of humanity, though in disguise. Realising that some humans have lost their "image", the Golem is portrayed as essentially human and humane. The film maker Paul Wegener made three Golem films (1914; 1915; 1920) and portrayed Rabbi Loew as turning to Satan himself in

<sup>20</sup> Moshe Idel, *Golem, Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid*, Tel Aviv 1996, 30. See also Yehuda Liebes's postscript in the same book.

<sup>21</sup> Scholem thinks that Paracelsus received his ideas about homunculi and Golems from the Jewish mystic Nissim Gerondi of Barcelona. (Scholem, 417)

order to create the Golem, a fairly robot-like vicious creature. Probably under the influence of Goethe's *Faust*, Wegener treated the scene in which the Golem was created as a mixture between the "witches" scene, and the creation of the homunculus scene in *Faust II*.<sup>22</sup> Walter Rathenau, a Jewish minister in the Weimar government, wrote a play called *Eleasar's Wife*. In the play, a man replaces his barren wife with a fertile female Golem, who happens to be emotionally cold. Rathenau, perhaps aware of Ibn Gabirol's sticks-and-hinges wife, tried to criticise the overly technological and industrial tendencies in Europe.

The Jewish playwright Halpern Leivik (1888–1962) was a left-wing radical who was arrested and sent to Siberia. In his play, he depicted the Golem as a violent vehicle for national redemption, which must nevertheless be ever used. The then newly established Habimah theatre performed *The Golem* in Tel Aviv (1925) with moderate success. Some of the critics complained that the piece was "exile-oriented", probably in rejection of Leivik's anti-violence approach.

Yoram Porat wrote and directed *The Last Golem Show*, set in a concentration camp, and implicitly stating that the 16th century aspiration of the Prag Jews for some "power" had ended in the annihilation of most of Europe's Jews during World War 2. In the most recent production of the *Yossele Golem*, Danni Horowitz, an Israeli playwright, hinted that the present Golem is no other than the State of Israel. The Israeli Golem seems to protect World Jewry, but threatens to destroy its very (Jewish) maker.

The nature of words in the performing arts and in theatre especially, always alive, immediate and dialogical, is often performative. Theatrical words "do" rather than "describe" things, under the security blanket of the fictitious event in a real performance. Hence theatrical Golems enjoy a short but real kind of life. In the cinema too a Golem is "really" there as a figment of light, and disbelief is sustained for as long as the film is running. The performing arts maintain a balance between reconstructing old tales, in a way that is partly imitative-mimetic and partly "poietic" and actually performative. Nevertheless, observed theatrically or cinematographically, every single character is a Golem, a human being clad in the body and voice of the actor, and filled with the actor's talent, ability and spirit. Suffice it to say that in the arts a Golem is always created by a mini-God.

<sup>22</sup> Rudolf Steiner, *Die Geheimwissenschaft im Umriss*, Tel Aviv 1983, 36.

The three Old Testament human-creation stories have been regarded as traditional sources concerning human attempts to compete with God, and create their “likes” in ways different from the obvious biological ones. Not surprisingly, believers and sceptics alike have, perhaps unintentionally, imitated God in trying to (pro-) create in ways other than biological. The question arises as to whether creating a human being in the non-procreative manner can be called a creation in the image of God? World literature is replete with homunculi (Paracelsus and Goethe), Frankenstein-like creatures (Mary Shelly’s story and numerous films made thereafter), Golems, robots, and later still androids, robocops and more and better humanoids. Moreover, the possibility, nowadays, of cloning humans is reminiscent of Eve’s creation. Cloning is indeed reminiscent of the creation of Eve. However, “proper” cloning can create only a human being of the same sex as the clone. The Old Testament emphasizes the creation of *ezer kenegdo* (“help meet”), in terms of the conditions and capacity of sexual reproduction, namely the creation *ex nihilo* of a new being, not just a clone, as an extension or a physical continuation of “my” own body. Sexual reproduction, like artistic creation, is more creative than cloning.

Many of these old and new semi-animated man-made creatures represent an ancient desire to continue and expand the human “self”, and the creator’s self, as well as a wish to examine the consciousness of creation itself *vis-à-vis* a creature so resembling the creator. In their initial artificiality, these theological-artistic creatures are vice-humans, who reflect whatever the human mind wants to achieve, and express its hopes and fears under specific cultural conditions and surroundings.

Special attention must be paid to the moment the creature says “I” to itself, in order to trace the quintessential humanity involved in this self-asserting, self-referential performative act. According to numerous religions, the “I” is conceived simultaneously as the most human and the divine element in Man, since the “I” is perceived as the spiritual element. “The true essence of the “I” is not dependent on any exterior thing, therefore no exterior thing can call it by the name of “I”.<sup>23</sup> Adam utters an explicit “I” (rather than “my”) in the verse כִּיעָרוֹם אָנֹכִי (Because I am naked). (Gen 3:10)

God himself is portrayed in our image, and there is no way out

<sup>23</sup> See Isaac Asimov’s *I Robot*, the three cardinal rules for robot behavior.

of the loop: whose image comes first (God or Man, the I or the linguistic performance constituting it, art or life e.g. in *Hamlet*, in Cervantes's *Don Quixote* etc., or even in Carlo Colodi's children story *Pinocchio*)?

Among the many films that portray man-made creatures, like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Frankenstein*, *Blade Runner*, *Robocop* and others, one of the most fascinating is the scene in Stanley Kubrik's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, when astronaut Dave disconnects HAL's "brain". In the process of losing his electronic mind and voice (speech is very important here!), the computer still manages to utter something close to "I think, ergo I am." Even HAL's name is strongly supportive of his assumed sense of selfhood. In a quasi-Kabalistic shifting of letters, the H in HAL becomes I, A becomes B (or "to be"), and L becomes M. IBM is not just a computer company, but a cripto-Cartesian declaration of HAL's independence in saying "I Be (a) Man".

This page intentionally left blank

## REFERENCES TO ANCIENT TEXTS

### I. EGYPTIAN TEXTS

<i>Eсна Text</i>		
206	15	206:1-9
		16

### II. OLD BABYLONIAN TEXTS

<i>Atramchasis</i>		<i>Gilgamesh</i>	
I 220ff	13	I ii 34ff	17
I 272-276	14	I iv 2ff	17
<i>Enuma Elish</i>	178f	II iii 15ff	17
VI, 29	14		

### III. GREEK & LATIN PAGAN TEXTS

<i>Adespota</i>		<i>Diodorus Siculus</i>	
Fr. 1047	32	Fr. 3.57.3	31
<i>Aeschylus</i>		<i>Heraclides Ponticus</i>	
Fr 369	29	Fr. 66ab	32
<i>Anonymous</i>		<i>Hesiod</i>	
Cypria fr. 4	25	Catalogue	
Hymn to Aphrodite 5	25	205, 234	19
<i>Apollonius</i>		Theogony	
FGrH 365 F3	23	35, 187, 563	19
<i>Aristophanes</i>		60-105	24
Birds		535-557, 573-577	21f, 25
686, 971	32	578-590	22-24
97	132	591-616	24
Fr. 354	80	Works and Days	19, 24
<i>Aristotle</i>		48-59, 61-64	24
De Anim.		71-75	25f
I 412a10-11, 22-27	147	81-82, 90-92	26f
II 2,413b24-27	148	96-98	27
Gener.Anim.		105	29
II 3,736b27-29	148	145	19
Physica 252b	67	156, 158	31
<i>Asius</i>		<i>Homer</i>	
Fr. 8	19	Odyssey	
<i>Callimachus</i>		18.134	28
Fr. 493	32	19.163	19
<i>Democritus</i>		20.70-72	26
Fr. 34	67	24.294	26
		Iliad	
		I.39	32
		VI. 394	26



IX.390	24	<i>Philostratus</i>	
XVI.178	26	Life of Apollonius 6.39	32
XVIII.417-420	22	<i>Pindar</i>	
XXII.88	26	Odes 9.79-81	31
<i>Horace</i>		<i>Plato</i>	
Carminum		Critias 109C	23
1.16.13-16	32	Gorgias 48.7.6	26
<i>Hyginus</i>		Laws 920D	23
Astr. 2.637-638	26	Phaedo	150
Fab. 142	26	Protagoras	
<i>Menander</i>		320D	32
Fr. 508	32	321D	23
<i>Nikophon</i>		Symposium	109
Pandora		189A-193D	96
Fr. 13-18	30	Timaeus	
<i>Oppian</i>		22A	31
Cynegetica 1.12	32	23C	23
Vita Herodotea 249	32	42E-43A	150
<i>Pausanias</i>		73B-77E	142
1.24.7	20	<i>Sappho</i>	
2.19.5	21	Fr. 207	29
<i>Pherekrates</i>		<i>Sophocles</i>	
Myrmekanthropoi	19	Pandora or the Hammerers	
<i>Philemon</i>		Fr. 482-486	29
Fr. 93	32	<i>Strabo</i>	
<i>Philochoros</i>		9.5.23	32
FGrH 328 Fr. 10	32	<i>Stobaeus</i>	
		Anthol. 1.5.3	32

## IV. JEWISH TEXTS

1. *Hebrew Bible*

Versions		3:20	71, 153
Septuagint (LXX)	4, 12	3:21	149
Gen 1	84	4:1	71
1:26-2:18	84	5:1	142
1:26-27	38, 84	Ps 16:15	84
1:26	83, 142	Dan 3:97	87
1:27	79, 83	4:13, 23	90
2	84		
2:7	38	Vulgate	12, 86
2:7b	146	Gen 2:24	12
2:16	71		
2:18	37-38, 149	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan	
2:18c	37-39	Gen 1:26	42
2:20	37	2:7	118
2:20b	27	2:15	53
2:24	12	Targum Neofiti	
2:25	39	Gen 2:15	53

<i>Genesis</i>	2f, 27, 45,	2:16f	18, 54, 60, 182
	50, 52, 63-65	2:18ff	4f, 95, 101
1-3	38, 49f, 56, 61	2:18-3:1	63
1-2	35, 47	2:18-25	39, 51
1	6, 16, 56, 59, 85	2:18-24	12, 43-45, 120
1:1-2:4a	50	2:18-20	3, 47, 122
1:2	8f, 118	2:18	10, 11, 13, 37,
1:11	8f		43, 52, 53, 93,
1:14-18	9		97, 102, 111,
1:21, 24, 25	8		153, 182
1:26-31	41f	2:18c	38
1:26-28	41, 43, 48, 58	2:19	45, 84, 182
1:26-27	34, 38, 47, 52,	2:19f	17, 53
	67, 83f, 188	2:20-24	3
1:26	66-69, 84, 105,	2:20	10
	109f, 116, 144	2:20c	39
1:26b	41f	2:21-24	189
1:26c-g	43	2:21-22	52, 59, 167, 182
1:27-28	101	2:21	10, 102, 109,
1:27	3-5, 7-9, 45f,		112, 124, 154
	68f, 85, 93, 95,	2:21c	152
	100f, 105, 110f,	2:22	10, 39, 122,
	116, 165		129, 163
1:27a-c	42	2:23	10-12, 52, 102,
1:27ab	41, 42		122, 128
1:27a	4, 7, 51f	2:24f	18, 39, 52, 102,
1:27b	4, 7f, 34, 46		182
1:28	60, 101, 104	2:24	4, 10, 12, 16,
1:28a	41		17, 52, 96, 103,
1:28g-i	43		122, 182, 190
1:29-30	41f	3	16, 50, 60, 124,
2-3	39, 56, 59, 173,		172
	181	3:1-6, 7, 22f	18, 183
2	9f, 13, 16, 18,	3:1-5	183
	46, 48, 59, 85,	3:7f	18, 184
	121, 172, 186	3:8-19	63
2:1-2:17	63	3:9	184
2:4-6:13	63	3:10	204
2:7-3:20	181	3:12f	184
2:7-25	11	3:14-19	60
2:7-18	10	3:14	184
2:7-17	11	3:16-19	18, 184
2:7	3, 5, 10, 22, 34,	3:17g, 19	59
	38, 45, 47, 51-3,	3:20	33, 39, 59, 181,
	59, 67-70, 85,		184
	105, 113, 117,	3:21f	18, 60
	119, 189	3:23-24	59
2:7a	143, 150	4:1	39, 98
2:8-15	52, 53	4:8	114
2:8	59, 70	5	7, 8
2:9	42	5:1ff	7, 190
2:14	43	5:1	7f, 142
2:15	51f, 53, 59, 182,	5:2	7f, 108f, 111
	190	5:3	8, 191

6:19	6f	<i>II Samuel</i>	
7:9, 16	6	19:35	18
9:1, 7	43		
9:2-3,6	42	<i>Isaiah</i>	
15:12	10	3:16	123
17:15f	133	6:10	152f
18:10	123, 131	34:14	113
21:1	131	40-45	2
21:6f	132f	54:1	135
24:63	136	<i>Jeremiah</i>	
25:20f	136	1:5, 6	130
30:1	123, 137	10:10	200
31:19	123	<i>Ezekiel</i>	
<i>Exodus</i>		28:13	123
20:21	119	37:12	137
26:20	109, 112	37:14	117
<i>Leviticus</i>		<i>Psalms</i>	
3:1, 6	6	8:3-5	157
12	48	17:15	84
12:2, 5, 7	6	49:13	116
15:33	6	77:17	8
22:27	131	139:13-15	11
27:3-7	6	139:16	117, 199
<i>Numbers</i>		<i>Job</i>	
1:2, 3, 20, 22	6	10:8-9	2
3:15, 22, 28, 34, 40, 43	6	10:8-13	11
5:3	6	21:31-32	125
12:18	84	28:24-27	78
27	7	<i>Proverbs</i>	
<i>Deuteronomy</i>		1:25	123
4:32	110, 117	8:22-31	78
28:12	137	<i>Lamentations</i>	
<i>I Samuel</i>		1:1, 16	135
2	185		

2. *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*

<i>Greek Life of Adam and Eve</i>		<i>Ben Sira</i>	34
7:1	35	<i>I Enoch</i>	
33:5; 35:3; 37:3	34	7:7; 12:4	88
40-42	35	<i>2 (Slavonic) Enoch</i>	34, 55-62
<i>Latin Life of Adam and Eve</i>		24-36	55f
13:2-3	34	30:8-32:1	56, 58ff
<i>2 Baruch</i>		31:1	53, 59
4:1-7	34	31:6f	58ff
14:17-19	34	33-36	55
48:42-47	34	44:1	34
		65:2	34

<i>Greek Apocalypse of Ezra</i>		1:22-37	50-53
2:10-11	34	1:28-32; 33-37	52, 54
<i>4 Ezra</i>		1:38-64	50, 53
3, 6, 7	34	3:24	34
<i>Jubilees</i>	40-48,	<i>Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs</i>	
	61-62	Test. of Reub.	
2:11-16, 23	40f, 42f,	5:1	89
	45-47	5:6-7	89f
3:1-16	40, 43-47	<i>Tobit</i>	35-39, 62
4:22	88	8:4-9	35f
6:5-9	42f	8:6	37-39
7:21	88	8:7a	39
10	88	<i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>	
<i>Judith</i>		2, 7, 8, 10, 15	34
16:14	35		
<i>Sybilline Oracles</i>	35, 48-53		
1:5-64	48-50		

3. *Qumran Texts and Damascus Document*

1Q20 2 12-17	88	4Q405	91
1QSa 2 3-9	91	4Q416-418	34
1QM 12 1	91	4Q422f	34
1QM7 5-6	91	4Q504-506	34, 91
4Q180	90	4Q534 2 18	90
4Q184 fr. 1 7-8	88	11Q17 5 5-7	91
4Q216	47	<i>Damascus Document (CD)</i>	
4Q201-227	90	2:18	90
4Q264-7	34f, 61	4:21	35
4Q301-5	34	15	17
4Q381	34		

4. *Josephus*

<i>Bellum Judaicum</i>	
II 121	75

5. *Philo*

<i>De Abrahamo</i> 71	67	6	84
<i>De Cherubim</i>	63	69	66f, 69, 84
<i>De Fuga et Inventione</i> 109	78	70-71	66
<i>Legum Allegoriae</i>	53, 71	75	4, 71
I-III	63	76	68, 85
I:55	53	82	67
I:90	71	128	70
II:4-8	97	133	32
II:13	85	134ff	70
II:50	74	134	68, 85
<i>De Migratione Abrahami.</i> 220	67	139	69
<i>De Opificio Mundi</i>	63	151f	71f, 74, 95

157ff	97	I	63
165f	72f	I:14	53
<i>De Plantatione</i>	67	<i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i>	67
<i>De Posteritate</i> 58	67	<i>Quod deterius</i> 54	78
<i>Quaestiones et Solutiones</i> <i>in Genesin</i>	71	<i>De Vita Mosis</i> II 127, 135	67
		<i>De Somniis</i> II 184	71

6. *Pseudo-Philo*

<i>Biblical Antiquities</i>			
13:8-9	34	32:15	34f
26:6	34	37:3	34

7. *Rabbinical Writings*

<i>Gen Rabbah</i>	3, 107f	<i>EccI Rabbah</i>	
1:8	116	7:23	42
8:1	4, 109, 112, 117f	<i>MidrPss</i>	
8:3-4	42, 110	8:2	42
8:8f	110f	<i>Siphre Deut</i>	
14:4	119	11:13	53
14:7f	113, 116f, 119	<i>Midrash Tanchuma</i>	107
16:5	53	<i>Pirque Rabbi Eliezer</i>	
17:2	111, 121	11	119
17:4	119	<i>Babylonian Talmud</i>	
17:6	112	Erubin 11b	113
17:7	114	Gittin 69b	113
17:8	125	Jebamoth 63a, b	112, 121
18:1f	115, 123	64a, b	136f
18:4	114, 128	Nidda 24b	113
22:7	114	Sanhedrin 38a, b	42, 110, 116, 117
<i>Num Rabbah</i>		Shabbath 151b	113
19:3	42	Ta'anith 2a-b	137

## V. CHRISTIAN TEXTS

1. *New Testament*

<i>Matthew</i>		5:12, 15	77
10:37-39	94	10:12	78
<i>Mark</i>		<i>I Corinthians</i>	
9:35	169	6:15-17	96
<i>Luke</i>		7	79
1:52, 53	185	7:1, 2	79f
13:28	192	7:4	80, 87
<i>John</i>		7:8, 9	80, 93
1:5	152	7:29, 38	93
<i>Romans</i>		8	81
5:12-17	76	8:6	78
		9:10	81
		10:23-24	81

11:2-16	76, 78, 80-82, 91	<i>Ephesians</i> 5:22f, 25	94
11:2	82		
11:3, 4-5, 7-9	82, 83, 87	<i>I Timothy</i> 2:8-15	172
11:10	76, 80, 83, 86f, 92	2:11-15 2:12	94, 185 161
11:13	86f		
11:15	161	<i>Titus</i>	
11:16	86f	1:6	94
11:17-34	81		
12:13	78	<i>Revelation</i> 2:26; 6:8; 11:6; 13:7	87
14:35	161, 168	14:4	94
<i>II Corinthians</i>		14:18; 16:9; 20:6	87
5:17	77		
<i>Galatians</i>			
3:28	8f		
6:15	77		

2. *Extra-canonical Early Christian Writings*

<i>I Clement</i>		II 10-26	140, 142f, 145, 149-154
30; 35.2; 38.2	94		
<i>II Clement</i>		III 23, 21	144
12:2-5	94	IV 30, 17-18	145
<i>Gnostic Texts</i>		<i>The Letter of Peter to Philip</i>	
<i>The Secret Book (Apocryphon) of John</i>		VIII 136, 13-15	143
BG 22, 17-26, 14	143	<i>The True Nature of the Archons</i>	
BG 38, 1-3. 15-17	140	II 88, 3-6	145
BG 48-67	142, 145f, 149-155	<i>On the Origin of the World</i>	143
II 2, 26-4, 18	143	<i>The Revelation of Adam</i>	
		V, 64, 2-14	155
		<i>The Gospel of Philip</i>	145

3. *Patristic Texts*

<i>Augustine</i>		Exc. Theod.	
De Civitate Dei 18.12	23	44	88
De Genesi ad Literam IX	104-106	56	148
<i>John Chrysostom</i>		<i>Eusebius</i>	
De Virginitate XI, XVI, XLIV	101	Demonstr. evang. 1.8	95
Homil in Gen X, XII, XIV-XVIII	101-103	Praepar. evang. 2.2.37	31
		13.13.23, 14.26.13	20
<i>Clement of Alexandria</i>		<i>Gregory of Nyssa</i>	
Stromateis II. 23	94	De Opificio Hominis 180-189, 205	99f
IV. 58, 2ff	75		
IV. 89	148	<i>Hippolytus</i> Refutation	19

I 20,4,6	148	De Principiis II.9, III.6	97
V 7,3-7	19	Hom. in Gen	
<i>Irenaeus</i>		I.13, 14, 15	97f
Adv Haereses	31	I.18	101
I.4.5	88	<i>Tertullian</i>	
I.6	148	De Corona	
I.8.2	88	7.3	20
I.24.1	145	14.2	87
I.28.1	94	Orat. 22, 50-6	87
I.29	140	Adv. Marc. 8, 2	87
I.30.6	145	Virg. Vel. 7,2; 17,2	87
II.14.5; 21.2: 30.4	31	Ad Uxorem II.9	94
<i>Jerome</i>		<i>Theophilus of Antioch</i>	
Adv Jovinianum		Ad Autolyicum	
I.3, 29	104	II.12ff, 18, 28	98
<i>Origen</i>			
Contra Celsum 4.36	20		

THEMES IN  
BIBLICAL NARRATIVE  
JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

ISSN 1388-3909

1. García Martínez F. & G.P. Luttikhuisen (eds.). *Interpretations of the Flood*. 1999. ISBN 90 04 11253 7
2. Luttikhuisen, G.P. *Paradise Interpreted*. Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity. 1999. ISBN 90 04 11331 2
3. Luttikhuisen, G.P. *The Creation of Man and Woman*. Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian traditions. 2000. ISBN 90 04 11671 0