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Antiquity
Including the "East" As "Western Identity"

Edited by Maria Helena Trindade Lopes
and Ronaldo G. Gurgel Pereira

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Contents

Preface

What we call "cultural identity" is a set of values and conventions guiding behaviours and conditioning a group to reproduce them by repetition, indefinitely. A cultural identity creates a common notion of belonging and normality in each society. It reinforces the idea of temporal continuity, as it strengthens the bonding of a group to their ancestors and, in a more general perspective, to "their past." However, "the past," as a collective social memory, can become an instrument of discourse for any cultural identity to legitimate its own narrative. In that case, the relations of cause and effect that define the subject studied by "History" (and the "Humanities") are reduced to national "Myths" and reproduced carelessly by the community.

Our notion of "Classical Antiquity" is a myth created during the Renaissance (14th–16th centuries), when European philosophers rediscovered Greek and Roman antiquity. In this same sense, "Western Identity" is another recent and subjective demarcation of the civilizational sphere, based on Catholic Christianity, and a common geography shared by the Catholic nations.

In opposition to that idealization of an "Us"–"West," defined by Graeco-Roman philosophy, arts, reason, and Christianity, was invented a lustful, sinful, and impulsive "Them"–"East" to be confronted as its "Other." The otherness produced by the creation of the "East" personified contemporary concerns with the Ottoman Empire and the threat of an Islamic expansion over Europe. Thus, the separation between Western and Eastern antiquity is the product of an ideological narrative that obeys a logic of polarization and hierarchization: "pre-classic" antiquity was centered in the "tyrannic" and "cruel" Bronze civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, existing only as the antagonists of the Biblical prophets; later on, with the Iron Age, Greece and Rome would emerge to "save mankind" with their wisdom and to promote Christian values across the globe, always triumphing over the barbaric peoples from the East.

From the 17th to 19th centuries, modern thinkers continued to encourage the ideological portrayal of West European monarchies as the heirs of a moral Greek–Roman legacy. That "invented tradition" aimed to legitimate their imperial agendas, based on a discourse of hegemony by a superior intellect, culture, religion, and ethnicity.

It was under such historical-cultural background that, in the 19th century, the European school curriculum was developed. Its "paideia" crystallized the hierarchization of stereotyped West and East, and became the paradigm reproduced also by the European colonies, especially in the Americas. Thus, the "Western Civilization" created a myth of identity based not on historical Greek–Roman Antiquity, but rather on an idiosyncratic and unreal construction of idealized Classic Antiquity.

The usages of the past, and of antiquity, were felt throughout history, reflecting the fabric of apologetic and ideological narratives. Understanding antiquity does not end in the exiguity of its chronology. Antiquity is studied to understand time to understand the way in which the past is received, integrated, and used. Interdisciplinarity, thanks to the intersection of philosophy, history, literature, archaeology, and art history, corresponds to the transversal, comprehensive, and complex look essential to understand the intrinsic value of antiquity in each time and in each present.

Therefore, when we mention "Western Identity" and "the East" we are reproducing the myths perpetuated by a discourse of identity and an idealization disconnected from history. By "disconnected" from history, we mean that ancient civilizations were not "culturally/ethnically impermeable," as we are led to believe by traditional views (or "myths") on Classics.

Ancient history and archaeology demonstrate how diverse the ancient world truly was. Intercultural relations were increasingly frequent across the entire Mediterranean basin, from the Iron Age onwards, and especially under the Roman Empire. Socio-cultural change and dynamics in contact situations between groups of distinct cultures produced constant innovations and adaptations. Studies on intergroup relations and processes in shaping social change emphasize the role of marginality, conflict, and competition, and suggest that people at the edge of two different societies were more likely to adopt practices from both cultures.

This work presents seven case studies that demonstrate how artificial and anachronic is the idea of a frontier splitting West and East Antiquity.

The first section focuses on archaeological approaches. In Chapter 1, "Egyptian Amulets in the Western Mediterranean: The Case of Cadiz", Dr. Munõz Pérez discusses the importance of Egyptian and Egpyptianizing funerary amulets in the Phoenician colony of Cadiz, Spain. In Chapter 2, "The Heritage of Eastern Mediterranean Cultures in Greco-Roman Town of *Akrai/Acrae*, SE Sicily", Dr. Chowaniec examines material culture to discuss Greek identity in Sicily as a product of combined elements of the Eastern Mediterranean basin and Roman culture. In Chapter 3, "Technopoiesis in the Southern Levantine Metallurgy and Its Implications on the Rise and Fall of the Ghassulian Society", Dr. Amzallag discusses social-cultural transformations in the southern Levant as the result of the transition into the Bronze Age. In Chapter 4, "Social and Economic Developments in Pre-Islamic Somalia: Introducing African-Arabian-Mediterranean Interaction", Dr. Hussein presents material and linguistic evidence to debate mobility and migration, and the economic integration of ancient Somalia into a trade network connected to the Mediterranean.

The second section addresses the Bible as a historical source. In Chapter 5, "Genesis 1: Where Babylon and Greece Meet", Dr. Gnuse debates Greek and Near Eastern common elements shared also by the Old Testament Book of Genesis. In Chapter 6, "Including the Ancient Near East as "Western Identity": The Case of Enochic Traditions in Early Christian Literature," Dr. Hogeterp debates cultural identity and early Christianity by discussing intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

The final section includes one chapter. In Chapter 7, "Perspective Chapter: Βάλτοι – The Reception of Western Asian Colors-Cardinal Points System along the Boundaries of the Hellenic Oikumene", Dr. Bonda discusses neurolinguistics and the complex formation of a koine that mingled Byzantine and Western Asian peoples' influence regarding the expression of spatial perception in Greek.

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Section 1

Archaeology

Chapter 1

Egyptian Amulets in the Western Mediterranean: The Case of Cadiz

Carmen Muñoz Pérez

Abstract

Among all the artefacts exported from Egypt in Antiquity, amulets have played an important role. These small objects were imbued with magic properties, based on their iconography and hieroglyphic inscriptions, the combination of materials and their colour. Because of their apotropaic properties, amulets were used in daily life and in funerary rituals in Egypt. Furthermore, Egyptian amulets have been attested in other funerary contexts in the Mediterranean area. In the western part, the city of Cadiz was one of the most important Phoenician cities. A great number of Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets, which are still unpublished, have been found in the local necropolis. Thus, to precisely say if the same funerary amulets were used in Egypt and in the Phoenicians cities is still a work in progress. Nevertheless, their great number suggests that Egyptian amulets were closely part of the Western identity.

Keywords: Egyptian amulets, interconnections, Phoenicians, Cádiz, iconography

1. Introduction

Amulets were widespread in ancient Egyptian culture. In daily life, these objects were carried by their owners because of their apotropaic properties: to prevent bad luck or against evil forces as well as in medicine and during passing times, like childbirth. Moreover, amulets played an important role in funerary rituals, like mummification.

In this manner, these small objects were placed close to the deceased's body, between the mummy's bandages. Their typology and their emplacement were precisely chosen, according to the relationship between the amulet and the deceased [1, 2]. However, comparative studies between mummies from different sites and periods (in particular, through CT-scan analysis) have shown that not all Egyptian amulets were suitable for funerary rituals. Those selected were precisely chosen for their iconography and, for symbolic reasons, even for their material and their colour. Despite the interest of these objects for the understanding of Egyptian culture, few studies have been focused on the particularity of funerary amulets.

Even if mummification practices have only been attested in Egypt during Antiquity, amulets and apotropaic objects of Egyptian manufacture or inspiration are also attested in the Mediterranean, in particular in a funerary context. Beyond mere aesthetic value, they arose as a response to changes in the mentality and in general in the society of ancient Egypt, more particularly when the country came into

contact with other cultures. Indeed, amulets are not exclusive to Egyptian civilization, but they were commonly used by several ancient cultures: Persians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, etc. Their presence in the tombs of these cultures proves their degree of assimilation.

The diversity of their cultural and chronological contexts shows that Egyptian amulets therefore had universal values, shared by several ancient societies. In this article, we would like to analyse the diversity of amulets in ancient Egyptian culture and their multiple uses, mostly in the funerary field. Furthermore, a comparison between Egyptian amulets and those attested in the Mediterranean necropolis allows us to precise their reuse and reinterpretation. In particular, the Phoenician culture is relevant: by creating new colonies all along the Mediterranean, they have spread their men, rites, religious ideas and objects. The case of Cádiz, the Phoenician city at the end of the Western Mediterranean, is significant because of the great number of Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets found in its necropolis. Through this particular example, we would like to consider the role of these "oriental" objects and their presence in the Western cultures.

2. Amulets in Egypt

In Egypt, amulets were essentially defined by their apotropaic role. So they were supposed to provide their owner magical protection. Indeed, three of the four words used in Egyptian to define them refer to protection: *sꜣ*, *mkt* and *nḥt*. These words confirm the amulets' intention to grant a certain magical security to their owner. There is a fourth word, *wḏꜣ*: even if it names one of the most common amulets, the *wedjat*-eye or the eye of Horus, the Egyptian word rather refers to the idea of well-being in general [2]. The words used in the Egyptian language show that amulets were created to protect their owner, which explains why they were supposed to be worn. However, not all the Egyptian amulets had a perforation or suspension system. This suggests that their role and use could be multiple.

Considering that the funerary contexts are the best preserved, we have chosen in this study to focus on funerary amulets. In this manner, some textual and iconographic sources provide further information about them. The main papyri concerning funerary amulets is the *Book of the Dead*: a few chapters describe the addition of a precise amulet during the ritual of mummification. Thus, the vignettes that illustrate the text allow to unequivocally establish the typology of the amulet. Furthermore, amulets' emplacement on the body of the deceased and their material are sometimes specified [2]. In this way, chapters 155–160 are dedicated to the "activation" of certain amulets and to their emplacement on the body of the deceased. These chapters name the main funerary amulets in the Egyptian culture: the *djed*-pillar (in Ref. to Osiris), the *tit*-knot (the so-called "knot of Isis"), the golden vulture, the *usekh*-necklace and the *wadj*-column (the papyrus sceptre). In addition to these chapters, other papyri also provide some indications concerning funerary amulets, in particular on their manufacture materials. This is the case of the MacGregor papyrus (private collection) and the papyrus of Month-Em-Hat (University of Bonn L 1647), indicating the choice of some golden amulets in a funerary ritual. Likewise, the so-called "papyrus of Men" (British Museum EA 10098) shows a schematic plan of the position of some amulets in a Ptolemaic mummy [2]. Finally, the texts inscribed on the walls of the Ptolemaic temple of Hathor at Dendera describe that the amulets needed to accomplish the ritual of the mummification of Sokar.

In spite of these sources, only a few researchers had been interested in Egyptian amulets. We have to point out the work of Sir Flinders Petrie (1914) about the collection of University College London, as a founding study [3]. He was one of the first Egyptologists to consider amulets in a specific way, proving their interest for the study of Egyptian magic and rituals. In his study, Petrie distinguished five main amulets' values: physical, in the sense that amulets allowed their wearer to protect themselves against dangers; medical, in order to combat physical illness; as an *alter ego*, considering the idea that the organs are connected to each other in a mystical way; as a double, when an object which represents an evil force can prevent it; and finally, the so-called "doctrine of similars" by which objects that come together must be connected [3].

The diversity of the use of Egyptian amulets as well as their typology is significant. Because of these reasons, they seemed ordinary objects [4], which explains why amulets have usually received little interest by researchers. Therefore, the definition of what can be considered as an amulet is a complex question.

The definition of Petrie is too simple: he considered as an amulet any small object (under 5 cm long), worn by a person without an aesthetic purpose [3]. However, this approach is remarkable because, today, the distinction between an amulet and jewellery is not clear. Indeed, amulets are often confused with jewels with an apotropaic function [5]. Like amulets, jewels also played various roles: during the life of its owner, the jewel could be worn as a distinctive sign of his function or social rank, as protective amulet or simply as a decorative object. Thus, the jewellery perfectly demonstrates the difficulty of distinguishing objects of personal adornment from amulets since both amulets and jewellery that incorporate amulets were magical items worn by the ancient Egyptians. In addition, frequently used during their lifetime, the jewels end up spreading in the funerary field, deposited in the tombs [2].

Considering this idea, a more complete definition of what we can consider an amulet was given by D. Dunham in a brief article (1930) on certain Late Period amulets of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston: "The term amulet, as applied to ancient Egypt, means an object which is intended to protect the wearer from evil either specific or general, to ensure him the favor of a particular deity, or to supply certain benefits to him" [6]. Indeed, the relationship between the amulet and its owner is one of the main features that distinguishes these objects. This criterion is still the one mainly used by researchers, in particular concerning amulets found outside the Egyptian territory.

3. Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets in the Western Mediterranean

Amulets, in particular, are one of the best testimonies of the relationship between Egyptians and other Mediterranean cultures. Thus, the comparison between the use of these objects in Egypt and outside their original territory can allow us to have a different approach to certain religious and ritual ideas. Their study also makes possible a better understanding of the commercial and intellectual exchanges in the Mediterranean area during Antiquity.

The great diversity of Egyptian amulets makes their study more complex. Thus, the difference between funerary and daily amulets is not yet established, considering that they have several uses in both contexts. Concerning the funerary domain, amulets have been part of the burials in all periods of Egyptian history, as offerings but especially as protectors of the deceased. On the one hand, most of the amulets are attested in all periods of Egyptian history. Some of them, like the *wedjat* or the

djed-pillar, have been attested from the predynastic period (c. 6000–3000 BC) until the Roman times (from 30 BC), so we can consider them as "permanent amulets." On the other hand, the number and the typology of funerary amulets increased from the Late Period (664–332 BC), when some amulets seem to have been created especially for the burial [1, 6]: this is the case for the two fingers and the headrest amulet, both used exclusively in mummification.

The "profusion" of amulets during this period is also a phenomenon outside the Egyptian territory. Amulets, in particular, represent a large part of the material exported by the Phoenicians. These objects were first exported to the regions close to Egypt, the Levantine area and Greece. In the Levant, a significant number of Egyptian amulets in faience representing deities are attested alongside other amulets of local production [7]. This confirms the importance that these objects had in other ancient cultures, being included in their funerary practices, and the Egyptian influence concerning religious and magical ideas. Furthermore, the presence of Egyptian amulets is well attested in Greek tombs, especially in childrens' burials: most of them are figures of scarabs and Egyptian divinities in faience or steatite [5].

Through the Greek and especially the Phoenician trades, these "oriental" objects have progressively arrived to the farthest regions, in the Central and the Western Mediterranean.

Thus, the study of Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets in Carthage is particularly interesting. As J. Vercoutter has pointed out, these objects are usually the only ones deposed in Carthaginian tombs: "*Quiconque ouvre un rapport de fouilles de Carthage, ne peut manquer d'être frappé par la fréquence des termes: amulette "égyptienne", décor "nilotique", objet "égyptisant"*" [8]. Beyond the interest of maritime trade routes, the presence of Egyptian amulets in Carthage shows the importance of the Egyptian amulet as a protective element of the deceased in other ancient cultures. The great number of scarabs and scaraboids is significant, as well as the diversity in their typology, but other amulets, especially divinities (Isis et Horus, Osiris, Shu, Bes, etc.) and apotropaic symbols (*wedjat*, *uraeus*, Ptah-*pathecus*. Etc.) are also attested.

Egyptian-type objects, including amulets, appeared even in the south of the Iberian Peninsula. The presence of Phoenicians at the end of the Western Mediterranean is well attested since the 8th century BC, through some important settlements and objects. This phenomenon was mainly due to economic reasons: to find metallic sources, like silver and bronze. Therefore, some researchers concluded that the main reason for the trade relationship between Egyptians and Phoenicians was provisioning of raw materials. This would explain the large appearance of bronze statuary in Egypt during the Libyan Period (945–715 BC) and the expansion of the Phoenician colonisation in the Western with metal products during the 9th and 8th centuries BC.

It has to be noted that Egyptian amulets have been mostly attested in necropolis [4]. During the first years of the Phoenician colonisation (8th century BC), the volume of amulets in the Mediterranean necropolis was not significant, in general, one or two amulets by tomb [9]. Thus, their number increased progressively, in particular from the 6th century BC onwards. According to M.J. López Grande, around 64 Egyptian-type objects were found in the Phoenician colonies in the areas of Catalonia and the Western Languedoc. This is not a great quantity, considering the many hundreds of tombs in the area. Besides, only 35 of these objects were found in a funerary context [10]. However, a more significant number of Egyptian-type objects were found in the east and the south of the Iberian Peninsula.

The role of Ibiza in the development of the trade relationships between Phoenician, Greek and Etruscan civilizations must be underlined [10]. Indeed, the

port of this island was one of the main trade routes in the central Mediterranean, under the influence of Carthage. The so-called "Island of Bes" presents a large number of Egyptian objects, most of them with the image of this Egyptian divinity. We also found a large number of Egyptian-type amulets, especially in the necropolis of Puig des Molins. This necropolis, which was in continuous use from the 7th century BC until the 1st century, is exceptionally well documented. Most of the Egyptian amulets kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid probably belong to this necropolis [4]. They are diverse in their typology, their material and their manufacturing technique as well as in their iconography. The representations of Isis, Hathor and of course Bes are significant in number [4].

In this manner, one must distinguish between the two main influences in the Mediterranean: the "Circle of Carthage" and the "Circle of the Strait". This concept was created in 1960 by M. Tarradell to distinguish materials from the central Mediterranean (Carthage, Sardinia, Sicily and Ibiza) and from the West (the area close to the Strait of Gibraltar). However, this classification was made according to a political idea, rather than an iconographic analysis of the objects. This theory is also based on the fact that the relations between Tire, the Phoenician metropolis in Lebanon, and the city of Cádiz, at the end of the Western Mediterranean, were strongly maintained [11]. Indeed, the worship of the divinities composing the pantheon of Tire, like Astarte, was very popular in Cádiz.

The city of Cadiz has been conditioned by its insular nature, close to the Strait of Gibraltar and the entrance to the Atlantic Ocean. The city (*Gadir*) was founded by the Phoenicians in the 8th century BC and is one of the oldest cities in Western Europe. For this reason, the chronological and spatial scope of the necropolis of Cádiz is relevant [9]. On the one hand, the considerable number of Egyptian amulets found in this necropolis shows the strong position of this city in the Phoenician network. On the other hand, the great number of Egyptian-influenced objects and Egyptianizing amulets could suggest the existence of a particular workshop in Cádiz.

Concerning this idea, note one of the main problems regarding the study of these objects in the Mediterranean: the distinction between Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets. In the Phoenician cities of the Iberian Peninsula, the importation of Egyptian amulets led to a phenomenon of imitation: a local production of amulets, which largely took on the shape or decoration of Egyptian ones. This is particularly clear in the case of scarabs and scaraboides. J. Padró has tried to establish the limits of this problem: while Egyptian objects were created in the Egyptian territory, Egyptianizing objects are those that are not Egyptian but that show some characteristic or influence that connects them with Egypt [12]. Considering the ambiguity and the difficulties to distinguish amulets in these categories according to their iconography, we have to turn up to their material, more precisely, to the metallographic or geological analysis of the objects [13].

The production of Egyptian-inspired amulets, in particular scarabs, is remarkable in various sites in the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, these objects are not mere imitations, but they allow us to see and to evaluate the impact of the Egyptian culture among the indigenous populations [14]. Regarding this idea, we must consider the heterogeneity of the Iberian Phoenician necropolises, both in their system and grave goods, as a sign of the diversity of the deceased's social origins [11]. In the Phoenician societies, the quantity and the quality of the objects placed in the tomb indicated the status of its owner. In this manner, A.M. Jiménez Flores thinks that the quality of the Egyptian-type amulets found in the Iberian Peninsula is poor, given that most of them are made in faience or steatite, presenting just a few incised details [9]. Nevertheless,

these amulets would be recognised, especially for their magic properties, rather than their economic value.

Thus, the quality of each amulet depends on two factors: the social status of the burial's owner as well as the necropolis in which the deceased has been buried. It must be noted that, despite the wealth of the archaeological objects found in its necropolis, most of the Egyptian-type amulets of Cádiz are still unpublished. However, the particularity of this city deserves to have a closer look.

4. The amulets of Cádiz: A dismissed corpus

The necropolis of Cádiz is well known since the 19th century, more precisely, from the discovery of the two anthropoid sarcophagi representing a man (c. 450 BC, discovered in 1887) and a woman (c. 480 BC, discovered a century after the previous one, in 1980). Studies made on the marble lets us suppose that both sarcophagi were made in the same workshop. They perfectly show the influence of customs and especially Egyptian iconography in the Near Eastern areas during the late 2nd millennium and the 1st millennium BC. Since the discovery of these two anthropoid sarcophagi, the city became a reference for the study of the Phoenician-Punic culture [11].

The necropolis of Cádiz is important because of the diversity of its graves (incineration in an urn or in a cist, cremation, burial, etc.) as well as because of the objects, amulets and gold jewellery found in these burials, some of them dating from the 8th century BC [11]. The study of Egyptian and Egyptianizing objects in the Iberian Peninsula was mostly developed in the late 20th century. Nevertheless, the lack of information about Cádiz is remarkable. On the one hand, it was due to the lack of archaeological material, given that there were not architectural or urban remains of the ancient city. The best context was the funerary, having examples dating from the 7th–6th century BC, which confirmed the location of the first Phoenician city as well as its antiquity. On the other hand, access to the Egyptian and Egyptianizing objects found during the local excavations was not possible.

It is interesting to mention an ancient study published in 1892 by the *savant* Louis de Laigue, which, among other heterogeneous research studies, dedicated a particular study to our corpus: *Amulettes de style égyptien trouvées dans la nécropole phénicienne de Cadix* [15]. He pointed out the importance of the necropolis of Cádiz and the similarities between the objects found there and in Carthage. In this brief study, he described two gold rings and three amulet cases with the head of an animal (a hawk, a lion and a ram) on the top (**Figure 1**). The Egyptian influence in the iconography of these objects was clear. He finished his report with a hope note: "*Les découvertes vont continuer et contribueront à jeter un jour inespéré sur la civilization sémitico-gaditane, si incomplètement connue jusqu'ici*" [15].

From the 20th century, we have to point out the work of Pelayo Quintero Atauri, who led most of the archaeological excavations in Cádiz. It was under his guard that most of the Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets were found. Nevertheless, it is not until 1978 that this material has been considered, in the publication of I. Gamer-Wallert [16]. Her founding work about the *aegyptiaca* in the Iberian Peninsula includes a brief summary about the objects found in Cádiz. However, as J. Padró has also noticed, she has just considered the objects that were exhibited in the local Archaeological Museum in Cádiz and the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid [14]. In other words, she focused just on their iconography rather than their archaeological context.

Figure 1.
Amulet cases. Museo provincial de Cádiz - Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte - junta de Andalucía.

Afterwards, J. Padró published the first volume of his doctoral thesis, some years after the work of Gamer-Wallert. The third volume, published in 1985, is dedicated to the south area: *Egyptian-Type Documents from the Mediterranean Littoral of the Iberian Peninsula before the Roman Conquest, Volume 3 Study of the Material. Andalusia* [17]. In this research, he made a complete catalogue about all the Egyptian-type objects found in the Mediterranean coast of the Iberian Peninsula before the Roman conquest. However, he also dismissed the objects of Cádiz, given the difficulties to have access to them.

The most recent study is the doctoral thesis of M.A. García Martínez (2001), under the supervision of J. Padró: *Documentos prerromanos de tipo egipcio de la vertiente atlántica hispano-mauritana* [18]. This work aims to be a continuation of the previous one. She also made a catalogue of Egyptian-type objects found in the Atlantic coast according to their typology. She paid attention not just to their iconography and aesthetic criteria but also to their role as vectors of religious and cultural ideas. Nevertheless, she has not included the Egyptian-type objects from Cádiz.

Finally, we would also like to underline the recent study made by F. Barreiro Espinal, which gives precise information about the amulets kept at the Museum of Cádiz. Most of her conclusions were discussed during a conference and published in the proceedings: *Los amuletos egiptizantes de Gadir. Propuesta tipológica* [19]. Moreover, this work would need to be updated.

The Egyptian influence in the objects of Cádiz is relevant as suggest the large number of Egyptian-type statues found in this area. Most of these figures represent Phoenician divinities, in particular Melqart, whose iconography is also typically Egyptian: he is represented as Osiris, with the *shendyt*-cloth and the *atef*-crown. Melqart has played an important funerary role, assimilated to Osiris, as a divinity that died and reborn. It is the same for the "priest of *Gadir*", kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid, who has been interpreted as the god Ptah with his face covered by a golden mask. However, he could also be one of the protective divinities of trade, taking into account the important role that Cádiz played in its development. In any case, metallographic analyses show that it is an imported object, probably from Egypt.

The importance of the necropolis of Cádiz for the study of the Phoenician culture in the Western Mediterranean is currently undeniable. Thus, recent archaeological

excavations continue to nourish this idea. Indeed, other Egyptian-type amulets have been found in the ancient necropolis area of the city. However, most of the objects are noted in the archaeological reports, which are not published, but kept in the administration archives. This partial information makes it more difficult to create a corpus of all the Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets of Cádiz. In other words, further research has to be developed.

5. Notes about some Egyptian amulets in Cádiz

Most of the Egyptian-type amulets found in Cádiz are well attested from an archaeological point of view. They were found in a funerary context, being part of burials from the Phoenician to the Roman period. F. Barreiro Espinal distinguished in her study around 164 amulets with an Egyptian and Egyptianizing iconography [19]. She classified them according to their typology: anthropomorphic divinities with human head (Bes, Nephthys, Isis, Harpocrates, *pataikos*, etc.), anthropomorphic divinities with animal head (falcon, ram, hippopotamus, ibis, etc.), parts of the body (*wedjat*, two fingers, leg, hand, etc.), animals (scarab, cat, *uraeus*, lion, etc.), plants (papyrus and lotus), symbols of power (white and red crown, pyramid and solar bark), creation of the world (religious compositions) and objects (like the New Year vases in faience or the amulets case).

As she has pointed out, the most common amulet in Cadiz is the *scarab* (28), followed by the *uraeus* (22) and the *wedjat* (13) [19]. As we have explained, this corpus must be updated, given that recent excavations have shown more sets of amulets. However, by paying close attention to the iconography and materials of these amulets, we can find some differences with those used in Egypt. In other words, the degree of acculturation and assimilation of these "oriental" amulets is not the same in the Western Mediterranean.

Created in all materials, the scarab is one of the most widespread amulets. This assimilation can be explained by the variety of its symbolism. Likewise, its wide distribution, both chronological and geographical, must be considered: in Egypt, this amulet was made from the First Intermediate Period (2181–2055 BC) and up to the Roman period in Egypt, its form being imitated in the Near East and in the rest of the Mediterranean area [2].

In Egypt, the hieroglyphic sign of the scarab represented the phonetic value *ḫpr*, which is translated as "to be created", "to come into existence" or "to become". The amulet takes the form of the sacred dung beetle (*Scarabeus sacer*). According to the legend of Heliopolis, the sun had three forms according to the time of day and sunrise (Khepri) is represented by a man with the head of a scarab. It was therefore the symbol of rebirth because it represents the sun, which rises each day in the morning [2]. This divinity is also represented as a black beetle on the walls of tombs accompanying the deceased in his passage from the darkness of night to the light of day. It is therefore a symbol of regeneration and rebirth, which explains the use of this amulet in the burials.

Scarabs and scaraboids are very similar objects; by paying close attention to their iconography, one can find out that they are two different types of amulet. Scarabs are interpreted as small beetle-shaped amulets with iconographic decoration and inscriptions on their reverse. On the contrary, scaraboids do not present anatomical details of the insect on the reverse but other iconographic symbols [20]. Most of the scarabs in Cádiz appeared as pendants or being part of rings [19].

Most of the scarabs found in the Mediterranean were created in Egypt. The workshop of Naucratis (the so-called "scarab factory", according to the great number

of moulds in clay and the scarabs and scaraboids in faience) was one of the most important sites, especially during the 6th century BC [21]. From this period onwards, the manufacture of Greek and Punic workshops became more important, according to the growing number of Egyptianizing scarabs and scaraboids [20].

Outside Egypt, scarabs (and scaraboids) are the most frequently attested amulets in Greek tombs. Some Greek sites have revealed the strong relationship between the scarab amulet and children, given their presence in their tombs [21]. Indeed, some researchers think that scarabs were used as a social distinction so that they were mostly used in the burials of women and children [20].

Concerning the iconography, scarabs found in Cádiz belong mostly to two categories. On the one hand, simple scarabs [19], that is, pendants with the form of the insect. They could correspond to the so-called "mummy scarabs": often anepigraphic and very small in size (between 1 and 4 cm), with detailed anatomy. This variant, developed from the 26th dynasty, is characterised by its reverse and the naturalistic representation of the legs folded over the very convex belly. Created from the Late Period, in coloured stones and faience, these "naturalistic" scarabs had an apotropaic function; they were placed on the chest or between the bandages of the mummies. They are often pierced horizontally so that they can be sewn to the mummy wraps [2]. On the other hand, scaraboids present a more complex iconography on their reverse. These symbols were not typical from the Phoenician society, rather the Greek and the Egyptian influences. Let us mention a scaraboid with the representation of the winged horse Pegasus and another scaraboid with the head of the Egyptian god Bes. Concerning the last one, the image of Bes is commonly known for its apotropaic powers. Amulets representing this god were widespread in Egypt from the 26th dynasty [2]. They were commonly worn in daily life, in particular by women and children. Their use in tombs is also well attested in Egypt but also outside the Egyptian territory: they are one of the most common amulets in the tombs in Greece, Carthage and Spain [2, 5].

The second most spread amulet in the necropolis of Cádiz is the *uraeus*. In Egypt, we must distinguish the amulet of the *uraeus*, representing the cobra, and the amulet representing the head of the snake (*mnḫbyt*): this amulet, always made in red stones (carnelian or jasper), had the intention to prevent snakes and worms to devour the deceased's body in the afterlife [2]. Thus, according to this interpretation, this amulet is not attested outside Egypt. Moreover, the *uraeus* was a cobra in attack position, that is, with its head raised to expel venom. This is why the pharaoh wears it on his forehead, as a symbol of his royalty and his divinity. Represented on the walls of tombs and funerary ornaments, the *uraeus* protected Osiris and the deceased. Moreover, the amulet should be considered as a representation of the goddess cobra of the Delta, Ouadjyt, eye of the sun and protector of the pharaoh. However, the goddesses taking the form of a serpent are numerous [2]. The profusion of their amulets indicates that the protection of the cobra reached not only the pharaoh but also the wearer of this amulet. In the case of the deceased, the effectiveness of the amulet extended into the afterlife.

Despite the strong relationship between the cobra and the Egyptian pharaoh, the use of this amulet in the Phoenician culture shows that it has lost a part of its original significance. In other words, the cobra was related not just to the pharaoh's power but also to the idea of protection (**Figures 2–4**). It is interesting to note the absence of this type of amulet in the necropolis of Carthage. However, in addition to Cádiz, amulets representing a cobra are also attested in the necropolis of Ibiza. Their discovery in a funerary context proves that the amulet was considered for its apotropaic powers and prevention to the deceased in the afterlife.

Figure 2.
Uraeus amulets. Museo provincial de Cádiz - Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte - junta de Andalucía.

Figure 3.
Uraeus amulets. Museo provincial de Cádiz - Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte - junta de Andalucía.

Figure 4.
Uraeus amulets. Museo provincial de Cádiz - Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte - junta de Andalucía.

Finally, the *wedjat-eye* is considered not only one of the most widespread amulets but also one of the most powerful. It had great importance in daily life in Ancient Egypt as well as in the rituals for their deceased.

The name of the amulet derives from the word *wedja*, which can be translated as "to be in good health" or "intact". The amulet was considered as the source of happiness and health. It can also be translated as "to be complete": placed among the bandages of the mummies, this amulet therefore guaranteed the physical integrity of the deceased after death, the ultimate goal of mummification.

Traditionally, this amulet has been identified with the eye of the god Horus, the markings located below the eye derive from the feathers of the falcon. According to mythology, Seth had torn it off during a fight; he had been cared for and cured thanks to the god Thoth and thus transformed into a protective symbol, guarantor of physical integrity. Part of this myth tells that Horus offered the healthy eye to his father Osiris in order to bring him back to life. When Osiris became the master of the afterlife, the *wedjat* was identified with his son Horus [2] (**Figure 5**). The iconography of this amulet is complex, often combined with other symbols. Note that certain female deities considered dangerous (such as Sekhmet, Neith, Isis and Tefnut) were connected with the eye of Horus and are often represented on the back of the *wedjat*-eyes.

The *wedjat* amulet was also seen as a symbol of inviolability. This is the case in the pectoral of Tutankhamun, where the *wedjat* is surrounded by an *uraeus* and a vulture; that is to say, the goddesses Nekhbet and Wadjet, representing the Two Lands of Egypt, protect the *wedjat*-eye, which in turn can protect both animals and the pharaoh. It is rather in this perspective that several mummies have a *wedjat* engraved on the plate, which covered the incision made during the embalming. It should be noted

Figure 5.
Wedjat and falcon amulets. Museo provincial de Cádiz - Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte - junta de Andalucía.

that the left flank of the body was associated with Seth. The amulet prevented the entry of malignant forces through this part while promoting complete healing of the wound. It therefore represents the restored integrity.

It is interesting to point out that both the *uraeus* and the *wedjat* are also the most attested amulets in the necropolis of Ibiza as well as in Carthage [4, 8]. Despite their undeniable Egyptian origin, these amulets seem to have been adopted and reinterpreted by the Phoenician culture, readjusting them to their own funerary ideas. On the one hand, their funerary context suggests that, like in Egypt, they were also used to protect the deceased in the afterlife. On the other hand, similarities between their emplacement in relation to the deceased's body can also be found by paying attention to their archaeological context. This idea can also be applied to their iconography and their material.

Indeed, Egyptian-type amulets found in Cádiz were made in the same materials as Egyptian amulets: faience, gold, argent, bronze, semi-precious stones and vitreous paste. The most common, faience, can also provide us considerable information. Egyptian faience seems to be the preferential material for the creation of amulets. Two advantages can explain this choice: its malleability, being a paste (a mixture of sand and metallic fondants), perfectly adapted to the moulding technique and its symbolism. Indeed, in Egyptian culture, faience was related to the sun and rebirth ideas because of its shiny aspect. For this reason, it has been selected for the creation of some funerary objects: the *oushabtis* figures and the net placed on mummies during the Late Period in Egypt. Depending on its components, Egyptian faience can present different colours: the most common is blue, but green, yellow, black and white varieties are also attested. Faience amulets were used by both poor and nobles, even in royal contexts: consequently, all levels of society have included faience objects in their burials, given its apotropaic powers.

It seems that the typologies and the materials of the Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets in Cádiz do not differ from those found in other Mediterranean sites. The same parallels can be found through the Phoenician area of influence: Palestine/Israel, Sardinia, Carthage, Sicily, Malta, North Africa, Ibiza and the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, there is not a precise typology of funerary amulets. The distinction between daily and funerary amulets is often very problematic because it is assumed that they were used during the lifetime of their owner. Concerning the case of Cádiz, one must distinguish the difference between personal objects and amulets: while the first seems to be created, in particular, for the burial, amulets seem to have been used during daily life [9, 19].

This suggests another problem for the study of these objects: to evaluate their degree of assimilation and understanding by the Western Phoenician society. One can think that the local culture did not totally understand the real meaning of amulets and Egyptian divinities. However, they were used as magical and apotropaic objects. The person who sold the amulet was informed about its capacities, in order

to introduce it into the Mediterranean market. Considering that the future owner will carry it during his life, or even take it to his burial, he had to know its effects and powers. Placing an object in a tomb was not left to chance but had a precise intention. Despite the diversity of objects in burials, amulets, like personal objects that belonged to the deceased or figures of divinities, served intentionally for funerary purposes.

6. Conclusions

Amulets have been in use since the earliest periods of ancient Egyptian history. This shows their intention to address deep-seated concerns in the society. We must take into consideration the role of *ma'at*, the universal harmony which governed the life of the ancient Egyptians. Particularly in the funerary field, *ma'at* is the power that balances the scale during the weighing of the heart (chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead*). Thus, the ancient Egyptians used amulets in order to guarantee a certain control of this natural balance: they were used to fight the evil forces during the living, as much as in the afterlife. Considering that the afterlife was an extension of life on earth, they therefore adorned their deceased with amulets, just as they did during their lifetime [6]. Amulets were obviously multifunctional objects because the same type of amulet may have been used in different situations. The use depends on several characteristics, such as the shape of the amulet, its material and colour, as well as its inscriptions. However, their original function can only be understood in a complete way from the analysis of their context of use. In this manner, several Egyptologists have tried to establish a classification of amulets according to their daily or funerary use since they were supposed to guarantee magical defence to their owner against evil forces, both on earth and in the underworld.

This distinction between daily and funerary amulets is often very problematic because it is assumed that they were always used during the lifetime of their owner. However, some funerary amulets, as well as certain funerary jewellery, were created exclusively for tombs [2]. This is the case for the *ib* amulet in the shape of the heart, which is only attested in funerary contexts. However, this amulet is not attested in the Mediterranean tombs.

The exclusively funerary use of the amulet can be highlighted by its material study, as some seem too delicate to have been worn during the lifetime of their owner. However, although Petrie defined the amulet as "any object worn" [3], the presence of a suspension or perforation system would not be necessary when the amulet was placed on the deceased's body. Concerning the corpus of Cádiz, we would like to insist on the difference between apotropaic jewellery and amulets. On the one hand, "the necropolis of Cádiz has plenty of rings and earrings, which could not have been used in life" [11]. On the other hand, Egyptian-type amulets in Cádiz seem to have been worn during the life of their owners [19].

Some objects were directly imported from Egypt because of their particular materiality but mostly because of their symbolic values. Through the Phoenician network, these objects arrived to all the areas in the Mediterranean. In the extreme Western, they were reused and imitated, creating the so-called "orientalizing" art. However, to precise if their use was the same in the East and the West is a complex task. To answer this question, we must pay attention to the context in which these objects were found. The case of Cádiz is relevant because of the important role of this city during the Phoenician colonisation and the establishment of this culture in the Western Mediterranean.

This article resumes the first conclusions of our ongoing research about the Egyptian influence in the necropolis of Cádiz through amulets. The study of the iconography of these objects as well as their material would allow us to contribute to one of the most difficult questions about these objects: the distinction between Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets. Moreover, our main purpose is to have a better understanding of the amulets of Cádiz and their use in ancient societies, that is, to determine the adaptation and reinterpretation of Egyptian ideas in the Mediterranean.

The necropolis of Cádiz has been continuously used from the Phoenician until Roman times. We have pointed out that Egyptian amulets have been found in these Phoenician burials, but it is also interesting to note that these same amulets are also attested in the Roman necropolis. Whether they were imported from Egypt following the Roman trade connections or were reused from the Phoenician times is still a problem to solve. Considering the practical aspects of the Roman culture, it is not unlikely that these amulets were already part of the local society. This idea confirms that Egyptian amulets have been part not only of the Western rituals and funerary practices but also of the foundation of the Western identity.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 2

The Heritage of Eastern Mediterranean Cultures in Greco-Roman Town of *Akrai/Acrae*, SE Sicily

Roksana Chowaniec

Abstract

The chapter presents new studies of a material culture, recently excavated within ancient town *Akrai/Acrae*, south-eastern (SE) Sicily, and shed light on the rich history of acculturation and assimilation of the local traditions with Eastern Mediterranean cultures (e.g. Greek, Aegean, Cyprus, and Levantine). The *Akrai/Acrae*, founded by Syracuse and being for centuries a part of Syracusan Kingdom, after the Roman conquest in 212 BC, similarly to many other Sicilian urban centres, became a part of Roman province. From the very beginning, the links with the East in this region are evident, both in the legal rules adopted here (e.g. *lex Hieronica*) and in the religion (e.g. cult of Cybele), but above all in the iconography and in the material culture. Many finds (e.g. pottery, terracotta figurines, glass, lamps, and jewellery), discovered within the excavations between 2009 and 2020), are an excellent confirmation of these long-distance relations throughout the town's history. These cultural implications and imports embraced mostly the Eastern Mediterranean producers and suggest strong economic and other contacts of the population of south-eastern Sicily with the centres in the East.

Keywords: *Akrai/Acrae*, Sicily, material culture, Eastern Mediterranean, Greco-Roman world

1. Introduction

Sicily, being the largest island of the Mediterranean, has always been a natural junction point among East, West, South, and North. It was a land where various worlds of Europe, Africa (particularly with Egypt), and Near East linked, just as the Phoenician, Greek, Carthaginian, and Latin cultural circles. It was a melting pot of miscellaneous cultures, a crossroads of trade routes, and a bountiful land rich in desirable goods unavailable elsewhere. Its history made it so multifaceted, as it was first shaped by heritage of the Phoenicians, the Elymians, the Sicani, the Sicels, the Greeks, and the Carthaginians, only to be taken over by the Romans for several centuries, then briefly by the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Byzantines.

Discussing Eastern Mediterranean influences in south-eastern Sicily, it is essential to mention Aegean and Levantine material culture, dated to the middle of 3rd-end of 2nd millenium BC. The Sicani and Sicels were influenced by the Mycenaean culture, whereas the Elymians came to Europe from the lands by the Aegean Sea, from Anatolia, having previously travelled through northern Africa [1]. But genuine eastern influences had begun with the Greeks, who started the colonisation here since the 8th century BC, when *apoikiai* of *Syrakousai*, *Katane*, or Messina were established [2–6]. The Greeks consistently pursued an expansive territorial policy, also in relation to their western neighbours, the Carthaginians, for example by establishing Himera, which enraged the Carthaginians, who treated western Sicily as their domain of influence. The very territorial and trade expansions itself led to armed conflicts between the Carthaginians and the Greeks, especially those from south-eastern Sicily, from Syracuse [7, 8]. The Greeks elbowing around the island caused much strife, which eventually resulted in the Romans appearing on the island in the 3rd century BC. The First Punic War was a consequence of disagreements and dissensions between three sides—Rome, Greece, and Carthage—and was entirely waged in Sicily and on neighbouring waters [9]. Syracuse and Carthage, the eternal rivals, became allies for a short time. However, when the Romans besieged Syracuse, many Sicilian Greek towns switched sides and started to support Rome. Then, Hiero II, the ruler of Syracuse, abandoned by his ally—Carthage—and forced by the odds, signed a peace treaty in 263 BC and became a Roman ally [10]. But during the Second Punic War, some Sicilian towns manifested their spite towards the Romans by making alliances with Carthage. The Syracusan Kingdom was also among them [11].

For the reasons above mentioned, and because of its location, the south-eastern part of Sicily, with its cities, is an excellent example to trace the region's relationship with the Eastern Mediterranean cultures. This region has always had a strong connection to the East, which has manifested itself in both material and nonmaterial culture.

2. Greco-Roman town of *Akrai/Acrae*, SE Sicily

The ancient town *Akrai/Acrae*, located in south-eastern Sicily, close to the modern town of Palazzolo Acreide, Syracuse province, naturally belonged to the eastern circle of civilisation (**Figure 1**). The ancient settlement, located in the Hyblaean Mountains, and situated between the rivers of Anapo and Tellaro, was established in the 7th century BC by Greeks, who arrived here from Syracuse, where they migrated from Corinth, in large numbers. It resulted in leading to a surge in urban development and new settlement, expansion of farming, and intensified stockbreeding [4, 12, 13]. The presented data were collected within the recently surveyed and excavated residential area of the ancient town and its surroundings since 2009 (**Figure 2**).

The first visible trace of Eastern influence in the town is a temple of Aphrodite, built in the second half of the 6th century BC, and interpreted as a symbol of *Akrai*'s transformation into a truly urban organism. With the founding of the town, Greek beliefs, political and economic structures, architecture, and material culture emerged here.

In the meantime, numerous sanctuaries *extra muros* were also established, like the so-called Templi Ferali, carved in a rock and associated with a cult of death. But the great example is Santoni, one of the most important cultic centres dedicated to the Phrygian goddess Cybele, dated to the 3rd century BC. Cybele was worshipped for millennia throughout Asia Minor as *Magna Mater* and her rock sanctuary, La Cuntrata del Santicedda, was localised at the foot of the ancient town *Akrai/Acrae*.
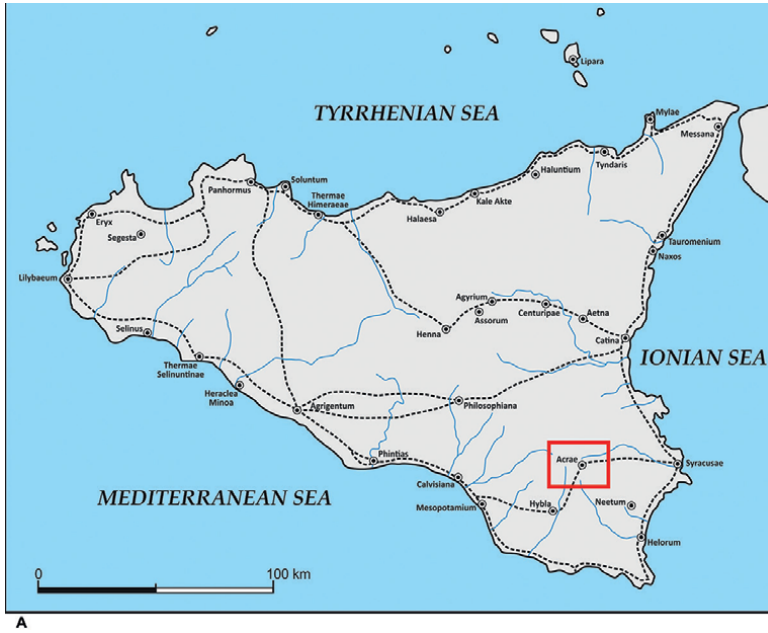
Figure 1.
Akrai/Acrae, *marked on the map of Sicily with the courses of the ancient roads.*
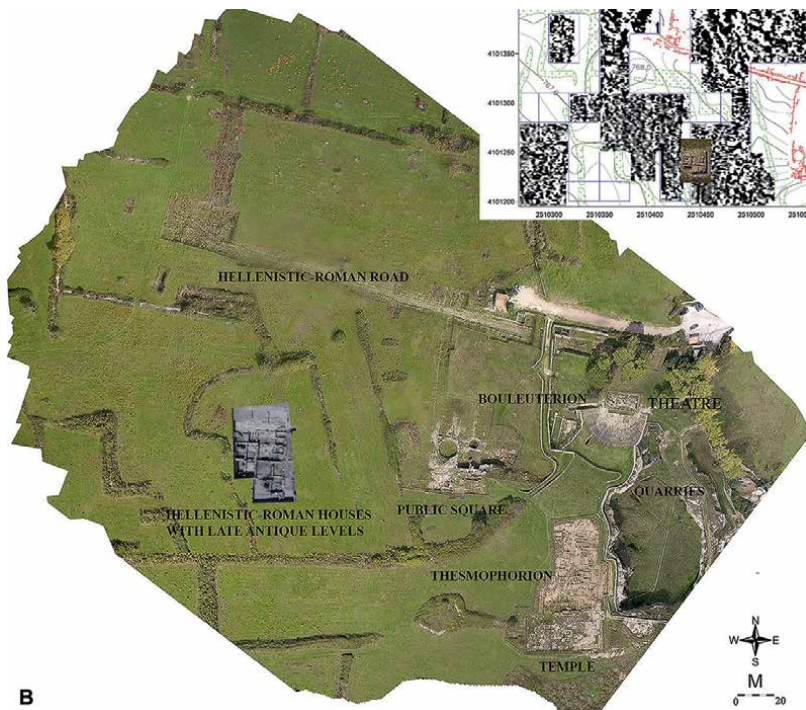
Figure 2.
Orthophotomap of archaeological site of Akrai/Acrae *and with recently excavated areas and structures.*

The goddess is depicted with lions and in some niches, and Cybele is holding offering bowls or drums/tambourines [14–17]. In reliefs II and VIII from the Santoni sanctuary is represented also Attis, alongside Cybele. Representations of Attis became popular in the Greek world ca. 3rd century BC with examples from Sicily, Athens, Delos, Amphipolis, and Olynthos. Beyond the sanctuary, among the terracotta finds from *Akrai/Acrae*, there is also a figurine of Attis wearing a Phrygian attribute—a cap, the key identifying element (**Figure 3**) [18].

Until the 3rd century BC, *Akrai/Acrae* appeared to be a town of marginal importance, heavily influenced by Syracuse. After the fall of Syracuse in 212/211 BC, like other Syracusan towns, *Akrai/Acrae* was placed under the Roman administration. The recently done archaeological excavations suggest that the town functioned until the beginning of the 8th century AD [19], all the while remaining in close relations with Eastern cultural circles. Throughout the period between 212 BC and beginning of the 8th century AD, the Eastern Mediterranean influences are widely and strongly represented in the material culture coming from the excavated area of Hellenistic-Roman residential complex of *Akrai/Acrae* [13].

The largest category of finds, which allows eastern influences to be captured, is pottery. The vessels were obviously not only produced regionally, but were also imported from various production centres, depending on the time period from eastern parts of the Mediterranean or Africa. Plain tableware, represented by a wide gamut of forms, shows eastern imports, like deep bowls (kraters) with horizontal handles originally from the Eastern Mediterranean (Rhodes?) [20]. The eastern types of thin-walled pottery, present here already in Hellenistic period, continued to appear throughout the 1st century AD and until the early 2nd century AD. The Eastern sigillata A and Knidian ware were noticed in archaeological contexts dated from the 1st century BC until the early 3rd century AD; the Eastern sigillata B, imported from the

Figure 3.
Relief from sanctuary of Cybele, in 'Santoni' in the vicinity of the ancient town Akrai/Acrae, *painted by Jean-Pierre-Louis-Laurent Houël between 1776 and 1779.*

western coast of Asia Minor (the Meander Valley)—in the contexts dated from the 1st century AD until the early 2nd century AD; while Eastern sigillata C, from Pergamon or Pitane—in the contexts dated from the late 1st century AD through the early 3rd century AD. The similar chronological range represents the Pontic sigillata and Aegean thin-walled pottery, which, however, lasted until the 3rd century AD [21, 22]. In the Late Antiquity, the eastern imports, like the Late Roman C/Phocean Red Slip, substituted the irregular supplies of the African Red Slip pottery during the Vandal occupation of North Africa (**Figure 4**) [22].

Among the group of amphorae, many fragments were produced in the East and imported at *Akrai/Acrae*. On the one hand, amphorae were manufactured in the Aegean basin, in workshops in Rhodes (**Figure 5**), Cnidus, Kos, and on the other hand in the western coast of Greece, Egypt, and the Adriatic coast (e.g. Corinthian type B amphorae). Also, the amphorae from the Black Sea coast from Sinope are registered (**Figure 6**) [23].

Kitchen and cooking wares imported from the East should also be mentioned. Vessels and other utensils for the food preparation and cooking were identified as Aegean cooking ware, most probably from Knidos and Knossos [24].

Another category of finds with eastern connotations is glassware. Inter alia (I.a.) shallow bowls made of naturally coloured transparent glass (Isings 97a) dated to the end of the 2nd century AD through the 4th century AD, common in Syro-Palestine and Cyprus; shallow bowls with wide collars (Isings 118) from Syro-Palestinian workshops [25], or mug-like translucent olive lamps with three handles and mouths bent outwards made of light-green glass (**Figure 7**), and semi-circular mugs with truncated polished mouths with a relief decoration in the form of vertical striae dated to the 4th century AD through the early 5th century AD, which were imported from the Eastern Mediterranean [25].

The olive lamps present a strong connection to the Asia Minor, and Egypt, in both imports and influences. For example, the lamp Ricci type F was inspired by Athenian
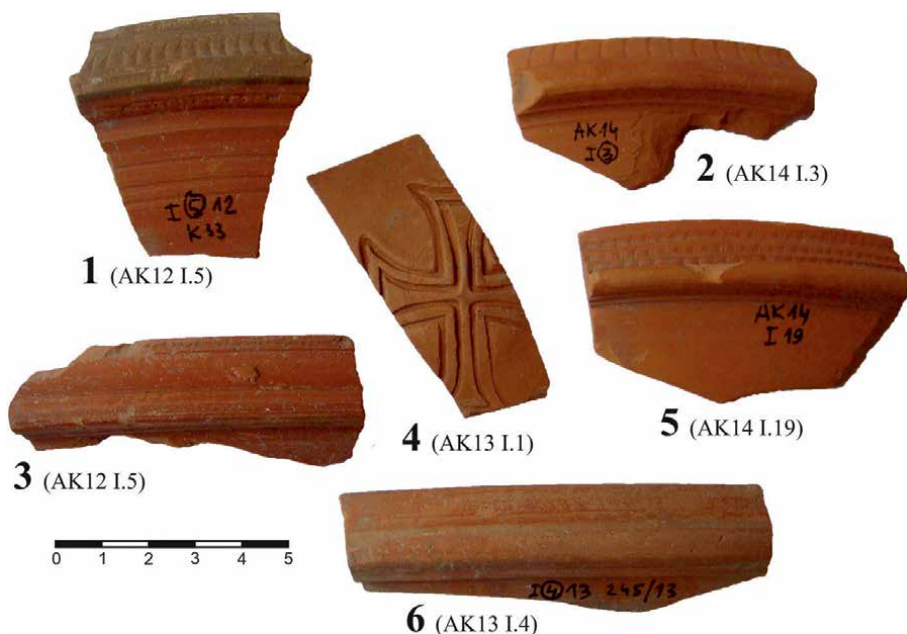
Figure 4.
Late Roman C/Phocean Red Slip ceramic registred in Akrai/Acrae.

Figure 5.
An example of the handle of Rhodos amphora registred in Akrai/Acrae.
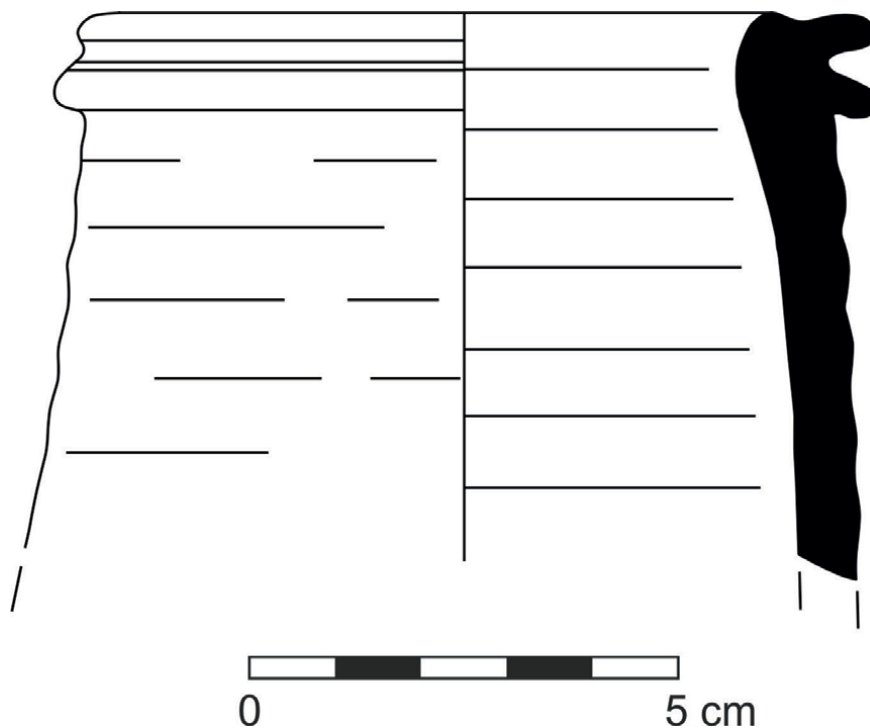
Figure 6.
An example of Sinope amphora registred in Akrai/Acrae.
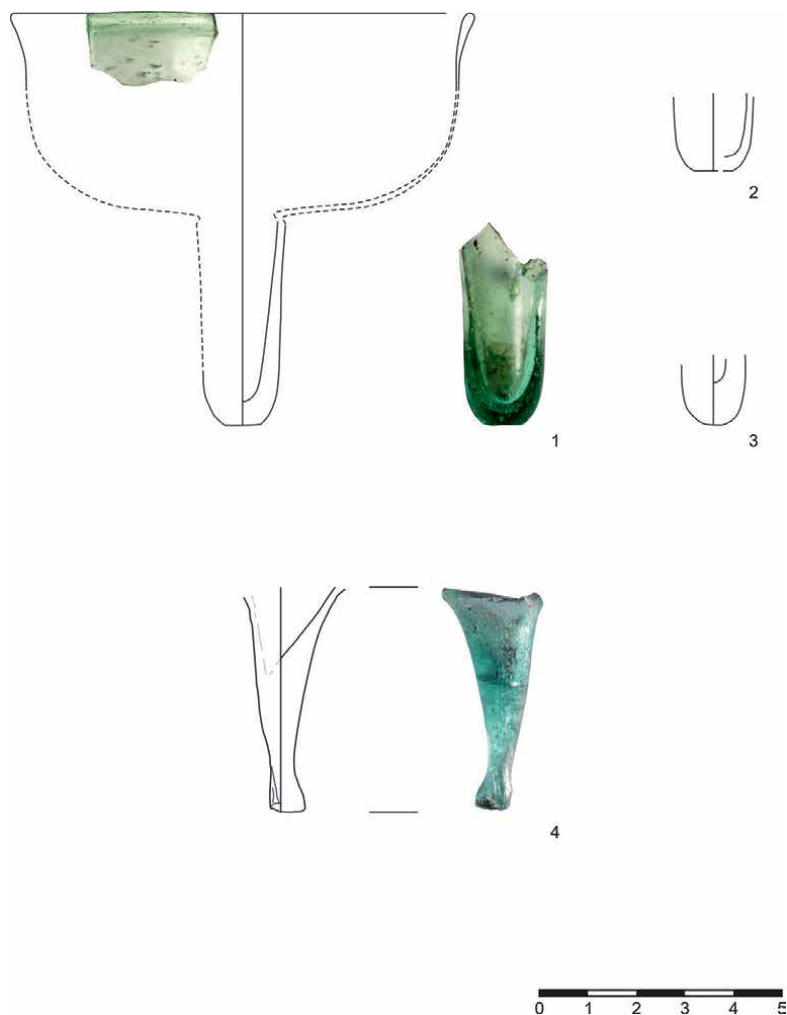
Figure 7.
The examples of lamps made of glass from Akrai/Acrae.

lamps belonging to Howland type 27, whereas the lamp Ricci type G is an adaptation of Hellenistic from Aegean as well as Asia Minor [26, 27].

The typically eastern connotations have the scarab-shaped objects [28], which are most likely game counters. Several such artefacts made of cobalt, light-green, dark opaque, light olive-green, and yellow-green glass have been found in *Akrai*. Also, some glass bracelets with tooled or moulded decoration produced in the Syro-Palestine workshop (**Figure 8**) and various glass beads dated to the 3rd–5th century AD, manufactured in Egypt and in the Syro-Palestine were registered [28–30].

It is also worth mentioning about lead seals found in *Akrai*, dated from the Hellenistic up to the Byzantine period, representing the Eastern Mediterranean iconography (e.g. Athena, Zeus), and with Greek lettering (**Figure 9**) [31].

Furthermore, the presence and inspiration of Byzantine culture in the ancient *Akrai/Acrae* are evident through the discovery of numerous artefacts during the
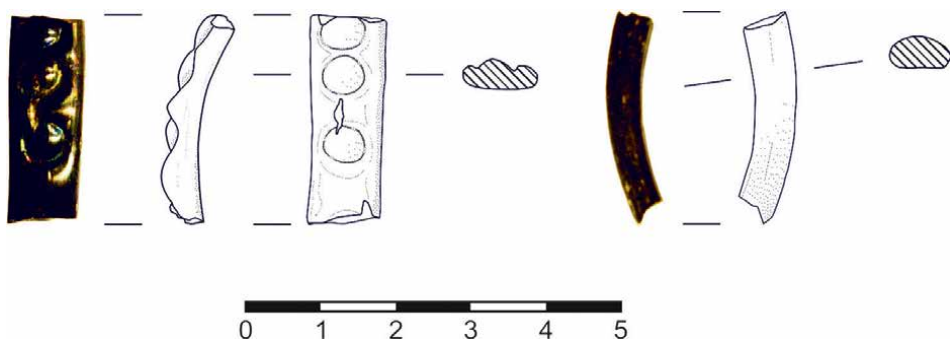
Figure 8.
Some glass bracelets produced in the Syro-Palestine workshops from Akrai/Acrae.
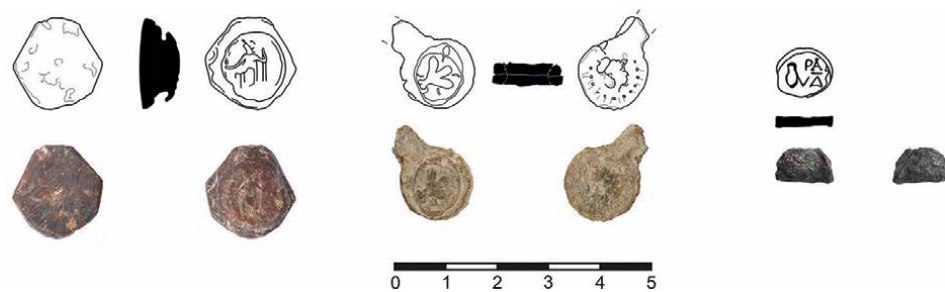
Figure 9.
The examples of lead seals with Eastern Mediterranean iconography and with Greek lettering found in Akrai/Acrae.

Figure 10.
The artefacts being the example of influence of Byzantine artistic traditions registered in Akrai/Acrae.

excavations in the residential complex between 2011 and 2020. These finds provide valuable evidence of the influence and dissemination of eastern Byzantine cultural elements within the town. Among the artefacts were registered the Byzantine coins, nearly exclusively of local production of eastern Sicilian mints, predominantly that of Syracuse mint, but also a fragment of a bronze censer, bronze belt buckles, 'half–crescent'-shaped electrum earrings, bronze and iron rings and crosses, dated to the 5th–8th centuries AD and being the great examples of the influence of Byzantine artistic traditions (**Figure 10**) [32].

These long-distance imports embraced mostly the Eastern Mediterranean producers, instead of the Gaulish or Spanish ones. This suggests much stronger economic and other contacts of the population of south-eastern Sicily and *Akrai/Acrae* with the Eastern centres than with the western Mediterranean.

3. Heritage of Eastern Mediterranean cultures in SE Sicily and *Akrai/Acrae*

3.1 Eastern Mediterranean culture before the Roman conquest

The eastern part of island, together with its town, among which was also *Akrai/Acrae*, despite the presence of many cultures here, including the Romans, was permeated with Greek heritage and tightly linked to the Hellenistic world of the Eastern Mediterranean.

When the Greeks arrived in Sicily, they transformed and consolidated the economy to the so-called 'Mediterranean' type, based on the 'triad' of grapes, olives, and grain. Greek colonists introduced standardised farming and before the 6th century BC, the island's wheat production not only catered to the local needs but also permitted extensive trade. Under Greek influence, Sicily became known for olive oil, grain, and wine [4, 33, 34]. With the newly arrived style in farming and breading, is also associated gastronomy, and describing culinary variety was the favourite form of indicating cultural differences in the Greek world [35]. Already, Epicharmus of Kos (540–450 BC), who certainly lived in Sicily, allegedly mocked at Syracusan scroungers, who never cease eating and drinking [36]. Thanks to the frequent connections within Sicily and Eastern Mediterranean, Sicilian cooks were mentioned in literary works, for example Plato (427–347 BC), who probably has stayed in Syracuse, mentions 'the Syracusan table' and 'the Sicilian elaboration of delicate dishes', and Cratinus the Younger (4th century BC) praises the Sicilian cooking art. The food products were exported to the Greece. For example, Sicilian cheese, which is attested already by Homer, who mentioned Sicilian cheese made of mixed goat's and sheep's milk [37, 38].

A little later, in the Hellenistic period, the very strong relationship of the Syracuse Kingdom, together with *Akrai/Acrae*, with kingdoms of the Seleucids or the Ptolemies can be observed. This is particularly clear when Syracuse is in power of Hiero II. The ruler pursued a wise, coherent, and calculated policy, influenced the local economy, architecture, and culture, and through his administrative skills secured a long period of peace for his region. The status of Syracuse was so high that the Seleucids or the Ptolemies maintained extensive economic and cultural relationships with it [39]. For instance, as a token of a perfect partnership, Hiero II presented the rulers of Egypt with a luxury ship *Syrakosia*, built circa 240 BC, which was additionally loaded with 60,000 kilogrammes of grain and 10,000 jars of salt. Another illustration may be an exchange of artists and creators, such as Theocritus of Syracuse's stay at the court of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Hiero's strong position was also evidenced by the fact

that when Rhodes was struck by an earthquake in 227 BC, the ruler sent financial aid for inhabitants of the town in order to help them in their misfortune [13]. Also, the Sicilian metropolis drew upon Hellenistic experiences and heritage, for instance, by adopting the tax laws from the Ptolemies as well as the habit of putting images of living rulers and queens on coins. Simultaneously, it introduced various innovations regarding different aspects of life, such as inter alia a new plan of a theatre decorated with figures—maenads, satyrs, etc., and novel Ionic and Corinthian capitals of the so-called Sicilian type.

The best example of Eastern influence is the law, the so-called *lex Hieronica*—a taxation law setting the levy at 10% of harvest and rearing—adopted by Hiero II from the Ptolemies [40]. Not only the law itself but also the method of tax collection based upon the assumption that the land in the state belonged to the king, and so people did not pay taxes but rather a leasing fee was adopted. However, details of this method remain obscure to us. It is also worth noting that the introduction of the *lex Hieronica* could not have been a direct copy of the system of the Ptolemies, since Sicilian social structure and municipal administration were completely different.

These relationships allowed Syracuse to strengthen its Greek identity and help the Syracusan Kingdom become a prominent point on the world map of the time.

3.2 Eastern Mediterranean culture after the Roman conquest

Although after 212/211 BC the region was incorporated into the Roman province and gradual Latinisation started, it took place not before the Principate. *Akrai/Acrae* as other towns of the former Syracusan Kingdom, for nearly 200 years, remained a part of the Hellenistic world enshrouded in the Sicilian Greek heritage until the end of the Republic [13, 41, 42]. After Sextus Pompeius had been defeated in 36 BC, not only the number of inscriptions in Greek, but also the predominance of Greek elements in ceramics or art, started to decrease systematically, albeit not dramatically, which should be understood as a result of the growing number of immigrants coming from Italy and settling in Sicily, lower inflow of population from the east (e.g. from Greece) [43], and superseding or downturn in the autochthonous population. At the same time, Kalle Korhonen believed that there was no information suggesting either an inflow or an outflow of Greek-speaking settlers in the early Imperial Period and quoted only a few examples of Greek-Sicilian tombstones beyond the island [44]. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that the colonisation of towns initiated by Octavian Augustus prompted the migration of Latin-speaking people, including many thousand veterans and their families [45].

But the inflow or even mere presence of newcomers did not always impact local communities, and in a number of cases it could be quite the opposite. The Roman world came here, but mostly only in politic. The local inhabitants probably learnt to call and to consider themselves Romans, but they did not adopt the Roman language or Roman civilisation. Alberto Vàrvaro noted that Latin onomastics acted as a camouflage for the Greek community and actual domination of Latin should be sought only in the villages, as it was where the new settlers bought or were granted land [46]. However, Giacomo Manganaro was of a different opinion and believed that it was the rural population that still spoke Greek [47]. Kalle Korhonen tried to explain the differences by pointing out that Latin might have dominated in towns situated along the western and northern coasts, especially in public epigraphy, whereas in the east, the Greek language still prevailed [48]. In order to decide such discrepancies, archaeological sources also need to be consulted. For instance, in *Akrai* or Syracuse, fragments of terra sigillata

vessels with graffiti in Greek, produced in the 1st century AD and the 2nd century AD, have been found. This proves that Greek has never disappeared from the epigraphy of this region, was still present in everyday life, and acted as a lingua franca, enabling or facilitating communication within the multi-ethnic environment [13, 44]. During the Byzantine Period, Greek experienced a renaissance, which was noticed by Belisarius when he came to the island [49]. At the same time, the regained supremacy of Greek inscriptions was observed mostly precisely in the south-eastern part of the island.

Religious landscape of the region was equally complicated. We can also notice a mixture of Greek and Roman elements as well as reminiscence of Sicel, Sicani, Punic, and Elymian religions, and the influence of Hellenistic heritage upon the Roman religion. The mutual permeation of religions started after Rome absorbed southern Italy with its Greek towns, but as a result of which the conquering of Sicily intensified. Since the Hellenistic period, due to a close relationship with the Ptolemies, also Egyptian inspirations started to appear. Roman set of beliefs prevailed but it was based upon local Greek traditions. Since the 3rd century AD, and even more intensively since the 4th century AD, local religions were adopting elements of Judaism, which was introduced into the island by numerous incoming Jewish communities from the East [50–53]. Since the 4th century AD, Christianity developed quickly, represented by both the Latin and the Byzantine churches [32]. Christianity permeated the eastern coast of Sicily along with new landowners [54, 55]. It has generally been accepted that already in the first half of the 5th century AD, the previously dominant sets of beliefs were displaced by Christianity. It seems, however, that the new faith was not adopted all that fast, as Pope Gregory alarmed that heresy and traditional beliefs were still present on the island [32, 56].

Greek towns, already possessing stable municipal infrastructure many centuries before the Romans came to Sicily, left little room for outlandish innovations. In this case, Roman factor occurred within the existing urban structures, usually through foundations by Roman officials residing on the island. Such situation caused much difficulty in introducing Roman architectural elements. An *agorà* was usually transformed into a forum, while an existing theatre was adopted to Roman spectacles. It should be remembered also that in many cases Roman architecture have followed the Hellenistic models closely [13, 57]. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that from the mid-3rd century BC to the mid-1st century BC, no major changes in urban character of the Greek centres occurred [13, 19, 58]. Intermingling of local Greek and new Roman elements was noticeable also in residential architecture.

It should be very strongly emphasised that Eastern Greek influences affected Roman culture. The Romans valued Greek culture much higher than most local cultures they conquered [13, 59]. By gradually conquering first *Magna Graecia*, then Sicily, and finally the remaining territories permeated with the Greek culture, the Romans developed tight relations with the Hellenistic world. They were aware of the existence of great highly developed towns as well as the nature and diversity of cultures which created them. They started learning Greek and studying Greek literature and philosophy [13, 60]. Since the 3rd century BC, the existing relationship between the Greeks and the Romans influenced various aspects of Roman life [61]. Knowledge and services of teachers, physicians, craftsmen, or artists, who often were hostages or slaves, were in high demand. Having conquered and looted Greek towns in Sicily, including Syracuse and *Akrai*, the Romans captured magnificent works of art and craftsmanship [13, 19, 62]. The Greek spirit was so strong that it was reflected by the development of Roman theatre, literature, and daily life. Therefore, the Greco-Sicilian traditions were not a big nuisance for the Romans [63].

During the 5th century AD, Sicily found itself again to be strongly influenced by the Eastern, particularly Byzantine, culture and power. This period marked a significant shift in the political and cultural landscape of the island. The Eastern influence on Sicily can be attributed to the expansion of the Byzantine Empire, which sought to establish its dominance over the Mediterranean region. Sicily, with its strategic location in the heart of the Mediterranean, became a crucial territory for Byzantine control and influence. Under Byzantine rule, Sicily experienced a series of transformations. This brought the changes in land ownership and taxation, and also had a profound impact on the island's culture, art, and architecture. Byzantine artistic styles and techniques permeated Sicilian art, particularly in the creation of mosaics, frescoes, and religious iconography. Byzantine architectural elements, such as the use of domes and intricate decorative motifs, can be seen in the architectural constructions [32, 56, 64]. The Eastern influence on Sicily in this period also extended to trade and commerce. The island became an important hub for maritime trade routes connecting the Eastern Mediterranean with Western Europe. This facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultural practices between different regions, further enriching Sicily's cultural landscape [12, 32, 56, 64].

4. Conclusions

Sicily, due to its geographical location and role as a link between naval passageways leading from the east westward and from the south northward, was simultaneously a final destination for transported goods and an intermediary station on long-range trade routes. The eastern Sicilian ports in Syracuse or Catania were important stops for ships sailing from the East, Asia Minor, islands on the Aegean Sea, and the Peloponnese to the west, through the Strait of Messina, to Sicily but also to the ports in Latium, in Sardinia, or in Corsica [65]. With such proximity to naval lanes, Sicily had access to all products (pottery, olive lamps, glass, etc.) circulating in the Mediterranean Sea, which were first available at cities with ports, and then were redistributed inland to places like *Akrai/Acrae*.

Thanks to archaeological research and excavations carried out between 2011 and 2020 in this ancient town, the presence of Eastern Mediterranean influences has been unequivocally confirmed. The location of *Akrai/Acrae*, close to the port and great town of Syracuse, as well as the whole region, has fostered the exchange of ideas, trade, and cultural practices with various Eastern Mediterranean civilisations. The eastern Greek influence (in language, customs, and culture traditions) is prominent and can be traced back to the ancient colonisation and foundation of towns, among them *Akrai/Acrae*. These colonies became centres of Greek culture, fostering the development of art, agriculture, architecture, literature, philosophy, and political systems that were characteristic of the Eastern Mediterranean Greek world. Later, the Eastern Mediterranean cultures, particularly the Hellenistic and Byzantine, also played a significant role in shaping the cultural heritage of this Greco-Roman town. Hellenistic influence introduced new artistic styles, including the fusion of Greek and Eastern motifs, the use of products manufactured there, as well as beliefs. With the rise of the Byzantine Empire, Eastern Mediterranean cultural influences intensified. The Byzantine presence impacted trade routes and economic exchanges, further connecting the island to the Eastern Mediterranean region. The heritage of Eastern Mediterranean cultures in the Greco-Roman town of *Akrai/Acrae*, or more generally in the south-eastern part of the Sicily, is reflected

in the material culture. It is a testament to the vibrant history, one of the places where Greek, Roman, Hellenistic, and Byzantine influences have merged to create a unique cultural mosaic.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 3

Technopoiesis in the Southern Levantine Metallurgy and Its Implications on the Rise and Fall of the Ghassulian Society

Nissim Amzallag

Abstract

The impact of mental shifts on societal transformations in antiquity is frequently minimized due to the difficulty of evaluating them. However, even in the absence of written sources, some of these changes are traceable in the material culture, through a special type of implements produced for revealing the technique bringing them forth. Defined as processual artifacts, they inform us about the 'juvenile phase' of complex techniques with strong cosmological dimension (technopoiesis), their evolution, and their societal influences. This paper exposes the heuristic power of this approach through the analysis of the early metallurgy in the Southern Levant. It shows how the evolution of this craft and its cosmological resonances contribute to clarify the singularity of the Ghassulian culture and its disappearance during the transition to the Early Bronze Age.

1. Introduction

Our representation of ancient history depends on the data available and the tools and concepts used for their investigation. Concerning prewriting societies, the material culture remains the primary source used to understand ancient history and lifestyles, but it poorly informs us about the mental universe of the past's inhabitants and its transformations. The shifts affecting ancient cultures are therefore generally accounted for by deterministic factors, such as climatic changes, ecological crisis, plagues, famines, invasions, and breakdown of communication networks. Though no one excludes that 'intrinsic' factors, such as the beliefs, rituals, and mode of social organization, may potentially drive societal changes, our inability to characterize them through the material remains renders this type of explanation speculative. This methodological bias overemphasizes the weight of the deterministic factors, as they are the only ones where variations may be accurately measured.

This situation is not always easy to accredit. For example, the process of plant domestication in the ancient Near East, the driving force of the Neolithic Revolution, extended for so long a time interval (12,000–8300 BCE) that its representation as a response to climatic changes, famines, and overpopulation becomes difficult to argue [1]. This timeline may explain why researchers have assumed that mental changes (materialized by the revolution of symbols, rituals, and architecture) might be the driving force of plant domestication and its societal consequences ([2], pp. 3, 9; [3, 4]). Nevertheless, the theories about plant domestication that rank mental changes before survival considerations remain marginal today. Models advocating a neutral process of protracted domestication [5] are preferred, even though they are discrepant with the data [6]. A methodological problem is the source of this bias. It is revealed by Jacques Cauvin, who advocates the prevalence of mental changes to explain plant domestication but acknowledges that "*this invention is scarcely accessible to our present analytical tools. We see only the consequences, at a stage where the phenomenon, already well established, has substantially reshaped the mass of quantifiable information that we can get hold of.*" ([3], p. 60).

This situation is not necessarily a fatality. The intrinsic (endogenous) factors that are perceived only through their consequences, after their influence vanishes, might result from the lack of appropriate conceptual tools to reveal their expression and track their evolution. This paper aims to show that a new conceptual tool, *technopoiesis*, may uncover the contribution of some intrinsic factors to societal transformations and illuminate some decisive steps in their evolution. Examination of the rise and demise of the Ghassulian society in the Southern Levant (late Chalcolithic period, 4500–3900 BC) will here illustrate the heuristic power of this approach.

2. The concept of technopoiesis

The analysis of the material culture enables us to reconstitute the techniques used to generate it. Nevertheless, the societal importance of these techniques is generally considered secondary to the impact of the end products. The reason for this bias is simple: we generally approach techniques as processes teleologically oriented toward producing the desired artifacts ([7], p. 20). Through this perspective, the crafts systematically integrate the classical approach of technology (also defined as *technopraxis*) in modern societies, a concept defined as the collection of techniques, skills, methods, and processes recruited to attain an objective and/or the creation of an end product. By extension, the material universe as a whole becomes oriented by the considerations of survival and their societal extensions, the perspectives of increase of wealth and concentration of power.

Nevertheless, technical developments may have other motivations. For complex techniques requiring generations to mature the end product and to explore the benefits of its use, the practical perspectives of the outcomes remain necessarily evasive to the first proponents. In these cases, the first stages of emergence are mainly fueled by discovering a new intriguing reality, the wish to reproduce it and to explore its implications. These latter may be of cosmological nature, and consequently, they may interfere with the universe of beliefs. The early developments of gunpowder and electricity, stimulated by cosmological considerations rather than by any practical perspective, are recent examples of such motivations ([8], pp. 32–33; [9]). They testify that the origins of some complex techniques do not necessarily integrate the technopraxis framework fueled by perspectives of practical applications. An

alternative framework, *technopoiesis*, was recently introduced in order to account for situations of importance of a technical process, irrespective of the potential of practical exploitation of its outcome [10].

In technopoiesis, the primary function of the end product is not practical (tools, ornaments, and prestige artifacts). Instead, the items become the material expression of the technical process that brought them forth. Defined as *processual artifacts*, these objects may carry symbols and serve ritual functions that reflect the cosmological dimension attached to the techniques involved. Identifying processual artifacts in the material culture and investigating their evolution may therefore illuminate the mental changes accompanying the juvenile phase of the development of a technique (technopoiesis) and those accompanying the transition to the 'mature phase' (technopraxis) focused on practical applications. Few points characterize this duality:

1. *Unidirectional trend:* The replacement of the production of processual artifacts (technopoiesis) by their utilitarian or prestige counterpart (technopraxis) is a spontaneous evolution from the juvenile to the mature phase of the development of a technique. However, the opposite trend, the transition from technopraxis to technopoiesis, is not observed.

2. *Facultative character*: Technopoiesis is a facultative stage of development. In relatively simple techniques, such as the production of elementary ceramic artifacts, technopoiesis is attested in some homelands but not in others in which a utilitarian dimension is visible from the very beginning [10].

3. *Uniqueness*: The cosmological connotations attached to technopoiesis interfere with the cultural universe of the people developing the technique. This local character of the motivations contrasts with the universal principles of efficiency guiding the production of the desired issues in the technopraxis framework.

4. *Cosmological dimension*: In technopoiesis, the cosmological resonance of the process overlooks the practical perspectives attached to the end products. This characteristic is generally minimized or even evanesces after the transition to technopraxis.

5. *Religious changes*: Through their cosmological dimension, the principles guiding the technopoietic development of a craft may influence the whole universe of beliefs. The transition to technopraxis introduces a deconsecration of the technique.

Introducing the concept of technopoiesis opens a new horizon of investigation. It explains some characteristics attached to the early development of some techniques and may enable us to track its impact on societal changes. The technopoietic dimension of metallurgy in the Ghassulian society (4500–3800 BCE, Southern Levant, Chalcolithic period) illustrates this reality.

3. The question of origin of the South Levantine metallurgy

Attested from the Ghassulian period, metallurgy reached in the Southern Levant a level of technical development unmatched in the other contemporaneous homelands.

It comprises the mastering of the furnace technique of copper production, the making of complex copper alloys, and the development of the lost-wax technique of casting ([11], 245–253); ([12, 13], p. 41). The high level of standardization of the techniques even suggests the differentiation of a corporation of specialized Ghassulian metal-workers developing this craft ([13], p. 46; [14], p. 390).

Metallurgy emerged in the Southern Levant many centuries after the first attestations of metalworking in the neighboring areas (Balkans, Anatolia, Upper Euphrates, Caucasus, and the Iranian plateau). Some authors deny that metallurgy was introduced in the Southern Levant from one of these homelands, because we find no sign of external influence on the early development of the Ghassulian metallurgy ([15], p. 562) and because the earliest use of furnaces for copper production is attested in the Southern Levant [12]. On the other hand, the rapid development of techniques of smelting and metalworking in the Southern Levant is easy to justify by the introduction of mature technical knowledge from another homeland [16]. The discovery of a small artifact of native copper dated from the sixth millennium BCE in the Southern Levant and originating from the Northern Euphrates/Caucasus copper area renders this assumption plausible [17]. The use by the Ghassulian metal-workers of arsenic- and antimony-rich ores coming from afar (Caucasus and Upper Euphrates) might also reflect an ascendancy of these homelands in regard to the one identified in the Southern Levant [18]. The reference to technopoiesis enables us to clarify this question.

4. Technopoiesis in the Southern Levant homeland

The Ghassulian metallurgy is atypical by the produced items. Utilitarian artifacts (hooks, axes, and chisels) and personal ornaments are rarely encountered ([19], p. 21). Concerning the Nahal Mishmar hoard [20] even the artifacts shaped as tools (axes, chisels, and adzes) do not show traces of use, and their abnormal dimension even challenges utilitarian purposes ([21], pp. 294–295). Most items from this hoard, especially the complex ones, are approached as 'prestige artifacts' [20]. However, these complex items are encountered neither in burial contexts nor in any other circumstance attesting to social stratification, and the low level of differentiation of the Ghassulian society reduces considerably the potential demand for such 'prestige artifacts' ([13], p. 68). Finally, the reduced importance of the trade of copper items (seals, stamps, bullae, and tokens are extremely rare in the Southern Levant at this time) undermines the prominence of a mercantile dimension of the Ghassulian metallurgy.

These observations challenge the interpretation of the complex metallic items (such as those discovered in Nahal Mishmar) produced by this culture as prestige artifacts. These objects might have been conceived for rituals ([22], p. 124; [23]). If their metallic nature, shape, symbolism, and even their mode of production (lost-wax casting) was of significance, these objects should be interpreted as processual instead of prestige artifacts ([24], p. 273; [25]).

The rise of metallurgy in the Southern Levant coincides with the emergence of religious and symbolic novelties of the Ghassulian culture, suggesting that both are interrelated. This premise is supported by the similar symbolism identified on these metallic artifacts and other nonmetallic ones (ossuaries, incense burners, and ritual vessel). It suggests an interference between metallurgy and the Ghassulian beliefs about death, afterlife, and regeneration ([25, 26], pp. 72–73). Milena Gošić and Itzhak

Gilead even conclude that "*The Ghassulian metallurgy introduced a new ritual behavior, starting with metal-smelting, through shaping of the artefacts, to the use of the finished artefacts in rituals. Its transformational quality demonstrated the unprecedented control of smiths over the material world and suggests they were most influential members in their communities.*" ([23], p. 171). All these observations suggest a technopoietic dimension of this craft and its impact on the beliefs of the Ghassulian society.

5. Metallurgy in the surrounding homelands

Extractive metallurgy (the production of metal from ore) is attested from the late sixth millennium BCE in Iran [27], the early fifth millennium BC in the Balkans [28], and the mid-fifth millennium in Anatolia, Upper Euphrates [29], and the Caucasus [30]. Though these homelands probably emerged independently from each other, they share a similar mode of copper production by co-smelting sulfide and oxide ores in a crucible ([31, 32], p. 195; [33]). The type of produced artifacts is similar too. In all them, most of the implements are tools (chisels, awls, hooks, knives, adzes, and flat axes), weapons (projectile points, and daggers), and ornaments (rings, beads, and pendants), all shaped by simple production processes (hammering or casting in open or bivalve molds) [34–37].

Though copper was probably considered a precious, powerful, and even outstanding material, its mode of production does not show any substantial cultural importance in these homelands. The rise of extractive metallurgy is accompanied neither by a cultural discontinuity nor by a metamorphosis of the rituals and symbols. Instead, a mercantile dimension of copper production is rapidly visible in all them, evidenced by the networks of trade and exchange centered on the areas of metal production in the Upper Euphrates area, area ([38], pp. 37, 43), the Caucasus [30, 35, 39], the Iranian plateau [32], and especially the Balkans ([28, 40], p. 117). In these cultures, the development of extractive metallurgy did not modify the universe of beliefs, symbolism, and rituals. Rather, the mercantile perspective and the many practical uses of copper advanced the integration of early metallurgy, in all these homelands, into the framework of technopraxis.

While the approach of a technique evolves spontaneously from technopoiesis to technopraxis, the opposite trend is unexpected (see above). The technopoietic dimension of the early copper metallurgy in the Southern Levant is therefore unlikely to have emerged from the introduction in this area of the technopraxis approach attested in all the neighbor homelands. The concept of technopoiesis invites us to conclude that metallurgy in the Southern Levant emerged independent of all the other homelands.

6. Early metallurgy and the fundaments of technopoiesis

Extractive metallurgy followed the work of native copper in Anatolia/Upper Euphrates ([38], pp. 19–22), Caucasus [35], Iran [41], and the Balkans [42]. In these homelands, the early mode of smelting in crucibles extends their use for purifying native copper and casting it. Also, the artifacts made of smelt copper are inspired by the repertoire of tools and ornaments produced from native copper. This continuity reveals that copper remained apparently approached before the rise of extractive metallurgy as a powerful material of precious value, with mechanical properties allowing

the production of ornaments and utilitarian and prestige items. It seems, therefore, that extractive metallurgy was teleologically oriented from its very origin toward the production of raw copper, the preexisting desired issue. This motivation positions extractive metallurgy, from its very beginning, within the technopraxis framework in these homelands. At best, the rise of extractive metallurgy affected the societies by increasing the amount of metal available, then enhancing the network of exchanges and social stratification.

Unlike all these homelands, the Southern Levant one is devoid of native copper [21]. It means that the development of the smelting process, in this area, antedates the potential uses of raw copper, its final issue. This singularity is compatible with the main characteristic of technopoiesis: the prevalence of considerations about the process on the perspectives of exploitation of its issue.

Furthermore, extractive metallurgy extends in all the neighbor homelands the separation of native copper from its mineral gangue in crucibles. It means that the symbolism of extraction extends there from the production of native copper to that of smelt metal. In the Southern Levant, where native copper is absent, the smelting of green sandstone devoid of metallic characteristics to produce a metal becomes an act of the creation of matter of cosmological consequences. And the furnace, where copper ore is mixed with coals for performing the smelting process (from the very beginning of metallurgy in this area [11], pp. 244–252; [12, 16]), becomes the site of expression of these demiurgic powers. The religious dimension attached to this technopoietic dimension of early metallurgy is closely related to the singular mode of emergence of metallurgy in the Southern Levant.

7. The transition to the Early Bronze Age in the Southern Levant

7.1 The dislocation of the Ghassulian culture

The Ghassulian culture disappeared at the early fourth millennium BCE. Many settlements became deserted, and those surviving were of reduced size ([43, 44], p. 41; [45]). In parallel, the mode of habitat and crafts (especially pottery and metallurgy) simplified ([13, 46, 47], pp. 69–70; [48]), and the production of the Ghassulian ritual artifacts ceased ([49], pp. 24–26). However, a new culture did not immediately replace the Ghassulian one. Instead, the beginning of the Early Bronze Age (3800–3500 BCE, EBA1 period) looks like a 'dark age', in which the Ghassulian cultural unity merely dislocates [50].

The causes of this erosion are unclear today, mainly because the deterministic factors traditionally drawn on to account for societal collapse are not applicable here. An invasion replacing most of the local population was typically invoked in the past ([51], pp. 64–65; [52], p. 101). However, no foreign influence is visible in the early fourth millennium BCE in the Southern Levant, nor is there any evidence for genocide of the Ghassulian people [53]. Alternatively, the disaggregation of the Ghassulian society became approached as the unavoidable consequence of the degradation of the conditions of subsistence consecutive to a transient phase of drought [45]. However, the analyses of oxygen isotope ratios in the Southern Levant and the evolution of the Dead Sea level suggest an opposite trend [54, 55]. They aim for a transient period of wet climate from the beginning of the fourth millennium BCE (including in the semiarid areas). Plagues are another factor potentially explaining the degradation of the Ghassulian society, but in the absence of positive evidence and parallel collapses

in neighboring areas, such a hypothesis remains speculative. Warfare and internal conflicts are also taken in consideration, but whether or not violence escalated at the end of the period remains a matter of speculation ([53, 56], p. 90). Social disorders are also among the possible causes of collapse, potentially revealed by the disruption of the production of prestige items, especially the metallic ones ([13], pp. 70–71). This assumption depends, however, on the interpretation of the precious copper items as prestige artifacts and their use as markers of the social stratification of the Ghassulian society ([56], p. 241). However, out of this perspective (here challenged), nothing attests that social disorders prompted the disappearance of this culture.

The inability to account for the collapse of the Ghassulian society through deterministic factors calls for an alternative approach. In light of the central importance of metallurgy in the Ghassulian society and religion, this craft and its cultural impact might have been the intrinsic factor whose transformation stimulated the collapse of this society.

7.2 The transition to technopraxis

The cessation of the production of complex metallic items, at the end of the Ghassulian period, is significant. The concomitant demise of the symbols, rituals, and burial traditions reveals that this cessation does not merely result from problems in supplying the exotic ores necessary for producing the alloys. Rather, Alex Joffe concludes, "*These symbolic endings were doubly significant: they represent the abandonment of both symbols themselves and highly skilled craft production (and resource procurement) patterns. If nothing else, this represents a dramatic manifestation of ritual failure*" ([53], p. 100).

Since metallurgy was a central component of the Ghassulian religion, the 'ritual failure' characterizing the end of the Ghassulian period might reflect the disappearance of the technopoietic dimension of this craft and the religious dimension attached to it. In such a case, we may expect the replacement, toward the Early Bronze Age, of the processual artifacts by ornaments and utilitarian and prestige items. Such a transition is attested in the Southern Levant at the early fourth millennium BCE. Instead of highly complex artifacts cast through the lost-wax technique, the techniques of alloying and casting simplify, and this activity reorganizes around the production of tools (awls, flat axes, and adzes), weapons (crescentic axes, daggers, and spearheads) and prestige items [53, 57, 58]. In parallel, the metal production shows drastic changes. The Chalcolithic metallurgy lacked specialization and division of labor: the ores were transported to small workshops, mainly located in the northern Negev, where the metal was produced, alloyed, purified, and cast to produce implements [59]. This mode of organization (cottage industry) fits a technopoietic context in which the mode of production is inseparable from its end products.

From the early fourth millennium BCE, new centers specializing in copper production emerged in the mining areas from the Arabah valley [57, 58]. Besides these sites devoted to the production of copper ingots, other centers positioned at the nexus of networks of trade and distribution became specialized in transforming this raw material into implements [60]. This division of labor fits a reorientation of this activity toward the criteria of efficiency rather than the cosmological considerations.

In the Early Bronze Age, the division of labor became visible even within the workshops specializing in copper production [61, 62]. This evolution suggests that standardization and efficiency in producing the desired issue (raw metal or finished implements) now conditioned the development of this activity. It corroborates the

assumption that metallurgy overcame an abrupt transition from technopoiesis to technopraxis at the same time as the Ghassulian culture collapsed [63].

Once gathered, the cosmological importance of the Ghassulian metallurgy, the switch to technopraxis at the early fourth millennium BCE, and the absence of deterministic factors accounting for the collapse of the Ghassulian culture promote a new interpretation: the transition of metallurgy from technopoiesis to technopraxis might be involved in the collapse of the Ghassulian culture and the transition to a 'dark age' period in the Southern Levant.

8. Conclusion

The over-importance devoted to deterministic factors in the transformations affecting the ancient societies reflects a methodological bias rooted in the inability to evaluate the contribution of intrinsic factors. However, this inability also emanates from the exclusive approach of the techniques forging the material culture through the perspective of technopraxis. Ignoring the cultural dimension of the juvenile phase of development (technopoiesis), this premise prevents us from accounting for the changes in cosmological conceptions by analyzing ancient techniques, their mode of organization, and their use.

Identifying the processual artifacts and their symbolism enables us to apprehend this reality, the cosmological resonance of a technique, and its involvement in shaping the religious universe. By extension, it enables us to appreciate the contribution of these beliefs in the transformation of ancient cultures, even though their exact nature remains ignored. This approach allowed us to identify the indigenous origin of the Ghassulian metallurgy and its importance in the religious universe of this culture. It also clarifies the origin of the singular combination between the high inventiveness of the Ghassulian metallurgy and its disconnection from any utilitarian perspective, trade, and exchange. Introducing technopoiesis also illuminates its singular combination of a lack of specialization and division of labor with an outstanding level of mastery of this craft. It also accounts for the contrasting reality of the high level of specialization and the low level of technical complexity and inventiveness of the subsequent technopraxis phase of the development of the metallurgy at the Early Bronze Age.

The example of the Southern Levant reveals that the concept of technopoiesis may illuminate some processes inherent of the evolution of ancient societies that are generally overlooked or considered inaccessible. It stresses how the motivations driving the early development of complex techniques may be far more diversified than the universal pragmatism guiding the technopraxis development of crafts. But technopoiesis is a facultative reality, whose expression remains generally limited. It is why the driving force of the development of the Ghassulian metallurgy, once identified, cannot be extended to other crafts or other homelands of metallurgy. While technopraxis is the domain of general theories and considerations, technopoiesis remains mainly a local and transient reality. Nevertheless, this dual approach opens new perspectives of investigation of ancient history, out of the general principles and theories currently conditioning its investigation.

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Social and Economic Developments in Pre-Islamic Somalia: Introducing African-Arabian-Mediterranean Interaction

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Abstract

Although the history of Somalia is poorly studied, occasional researches show that the nation has a rich, ancient history. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the evolution of Somali society and aspects of their economy throughout circa 3000 BCE–500 CE. During 1960s–1980s, it has been postulated that the Somalis originated from the region of Omo-Tana around 1500 BCE and eventually expanded toward the north until 1400 CE. The chapter reassessed this hypothesis and further used new or less utilized data from linguistic, genetic, archeology, and ancient documentary sources. The integrated data suggest that the ancestral home of the Macro-Somali was the northern part of their Peninsula from about 3000 BCE and in due course, they expanded toward the south and west throughout 1500 BCE–500 CE. The data also explain the nature of their pre-Islamic socioeconomic system and their interaction with the Arabian-Mediterranean region upon which the Greco-Roman geographers of 150 BCE–550 CE elaborated.

Keywords: pre-Islamic Somalia, socioeconomic developments, origins, regional interaction, African-Arabian-mediterranean interaction

1. Introduction

Since 1854 European explorers were speculating that the Somali is a young nation that was preceded in the Horn of Africa by Galla (Oromo). This was mainly because they confused the term Galla with two Somali words—gaal (infidel) and gaal (camels)—although these words, with their similar structures, have different meanings. Oscar Neumann, an explorer, rejected these speculations in 1902 after he observed that the Bayso community, around lake Abaya (**Figure 1**), and his Somali workers from the north speak almost a similar language. Rather, he suggested that the existence of an archaic Somali community down to Rift Valley evidences the presence of an ancient Somali nation across the Horn [1]. Prior to these, professor Heeren made in 1833 a long comment on a mercantile ancient nation of Somali in reference to Greco-Roman records and others. Connecting that antiquity to his time, he concluded: "The

Figure 1.
The area of the study: Sanaag: region; Rendille: people; towns. All locations are approximate, the author 2021.

Somalis, a very dark race with woolly hair, neither completely Negroes nor Arabians … are friendly, well-disposed race. Their country is a natural staple for the commerce between Africa and Arabia, in it, the greatest marts are found. The Somalis send in their own vessels (for they have a sort of navigation act to carry for themselves and to lade no Arabian vessels) to Aden". Whilst this "navigation act" partly refers to a Greek statement of nearly 2000 years ago, the historian comprehended the nature of that historical socioeconomic course as he added: "This trade, therefore, has continued full a thousand years, notwithstanding all the religious and political changes which have taken place, simply because the nature of the country itself" [2]. Referring to Zaylac/ Harar-based State of Awdal, Schmidt Max almost came to a similar view in 1926 [3]. It was generally a period in which most Egyptologists have already identified northern Somalia with the kingdom of Punt in the Egyptian records [4].

The inferences of Heeren and others should have required additional work for elaboration. However, Enrico Cerulli, who got colonial assignment to update Somali history, did not feel to waste a time in identifying his Somalia with historical Somalia. Instead, he simply renewed the modern speculations in 1957. He claimed that the Somalis conquered the Horn from Galla through sustained movements from the shores of the Red Sea just for the last ten centuries. Misinterpreting again the historical

meaning of the name Zanj,[1] he added that the Somalis superseded a Bantu community in the inter-riverine region [5]. I.M. Lewis immediately embraced this idea of Cerulli [6] and remained on it [7]. Galla themselves were seen as new people for it was said that before the nineth century CE, the Somali hinterland was held by hunters, and origins of the coast residents were searched from Indonesia to Persia, Arabia, and nonexistent Cushites [8]. However, after a review of linguistic data from Bayso and Rendille and comparing them with the main Somali, Harold Fleming did not accept the idea in 1964. Rather, he proposed that the Somalis originated in pre-historic times in Bali highlands, near Bayso, where they afterward expanded into the Horn [1]. Herbert Lewis also questioned the historicity of the hypothesis of Cerulli and I.M. Lewis in 1962 [9] and invalidated it in 1966. He based his view on a revisit of East Cushitic linguistic classification presented in 1940 by M.M. Moreno and modified by Joseph Greenberg in 1963. He proposed the existence of 24 languages under "four coordinate branches" which consist of (1) Main Somali, Rendille and Bayso; (2) Afar and Saho; (3) Oromo and nine others; and (4) Hadiya and eight others. So, his conclusion was that since 21 of these 24 languages are spoken in the Hadiya-Tana belt, that region must constitute the ancestral home of the entire Eastern Cushites. Applying the so-called "least-moves principle," he then suggested since more Cushite languages and Somali segments are found therein, the main Somali and Afar-Saho must have left for the north [10].

But little was known in 1966 about the subdivisions of the East Cushitic. Many of these 24 segments were in fact dialects. In 1970s, they were reduced to three or five groups: Lowland East Cushitic (LEC), which consists of Macro-Somali, Afar-Saho, and Oromo-Konso; Highland East Cushitic (HEC), which comprises Hadiya, Sidamo, Kambata, and Darasa; Dulay; Burji; and Yaku in central Kenya. But whether Dulay or Yaku are independent branches or Dulay is a fourth branch of LEC and Yaku relates to Dulay is yet to be determined. With more knowledge about macro-Somali languages across the Omo-Tana region, an origin from that region for the Somali was sustained in more studies of the 1970s [11]. Before showing the resultant picture of the Somali differentiation in those studies, some other information within it must be reported here. In a recent observation, Cabdalla Mansuur, a linguist, grouped Dabarre and Gariirre with Bayso and Jiido, [12] which had previously been indicated by L. Martelli [13]. Garre claims the origin of Samaale. If that is the case, they emigrated from the north of Mogadishu and eventually adopted the dialect of Madalle, Aweer, and Saakuye. Madalle, a historic major tribe, underwent for the last four centuries influence of the conquering Oromo, where they are finally Oromized and are currently known as Gabra which means "subjected" or "subdued". Since this study does not accept the idea of Omo-Tana origin, it adopts the appellation "Omo-Bad" for Arbore, Dasanech, and Elmolo instead of the former "Omo-Tana West". Bad which means "sea" is the name they call the Lakes Turkana and Stefanie as Hayward has already noted [14]. The current generally accepted Somali separations and their approximate dates is thus as follows:

1. Pre-Somali [3500 Before Present (BP)]:

   a. Omo-Bad (Arbore, Dasanech, and Elmolo)

   b. Proto-Somali

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[1] From a Persian root which means 'black', the name Zanj was first used for Somalia by Claudius Ptolemy around 150 CE and Cosmas Indikopleweste in 547 CE. The Muslim geographers of the 9th–14th centuries continually employed the name for Somalia as well as East Africa.

2. Proto-Somali (3000 BP):

   a. Bali group (Bayso, Jiido, Gariirre, Dabarre)

   b. Somali II

3. Somali II (2500 BP):

   a. Rendille

   b. Somali III

4. Somali III (2000 BP):

   a. Ganane-Tana (Madalle, Aweer, Saakuye, Garre)

   b. Somali IV

5. Somali IV (1500 BP):

   a. Central Somali (alias May)

   b. Northern or Standard Somali (alias Maxaa).

With this, some scholars conceive that the idea of Omo-Tana is based on a shaky ground, and thus, it is questionable. In 1977, Ali Hersi based his thesis on analysis that date the presence of the Somalis in the Peninsula from the third millennium BCE toward [15]. Although M.N. Ali circumstantially built his thesis on the idea of Omo-Tana he, nevertheless, rejected the existence of substratum in the Peninsula [16]. He further admitted that the role of the tradition was supposed to be considered [17]. Questioning the validity of the Omo-Tana story, prof. Raphael Njoko has recently noted: "this hypothesis cannot be taken uncritically because cave paintings, dating back to 9000 BCE, found in northern Somalia, as well as studies of ancient pyramids, ruined cities, and stone walls, confirm that an ancient civilization thrived here at least from the late Paleolithic or Stone Age … along with the fact that the ancient Kingdom of Punt once flourished within Somali borders" [18]. These departures were warnings on the big gap between the hypothesis of the southern origin and the nature of Somali history.

2. Shortcomings of Omo-Tana hypothesis

Firstly, the least-move principle does not appear to be a rule that is applicable to all movements and differentiation of human societies. In a level of related nations, the original home of the Semitics was usually located in northern Arabia. But most of their languages existed or exist in Iraq-Levant and southeast Arabia. In a level of national communities, two regions brought together the largest communal varieties in the Somali Peninsula. In the south, besides the historical southerners, sections of other major tribes, such as Hawiye, Darood, Dir, and Isaaq, have resided in the inter-riverine region. But only the communities of Mirifle, Ayle, a few Digil, and some northern speakers who were later marginalized by other immigrant northerners

at the coast can consider the region as their ancestral home. In the west, the region of Jigjiga-Harar has contained a large collection of communities coming from Darood, Dir, Isaaq, Shekhaal, Hawiye, and other independent or assimilated tribes. These communities variously inhabited the region from the pre-Islamic era to the Middle Ages. But the Daaroods, who placed 10 of their 12 basic clans in the region, as well as the Dir and Isaaq communities buried their progenitors in Sanaag during 700–1100 CE. This communal distribution, therefore, does not agree on the idea of the least-moves principle. The principle is not right for the current and future assumption of locating the origin of these communities in the Jigjiga-Harar or inter-riverine region.

Secondly, there is a lack of clarity, if it is not confusion, in the available linguistic studies on whether the period of Somali presence in the south was longer than that of theirs in the north. There is no evidenced information for the primary location of the embryonic Somali and other Lowland East Cushitic languages. C. Ehret recently proposed that a Lowland East Cushitic population which he does not specify was gradually occupying from the tip of the Horn to the Harar-Bali highlands suggestively over 5000–2000 BP [19]. This is the same period as the whole East Cushites supposedly radiating out from Omo-Tana-Ganane. The two views spoil one another. In fact, there are many important linguistic developments whose context has not been explained in the historiography of the region. Examples include the fact that macro-Somali experienced at least five stages of separation while, in contrast, each one of Oromo-Konso and Afar-Saho split up only one time. The apparent explanation is the existence of historical differences in their respective population size and geographical distribution. Among the macro-Somali, there had been three main stages of losing Afroasiatic or Proto-Somali phonemes. In the earliest stage the dentals đ, and ṣ were lost. They were replaced by other letters or totally removed from the original word. In the second stage, more dentals or such as th, ẓ, z, ṭ, and d were in different times mutated or removed. They are revocable today in certain tongue practices. In the third stage, the emphatics ḥ and ʿa; and the velar q were lost by all Southern macro-Somalis and the other East Cushitics, with a few exceptions in Afar-Saho, Rendille, etc. The reason why only Northern Somali hold the explosives ḥ, ʿa, and q has not been explained. Among the macro-Somali, it was found that five linguistic areas, out of 45, are particularly closer to the Rendille of Lake Turkana. One of the five is Bari [20]. Further interesting evidence is the words like *Cal* or *ʿAl*, loft mountains, which is retained only by Bari and Rendille with Elmolo also having *ʿEl* for stone. Rendille does not live in mountainous habitats, so they call the hills *Cal* or *Ḥal*. Since the people of Bari did not come from the south, Rendille must have originated from the north.

Thirdly, there are no human and tradition remains in the south from these imagined immigrants. In mass migrations, the immigrants usually leave behind their own remnants. For example, some communities in Lower Shabelle emigrated from different regions in which they have remnants. Jiida migrated from Bali where they left behind a section of them, and that is probably the case of Dabarre of the central Ganane. Tunni emigrated from Lower Tana and they survived there by extended linguistic evidence and some human left-outs. The neighboring Garre came from the west, where the rest of the community still remains over the border of Kenya-Ethiopia. The main section of Geledi came from Harar area, where they have distant relatives, according to their tradition. At least Jiida, Garre, and Tunni left their origins due to security reasons in the late Middle Ages. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of Dir reside today in places that are far from Sanaag but still they have representatives in Sanaag and the neighboring regions. In the Omo-Tana idea, we do not have remnants but offshoots. It is difficult then to imagine how the huge family tribes of

Mirifle, Samaale, and Jabarti (Daarood) underwent such a long course of an exodus without leaving any traces.

Fourthly, the hypothesis contradicts the records and the traditions. Greco-Roman records and urban archeology regarding over 150 BCE–550 CE show that there had been a socioeconomically organized nation along the Somali coast. Some of the Greco-Roman named towns, such as Avalites, Mundu, Gaza, Pano, and Opone, are respectively identified with the historical and still enduring towns of Awtal > Awdal, Xiis, Gawa, Bina, and Ḥafūn. Additionally, these names and also *mokhar*, a Greek-mentioned tree of frankincense, are etymologically Somali. As a fall out of the Omo-Tana idea, it has alluded that during 1000–1400 CE Northern Somalia faced a sweeping sociopolitical change as the ancestors of the living northern Somalis advanced from the Shabelle Valley toward the Red Sea coast, where they eventually destroyed and replaced another unknown powerful nation ([19], pp. 243–254). This claim is totally against the history of the region. Why that is not indicated by nearly the 30 Muslim historians who made comments on the region across the nineth-fifteenth centuries? These documentary sources as well as archaeology and the distribution of the known ancestral tombs together with the narratives about social interactions and movements disagree with the idea of Omo-Tana origin. They show that throughout the eighth to fourteenth centuries the north experienced the largest Somali-driven social, economic, and political developments in the known history of Somalia. The northerners in question already established themselves along the Ḥamar-Zaylac region during the period in question [21].

With these steady developments in Somalia, ethnic conflict in other areas in the Horn were reported. Ibn Ḥawqal in 960s, and other sources, noted that the Christian Abyssinians were conquered by a neighboring people [22]. Ibn Said stated in 1370s that a people called Damdam overran the Southern Nubian regions in the early twelfth century [23]. Again ibn Said, al-Masʿudi 935 [24] and al-ʿUmari 1345 [25] mentioned movements of the Amhara Abyssinians from Tigrey to Shawa by continually changing their centers. If this idea would then be correct, we would have some information about a strong nation, which the Somalis destroyed just 600 years ago. Additionally, such a change would unequivocally have had ethnical, linguistic, and material relics, which do not exist at all. This lack of any sign of substratum and the steady information on the same nation is an adequate explanation for existence of a sustained socioeconomic system even in the pre-Islamic era. The Somali traditions further provide information about the older Somali communities of which the largest one was Tiirri, a pre-Islamic tribe. Tiirri means "people of pillars," as the construction of the numerous cairns in the region is attributed to them. The cairns are themselves called *Taallo-Tiirriyaat,* which means monuments of Tiirri ([21], pp. 261–265). Stories of different features relate to aspects of the power of the Tiirri generation. These traditions also state that the Tiirri were undergoing a marginalization process during the Middle Ages when the current northerners were in expansion. The Tiirri are usually compared with the Madalle of the south.

Finally, the hypothesis does not provide any reason for the supposed mass migration. It is true that almost only one dialect is spoken in the north. But there is no explanation why the ancestors of over 80% of the Somali population emptied their supposed land, south of the Shabelle River, and their descendants ended up in the arid terrain toward the north of Shabelle without apparent economic and sociopolitical reasons. The hypothesis absolutely failed to comprehend the historical socioeconomic experience of Northern Somali.

3. The genetic factor

The issue of Somali origin is brought almost to conclusive status by a genetic study published in 2005, which has found that Somali is an ancient, homogenous nation. The scientists genotyped markers on the Y chromosome in 201 male Somalis in Denmark and also considered data from other 23 Somalis from places, including Norway. They found that a special type of gene marker, E3b1, cluster *y,* defines the Somalis. Sample findings from other investigations on Y chromosome markers in diverse populations that are relevant to the Somali case were compared to the finds from the Somali samples. While the majority of Y chromosome genotypes observed in populations of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia belong to haplogroup E3b1 M78, its frequency in the studied Somali population is 77.6%, a unique high majority among the Somalis. Further, a specific branch of it (E3b1, cluster *y,*) uniquely characterizes the Somalis with a frequency of 75.1%. Comparatively, the frequency of this branch in the other populations of E3b1 lineages was found as follows: the Oromos in the neighborhood of the Somalis (35.9%), Amharas (22.9%), mixed Ethiopians (22.4%), Egyptians (20.0%), Sudanese (17.5%), Iraqis (6.3%), Northern Africans (6.1%), the highest frequency in southern Europeans (5.1%), Omanis (1.7%), Turks (1.7%), and various Sub-Saharan Africans (0.7% and lower).

Hence, among the non-Somalis, the highest frequency of E3b1, cluster *y,* was found in the Oromos, particularly those geographically relate to the Somalis and eventually assimilated sizeable Somalis during the last four centuries, with Oromo are the closest Somali relatives. These Oromos are followed at a lower rate by the other peoples of the Horn such as various Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Kenyans. And even it is almost absent in the populations outside this region of Northeast Africa. Moreover, the other three clusters of haplogroup E3b1, which were found in Arabs, North and Northeast Africans, and Europeans were found only in few Somalis and none of Oromos. Hypothetically, the E3b1, cluster *y* lineage, originated in Northeast Africa around 9600 years ago. However, it was estimated that the lineage was introduced to the Somali around 5000 years ago with later expansion. Generally, 81.1% of the Somalis, including 75.1% E3b1, cluster *y*, belong to major clade E3b. Most of the remaining Somalis consist of 15.0% from two different Eurasian lineages; 3.0% from three different Sub-Saharan African haplogroups; and less than 2.0% from the Northwest African E3b2 genotype. The interpretation of these genetic findings was the existence of extremely localized, coherent Somali lineage [26].

A new study focusing on medical genomics almost agrees with that of 2005. The researchers analyzed nearly 900,000 genomic markers from 95 unrelated individual Somalis of whom 91 were born in the NE Puntland State of Somalia. They found that their "data reveal a remarkably homogenous Somali population" who share their ancient origin with the Cushitic and Semitic-speaking Ethiopians as well as the populations of the Middle East. Probably due to the difference in the genetic focus between the two studies, one for anthropology and the other on medical genomics, ancestry components in the Somali population were shown differently. The later found that nearly 60% of Horn of Africa and 40% of West Eurasian gene markers among the Somalis. The West Eurasian components consist of 25% Near East and 15% North Africa. The new researchers tend to suggest ethnographic marching in the finds of the two studies. Their finds in the gene markers are common among the subjects which further determined the homogenous aspect of the Somalis [27]. In agreement with linguistic genetics, these chromosomal findings thus eliminate any perspective of substratum in the Somali Peninsula as both types of genetics determine the extent of one society's contact with other societies.

4. Linguistics and socioeconomic developments

On the basis of linguistic comparisons, and to some extent archaeological and botanical accounts, the development of food production in the Horn has been rooted in grain cultivation and animal adoption that took place around 9000 BP. Archaeologically, the cultivation was itself developed from an intensive collection of wild grains, which date back to 15000 BP and earlier in the Nile valley over the Sudanese-Egyptian border. Interrelated crop collection was generally practiced in the broad region of North and Northeast Africa together with Near East or Fertile Crescent. Still Northeast Africa, particularly that part of the Nile Valley, has signaled to be the region in which grass collecting was first invented and its eventual spread occurred. As they could consist of Sorghum, barley, wheat, *daafi* or teff, eleusine, chickpea, and *bun* or coffee, the types of these crops were naturally subject to their respective climatical geography. It has been estimated that the African side of the Red Sea had a climate of Mediterranean winter rainfall during the early period of crop collection. The cultivation of these crops is attributed to the rise of the Afroasiatic societies as a tool that enabled them to expand over a great part of Africa and the Near East. The timespan of Proto-Cushitic separation, as a branch of the Afroasiatic was estimated to be 7000–9000 BP [28]. The nature of those developments led some researchers to postulate that the Horn of Africa is one of two primary candidates for being the ancestral home of the Afroasiatic, with another one being Iraq-levant area [29]. In the Horn, the domestication of at least the sorghum, daafi, and chickpeas and animal species were attributed to the Cushites, while the eleusine was related to the Omotic. But was this domestication invented in the Horn or elsewhere?

Researchers have recognized three stages of crop and animal domestication. (a) Independent domestication of indigenous crops and animals. For example, wheat, pea, and olive were indigenously domesticated in the Near East around 11,500 BP, while sheep and goat were tamed about 10,000 BP. (b) Importing the idea of domestication from primary or secondary origin. For instance, domestication of the wheat in Egypt and the rest of Northeast Africa, and chickpeas in the Somali region, is regarded to be imported from the Near East because of the date of domestication and presence of the indigenous wild plant in the Fertile Crescent. (c) The learned domestication could trigger the domestication of indigenous food producers [30]. For example, the adoption of some food producers such as sorghum and cattle may led the adoption of others such as barley and camels, which have themselves been raised in the Horn for thousands of years. But it is not adequately known if the earliest ancestors of Cushitics and Omotic invented their domestication or if they modeled the idea from a former culture of domestication that they themselves imported from the Near East or the lower Nile Valley. Even it is not known if those ancestors had always been native Africans or if they swept the Horn from Levant. However, in 1951, Nikolai Vavilov considered Somalia and the rest of the Horn as one of the world's independent centers of agricultural development. As an agronomist, he based his view on the existence of 38 indigenous species of grain crops, vegetables, oil plants, spices, and stimulants in the Horn [31].

The speakers of the first-known speeches in the Horn were not apparently waiting always for external help in modeling how to use every available resource. The following economic lexical comparisons may give us a good hint and also reduce the lag of our archaeological knowledge of the Somali region as a part of the evidence package for exploring the time and location of the evolution of Somali nationhood. I have found here a useful tool to reproduce most of the lexical inventory that was compiled by Christopher Ehret (1979). I omitted a few of his lexemes due to less clarity for the

purpose. But more many words are taken from Somali, Arabic, and Egyptian. A few words are also added to the other ECs, SCs, NC (Beja or Buja), and Central Cushitic (Agaw), but non to the Chadic. In total, more than 52 lexemes are compared of which 18 relate to grain production, 18 regard animal adoption, 8 shows the use of metal. The last eight words suggest that the Proto EC, at least, shared some practices of clothing, housing, and village formation with the Egyptians and some Semitics.[2]

1. Ber (farm): Somali *beer*; SC: Rift *baar* (grain); Egyptian *pert* (crop)

2. Adb (farmland): Somali *adab*; Egyptian *adb*

3. Abur (cultivate): Cushitic: Somali *abuur*; HEC: *abuurto*; Agaw, *baruw*; S Cushitic: Alagwa *burubure* (cultivation ground)

4. Harqot (plough): EC: Hadiya and Kambata *harqota* (ox), Oromo *harkot*, Somali *harqot* (qotti: farmer), Saho *aro'ut*[3]

5. qambar (yoke): EC: Sidamo *qambari*, Oromo *kambari*, Somali *qambari*; Agaw: Chamira *qamara*

6. Nw (to plough): Agaw *nuw*; Beja *niu*

7. 'ar (cultivate): Somali *'arra* (soil, land); Egyptian *arit* (plough); Arabic ḥ*arth* (cultivate)

8. Sarn (wheat): Cushitic: Somali *sareen* (also soor), Afar-Saho *sareen*, Hadiya *serat* (sorghum), Beja *seram* (barley); Egyptian *sart* (wheat, barley)

9. masanga (sorghum): Cushitic: EC: Somali *masango*, Oromo *misinga*, Hadiya *masinka*, Duley masinka; S Cushitic *musange* (grain); Omotic (Kafa) *masingo*

10. dr (sorghum): Chadic: Hausa *dawa*, Dira dawro (pennisetum), Matkam dawn; Arabic *darra*; Omotic: Chara *dara*; Cushitic: Afar *daro* (grain)

11. Daaf: LEC: *daafi*, Somali also *dheef* (food); Agaw taf, tab; Egyptioan: *dfa* (food); Omotic: Gimira *tempo*, Kafa *teppo* (wheat); Ethiopic *teff*; Chadic: *def* (porridge); Arabic: Ḥadramawt ṭ*ahaf* (local grain).

12. Baad (food): Somali *baad*; Egyptian *pat*

13. bur (flour): Arabic *bur*; Somali *bur*; Agaw: Chamira *bura* (grits); Chadic: Bachama burey (gruel)

14. bd (flour): Cushitic: Somali *budo* (flour), Oromo-Konso *budiina* (bread); Chadic: Bole *budu* (flour); {the root is apparently from Arabic bath, and Somali buđo, biđi, also bus (powder, dust)}

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[2] My Egyptian sources include [32, 33].

[3] Harqot probably stems from two EC words: har or 'arra (soil, land) and qot (digging). So, the combination become harqot (field-ploughing).

15. hr (grain): Cushitic: Beja *harro* (sorghum), *Agaw ar* (sorghum), Somali *shura* (porridge); Chadic: Bura *vari*, Sura *war*, Hwona *yara* (gruel)

16. kbz (bread): Semitic *khubz*; Somali *kimis/kimiz*; Egyptian *kebes* (cultivate, a sack for cereals)

17. Fut (soap, flour): LEC: *fuut/futa*, Bega *futi*; Chadic: Banana *futa*, Ngizima *epta* (flour)

18. Mooye (wooden mill for grain): Somali *mooye*, Oromo *mooye*, Afar-Saho *motoka*

The Proto-Cushitic widely knew the terms for farm, cultivate, and plow. They shared some of them with the Egyptians and in less cases with the Semitics. These Cushitics were had widely been consuming, at one place or another, sorghum, *daafi* (teff), barley, and wheat with knowledge of processing these cereals into a form of flour, porridge, or bread.[4] Although the term Masanga for sorghum was dominant among the Cushitics, it was elsewhere called dar, har, etc. It appears that the Proto-Cushitic domesticated the *daafi* and were part of the domestication of the sorghum. In calibrated evidence, sorghum was culti-vated by 7000 BP in Sahel, a land strip from central Sudan to Senegal ([30], pp. 98–100). By calibrated evidence also, it was grown by 6000 BP near Khartoum in central Sudan [34]. Generally, the use of the names of these four cereals was flexible among the Cushitic, Omotic, Chadic, Egyptian, and Semitic societies. For example, the term *sar*n or *sart* was used for wheat, barley, and sorghum by different societies. Interchanging the names of these crops may suggest that they were adopted one after the other within several centuries so when a society expe-rienced an existence of a new product, they gave it a name to which they were already familiar. The eighteen words used here for the agricultural production only *ar* and *har* for sorghum were not identified in Somali. In the Eastern Horn, the high-altitude zone of Hargeysa-Harar-Bali is a candidate for early cultivation of *daafi*, wheat, and barley, and even medieval times for the barley. Since the lexemes for cattle, goat, sheep, and donkey were common among the Cushitic and they were shared by at least two other Afroasiatic branches, it is positive that the Proto-Cushitic were breeding these animals.

19. Lo' (cattle): Cushitic Somali *lo'*; Afar *la*; Oromo *loa*; Werezi *lo'o* (cow); Chadic: Mubi la; Semitic Akkadian lu (bul)

20. Sa' (cow): all EC: Somali *sa'* or *se*; Burji *se*; Beja *sa/sha*; Chadic: Hausa *sa*

21. Ywo (bull): S Cushitic *yawo*; NC (Beja) *yo*; Egyptian *yow* (cow)

22. 'oot (livestock): Somali *'oot*; Egyptian *'ot*

23. Soof/m (going to graze): Somali *soof*; Arabic *soom*

24. Raa' (sheepherding): Somali *raa'*; Arabic *raa'*

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[4] Al'Umari (*Masalik,49*) stated in 1340s that the Somali and other ECs were cultivating daafi and were also consuming bur. This indicates the indigenous root of the name *daafi* in the Horn.

25. har (donkey): Cushitic: Oromo *hare*, Saho *hera*; Agaw (Bilin) *huwer*; Dahalo (SC) *hella* (zebra); Semitic: *hamir*; thus, *damer* (Somali) may show a transition between Semitic and Cushitic.

26. Ar (goat/sheep): Cushitic: Somali *ari* (goat and sheep); Semitic: Southeast Arabian Languages *erin*, etc. (goat and/or sheep), Arabic *aram*, *ri'am* (white deer); LEC *ri'* (goat)

27. 'anz (young goat): Somali *'enzan* or *'eesan*; Arabi *'anz*, Akkadian *'anzan*

28. org (he-goat): Cushitic: Somali *orgi*, Oromo *orge*, Konso *orket*, Werezi *orke*; Burji *yirga*; Yaku *org* (male giraffe); Beja *argin* (ram); South Cushitic *ogur*; Somali *agoor* (young he-camel)

29. Sanga: Cushitic: Somali and Afar *sange* (castrated stallion or he-goat), Oromo *sanga* (ox); South Cushitic *sanga*

30. Ida (sheep, plural): Cushitic: Somali *ido*, Afar *ida*; (Sumerian: *udu)*

31. La (sheep, singular): Cushitic (LEC): *la*; South Cushitic *la* (he-goat);

32. beg (sheep): Cushitic: Agaw *bega*; Chadic: Fali *bega*; Omotic: Kafa *baggo*

33. Rangena (ewe lamb): Beja *rangana*; South Cushitic *rangina*

34. Yab (goat kid): Egyptian *yb* (kid); Beja ab (kid); South Cushitic *af* (goat)

35. Gamal (camel): Semitic: *gamal*; LEC: *gaal < gamal*

36. Awr (he-camel, bull): Somali *awr*, Afar *awr* (bull); Arabic *thawr* (bull)

37. Bir (steal): LEC: *bir* (Oromo lost bir and borrowed sibiil from Duley); Semitic (N and W) *brzl*; (Sumerian *an-bar)*

38. Tum (metallurgy): all Lowland East Cushitic *tum*; Werezi of Duley *tuu'*

39. Toor (dagger): Somali *toori*, Yaku *toor*; S Cushitic: Mbugu *toora*; Omotic groups toora

40. Bilawe (dagger): macro-Somali *bilaawe*, Konso *bilaawa*, Oromo *bilaa*, Afar *balade*

41. Waram (spear): Somali *waram > waran* (Bayso *jeren*), Oromo *waran*, Konso *worana*, Werezi *woran*, Afar *maḥadha* (Somali *maḥaad*: long spike for weaving mattress, etc.)

42. Samay (waram grip): Somali *samay*, Duley *samay*, Afar *soomaya*

43. Gudum (axe): Somali *gudum > gudin*, Afar *gudma*; Arabic *qaduma;* but Konso *erka*, Burji *irka* or *yirgi;* Omotic *yere* or *yergi*

44. Gud (cut by knife): Somali *gud*, *guz/gus*, Omotic: Maji *kudz/khudz*

45. Dhis (build): Somali *dhis*, Afar *dhis*, Konso *dhis* (farm), Oromo *dhis* (extend)

46. Min or man (house): almost all E Cushitic *min* or *man*; Arabic *manzil* also maskan from sakan, Somali sugan (settled)

47. Ghurf (hause): Somali *guri* (house), *guur* (moving house), *gurbi* (picking up house stuff); Arabic *ghurfa* (room), *ghurf* (picking up house stuff)

48. Hoy/hu (house/cloth): Somali *hoy* (house, living environment), Egyptian *ho* (living environment), also Somali *hu'* (clothes), Oromo-Konso *u'* (clothes)

49. Ham (water or milk vessel): Somali *ham* > *han*; Egyptian *hm*

50. makhr/bakhr (grain storage): Somali bakhar; Egyptian mkhr (grain storage)

51. Hap/hab (system, order): Somali hab < hap?; Egyptian hp[5]

52. Wat/wad (drive, road): Somali wat/*wad* (drive), *wado* (road); Egyptian wat/*wad* (drive)

In addition to the above-shown economic comparison, I also treated 168 core words, which were compiled by Paul Black as a cognate comparison for 14 EC languages, which consist of the following: (a) Six macro Somali members, namely main Somali, Rendille, Bayso, Dasanech, Arbore, and Elmolo; (b) Four Oromo-Konso languages, namely Boran Oromo, main Konso and two dialects that relate to it; (c) Afar-Saho, (d) Gwada: a member of macro Dullay; and (e) Hadiya: a member of HEC. The aim was to recognize from the Black collection the vocabularies that can fit for being Afroasiatic by comparing with non-Cushitic Afroasiatic languages without any sign of borrowing. Arabic was the one fully available to me. However, I also used what survived from the Egyptian. In total, there are 52 words that can be considered as Afroasiatic cognates. Since details of the data are available in Black's work, and I documented the details of this consideration elsewhere,[6] I only list here those 52 words in English as follows: All, back, breast, call, catch, die, dog, dust, earth, eat, fall, far, finger, go, grass, green, hair, he, hear, hit, I, kill, know, meat, milk, moon, mountain, mouth, neck, nose, pull, red, river, road, scratch, see, seven, sing, sky, smoke, sun, tail, three, throw, tie, two, water, we, what, who, wipe, and you. This is 30% of the Black's 168 core words.

In detail, the Somali-Egyptian cognates contain: all, dog, hair, nose, moon, river, road, sky, sing, sun, tie, and water. They share with the Arabic three of these (all, nose, and water). So, the Somali-Arabic cognates are 43 words, which are 25% of the 168. Almost all EC share with the Arabic 10 words, for example, catch, he, I, nose, scratch, seven, three, we, who, and you. But either Afar-Saho or Oromo-Konso can add to them eight more words: far, grass, mouth, red, see, sun, tie, and what. The non-Somali LEC, thus shares with the Arabic 18 of the 43 lexemes of the Somali-Arabic cognation. Gawada of Duley also adds at least one word (call).

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[5] Examples of this phoneme change may include: Egyptian ḥapi (river), Somali wabi (river), but also Arabic wadi.

[6] Black [35]; Hussein [36].

The big difference between the Somali and other EC for their cognation with the Arabic and Egyptian can be due to knowledge bias since the present author can more ascertain the Somali than the other Cushitic. However, this ascertainment may temporarily represent the EC for indication of what can be expected the cognation between the Cushitic and the two other languages. Pre-Islamic Arab loan words may disguise as cognates but even this is not favorable for southern origin since the Northerners were not anyway from the south. A new study which is to be revised reveals that the relationship between Somali and Arabic is far deeper than that usually expected in the lexical, phonological, morphological, and grammar comparisons. The Somali-Egyptian cognation is also at in unexpected level. For instance, why is Somali the only language of the Cushitic that shares with the Egyptian the word "dog" (Somali *ay*, Egyptian *ayu*)? All other LECs call the animal "karre," a word that is not found in the main Somali. But this is one example among many [37]. Taking the economic and Black lexemes together, it is clear that a substratum does not exist within Somali. The Somali language did not lose contact with Arabic and Egyptian as it was not exposed to antedate or stronger culture. Residence in a wide peninsula and within the interior border surrounded by relatives helped it to sustain a relative closeness to Proto-Afroasiatic.

5. Social development in surface archaeology: rock art link

Some characters require here more comments because of their economic importance. Mostly they appear on rock art, a widespread ancient pastoralism-oriented industry (**Figure 2**). Although the discoveries are increasing, around 80 rock art sites have so far been marked across the Somali Peninsula. The rock art and the hundreds of thousands of cairns must have been built by the same people during the same period. The pattern of their distribution and the quality of both suggest that they were based in the northern part of the Peninsula. The most up-to-date researches on the rock-art culture also suggest

Figure 2.
A Tiirri cairn on a hill, 30 km S of Garowe, with 58 m circumference, and 4.6 m high, photographer Cabdul-khaliq Said Shidad.

Figure 3.
Apparently late Tiirri or early Islamic stone slabs of the tomb in Sallaxley, southern suburban of Garowe, with an outside wall of 94 m circumference and 30 cm height. The inside tomb is 8 m east-west and 6 m north-south.

that the base was in the north [38]. The creators of that culture are viewed as a people of "advanced, sophisticated, and affluent culture consistent with a more settled society". They took time to adorn their cattle with ceremonial attire and ornaments fashioned from artistic metal or semimetal objects. Their specialized craftsmen produced a high-quality of art in their paintings and drawings. Despite the effects of age, human activities, weather decomposition, and other natural conditions, the quality of their work endured thousands of years and retained its clear designs and solid colors ([18], pp. 28–29). Some cairns required, in fact, many years to be completed (**Figures 2** and **3**).

Bakhar or **mahkar**: It appears that a system of underground structures that were designed to preserve the freshness of harvested grains existed both in Somalia and ancient Egypt. The possible similarity of *bakhar* in Somalia and *mkhr* in Egypt is supported by the similarity of this reservation technique. So, the technique and the terms may carry similar economic information. The technique regards the augmentation of grain consumption. The grains are stored in underground construction or in another storing device for two main purposes: saving a portion of the harvest for long-term consumption in case the agricultural production fails; preserving the freshness of the grain by keeping them within their ears. In Egypt, the practice was mentioned in a story that relates to the experience of Joseph, son of Jacob, in Egypt about 3800 years ago. In that Qur'anic story, we are told that the Egyptians were storing some of their harvests within their ears for long-term consumption.[7] The existence of the practice is affirmed by archeology. It shows that even the pre-dynastic Egyptians were storing the surplus of their harvests in large clay bins [39]. So at the time of Joseph, the Egyptians probably developed an underground or overground food storing system named *makhar*. Similarly, the Somalis adopted an ancient system of underground grain storehouse for similar aims. The farmers dig a 3 to 5-meter hole, quadratic or semi-quadratic, to reserve some of the newly harvested grains, and probably the incense, within their ears and a convenient bag for long-term consumption. The system is called *Bakhar,* or *Bakar*, Bakhar > Bakar. The similarities in the name, the purpose, and the technique in the two countries may represent self-explaining evidence for the same root as we also noted here other economic terms that the Cushitic, particularly the Somali, share with the Egyptians (**Figure 4**).

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[7] Qur'an, 12: 47, 48, 55.

Figure 4.
Nearly 100 superimposed engravings in Xuunshaale rock art site consisting of humans, humped and humpless oxen, camels, horses, giraffes, and a goat. The wall is 12 m horizontal long, but its height varies from 2 m to 30 cm, the author 2023.

The toor (dagger, saber): Toori which is also called Billaawe, Amley, and Golxob was found to have a special history. As we noted above, the origins of the item trace back linguistically to Proto-Cushitic. Although a variety of it has historically been made and worn with the belt by Yemenis and Afars, it has been observed that the Somali variety is a unique, indigenous model. An ancient brand of it was painted on a cave wall near Buur Haybe to the west of Mogadishu. Vinigi Grottanelli observes: "The Somali … have long had, and still retain, a typical cutting weapon, a straight-bladed dagger of a design peculiar to them alone. That this weapon is traditionally old among them, is proved by the ancient Somali rock-engravings … which faithfully reproduce the unmistakable shape of their hilts and straight double-edged blades". When later this tool was developed, he further explains, "the Somali departed so unwillingly from this particular type [and] remained faithful to the same model, merely making the blade longer" [40]. It was identified with the dagger that was worn at the belt by the Punt king, which was shown on the Deir-el-Bahri wall paintings after the Puntites received an Egyptian naval mission from queen Hatshepsut ([15], pp. 32–33).

The cattle: The role of the oxen was very historic in the Somali culture as cattle herding was attached to special importance. Some observers suggest that the pre-historic ancestors of the Somalis were in regard of "privileged relationship" with the oxen. This is made clear by numerous rock art sites. The oxen were the most important species among the animals that were painted or incised on the walls of the caves. The rock art generally suggests that the rearing of the humpless oxen date back to 3000 BCE with humped oxen replacing them around 500 BCE ([38], pp. 19, 22–24). But, linguistically, we have seen that cattle herding was adopted long before that date in the Horn.

The camel: Nearly half of the camels around the world are owned by the Somalis [41]. Despite their apparent antiquity, the date of raising camels in Somalia is yet

to be known. It has been postulated that the camel was introduced to Somalia from Arabia. In recent investigations on a vast area of Northwest Arabia, pictures of live-size camels are assigned up to 5000 years ago [42]. However, growing evidence suggest that the camel domestication time difference in Arabia and Somalia was relatively insignificant. In both regions, camels were engraved on many rock art sites in a wide area. In Somalia, most of the known camels were painted in historic times. Only two single camels in two different sites can be considered as dating to pre-historic times for they are found with hump-less cattle. A live-size camel was observed among different herds of well-shaped cattle in the Karin-Heegan rock art site to the west of Boosaaso [43]. In the Xuunshaale site, about 300 km to the SW of Karin-Heegan, a determined artist managed to carve at least one camel on a standing wall of a huge basalt in a less accessible area of fallen basalts. It appears that it was engraved at the time of incising the hump-less cattle on the rock of the floor (**Figure 5**).

Linguistically, we have mentioned above a few Arabic-LEC cognates, *gamal* and *awr*. But there are many other words for that cognation. Examples include *darr* (Arabic darrat, Somali darartay): a moment of the highest or most fresh milk production by a
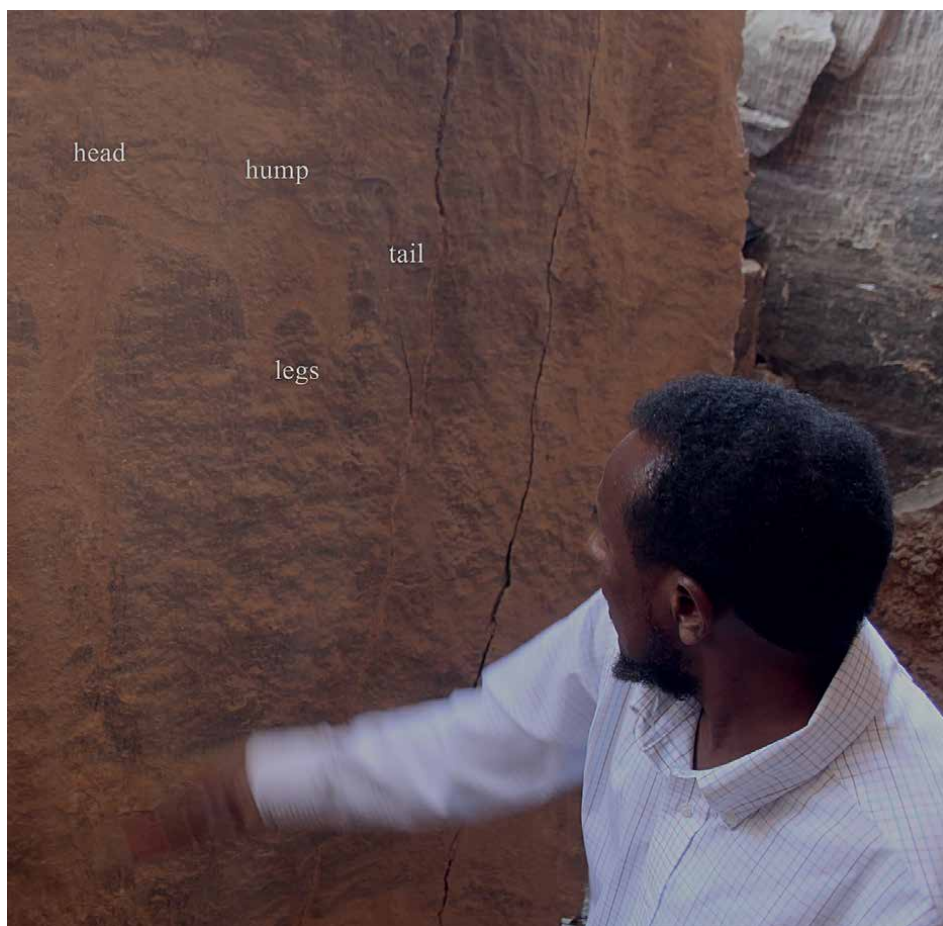

Figure 5.
Incised camel, probably prehistoric, on a hidden separate boulder of the Xuunshaale rock art site. The camel's vertical height is 20.3 cm with a horizontal width of 40.4 cm, the author 2023.

lactating animal after a rainfall; *ram* (Arabic raamat, Somali reemtay): the welcoming voice of a she-camel when her baby is to suckle; *dowd* (Arabic đowd, Somali dowd): preventing animals from proceeding to water or pasture; and *doh* (both languages): a voice of directing the move of a grown he-camel. Bernd Heine also shows that there is almost no difference in the camel terminology of Rendille and the main Somali who split up about 2300 BP [44]. What appears here is that the Proto-EC were familiar with the camel but it was widely adopted during the early first millennium BCE. The rock art also suggests that it was that time when camels replaced cattle for importance. After all, some of our economic lexemes should have been exchanged through ancient trade networks.

6. Developments of external trade

It has been noted that the international trade in Somalia dates back nearly 5000 years ago with different nations participating in that trade at different times. They seemingly or certainly include Arabs, Egyptians, Sumero-Akkadians, Phoenicians, and Israelites, followed by Persians and Indians, and Greeks and Romans. As Heeren has indicated, the type of products of the country, its location, and its trade-oriented culture sustained the popularity of the Somali market. Among these nations, ancient Egypt is seen as the one that made the first and largest involvement. But the evidence is mostly indirect as it is based on the apparent location of the Land of Punt in the Egyptian records. For about the last 150 years, most of Egyptologists, and historians, sustained to identify Punt with Northern Somalia because of its unique fit for being the home of rare products that the Egyptians badly demanded [45]. The Puntite factor in Egyptian history may exist since the pre-dynastic period, but the recorded data for trading with Punt approximately covered throughout 4570–3150 BP, the greatest era in the history of ancient Egypt. The traditional belief that the Egyptians were sailing for Punt through Marsa Gawassis near the western end of the Red Sea, is now archaeologically confirmed. Well-preserved remains of seagoing ships and harbor installations, which include ancient rigging ropes of large ships, their timbers, and anchors were recently excavated from the Marsa Gawassis. The archaeologically discovered materials date back to the periods of a number of Pharaonic sovereigns. The finds also include forty boxes of ship cargo of which some were inscribed with the name of Pharaoh [Amenemhat IV of about 3800 years ago], and with "wonderful things from Punt" [46].

Given the religious factor in the trade of the Egyptians, and other Near-Eastern societies, Puntite supplies were not demanded only for commercial needs but also for religious satisfaction as the Egyptians also called Punt the "land of gods". This is supported by receiving determinedly from Punt the products that were found in Egypt or the nearby countries such as gold, dogs, and ebony. It is also marked by calling those products collectively "wonderful things from Punt". Among those things, myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon were their primary imports from Punt. Since different Egyptian generations were mentioning Punt throughout nearly two millennia, it is possible that different places in Northeast Africa were occasionally called Punt as generalization and specification of ancient names were usual in the region. However, there was certainly Punt proper, which had always been defined by its supplies and the character of being a spiritual symbol for the Egyptians. One of the earliest and most detailed imports from Punt was brought by a mission sent by Pharaoh Saḥure (2476–2490 BP) of the new Kingdom. Incense was the main part of the Cargo brought back by the mission which consists of 80,000 aromatic units, 6000 gold and silver

units, and a lot of ebony woods, with first Puntite Pictures ([4], pp. 25–26). Nearly after ten centuries, the imports were still the same. The detailed expedition dispatched by Queen Hatshepsut around 3500 BP, whose destination was reckoned to be shortly before Qarfuuna (Guardafui or Cape of Aromatics), also brought back from Punt various kinds of myrrh, incense, gold, ebony, eye cosmetic, monkeys, dogs, and skins of leopards [47].

Incense (from Latin incendere, to burn or kindle) has the same literal meaning as the term perfume, which is the aroma yielded by odoriferous substances with smoke when burned. The two genuine and best-known types of incense are frankincense and myrrh. Both are fragment gum resin, but there is a difference between their colors and size. Frankincense is usually larger or elongate longer within a color of mostly looks like wheat, while myrrh is mainly brown.[8] Using it at temple rituals and funerals, incense trees were considered holy plants among the Near-Eastern and Mediterranean societies from time immemorial and their resin could be the most precious vegetative product [48]. From about 4600 BP, incense was one of the most common subjects mentioned in the Egyptian records and pictured in temples and tombs. Incense and burners have also been found in some graves [49]. Unlike the incense, the animals from Punt mostly figure in the records by 3500 BP with the earliest probable date being 3800s. The author of Periplus nearly 2000 years ago, and other Greco-Roman geographers before and after him, stated that the northern Somalia and southeast Arabia were the only regions that were producing the incense. Even the other parts of Somalia and the neighboring regions such as Eritrea were not exporting or producing the incense in question [50]. Herodotus around 450 BCE reported even an organized and informed Sudanese kingdom that was situated in interior, midway region between the coast and the Nile and Eritrea and Egypt, which was rich in gold but did not otherwise know about existence and use of incense [51]. The last port that was exporting any amount of incense was Zaylac.

The historical material discoveries within the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamen (c. 3330 BP) in 1922, provided an explanation for the origin of the Egyptian imported incense. There was an interesting find among what was excavated there. The air of the tomb was still smelling off, a pleasant odor at the time of the excavation because of frankincense from Punt. This Puntite incense was later examined and described by A. Lucas, a chemist, who found that it is the variety that grows in Somalia and not any other place in Africa ([49], pp. 91–93). Varieties of these incense also grow in Arabia. A tradition in Arabia holds that *al-khowjari* of South Oman can be compared with the *Meydi* of Somalia as the best type of incense in the two regions. But there is still a qualitative difference between the Somali and Arabian products. It is generally observed that "the Somali frankincense were often superior to the Arabian". The Somali one was seen as a native true one (Boswellia neglecta) while the Arabian variety (Boswellia serrata, etc.) was considered as a later cultivation. The incense grown in both regions was addressed in the Periplus. Its author attested that the type produced in the tip of the Somali Peninsula, the Qarfuuna region, was "in great quantity and of the best grade". The Arabians were themselves importing Somali incense to deliver to the eastern Mediterranean ([48], pp. 25–27, 33–35, 80).

As to the cinnamon, while its primary source, Southeast Asia or Somalia, is debatable, Somalia was otherwise a great market for its distribution. This was made clear

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[8] In Somalia, frankincense is produced by boswellia or *geed-quwaax* (trees of sweetness because of the taste of juice in their trunk). Myrrh is produced by cassia or g*eed-qodxeed* (thorny trees). The former consists of about 13 species, while the latter contain 11 species and their resin is mostly edible.

by the Egyptians and later Mediterranean civilizations. Israelites and Greco-Roman writers talked about its source for their region. These civilizations used it as incense and food flavor. In Queen Hatshepsut's inscriptions, it was one of the wonderful things of Punt. Herodotus knew that it was the region of Gulf of Aden that produces or exports the incense and cinnamon. Probably combining Arabia and Somalia as the source of the products, he mentioned Arabia since the Arabians were delivering them to the eastern Mediterranean. His statement on the region as "the last of inhabited lands towards the south" was usually reference to the both sides of that Gulf. He gave another hint for the then Somali role in the trade of the Sinnamon. He said that the Arabs did not tell its origin but some "relate that it comes from the country in which Dionysus was brought up". Dionysus was an Egyptian idol which was also adopted by the Greeks ([51], pp. 148, 276, 278) who began to reside in Egypt by 600 and conquered it in 332 BCE. Since that country was related to Egyptian culture, Arabia, Aromatics, and the extremities of the greater *Aethiopia* and the Southern Sea which is certainly the Gulf of Aden, that country must have been Somalia.

Dioscorides says that it grows in Arabia and Somalia, but he adds that "The cinnamon has many names, from the different places where it grows. But the best sort is that which is like the cassia of Mosyllum, and this cinnamon is called Mosyllitic, as well as the cassia" ([48], pp. 82–83). Mosyllum was an important trading city, probably Ceelaayo or Butiyaalo in the area of Boosaaso. Pliny, a Roman Scholar (d. 79 CE) described Mosyllum as "the port of export for cinnamon". He adds that the natives of the region were bringing it to Yemen in large amount [52]. Writing around 24 BCE Strabo, another Roman, and in Periplus, cinnamon was depicted as a specialty of Somalia and is located in the same places as those of the incense. Strabo described the inland of Qarfuuna as the myrrh, frankincense, and "the cinnamon country". This inland was well familiar to the Greeks as they gave its localities Greek names. Periplus addressed its varying grades in quality or quantity. While Berbera was exporting "the harder cinnamon", from Mosyllum, "there are shipped … a great quantity of cinnamon, so that this market-town requires ships of larger size"; and also, Caluula area "produces incense of fine quality". Beyond it, Tabai, "the port of spice trade … produces cinnamon, *gizir, asypha*, aroma, *magla, moto*, and frankincense," and in Xaafuun "the greatest quantity of cinnamon is produced." The region itself was called *regio Aromatifera* or *cinnamomifera* ([48], pp. 25-27, 82-83, 86). Here, no distinction was made between cinnamon and cassia (and even spices) which both belong to laurel tree family.

The apparent connection here is that the Greco-Roman Cape of Aromatics or Spices and Arabian *Barr Khaza'in* or country of treasuries is identical with the Egyptian *Kheto Anti*, aromatic terraces. As the finding from Tutankhamen's tomb accords well with the Egyptian records, some of the human figures in the Laasgeel rock art also make a fascinating linkage. It is well-known that a Puntite sovereign who welcomed around 3500 BP the queen Hatshepsut's expedition had at the ankle of his right leg been adorned by rings of yellow metal ([47], p. 23). Interestingly, important persons in Laasgeel rock art similarly adorned rings at the ankles ([38], p. 18). Since the Greeks learned the Egyptian traditions from the very beginnings of the dynastic era with enthusiasm of Hellenizing Egyptian heritage, ([51], pp. 171-80, 206-207), it can be detected that the Greco-Roman "Land of Aromatics" referred to Egyptian tradition. There are other cases which show these references to which Roman scholars also utilized after their nation took Egypt from the Greeks in 30 BCE. Pliny called Zaylac 'Port of Isis', with which he also associated myrrh production and the name Abalito, Avalite of Periplus. Zaylac or Port of Isis, which had on its gate "stone monuments with inscriptions in

unknown alphabet" was here linked with symbols of Egyptian culture. Isis is a Greek form of Iset, an important deity which was mother of *Huur*, another main deity. Huur (Falcon) was identified with a big Somali bird also called *Huur. Biset* (cat), another idol, also involved in these issues while *biset* also means cat in the Somali. Pliny also states that Pharaoh Sesostris led his army to Mosyllum ([52], V1: 34). This move is also indicated by Herodotus who additionally describes this Pharaoh's great conquests in Levant and Anatolia and beyond ([51], pp. 173-76). There were three Sesostrises during the 19th century BCE, whose period Egypt dispatched significant naval missions to Punt. But it is also suggested that Sesostris in question was Seti of around 1294-1279 BCE, who was also a great conqueror and thus was confounded with the original one ([51], p. 173, n. 4). In any way, interrelated Egyptian-Greco-Roman information addresses an Egyptian involvement in the extremities of the Horn. The Sesostris's action was apparently an ideological mission of providing Puntite products as Herodotus also attributed to Pharaoh Necho c. 600 BCE an ambitious, non-military expedition down to Indian Ocean ([51], p. 319).

The Egyptians may even trigger international common interest in the Somali market, which eventually contributed to the advancement of shipbuilding in the region. Other nations sent their seafaring missions to the same region of the Horn. It has particularly been noted a sea trade of the Sumero-Akkadian with Melukhkha from the late third millennium to late second millennium BCE. This was also the case of the expedition of King Solomon of Israel to Ophir in the tenth century BCE. Melukhkha and Ophir are identified with Punt or Northern Somalia on the basis of the destination area and the time length of the expeditions together with types of plants, animals, and precious stones imported from there [53]. It was proposed that Melukhkha could be both Somalia and Yemen although the Iraqis described it as a country of black men [54]. Solomon's expedition was led by Phoenicians, an indication that they may have already gained experience in trading with the Horn since the period of their rise coincidence with that of Egyptian decline. Herodotus later noted that Phoenician sailors led an expedition that apparently reached at least the ancient port of Xaafuun, which was dispatched around 600 BCE by Necho, the last Pharaoh who attempted to reinstate the power of dwindling Egypt [55]. However, it was the Yemenis who were mostly importing and then conveying the Somali aromatics to Levant and Iraq in this period.[9] The competition for Somali products has thus been rekindled by the Sabaeans. We can recall the well-known visit of Queen of Saba or Sheba to King Solomon. It was also a period that the caravan trade across Arabia-Levant was coming out. Solomon's interest in the exotic products of Somalia should have then been hinted at by the Yemeni-Israeli contact, as F. Albright noted.

Somalia itself yielded evidence for common international interest in receiving aromatic products from the Qarfuuna region. The evidence relates to prehistoric Somali-Yemeni commercial relations. A set of monumental inscriptions on seven large stone blocks have recently been discovered by local treasury-seekers in a cave temple 150 km southwest of Qarfuuna and 110 km north of Xaafuun. The Sabaean writers of these "homogenous inscriptions" were more concerned to express a religious devotion to Sabaean idols. But the commercial factor in the epigraphy is testified by statements for a naval expedition sent by a Yemeni king to this region of Somalia. The site of the inscriptions is not archaeologically investigated, but it is identified with a place of ruins that was reported by a French explorer in 1880, near Abdixan well. The experts of the Sabaean epigraphy date the inscriptions

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[9] See below, the next paragraph.

Figure 6.
(a and b) Fragmented Sabaean inscriptions on two stone blocks of 1.1 m width and 40 cm height, newly found at Xaafuun. If taken together, the inscriptions may read: "Barham bin Baran (gifts) … Yasran and s ayd and Yada' and Barham …", according to Nu'man Khaldun and A.N. Sawal, experts of Sabaean epigraphy in Yemen, (Mahad Jebiye, 2023).

at approximately 2700 BP. Other sites also yielded these kinds of inscriptions, which reveal that the Sabaeans heavily depended on Somali products for their big trade in incense. A Sabaean inscription consisting of only four letters on a stone block, which is part of a tomb, was also observed near the coastal town of Shal'aw 25 km southwest of the ancient port of Xiis [56]. Two stone blocks recently found at Xaafuun also carry Sabaean inscriptions (**Figure 6**).[10] The date of the Abdixan inscriptions was about two centuries after the visit of Queen of Saba to King Solomon. This may serve as evidence for the inspired judgment of Cosmas Indicopleustes, who journeyed through the northern coast of Somalia around

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[10] Mahad Jebiye (Pers. Comm., 9 March 2023) who helped the inscriptions of Abdixan to be published. Mahad, the secretary of The Institute of National Heritage, also told me that inhabitants currently reported ruins in Abdixan.

525 CE and stated that Queen of Saba "brought to Solomon spices from this very Barbaria [Somalia], which lay near Saba on the other side of the sea" [57]. It is noteworthy here that in this late time, 547 CE when Cosmos completed his book, it was still believed that Somalia was the home of the products even by a knowledgeable, Egyptian merchant who traveled as far as Sri lank and his nickname, Indicopleustes, expresses his experience on India. The unique role of Somalia in the Horn for the regional trade was also noted by Claudius Ptolemy c. 150 CE. He singled out the country for being a commercial partner of Yemen with the largest number of trade centers ([21], citing The Geography of Ptolemy; 1991. pp. 38, 107).

The trade between Somalia and Arabia must have existed long before and after the date of the inscriptions. Agatharchides noted around 150 BCE an increase the trade by a Yemeni presence in Somalia. Describing the Sabaeans and the Phoenicians as the richest nations in the world, he reported that the former were traveling and had settlements in the land of the aromatics ([55], p. 45). This mention of the Aromatic Land represents a period in which the Greeks were struggling to join the commerce in the Qarfuuna region. Agents of a Greek king of Egypt, Ptolemy Euergetes (d. 223 BCE) were said to have reached Mossylum ([48], p. 82). Meanwhile, the Greeks sent out to Somalia a certain traveler, Ariston, who named northern Somalia after the Greek Sea idol 'Poseidon'. A Greek tradition also mentioned that some travelers led by Yambul were captured in Northern Somalia [58]. A non-Greek sailor, possibly from the region, also led some Greeks to Qarfuuna and further to India around 118 BCE [59]. The nature of information offered by Agatharchides 150 BCE and Artemidorus 100 BCE, point out that Greek Egyptian merchants were visiting ports in Qarfuuna region by these times.

Strabo's report of about 26 BCE, is an indication of immediate Roman interest in the trade in Somalia. This interest was always directed to the region of aromatics as even it took the Greeks nearly four centuries to reach the southern coast of Somali after they began to deal with the northern one. Strabo expressed the geography and commercial importance of the Qarfuuna region. Explaining the sources of commercial revenue in Egypt, he states: "Large fleets are dispatched as far as India and the extremities of *Aethiopia*, from which the most valuable cargoes are brought to Aegypt and thence sent forth again to the other regions" [60]. At those times extremities of *Aethiopia* were the region of Qarfuuna, which he himself called the "Southern Horn". A Roman ruler of the Moroccan coast, Juba (d. 23 CE) also had a report on the region though he confounded Boosaaso with Qarfuuna. His mistake is stated by Pliny who says: "Juba holds that at Cape Mossylites begins the Atlantic Ocean, navigable with a north-west wind along the coast of his kingdom of the Mauretania" ([52], p. VI, 34). It appears that Juba had a clue about the tip of the Horn so he was differentiating the northern Somali coast from the southern one, calling the latter 'Atlantic', and thinking that it immediately joins the Mauretanian coast. The rest of the Pliny's remarks reconcile Strabo and Jubba's statements, as he adds: "Some writers place one *Aethiopian* town on the coast beyond this point [Mosyllum]". However, Xaafuun was the last point of the Greco-Roman known world as they knew not about the southern coast of Somalia. But the mention of the "Horn" means that Strabo at least learned from other sources that Qarfuuna is the point of coast trend toward the south. He further says "after doubling this cape toward the south, we have no more descriptions of harbors or places, because nothing is known of the seacoast beyond this point" ([60], pp. XV1, 1V, 14). A knowledge about the southern coast had thus to wait for the author of Periplus who himself followed the footsteps of the Yemenis.

Those pre-historic Yemenis should have later been assimilated by the Somalis. But the Yemeni presence was still obvious in the far south of the region. Periplus reports that the Yemenis were sailing all way down to the town of Rhapta, somewhere between Lamu and Malindi, [61] for trading with its Cushite-like population or Berber, as the Greco-Romans were calling the Somalis. There, the Yemenis were intermarrying with locals and speaking their language. The expansion of ancient Somalis over the Tana region around these times may led the Yemenis this trade move of a further afield. Further increase of the trade was reported by Cosmas. He observed a large Somali contribution to the regional trade network as they were exporting products of their land to countries, which included Arabia, Persia, India, and Eritrea ([57], pp. 51–52). The author of Periplus already noted that the Somalis were crossing to Arabia on their own small boats. And on the basis of population exchange between Somalia and Yemen during the Islamic era, it is possible that the Somalis were also residing in the Yemeni coast in the Pre-Islamic era. Pliny noted that cinnamon merchants from the Horn were staying southern Yemeni ports about five years for business ([52], p. XXI, 42).

Archaeological finds greatly corroborate the documentary sources. Besides the previously-known ancient wares from Xiis, Daamo and Xaafuun, recently-investigated two other ancient ports yielded interesting materials from the ancient trade. Again in the small barren port of Xiis, Mundu of Periplus, the investigators collected from tombs and nearby surface materials that include: fine ware, abundant types of amphoras and glasses from Roman Empire and areas of its influence from south France to south Turkey, and Syria; numerous Organic Storage Jars and at least cooking pottery from South Arabia; abundant Mesopotamian glazed pottery; decorated glass inlays, amphoras, millefiori dishes, and fine ware from Egypt; glass beads and stone beads from India; wheel-made kitchen pottery, necklace, and anklets; and rubble and short walls. These materials date from the first to third centuries CE. Still, South Arabian Organic Storage Jars dating back from the first-century BCE to the first half of the first-century CE were found in Siyaara 35 km to the east of Berbera [62].

Many larger abandoned towns are yet to be investigated. Illegal excavations, through which priceless materials were destroyed at many places, contribute to the explanation (**Figure** 7). For example, besides a Roman glass vessel of possibly 1st-3rd century CE (Gonzalez-Ruibal pers. Comm., 11 April 2023), multiple beads of apparently Indo-pacific origin were illegally unearthed from cairns in ancient port of Butiyaalo (**Figure 8**). These beads include the banded ones made of agate apparently from western India, glass beads, and rock crystal ones. They are almost similar to numerous beads found recently in ruins of Harla which was occupied around 550-1580s CE, 35 km NW Harar (Timothy Insoll Pers. Comm., 4 April 2023). The fact that these beads were buried with the deceased humans in the cairns represents a funeral aspect of pre-Islamic cultural legacy. Butiyaalo, 80 km east of Boosaaso, on the head of a sea canal off the coast of Qandala, can be Mosyllum. It was a center for at least the medieval sultanate of Bari

The types and quantity of the wares from the area and the selective commercial nature of their respective sources show that this was in the plan by urbanite community who were making choices for their lifestyle. This material selection for urbanite routine priorities is also indicated by the items mentioned in the Periplus. The imports contain glass, tin, copper, iron, various metal-made items, gold, and silver coin; dressed clothes, tunics, cloaks, cotton cloth, girdles; wheat, rice, sugar, sesame oil, clarified butter, herbal medicines, dye or varnishes, grape juice, wine by a
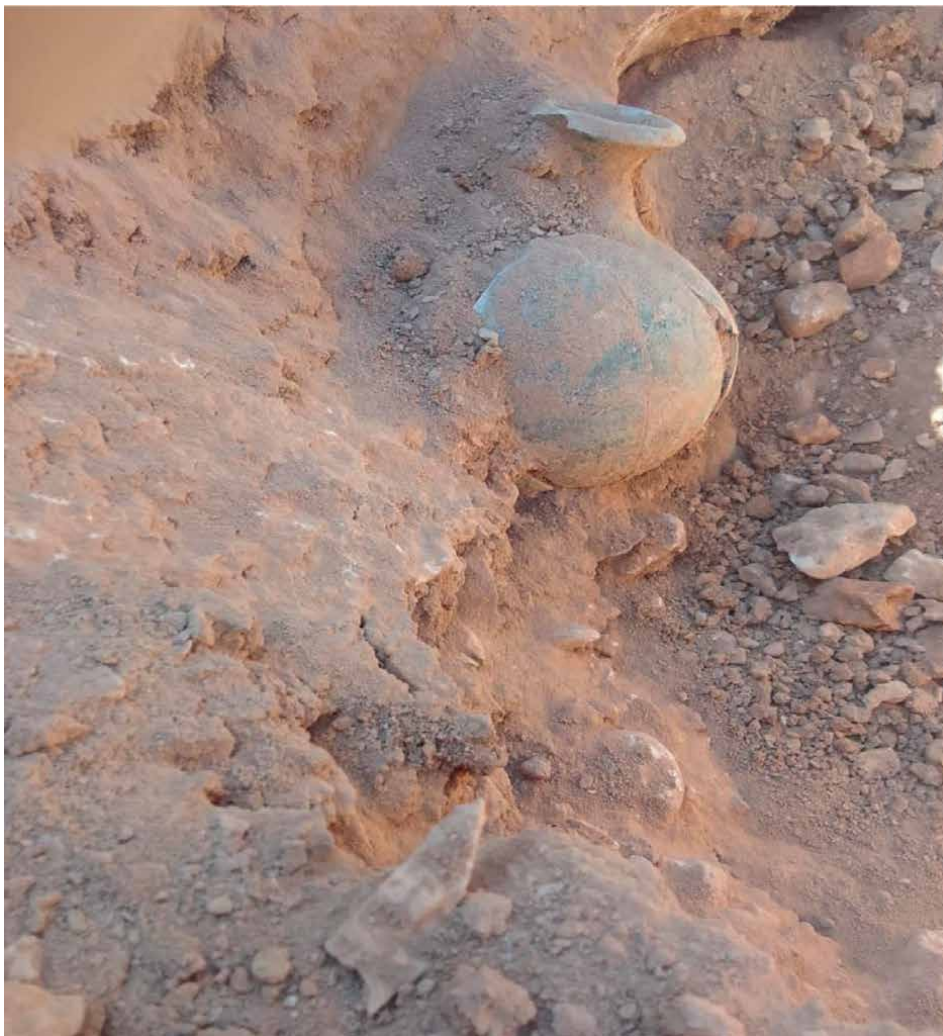
Figure 7.
Illegally excavated cairn showing a Roman glass vessel at the ruined town of Butiyaalo. The vessel is reportedly 37 cm long, 15 cm diameter in the middle, Mahad Jebiye, 2023.

few places; and Rhinoceros-horn in the far South ([50], pp. 55–61). Some goods like clarified butter, sesame oil, and others were imported from India probably to export them to Arabia, and Egypt. Gold was also imported for exportation. It appears that in the Periplus, it was particularly interested in internationally-traded items for it was not paid much attention to animal products, which were probably a significant part of Somali exports to Arabia. The age-old Arabian animal importation from Somalia is featured by a mention of horses of Berbera (Somalia) in a poem of the famous Arabian poetic, Imru'ul-Qays, 500–545 CE ([23], pp. 81, 211). Probably because of seeking a better breed, there was a longstanding tradition in the Near East to import horses as was noted in Periplus for Yemen ([48], pp. 31, 33) and in Israelites for King Solomon ([53], p. 135). With this great trade in Somalia, a pro-consumption norm at the expense of saving and investment as well as geographical problems preluded the growth of the towns ([21], p. 260).

Figure 8.
A sample of numerous beads illegally excavated from a cairn at ruins of Butiyaalo, Mahad Jebiye, 2023.

7. A cultural dimension

Despite these strong external relations, there are no visible effects of the contacts on Somali society, while, on the other hand, the contacts deeply affected other regions of the Horn such as Northern Ethiopia, Central Eritrea, and the Nile Sudan. Still, the causes of demographic and cultural changes in these regions existed also in Somalia without effects. A sense of self-identity and accompanied religious factors appear to have prevented the Somalis from acceptance of the change. Unlike the founders of Abyssinia, the pre-Islamic Yemeni immigrants were not allowed to influence the Somali identity but they were rather apparently assimilated. An example can be drawn from the case of large Muslim immigrants in Somalia who could not avoid to be immediately Somalized. Ibn Ḥawqal noted in the 960s that there were some Muslim immigrants who were interacting with the natives in eastern Sanaag ([22], pp. 50, 63); and al-Ḥamawi reported large Muslim immigrants in Mogadishu in 1220.

But there was no ever other mention of a non-Somali community in the country, although many communities descended from Arab origin. Even those in Mogadishu immediately coalesced into the Somali. After one-century ibn Baṭuṭa, who was their guest in 1330, called them Berber and they were speaking Somali [63]. But what about acceptance of a pre-Islamic religion?

Although the Near East is the home of the divine Religions, the Eastern Cushitic were more Abrahamic than most of the Near-easterners prior to the advent of Islam. The former believed in a monotheistic creed whose God was called Waaq. For the Somalis, Waaq is also called Eebe and both are still Islamic names together with the name "Allah". When the Somalis were converted to Islam they did not find a big difference between Waaq and Allah and their basic attributes. Waaq is also the creator and controller of the universe, and cherisher of mankind. The literature about Waaq provides that the meaning of the name is "eternal". The name and its manifestations still vigorously remain in the religious literature. Almost every Somali clan has an ancestor who lived sometime in the Islamic era whose name is X+Waaq, for example, BiddaWaaq, JidWaaq, CaabidWaaq, etc., which means slave of God like Abdallah in Arabic. The Somali names have thus the same meanings as those of the Semitic religious names, such as Gabriel, Israel, and Abdallah. Agaw and Sudanese Cushites did not show that they shared this creed with the East Cushites. This means that one of two things occurred: the non-EC Cushites corrupted the belief in Waaq; or the ancestors of the East Cushites have been converted through the religious legacy of Abraham or Solomon, a period that the Proto-Cushitic separation already took place.[11]

8. Conclusion

Pinpointing the birthplace of the Cushites must wait for intensive Afroasiatic linguistic analyses. However, on the basis of linguistics and the distribution and structural techniques of the cairns and rock art, the original homeland of the Somali as a major tribe by the early third millennium BCE must fall on the northern coast of their country. The southernmost corner of their early hinterland could encompass the Nugaal Valley to Harar Plateau. Moving out from that plateau and probably pushing the Proto-Oromo-Konso toward the south, the Bayso-Jiido group settled in Bali during the first millennium BCE. By the middle of the millennium, the Rendille-Madalle group occupied the lower part of the inter-riverine region, that is, the hinterland of Ḥamar coast. Around the end of the millennium, they were on the southern side of Jubba River. They were preceded by the Omo-Baɗ group but were followed by Tunni. The Proto-Mirifle and others replaced the Madalle-Rendille group in the inter-riverine region. The north was left for the Tiirri generation until the ancestors of the current northerners began to rise around 500 CE. Although there were fishing, hunting, and gathering communities throughout that long history, the majority of the society practiced herding and, in less degree, farming livelihoods. International trade at the coast was also effectively developed. This allowed economic choices, which further encouraged political decentralization within relatively well-established sociopolitical institutions.

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[11] Among the several symbols in Habajo rock art of the Sanaag plateau, there is one of a hexagram outline shaped by two equilateral triangles which is said to be looking like the Star of David. This may not represent a religious symbol but it still may be interesting [37].

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Section 2

Biblical Studies

Genesis 1: Where Babylon and Greece Meet

Robert Gnuse

Abstract

Genesis 1 is the prelude to the entire Old Testament. It was added to the Pentateuch by the Priestly Editors sometime around 400 BCE with other editorial texts. It uses the imagery of the Babylonian Epic, *Enuma Elish*, a narrative enacted in the Babylonian New Year Akitu Festival, but reacts negatively against the *Enuma Elish*, for the latter legitimates the divine hegemony of Marduk and the political power of kings and priests. Genesis 1 also draws heavily upon the Greek epic of Hesiod, the *Theogony*, especially in the early verses. Genesis 1 is not a mere copy of these ancient Mediterranean texts, it is a creative new statement. It is a masterful hymn about monotheism, creation, and human equality.

Keywords: *Enuma Elish*, *Theogony*, Hesiod, priestly author, Tiamat, Marduk

1. Introduction

Genesis 1 is the great hymn that introduces the entire Pentateuch. Critical scholars have assumed for more than a century that this text was crafted by a Priestly author sometime in the Persian period, perhaps around 400 BCE, and more recently minimalist scholars have suggested its origin in the Hellenistic era shortly after 300 BCE. Its message is a clear affirmation of monotheism in opposition to the polytheistic beliefs of the ancient Near East. To this end the chapter contains subtle critical critique of particular Babylonian deities. Such a rejoinder was necessitated by the large number of Jews who lived in Babylon for many centuries and were surrounded by Babylonians and their religious and political ideas, not only in the Chaldean period (586–539 BCE), but also during the Persian period (539–330 BCE) and Hellenistic era (330–63 BCE).

Already in the 19th century biblical scholars saw the immediate connections between Genesis 1 and the famous Babylonian literary epic, *Enuma Elish*. Early scholars were prone to naively say that the Babylonian work influenced the biblical text, but more recent critical scholarship recognizes that the biblical text is actually a critical response to the Babylonian account which affirms the lordship of the god, Marduk, and the primacy of Babylonian priests and kings over their subjects. In response Genesis 1 affirms the oneness of God and the equality of all human beings, who are assigned the attributes of kings in Genesis 1.

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What this essay seeks to argue is that the brilliant biblical author is not only responding to Babylonian religious and political propaganda in the *Enuma Elish*, but he is also responding critically to Greek thought found in the writings of Hesiod. Hence, the title, "Where Babylon and Greece Meet," refers to the attempt by the biblical author to refute beliefs of both Babylonian and Greece worldviews in his affirmation of monotheism and human equality. In this author's opinion that may imply a Hellenistic origin for this text after 300 BCE, but that is a minority opinion among scholars.

1.1 Enuma Elish

Let us first turn our attention to the Mesopotamian literature. Since this has been critically evaluated by many biblical scholars in the past, only a cursory review need be made. Adequate summary of the extensive literature in this area cannot be undertaken in this short essay. I have addressed the relationship of Genesis 1 and the *Enuma Elish* in greater detail elsewhere ([1], p. 1–31).

The story line of the *Enuma Elish* is as follows: A *Theogony* of the gods is presented until we arrive at the generation of the gods that include Apsu, the god of the sweet waters, and Tiamat, the goddess of the salt waters. Their divine descendants or children include Anu, Ea or Enki, Enlil, and their grandson, the beautiful god, Marduk. The noise generated by the younger gods leads Apsu to attempt to kill the younger gods, but Ea casts a spell on him and kills him. Tiamat then gathers other demons around her to attack the gods, and she marries Kingu. The younger gods select Marduk to fight Tiamat, who demands to be made king of the gods. In his battle with Tiamat, he is victorious. The body of Tiamat is sliced like a dried fish to make the Mesopotamian valley, and then again the poetic texts says that her body is divided to make the waters above the firmament and the waters below the firmament. The firmament is created with holes to let the light of the divine realm and rainfall come through. Marduk then creates land between the waters to separate them, which he fills with plants, birds, and animals. He appears to create the world in eight creative actions. Finally, Marduk rests (Pritchard 60–72; [2], p. 390–402).

The *Enuma Elish* was performed during the ten day Akitu festival in the spring (and perhaps also in the fall) with the king performing the role of Marduk. This enhances the authority of the king, who is supreme on earth as Marduk is king of the gods. Marduk created the earth to be a temple manor with the land belonging to the gods and administered by the priests. Thus, the priests have the authority of the gods, and people who work on the temple manor are slaves to the gods, and hence slaves to the priests. To this, in particular, Genesis 1 responds and seeks to undercut the over weaning authority of the king and the priests.

In brief Genesis 1 portrays the creation of the world not as a battle between two gods but as the calm creation of the world by the one god. References to water indicate clearly that water is a thing, not a goddess to be defeated. God creates the world as did Marduk, but references to other divine beings, as found in the *Enuma Elish*, are debunked in Genesis 1. The rest experienced by Marduk after his toil in creating the world becomes the rest to be had by all of humanity on the Sabbath. People are made in the "image" and "likeness" of God and said to "rule" over the world, all of which are cognate to Babylonian words used only to describe the king. Thus, people are all kings and queens and therefore not slaves to the king and the priests. As Marduk creates the world in eight divine actions, so also the biblical text has God create the world with eight creative commands, two occurring on day three and two occurring

on day six. That the biblical author has crunched two divine actions into day three and day six to obtain eight creative acts makes us especially suspect that the biblical author is using the images of the *Enuma Elish*.

As we read Genesis 1, particular features indicate the connection between the biblical text and the *Enuma Elish*. The very first verse in Genesis 1:1 is, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The first two words in the Hebrew are "in the beginning" (*bereshith*) and "created" (*bara*). To begin a sentence with the adverb ("in the beginning") followed by the verb (created") is not proper Hebrew syntax. The sentence usually should begin with the verb. However, this sequence is syntactically proper in Akkadian, the Mesopotamian language in which the *Enuma Elish* is written. In fact, the two words *Enuma Elish* are an adverbial form that means "when on high" and "created." Here the adverb begins the sentence and the verb follows it. It appears that the biblical author imitated the beginning of the *Enuma Elish* to indicate to the audience that Genesis 1 is a parody on that Mesopotamian narrative.

The expression "heavens and the earth" or "earth and heavens" was a stereotypic expression used in Mesopotamian texts to begin accounts of creation. A Sumerian text perhaps from the late third millennium BCE entitled, *Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Underworld* states the world was created "when the heaven had been separated from the earth, when the earth had come down from heaven" ([3], p. 74; [4], p. 36). Another text, a hymn in praise of the mattock, a tool used in farming and building construction, refers to creation by saying, "Enlil hastened to divide the heaven from the earth." In two Sumerian accounts called *Lugalbanda and the Mountain Cave* and *Silver and Copper* the heavens were separated from the earth ([3], p. 75; [4], p. 37). In all of these instances the sequence is "heaven" and "earth," as is the wording in Genesis 1. Many other examples could be presented.

The biblical narrative continues by saying, "and the earth was without form and void and darkness covered the face of the deep." (Genesis 1:2). The expressions "form" (*tohu*) and "void" (*bohu*) elicit the memory of Tiamat, especially the former expression which sounds like a cognate to some of the vocalizations of Tiamat's name. The Hebrew word for "deep" (*tehom*) is clearly related to another semitic vocalization of Tiamat.

In various Mesopotamian accounts the good creator god, be he Enlil, Marduk, or whomever, defeats the god or goddess of chaos in battle, often with the aid of wind and lightning. Once slain, the evil goddess is used to create the world. The biblical author gives only a casual nod to this by saying, "darkness covered the face of the deep." The word for "deep" or *tehom* alludes to Tiamat. The word *tehom* occurs thirty-five times in the Bible, and in thirty-four instances the word lacks the Hebrew article *he* prefacing the word. The preface *he* means "the," and thus we would translate this as "the ocean" in those texts. But when "the" is missing, the word is a name. If *tehom* is a name in those thirty-four instances, it strongly implies that "deep" or "waters" should be personified, and thus related to the Mesopotamian Tiamat. *Tehom* is Mrs. Ocean. In Genesis 1:1 *tehom* lacks the article and is a name, but our author wishes us to perceive that "Mrs. Ocean" is no longer a goddess; she is just a thing.

The "wind from God swept over the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2) is a demeaning reference to the great battle between the creator deity and the chaos goddess spoken of by Mesopotamians ([5], p. 104; [6], p. 87; [7], p. 110; [8], p. 36–76). No fantastic battle is described. There is merely wind blowing over the water. In Psalm 104:6–7 the poet declares that the "waters" flee from the "rebuke" of God, which is another poetic way of speaking about this creative process, but the waters are still

a thing, not a goddess. The Israelites and the Jews tell us the story and indicate that those Babylonians have the confused the story and that the ocean is not really a goddess.

On the second day in the biblical narrative Mesopotamian mythology again receives a critical response from the biblical author. In the *Enuma Elish* Marduk fought the seven headed dragon goddess, Tiamat, who was made of water. Marduk split her like a fish into two parts that became the Mesopotamian valley and then again he is said to have divided her to become the waters above and below the firmament. It is this latter image that Genesis 1:6–8 alludes to when it says that God separated the waters. In earlier Mesopotamian myths the hero deity is the Sumerian god Enlil, and in later Assyrian myths the hero is Ninurta. Mesopotamians re–enacted this myth for centuries during the New Year's celebration, the *Akitu* festival, to insure stability for the cosmos against Tiamat, the chaos that threatened to destroy the created order each year with the flooding waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. The good god brought order and salvation each year with the defeat of the evil waters. (Israel's story of salvation also involves water, the waters that drowned pharaoh and his soldiers in the story of Exodus 14–15, the "sea crossing"!) The image of Tiamat, the threatening dragon, emerges in the poetry of the Old Testament, for therein she is sometimes called Tannin, Leviathan, and Rahab (or sometimes just the "sea"). Tiamat also influences the image of the ten–headed beast in Daniel 7 and the various beasts in the New Testament book of Revelation. But here in Genesis 1 Tiamat is no beast; she is just a thing, the waters. The waters are simply divided between those above the firmament and those below the firmament. God did not engage in any combat to create the world; God spoke and things happened. It is a story about creation by dinvely spoken word, not creation by combat.

Like the actions of Marduk in *Enuma Elish*, God cuts or "separates" the water and places some under the firmament and some above the firmament (Genesis 1:7). The actions are the same as Marduk's, but the God of the Bible does it with so much ease, because God is the only God. The firmament is described with a Hebrew word that means "hard bowl." The word comes from the verb "to stamp" or "to spread," implying that the firmament may be stretched out like a tent or more likely hammered out like a burnished metal bowl ([9], p. 472; [10], p. 44; [11], p. 20; [7], p. 122). The dome holds back waters that can be either gentle rains or fierce storms. Holes in the firmament allow the water to fall as rain or to allow light from the divine realm to pass through. For the Mesopotamians that light comes from the gods; for the biblical author it comes from God. Then on the third day God separates the land from the water beneath the firmament. A similar action is undertaken by Marduk in the *Enuma Elish*.

On day five God creates the birds that fly and the fish that swim near or in the two great bodies of water separated on day two (Genesis 1:20). But our biblical author adds, almost as if it were an afterthought, a reference to the "great sea monsters" that swim in the ocean (Genesis 1:21). This is another attack on polytheistic Mesopotamian beliefs. The Hebrew word is *tannin*, which sounds like Tunnan or Tunnanu, a term for the cosmic ocean defeated by the storm god Baal in the 14th century BCE north Canaanite or Syrian version of the battle between the gods ([12], p. 46). In Psalm 74:13–14 the *tannin* has multiple heads, which hints at the great dragon or seven–headed beast Tiamat. In other biblical texts *tannin* is portrayed as a threatening cosmic beast, Job 7:12; Isaiah 27:1; 51:9. But in Genesis 1 *tannin* is simply a benign animal, as in Psalm 148:7 where the creature simply praises God. One could imagine Jews in exile pressured by Babylonians to participate in the New Year Festival, but Genesis 1

bluntly says there is no Tiamat and sea monsters are just created animals. God did not fight rebellious sea monsters; God simply spoke the word and they were created; they are not horrific threats to created order. The mention of such creatures is delayed until day five to further debunk their significance ([4], p. 66–67).

To conclude, once we have discovered that there is a spoof on the persona of Tiamat on fifth day, we turn back to earlier passages in Genesis 1 to see how many allusions to Tiamat occur. With this reference in verse 21, we are more confident in saying that there are references elsewhere to her. In Genesis 1:1 the earth is a "formless void," *tohu* and *bohu* in Hebrew. If *tohu* refers to watery chaos, then *tohu* might be allusion to Tiamat, which debunks her as inanimate. In Genesis 1:2, the "face of the deep" and the "face of the waters" are allusions to Tiamat. The Hebrew word for "deep" is *tehom*, which elsewhere in the Old Testament means the great chaotic waters that could oppose God. Genesis 1:2 indicates that the *tehom* are a thing, not a goddess of chaos. The Hebrew word for "waters" is *mayim*, which is not as dramatic a word as *tehom*, but nonetheless it can also refer to great cosmic powers that oppose God. Finally, the creative activity of the second day, which splits the waters, indicates that they are inanimate, not a powerful goddess. Genesis 1 is a masterly and subtle attack upon polytheistic belief in the *Enuma Elish*.

In the *Enuma Elish* Marduk commissions the creation of human beings and assigns this task to Enki and Ninmah. These two deities create seven pairs of human beings, male and female each, from clay and the blood of the defeated god, Kingu. Because people are made from the blood of the evil god, they are inherently meant to be slaves to the gods and work their land, which is the temple manor of the gods. The actual manifestation of their enslavement to these gods of the cosmos is demonstrated in their absolute obedience to the king and the high priests who administer the temple manor for Marduk. The *Enuma Elish* is thus a myth of social legitimation, a myth designed to justify the existence of an authoritarian society in Mesopotamia.

The biblical text radically counters this ideology. The text says that God created "man" and made "man" into male and female (Genesis 1:26–27). (Notice that "man" or Adam is not simply masculine, as too many today seem to think, but "man" is comprised of both the male and the female, thus implying equality.) Signficantly the text decalres that the male and the female are made in the "image" (*selem*) and "likeness" (*demuth*) of God (Genesis 1:26–27). Furthermore, the man and the woman are both commissioned to "rule" (radah) the creation, meaning tht they are to steward it, not abuse and exploit it (as too many people seem to assume today).

All three of these words have Babylonian cognates": *salmu* ("image'), *demuti* ("likeness"), and *radati* ("rule"). All three of these Babylonian words are used to characterize kings and describe what kings do. The biblical text is deliberately applying the language of royalty to the first couple. Although these words do not appear as frequently in the rest of the Old Testament, nonetheless, they tend to be used of kings in the biblical texts also. Our biblical author is making a powerful statement about human equality in the face of Babylonian declarations about a class hierarchy in society.

Ultimately, the author of Genesis 1 primarily declares several things: 1) There is one God. 2) There was no combat between a good God and a goddess of chaos at the beginning of creation. 3) All people are kings and queens in the eyes of God; all people are equal, and this includes the equality of the sexes. I like to assume that perhaps it is the message of human equality which our biblical author seeks to affirm most loudly.

2. Hesiod

I believe there is more to Genesis 1 than this masterful attack on Babylonian traditions, or the beliefs of the Eastern Antiquitarian tradtion. I believe that our biblical author has also taken on the traditions of the Western Antiquitarian tradition. In particular, I believe our author is also familiar with the *Theogony* of Hesiod. I have addressed this and other related issues with Hesiod earlier [13].

Hesiod may have lived in Greece in the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE. He was the son of a man who had failed as a merchant and had become a small farmer in Ascra in central Greece. This was the era when writing began to emerge, so that Hesiod's works might have appeared as written texts in the seventh century BCE ([14], p. 2; [15], p. 41). Chronologically these texts could have been used by the biblical authors after 500 BCE.

His famous work, the *Theogony*, recounts the origin of the cosmos and the generation of the gods, thus making it somewhat similar to Genesis 1. Hesiod utilized the old legends from the early seventh century BCE, including Homeric traditions, contemporary local legends, and perhaps ancient Near Eastern narratives ([16], p. 35–36; [17], p. 63–64). He believed the earth should be seen as the result of growth in the human and divine spheres ([16], p. 15; [18], p. 8–9; [14], p. 10; [19], p. 15).

Hesiod is a truly reflective thinker in contrast to Homer because he characterized the gods and their relationships ([20], p. 7). Scholars suggest that expansion and omission occurred in this epic from the seventh through the fifth centuries BCE ([21], p. 3; [16], p. 7; [17], p. 63). If the Priestly author of Genesis 1 knew this epic, most likely in the fifth century BCE, then most of those additions were already in the narrative.

Genesis 1 and Hesiod describe the origin of the cosmos, speaking of a primordial "void" or "chaos," creation of light and darkness, and creation of the sky and the earth below it with the ocean. Hesiod may have been familiar with ancient Near Eastern accounts of creation, as is true for the biblical account in Genesis 1 ([16], p. 36; [18], p. 8–9; [22], p. 41–42; [19], p. 15; [1], p. 1–12). Nevertheless, comparison of Hesiod's *Theogony* with Genesis 1 indicates that biblical author knew Hesiod's work in addition to the Near Eastern materials.

Passages in *Theogony* 116–131 are especially worth comparing with Genesis 1. The text reads as follows:

(116) In truth, first of all Chasm (Chaos) came to be, and then the broad-breasted Earth, the ever immovable seat of all the immortals who possess snowy Olympus' peak and murky Tartarus in the depths of the broad-pathed earth, and Eros, who is the most beautiful among the immortal gods, the limb-melter—he overpowers the mind and the thoughtful counsel of all the gods and of all human beings in their breasts. (123) From Chasm (Chaos), Erebos and black Night came to be; and the Aether and Day came forth from Night, who conceived and bore them after mingling in love with Erebos. (126) Earth first of all bore starry Sky, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, so that she would be the ever immovable seat for the blessed gods; and she bore the high mountains, the graceful haunts of the goddesses, Nymphs who dwell on the wooded mountains; and she also bore the barren sea seething with its swell, Pontus ([23], p. 12–13).

Both works begin with a reference to the "void."

Theogony 116 states that Chaos was born first and then came Gaia or earth. In comparison Genesis 1:2 declares, "the earth was a formless void." In particular, the

biblical text states that the earth was "without form" and "void." Both words may allude to Tiamat, goddess of chaos in the *Enuma Elish*. Hesiod's allusion to "chaos" may also reflect his knowledge of this same goddess of chaos. But I believe the biblical author knew Hesiod's text in addition to the Babylonian epic. Both the biblical text and Hesiod use the term "chaos" while the *Enuma Elish* is not does not ascribe this term to Tiamat ([2], p. 391–99, gives us the appropriate text of *Enuma Elish*). This is a significant observation.

Hesiod refers to night and day in *Theogony* 123–125. First, chaos gives birth to *erebos* (darkness) and black night, then *erebos* impregnated black night to produce "Aether" and "Day." According to Genesis 1:4–5 on the first day of creation God separated the light and the darkness. In contrast to both the biblical text and Hesiod, *Enuma Elish* does not refer to the creation of light and darkness. This leads us to suspect that the biblical author may referring more directly to Hesiod's *Theogony* than the Babylonian account ([2], p. 398–400, again provides the appropriate text of *Enuma Elish*). This is a very significant observation to make.

Theogony 126–131, in a more detailed section describes the generation of the "starry Sky" (line 126), the "high mountains" (line 129), and "the barren sea seething with its swell, Pontus" (line 131). Genesis 1:6–8 tells how God created the firmament and the waters above it with the land below the firmament and then the waters under the land. Thus, the biblical text recounts the creation of the heavens, mountains, and sea as does Hesiod's account. In this regard, the accounts in *Theogony* and Genesis 1 are closer to each other than to the *Enuma Elish* ([2], p. 399, again provides the appropriate text of *Enuma Elish*).

Subsequent, Genesis 1 and *Theogony* in their narrative. *Theogony* recounts the generation of various gods, a cosmogony, while the biblical text speaks of the creation of plant life, the sun, the moon, stars, birds, fish, land animals, and ultimately, man and woman. The similarity between Hesiod and the biblical description of original chaos and the first 2 days is impressive. In the opinion of some scholars, "the authors of Genesis had made room for Hesiod's *Theogony*" ([24], p. 15), in addition to their references to the *Enuma Elish*.

If the biblical author possessed Hesiod's narrative, one can observe the difference in the biblical perspective. *Theogony* recounts cosmogony, the emergence of the gods, but biblical narrative is more concerned with the structure of the world occupied by humanity. The biblical narrative concludes with the creation of people made in the "image" and "likeness" of God. *Theogony* does not speak the creation of people. Hence, we are led to conclude that the biblical text is more anthropocentric than the *Theogony*. In the biblical text God is more gracious and has a deep concern for the human beings and their world. Often we have characterized Genesis 1 as cosmological and Genesis 2 as anthropocentric, but now we have to alter these generalizations about Genesis 1.

3. Conclusion

As we observe what the biblical author has crafted, we can make several observations. In response to both the Eastern Antiquitarian tradition of *Enuma Elish* and the Western Antiquitarian tradition of Hesiod's *Theogony*, the author has affirmed monotheism. In accord with both pieces of literature, the biblical author works with the image of a primordial body of water existing at the earliest stage of the creative process, but in opposition in the Eastern Antiquitarian tradition, the biblical author

with several allusions indicates that no battle between the good deity and the goddess of chaos was fought. Specific phrases are taken from the Eastern Antiquitarian traditions, such as "in the beginning," and "heavens and earth." As in the Eastern Antiquitarian tradition there are allusions to the creation of plants and animals upon the earth. Specific phrases drawn from the Western Antiquitarian tradition include the reference to "chaos" and the distinction between night and day, which the Eastern Antiquitarian tradition does not have. Thus, it seems that our biblical author did have access to the *Theogony* of Hesiod and not just the *Enuma Elish*, which most scholars observe.

But what makes the biblical text a most critical response to both the Eastern and the Western Antiquitarian traditions is the anthropocentric perspective. Special attention is paid to the creation of the male and the female, and a heavy emphasis is placed upon their identity as royal beings, implying the ultimate equality of all later human beings. Ultimately the Eastern and the Western Antiquitarian traditions sought to speak about the cosmos and the divine realm. The biblical text wished to speak of humanity and affirm the equality of all human beings and the equality of both the man and the woman. Ironically it has taken the Christian tradition two thousand years to realize and attempt to actualize this powerful message of human equality.

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Chapter 6

Including the Ancient Near East as "Western Identity": The Case of Enochic Traditions in Early Christian Literature

Albert Livinus Augustinus Hogeterp

Abstract

The study of early Christianity has often been approached from the perspective of the Graeco-Roman world, with its acculturation being determined by Rome more than by Jerusalem, and by Hellenists more than by Hebrews. This teleological perspective tends to overlook settings of ancient Near Eastern traditions which remain understudied. A case in point may concern Enochic traditions. Examples range from Enoch being part of the Lucan Jesus's genealogy (Luke 3:23–28 at v. 37), to Enochic apocalyptic woes paralleling Lucan woes (Luke 6:24–26), to Enoch being a paradigm of deathless faith (Hebrews 11:5), and to Enochic discourse being quoted in terms of prophecy in Jude 14–15. This chapter will revisit intertextuality and interdiscursivity of early Christian literature with Enochic traditions, taking into account the Enochic writings among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The chapter then evaluates how this adds to the understanding of Christian cultural heritage in the discussion of "Western identity."

Keywords: ancient Near East, 1 Enoch, New Testament, Luke, Hebrews, Jude

1. Introduction

"Western identity" and "antiquity" are categories that may be interrelated in complex ways.[1] To be sure, "Western identity" is a concept external to antiquity. It constitutes a discourse that may engage cultural heritage, in particular sources of cultural identity, for the construction of a collective self or "imagined community."[2] Yet for people in antiquity, the modern concept of "Western identity" would be an outsider's (*etic*) perspective, not necessarily related to their insider's (*emic*) perspective. Understood as a sense of belonging, people may have multiple senses of

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[1] In this essay, all words from ancient languages with a non-Latin alphabet are presented in transliteration. For all primary and secondary literature that are abbreviated after full introduction, the author relies on Ref. [1] for all abbreviations.

[2] Cf. Ref. [2].

"identity"[3] at individual and collective levels, such as, culture, economy, and religion. And yet, "Western identity" has often been understood as built on the foundation of classical antiquity, that is Greek and Roman antiquity.[4] This essay aims to revisit the cultural ramifications of "East" and "West" related to the study of antiquity from the vantage point of Early Christianity.

From the vantage point of the early Jesus movement rooted in first-century CE Judaism,[5] this essay will also take into account recent insights about cultural exchange. That is, the study of the early Roman era may benefit from globalization theory in terms of interconnectivity and interdependence. As such, globalization theory understands cultures as "in essence hybrid entities with permeable boundaries."[6] In this respect, early Christian texts may be revisited as a body of literature that incorporates traditions of the "East," as the Jesus movement spread its mission from Roman Palestine to the western hemisphere of the Roman empire. Revisiting early Christian literature in this respect also implies a change of focus, away from exclusive notions of "acculturation" of emerging Christianity.[7] The "acculturation" approach has often implied a unidirectional movement from Jerusalem to Rome and from Hebrews to Hellenists as dominant contexts of cultural dialog.[8] This is illustrated by earlier studies on Acts which emphasized a narrative schema of missionary journeys turning from Jerusalem to Rome and of increasing tension between these two.[9] Recent studies show a unidirectional sense of "acculturation" into Graeco-Roman civilization is no longer self-evident.

Contexts of globalization in the early Roman empire may be illustrated by the presence of the "East" in the "West." This is apparent from documentary evidence of, for instance, Phoenician/(Neo-)Punic,[10] Nabatean, and bilingual inscriptions[11] in western parts of the Roman empire; from material evidence for the presence of eastern cults in Italy (e.g., the Isis cult in Pompeii)[12]; and from literary evidence of

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[3] The etymology of the very term *identity* may rather be derived from Late Latin *identitas*, denoting "sameness," instead of from Latin of classical antiquity.

[4] See the cautious observations on antiquity and problems with identity politics in Ref. [3], who also refers to Amartya Sen's argument for non-European democratic traditions and to Jakob Burckhardt's observation that human rights were alien to Graeco-Roman antiquity. Cf. Ref. [4], with reference to the practice of democracy in Shushan (Iran) in antiquity.

[5] Cf. Acts 10:36–38 (speech of Peter) on the gospel mission of Jesus of Nazareth having begun from Galilee and having been proclaimed throughout Judaea; Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44 on Judaea as place of execution of Christ, the originator of the "deadly superstition" of the Christians; cf. Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* (=*Ant.*) 18.63–64 ("Testimonium Flavianum").

[6] See recently Ref. [5] at 472, who cites Ref. [6] at 14, while arguing against monolithic ideas of "Judaism" and "Hellenism" as "self-contained cultural containers."

[7] Cf. Ref. [5] 473, who cites Ref. [6] 12–13, with regard to connectivity as aspect of ancient globalization, which urges scholarship to "move our intellectual concepts," including moves "from *acculturation* to *globalization*," "from *communities* to *imagined communities*," and from "*cultures*" to "*cultural debates*."

[8] Ironically, the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* include a narrative development in the opposite direction, from the gospel proclamation in Rome by Barnabas reaching Clement to Clement's itinareries to Caesarea, where Barnabas introduces him to Peter.

[9] Ref. [7] 319. On problems with "Hellenization" as unidirectional category of "acculturation," cf. Ref. [8].

[10] See Ref. [9] for a survey of epigraphic sources.

[11] See Ref. [10] for a survey of Nabatean inscriptions (1st c. BCE-2nd c. CE), including bilingual evidence from Rome, Puteoli, Delos, Miletus and Kos.

[12] See e.g. Ref. [11] 276–308 ("A City Full of Gods"), including attention for the cult of Isis and other Egyptian gods in Pompeii.

"Orientals" in second-century CE Rome, as exemplified by Juvenal's metaphor, stating that "already long ago the Syrian Orontes has flowed into the Tiber, secreting language and customs."[13]

Which concepts of "Antiquity" did people use in the early Roman era? The antiquity of ancestral traditions could be a source of authority and respectability in the Roman world, a tested foundation on which people relied for their cultural practices. For instance, in his digression on "the Jews" (*Histories* [=*Hist.*] 5) which includes an ethnic bias of anti-Jewish legends,[14] the Roman historian Tacitus yet observed that their religious observances "are sanctioned by antiquity," *antiquitate defenduntur* in Latin (*Hist.* 5.5.1), at the point where he just lined Jewish religion with its observance of the seventh day up with the Idaei and Saturn (*Hist.* 5.4). "Antiquity," *archaiologia* or *archaiotēs* in Greek, could encompass history and foundation myth,[15] legends and tales,[16] "time-honored customs, laws, and institutions"[17] of a community. In the realm of religion, antiquity, *archaiotēs*, could bestow an aura of "sanctity" (*hagneia*) or worthiness of "reverence" (*sebasmos*) on a cult.[18] This is not to say that there was ever any monolithic concept of "antiquity," for *archaiotēs* could also have pejorative overtones in certain rhetorical contexts of discourse, associating it with "simplicity" (Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 1.3), "things old-fashioned and trite" (Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* [=*Or.*] *13* 29 ll. 1–2), or "ignorance" (Dio Chrysostom, *Or. 13* 29 l. 5). Yet even so, "antiquity," *archaiotēs*, could be a frame of reference of recognizability, as it was also associated with name and renown (Dio Chrysostom, *Or. 33* 46).

"Antiquity," *archaiologia*,[19] was also the domain of the imagined ethnic community with its foundation legends and history. Thus, historians in antiquity could be occupied with writing, for instance, "Attic antiquities" (Phanodemus), "Roman antiquities" (Dionysius of Halicarnassus), "Jewish antiquities" (Flavius Josephus), "Egyptian antiquities" (Manetho), "Phoenician antiquities" (the Egyptian Jerome), "Chaldaean antiquities" (Berossus), and "Arabian antiquities" (Glaucus).

So what impeded the incorporation of the "East" into more Western concepts of cultural identity, which often concerned Graeco-Roman antiquity? And why does it matter to revisit early Christian literature for a case study in this regard?

Regarding the first question, several reasons may be adduced from the early Roman era. One reason concerns cultural bias in the discourses of power politics, which we can highlight right away, while another first-century CE reason concerns a context of conflict, the Jewish war against Rome (66–70 CE), to which I will turn in due course (§ 2.2 below). Regarding cultural bias, the first-century CE Jewish historian Flavius Josephus addressed the dichotomy between Greeks and "barbarians" in his apologetic treatise *Against Apion* (=*Ag.Ap.*). That is, Josephus aimed to

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[13] *iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes, et linguam et mores ... vexit*. Juvenal, *Satires* 1.3.62–65.

[14] Cf. Ref. [12] 314–315, 362–363; Ref. [13] 31–33, 74–75; Ref. [14] 265–280.

[15] Cf. Plutarch, *De Herodoti malignitate* 855d "For the excursions and digressions of history (*historia*) are principally allowed for fables and antiquities (*malista tois muthois didontai kai tais archaiologiais*)"; translation from Ref. [15] 4.

[16] Cf. Plutarch, *Theseus* 1.5, "May I therefore succeed in purifying Fable, making her submit to reason and take on the semblance of History. But where she obstinately disdains to make herself credible, and refuses to admit any element of probability, I shall pray for kindly readers, and such as receive with indulgence the tales of antiquity (*tēn archaiologian*)." Translation from Ref. [16].

[17] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* (=*Rom.ant.*) 7.70.2, translation from Ref. [17] 357.

[18] Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 5.4.4 and 11.89.1

[19] This survey is based on lemma search of *archaiologia* in Ref. [18].

counter ignorance about and bias against non-Greek antiquities, citing examples from Egyptians, Chaldaeans, and Phoenicians as keepers of historical records (*Ag. Ap.* 1.8). That which Josephus countered was his "intense astonishment at the current opinion (*tous oiomenous dein*) that, in the study of primeval history, the Greeks alone deserve serious attention" (*Ag.Ap.* 1.6).[20] The matter of "current opinion" would probably not so much involve cultural ignorance of non-Greek antiquities on the part of other historians,[21] as it concerned the cultural rhetoric surrounding power politics. For instance, when identifying the cultural backgrounds of Rome's foundation, the first-century BCE historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus insisted that Rome descended from "Greek colonies, sent out from the most famous places, and not, as some believe, barbarians and vagabonds" (*Roman antiquities* [=*Rom.ant.*] 7.70.1).[22] Dionysius argued for this hypothesis by connecting Roman ritual observances with "the customs of the Greeks" (*Rom.ant.* 7.71.3). While cultural biases may have been present on both ends of East and West,[23] these examples from Josephus and Dionysius illuminate the cultural distance which one would need to bridge to incorporate the "East" into "Western identity."

Regarding the latter question about the relevance of early Christian literature in this matter, it should be noted from the outset that first-century CE emerging Christianity was perceived by Roman authorities as a *Fremdkörper* coming from Roman Palestine[24] and as an internal division among Jews according to Acts 18:12–17 (cf. Acts 28:22). As a movement originating from Judaism in Roman Palestine, Christianity spread westwards, but its earliest literature attests affiliations with the antiquity of the Near East. This essay will illustrate this point with reference to Enochic traditions as a case study. The reasons for selecting this topic for a case study are as follows. The figure of Enoch is rooted in biblical and other early Jewish traditions about the primeval ancient Near East, and yet Enoch was also the subject of discursive concerns about archetypes and myths in western Jewish diasporas (cf. § 3 below). As a movement originating from Early Judaism, early Christianity incorporated Enochic traditions, ranging from Jesus's genealogy (Luke [=Lk] 3:37) to possible echoes of Enochic woes in Jesus's discourses (Lk 6:24–26), to exhortations on faith (Hebrews 11:5), to explicit quotations from Enochic writings in Jude 14–15, and to other early Christian literature beyond the canonical New Testament (§ 4 below). As such, Enochic traditions merit the attention as a case study, where "East" meets "West," even if they concern an archetypical figure from a distant, primeval past, where history receded to a realm of myths and legends. These traditions were considered significant to merit early Christian discursive attention in various ways. This went beyond the established intra-Greek framework of the Greek Bible among Greek-speaking Jews and Christians.

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[20] Translation from Ref. [19] 165.

[21] For instance, in his *Library of History* (=*Bib.hist.*), the first-century BCE historian Diodorus Siculus devoted extensive digressions to the Chaldaeans and their observations of the stars (*Bib.hist.* 2.29–31), while the Roman geographer Strabo digressed on the antiquity of Phoenician cities Tyrus and Sidon (*Geography* 16.2.22).

[22] Translation from Ref. [17] 357.

[23] For instance, the Greek novel *Callirhoe* written by Chariton around the turn of the common era includes a historicizing perspective on Artaxerxes, king of Persia in Babylon, attributing a pejorative perspective on the Greeks as "braggarts and beggars" (*Callirhoe* 5.3.2) to him.

[24] See n. 5 above, in particular Tacitus' evidence.

In what follows, before turning to Enochic traditions in Early Judaism (§ 3) and to specific cases of Enochic traditions in early Christian literature (§ 4), I will first survey cultural perceptions of "East" and "West" in the early Roman era, to situate "ancient Eastern traditions" more generally in this period (§ 2). Finally, my essay will then turn to an evaluation and conclusions (§ 5).

2. Cultural perceptions of east and west in the early Roman era

What did concepts of "East" and "West" mean in the early Roman period? In order to situate the case study of Enochic traditions more broadly in historical and cultural geographies of the time,[25] I will highlight these concepts across corpora of texts (§ 2.1), turn to these concepts in a first-century CE context of conflict and the concomitant question of gaps to be bridged (§ 2.2), and then consider early Christian settings of understanding "East" and "West" (§ 2.3).

2.1 East and west across corpora of texts

In Greek literature of the early Roman era, the "West" could variously stand for western parts of the empire. As such, *Hesperia* denoted "western land" and had allegedly served as a primeval Greek appellation of Italy, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus recounts in his survey of legends around the origin of this country's name (*Rom.ant.* 1.35.1–3 at 1.35.3). By the turn of the common era, "the western world," *to hesperion* (Strabo, *Geography* 1.1.8, 3.1.2) or *hē hesperios gē* (Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 1.67), was recurrently associated with the Iberians.[26] Other early Roman associations with "western nations" were "the Gauls and some other western nations" (*hesperia ethnē*)[27] or "the Celts, the Germans, and Britain" as the "West" (*ta hesperia*) subdued by Caesar.[28] On a generalized plane of continents, Philo of Alexandria conceived of "West" as related to Europe and of "East" as related to Asia. We may infer this from his chiastic formulation *ethnē ta heōia*, *ta hesperia*, *Eurōpēn*, *Asia*, "the eastern nations, and the western, Europe and Asia" (*On the Life of Moses 2* 20). The "western ocean," *ho hesperios Ōkeanos*, was a Roman term for the Atlantic Ocean.[29] In his *Description of Greece* 7.8.9, the second-century CE geographical guide Pausanias refers to the Romans, who subdued the Macedonian empire, as inhabiting the western part of Europe, *ta pros hesperan nemomenoi tēs Eurōpēs*.

By comparison, earlier Semitic evidence of an Aramaic composition, 4Q552-553a (*4QFour Kingdoms*[a–c] *ar*), dated to the early Hellenistic age (late 4th-mid-2nd century BCE),[30] was still entangled with an ancient Near Eastern perspective of empires, which yet envisioned a westward movement of dominion. That is, *4QFour Kingdoms* includes concepts of "East," *ma*[*dnkhā*] (4Q552 1 ii 4) and "West," *ma'arba* (4Q552 1 ii 7) in a

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[25] With regard to Greek evidence, my brief survey is based on Ref. [18] TLG search of the Greek terms for "West," *hesperios/Esperia*.

[26] Strabo, *Geography* 1.1.8 further adds *hoi Maurousioi*, the Mauretanians.

[27] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Rom.ant.* 1.38.2.

[28] Plutarch, *Comparatio Niciae et Crassi* 4.2.

[29] Plutarch, *Caesar* 23.2; Appian, *Roman History* prooemium 11; cf. Ref. [20] 2418 s.v. *Ōkeanos* as a noun modified by various adjectives: *Atlantikos*, Atlantic; *boreios*, northern; *hesperios*, western; *kata mesēmbrian*, southern; *Prettanikos*, British.

[30] Ref. [21] 57–90 ("552–553-553a. 4QLes quatre Royaumes ar") at 58 on the date of composition.

visionary context of trees symbolically representing kingdoms. The "East" refers to the dominion of Babylon over Persia (4Q552 1 ii 5–6), while the "West" refers to dominion over the lands, the sea, and the harbors under Persian dynasties (4Q552 1 ii 7–10).[31]

In the first-century CE Roman world, notions of East and West were further embedded in the cultural geography of a Mediterranean Greek-speaking Levant. This may be illustrated by two quotes from Chariton's Greek novel *Callirhoe*, dated to the early Roman period.[32]

> *As far as Syria and Cilicia Callirhoe readily put up with the journey, for she still heard Greek spoken and could look upon the sea which led to Syracuse. But when she arrived at the River Euphrates, the starting point of the Great King's empire, beyond which lies the vast continent, then she was filled with longing for her home and family and despaired of ever returning (Callirhoe 5.1.3).*

> *"There (in Ionia) the land which you gave me, though foreign, was still Greek, and I had the great consolation of living by the sea. But now you cast me forth from familiar surroundings and I am separated from my home by a whole world. This time you take Miletus from me, as before you took Syracuse. Carried off beyond the Euphrates, I, an islander born, being enclosed in the depths of a barbarian continent where no sea exists" (Callirhoe's direct speech; Callirhoe 5.1.5–6).*

These quotations indicate that, for a Greek-speaking citizen of Syracuse (Sicily) and, discursively speaking, for the Greek audience of *Callirhoe*, the eastern Mediterranean coastal regions would still be within a recognizable environment in terms of language (Greek) and mobility (travel by sea). Yet the lands "beyond the Euphrates" would be wholly non-Greek and unfamiliar as a "vast continent" to the East of the Mediterranean, and "barbarian" regarding the historicizing setting of the Persian empire as opposed to Greek dominion.

This Greek cognitive dissonance regarding the ancient Near East would not necessarily apply to religious notions of the "East" in early Jewish and Jewish Hellenistic contexts. For instance, in the philosophical thought of Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BCE-ca. 50 CE), the "East," *anatolai*, could symbolically stand for both the best and the worst. Paradise, planted in the East (*kata anatolas*), archetypically stands for "right reason (which) never sets, and is never extinguished, but it is its nature to be always rising (*anatellein*)" (*Allegorical Interpretation 1* 46).[33] Referring to Zechariah 6:12 as a prooftext, Philo further associates the appellation "East," *anatolē*, with the "incorporeal being" and with the "divine image" (*On the Confusion of Tongues* [=*Confusion*] 62). Yet the "East" may also be an example of a "worse kind of dawning," *tou de cheironos anatolēs eidous hypodeigma* (*Confusion* 64). Philo associates this with the biblical Balak's willingness to curse the people blessed by God (Numbers 23:7). In this connection, Philo symbolically associates Balak's dwelling place in Mesopotamia with a mind being overwhelmed by the depth of a river (*Confusion* 64–66).

As a mythical place in the East, paradise was also a recurrent topic across other ancient Jewish literature, including Enochic literature. For instance, as part of his

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[31] Ref. [21] 66–67.

[32] Ref. [22] 2–3 on "the range 25 B.C.-A.D. 50" as date of composition of *Callirhoe*; translations from Ref. [22] 233.

[33] Translation from Ref. [23]. Cf. Philo, *On Planting* 40 on Paradise in the East as related to wisdom, light, rising.

visionary eastward journey (*1 Enoch* 20–36), the protagonist Enoch encounters the "paradise of righteousness" (*1 Enoch* 32.3) in the East. Yet the Qumran book of *Astronomical Enoch* (= 4QEnastr[a–d] ar) associates the "[Paradi]se of Righteousness," [*pard*]*es qushtha*, with a "third space," assigned to the deserts, "seven mountains," and the paradise of righteousness, within a tripartite division, which allots a first place to the abodes of human beings and a second place to all the seas and rivers (4Q209 [4QEnastr[b] ar] frg. 23 ll. 8–10).[34]

2.2 East and west in a first-century CE context of conflict

The first-century CE Graeco-Roman world in which emerging Christianity spread its mission westwards was also a world ultimately characterized by conflict between "East" and "West," which culminated in the Jewish war against Rome (66–70 CE). This war has been conceptualized as an "ancient clash of civilizations."[35] Yet long-term diachronic perspectives on Jewish-Roman relations have recently been revisited, turning from a conflict model to cultural competition.[36]

In this context of conflict, concepts of "East" and "West" did play a significant role in both pre-70 CE apocalyptic discourses and post-70 CE historical discourses. In pre-70 CE settings, Qumran sectarian literature has yielded evidence of apocalyptic applications of prophecy from Isaiah 10:34–11:5 to ideas of war. Originally related to the envisioned fall of Assur, these Qumran texts applied it to war against the "Kittim" (4Q161 [*4QIsaiah Pesher*[a]] frgs. 8–10; 4Q285 frg. 5), which ultimately became a biblical code-word for Romans.[37] The apocalyptic perspective of a war of "the sons of light" against "the sons of darkness" in the *War Scroll* (1QM 1.1) further envisions "great panic among the sons of Japhet," when Assur falls (1QM 1.6). "Sons of Japhet" would also be western nations, in view of the biblical table of the nations (Genesis 10:1–32 at vv. 2–5) and its explanation by Flavius Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities* [=*Ant.*] 1.122–129).

In a post-70 CE context of Roman victory against the Jews, having culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem, Tacitus writes that "the majority were convinced that the ancient scriptures of their priests (*antiquis sacerdotum litteris*) alluded to the present as the very time when the Orient would triumph (*ut valesceret Oriens*) and from Judaea would go forth men destined to rule the world. This mysterious prophecy referred to Vespasian and Titus" (*Hist.* 5.13.2).[38] Further, Flavius Josephus also described "an ambiguous oracle," *chrēsmos amphibolos*, mistakenly interpreted by "many of their wise men" (*polloi tōn sophōn*) as applying to world hegemony by someone from the country of the Jews (*Jewish War* [=*J.W.*] 6.312), which yet applied to Vespasian's proclamation as emperor in Judaea (*J.W.* 6.313). In his *Jewish War* 4.618, Josephus explicitly stated that Vespasian had been proclaimed the new emperor in the *East* (*ton epi tēs anatolēs autokratora*).

In a post-70 CE context, the Matthean narration about *magicians* coming from the East, *magoi apo anatolōn*, to worship a king of the Jews (Matthew [=Mt] 2:1) could also have ambiguous political overtones in the Roman world. *Magicians* could have varying roles of divination and omens attributed to them, as a collective part

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[34] Ref. [24] 436–437.

[35] Ref. [25].

[36] Ref. [26].

[37] Cf. Ref. [27] 241 n. 30: "Today there is quasi-unanimity in identifying the victorious Kittim of Qumran literature with the Romans."

[38] Translation from Ref. [28] 288.

of the perplexed entourage of magicians, enchanters, Chaldaeans, and sages at the Babylonian court of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel[39] or as an individual who, according to tradition attributed to Aristotle, had come from Syria to Athens and predicted a violent end for Socrates (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* 2.45). This ambiguity probably added to the sense of imminence of the Matthean birth and infancy narrative of Jesus (Mt 1:18–2:23).

2.3 East and west as part of early Christian perspectives

There are no explicit indications of cultural perceptions of "East" and "West" in representations of Jesus in the Gospels, but discourses of Jesus do yield implications of a cultural and religious framework of Jewish audiences in Syro-Palestinian regions in the early Roman era which differed from the dominant culture of the Graeco-Roman world. Except for perhaps Matthew, the canonical Gospels have recurrently been understood as authored by Gentile Christians writing for Gentile readers,[40] for whom information on "the Jews" and their "tradition of the elders" (Mark 7:3) would be an *etic* perspective. Yet the originator of the gospel movement, with its varying appellations as "the Way" (Acts 9:2, 19:9.23, 22:4, 24:14), "Christians" (Acts 11:26), and the "sect of the Nazoreans" (Acts 24:5), was the Jew Jesus. For Jesus and his earliest followers, Judaism of Roman Palestine would be a familiar world, perceived from an *emic* perspective. The fact that the Judaism of Jesus did not exactly coincide with the dominant culture of the Graeco-Roman world may be apparent from the language of Jesus (traces of Aramaic words)[41] as well as his religious and cultural affiliations with the Scriptures of Israel rather than with the literary canons of the Graeco-Roman world. For Jesus, people gathering into the kingdom of God "from east and west, and from north and south" (Lk 13:29) would be seeing "Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets" at the heart of this kingdom (Lk 13:28).

To be sure, Jesus was open-minded to Jews as well as Gentiles as audiences of his teachings in the Syro-Palestinian regions, even to the point of Jesus' amazement about a centurion's faith as compared with all Israel (Lk 7:9 par. Mt. 8:10).[42] Yet even after his earthly death, Jesus of Nazareth was perceived as a mighty prophet by his Jewish followers (Lk 24:19) upon whom they had fixed their hopes to redeem Israel (Lk 24:21) and to restore its kingdom (Acts 1:6). In other words, Jesus and his earliest followers cannot be disentangled from this movement's early Jewish hopes for Israel.

Turning to Paul the Apostle, whose Letters approximately dating between 50 and 60 CE constitute the earliest documents of Christianity,[43] "East" and "West" were part of the scope of his missionary activities. These included obviously Eastern localities in his early years, such as Arabia and Damascus (Galatians [=Gal] 1:17), ranged from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Romans [=Rom] 15:19), and envisioned more Western itineraries by way of Rome to Spain (Rom 15:28). Yet no unidirectional sense

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[39] LXX Daniel 2:1–49 at vv. 2.10.12.27; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 10.195, 10.198–199, 10.203, 10.234.

[40] Cf. e.g. Ref. [29] 320–321 (Mark); Ref. [30] 73, 79 on a "Gentile Christian perspective" of Luke with a "Greek target culture" in mind; Ref. [7] 541 on the Johannine addressees as "überwiegend heidenchristliche Gemeinde."

[41] E.g. *Boanērges*, Mark (= Mk) 3:17; *talitha qoum*, Mk 5:41; *ephphata*, Mk 7:34; *abba*, Mk 14:36; *elōhi elōhi lema sabakhthani*, Mk 15:34; *raka*, Mt. 5:22. Cf. Ref. [31].

[42] Yet the cultural framework of language in Mk 7:24–30 at v. 27 implies that the Markan Jesus would not let the election of Israel be trampled by Gentile "supersessionism"; cf. Ref. [32] 211.

[43] For an extensive chronological framework of Paul's life and letters, cf. e.g. Ref. [33].

of exchanging Jerusalem for Rome as destination can have been on the apostle's mind, when he wrote his Letters. For he repeatedly refers to a collection as service for the holy ones of the Jerusalem church (1 Corinthias [=1 Cor] 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8–9; Gal 2:10; Rom 15:25–32). Furthermore, a Greek-Aramaic bilingual outlook of some of Paul's words (*abba ho pater*, Gal 4:6, Rom 8:15; *marana tha*, 1 Cor 16:22)[44] imply that the apostle wrote as a man of two worlds, coming from the Semi-Hellenized Semitic-speaking Near East[45] and addressing Greek-speaking congregations as part of the westward spread of Christianity.

"East" and "West" are also in the picture in the Acts of the Apostles. Luke describes the Jewish festival of Pentecost (Acts 2:1) as the occasion at which the Jerusalem church sought to address assembled pilgrims regarding the gospel. Eastern and Western diasporas of Jewish communities are among the Lucan description of pilgrims to Jerusalem: "Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians" (Acts 2:9–11, RSV). This enumeration of peoples, which has been associated with an "inherited list" to emphasize a long-standing Jewish tradition,[46] includes a heavy Levantine and Eastern component, in terms of geographical provenance as well as languages, which would certainly not coincide with the dominant culture of the Graeco-Roman world. The Lucan description indicates no unfamiliarity or dissonance from the peoples of the "East" among the gathered people as "barbarians," such as illustrated in *Callirhoe* (5.1.5–6; § 2.1 above), but instead refers to them as "Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5, RSV).

Christianity never was a purely "Western" phenomenon of Graeco-Roman acculturation even long after the first century CE.[47] The Near Eastern settings of the early Christian movement remained in place with the spread of eastern Christianity,[48] even though the canonical Greek New Testament writings attest the westward spread of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world. In the patristic imagination of Eusebius of Caesarea (263–340 CE), even the Jewish-Christian leadership[49] of the Jerusalem church continued for some time after 70 CE until the defeat of the Bar Kokhba revolt under Hadrian in 135 CE. And Christian presence in Roman Palestine continued with

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[44] Cf. Ref. [34]; Ref. [35] at 138–143 on the syntagm "works of the law" in 4QMMT and Paul's Letters; Refs. [36, 37].

[45] For the term "Semi-Hellenized East," cf. Ref. [38].

[46] Ref. [39] 240 and 242. Cf. Ref. [40] 121–122, "a relic of an older list" (121), who further compares Acts 2:9–11 with "accounts of the distribution of Jews throughout the world," such as in Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.282, *J.W.* 2.398, *Ant.* 14.114–118; *Sibylline Oracles* 3.271; Philo, *Against Flaccus* 45 f. and *On the Embassy to Gaius* 281 f., thereby arguing for the Lucan use of "the precedent of Jewish lists" (122) and concluding: "He wished to indicate in a rough, approximate, impressionistic way that the whole world was represented at Pentecost" (124).

[47] Cf. e.g. Ref. [41] 16–42 ("The World of Early Christian Traditions") at 20–32 ("The Environment of the New Testament: Religions in the Greco-Roman World") and 33–41 ("Judaism as a Greco-Roman Religion") appears to imply that Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity were wholly Graeco-Roman phenomena, thereby leaving out of the picture Semitic ancient Near Eastern components or aspects of tradition.

[48] Cf. Ref. [42].

[49] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.5.3 lists 15 short-lived bishops in Jerusalem from James the brother of Jesus up to Judas, all of them reportedly "belonging to the circumcision" (4.5.4).

Theophilus, bishop of Caesarea, in the second century CE and with Sextus Julius Africanus (160–240 CE), living at Emmaus near Jerusalem.

These observations on cultural perceptions of "East" and "West" in the early Roman era should set the stage for our discussion of traditions from the ancient Near East as incorporated in the early Jewish context of emerging Christianity, focusing on the case of Enochic traditions.

3. Enochic traditions in early judaism between east and west

3.1 Enoch in biblical tradition

The Enoch, *Chanoch* in Hebrew, to whom subsequent Enochic traditions were attributed is a biblical figure of the age before the Flood, mentioned in Genesis (=Gen) 5:21–24. Son of Jared, Enoch is the seventh generation after Adam in "the book of the generations of Adam" (Gen 5:1–32). Even though he is only tersely described, the biblical verses about him twice refer to his "walking with God" (Gen 5:22.24), which the Greek Bible renders as "well pleasing to God" (LXX Gen 5:22.24).[50] Enoch's end is somewhat mysteriously described as "and he was not, for God took him" (Gen 5:24, RSV), which the Greek Bible renders as "and he was not found, because God transferred him" (LXX Gen 5:24, [43]). The biblical genealogy with Enoch as the seventh generation since Adam recurs in 1 Chronicles 1:1–3.

Yet Genesis also provides a twilight perspective on primeval genealogy.[51] It mentions one "Enoch" as the descendant of Cain (Gen 4:17), with a city named after him, and as ancestor of one "Lamech" who became a proverb of degeneration from Cainite sevenfold vengeance toward seventy-sevenfold blood revenge (Gen 4:18.23–24). Genesis 5:1–24 mentions another "Enoch" as the descendant of Seth, who walked with God (Gen 5:21–24) and was the grandfather of another "Lamech," the father of Noach (Gen 5:22.25–29).

3.2 Enochic literature in the second temple period

As compared with the terse biblical account of Enoch, Enochic literature, pseudepigraphically named after this biblical literature, is vast, including various books of *1 Enoch*: the Book of Watchers (*1 Enoch* 1–36), the Book of Parables (*1 Enoch* 37–71), the Book of the Luminaries (*1 Enoch* 72–82), the Dream Visions (*1 Enoch* 83–90), the Epistle of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 91–105), the Birth of Noah (*1 Enoch* 106–107), and a final book (*1 Enoch* 108), of which the dates of composition range from the late fourth century BCE to the turn of the common era.[52] In its totality, *1 Enoch* has only been transmitted as a complete text through late medieval Ethiopic manuscripts.[53] However, Greek fragments and especially Aramaic fragments from Qumran have made it possible to relate *1 Enoch* to antiquity, more specifically to the Second Temple

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[50] Translation from Ref. [43] 9.

[51] Cf. Ref. [44] 23: "Some critics have argued that the two lists reflect competing versions that deploy the same group of fathers and sons in different patterns: some of the names are identical in both lists, others—such as Cain-Kenan, Irad-Jared—may well be variants of each other."

[52] See Ref. [45] vii, 1–13.

[53] Ref. [46]; Ref. [47] at 6 still counted five major Ethiopic manuscripts of *1 Enoch*. Yet more recently, Ref. [48] have added more than twenty additional copies of *Ethiopic Enoch*.

period. The Qumran evidence also helps to situate Enochic traditions about ancient Near Eastern settings, as I will briefly highlight below.

Qumran Aramaic manuscripts contain three types of Enochic literature: (a) Enoch manuscripts paralleling *1 Enoch* (4Q201–202, 204–207, 212 [*4QEnoch*ᵃ⁻ᵍ *ar*])[54]; the Enochic *Book of Giants* (1Q23–24 [1QEnGiantsᵃ⁻ᵇ ar], 2Q26 [2QEnGiants ar], 4Q203 [4QEnGiantsᵃ ar], 4Q530–533 [4QEnGiantsᵇ⁻ᵉ ar], 6Q8 [6QpapEnGiants ar])[55] with tales about the imagined primeval age; and (c) *Astronomical Enoch* (4Q208–211 [4QEnastrᵃ⁻ᵈ ar]) with observations about the stars.[56] The Qumran fragments parallel various sections of *1 Enoch*, except for the Book of Parables (*1 Enoch* 37–71).[57]

The Aramaic *1 Enoch* manuscripts from Qumran (4Q201–202, 204–207, 212), which are palaeographically dated to the second and first centuries BCE, parallel sections from the Book of Watchers,[58] the Dream Visions,[59] the Epistle of Enoch,[60] and the Birth of Noah.[61]

The Book of Watchers as witnessed in the Qumran Aramaic fragments envisions the rebellion of the Watchers "in the days of Jared," *bᵉyome Yared* (*1 Enoch* 6:6, 4Q201 col. 3 l. 4), at Mount Hermon, begetting giants, whose rate of growth surpassed available sustenance, after which all flesh started to become consumed by them (*1 Enoch* 7:1–5).[62] Enoch's ultimate role in the Book of Watchers is that of intermediary between the angels, who pass on exhortation of divine judgment against lawlessness, and the fallen Watchers on earth (*1 Enoch* 12:3–14:7).[63] This archetypical story mentions four archangels, Michael, Sariel, Raphael and Gabriel, who take up the case of bloodshed on the earth (*1 Enoch* 9:1–11). Two of them, Michael and Gabriel, also occur in Daniel's apocalyptic prophecies with a view to an unfolding history of wars and dominions of successive kingdoms in the ancient Near East (Dan 9–12 at 9:16.21, 10:13.21, 12:1).[64] As such, *1 Enoch* constitutes an archetypical story with an eschatologically oriented discourse of admonition against lawlessness rooted in ancient Near Eastern antiquity.

As compared with biblical tradition, which tersely narrates that Enoch was taken by God (Gen 5:24), the Book of Watchers elaborates on this (*1 Enoch* 12:1–2),

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[54] Texts published by Ref. [49] 139–272, 340–362.

[55] 1Q23–24 published by Ref. [50] 97–98; 2Q26 and 6Q8 published by Ref. [51] 90–91 and 116–119; 4Q203 published by Ref. [49] 310–317; 4Q530–533 published by Ref. [52] 9–115 ("530–533, 203 1. 4QLivre des Géants ar"). Cf. Ref. [53] 43–185, 221.

[56] Texts published by Ref. [49] 278–297.

[57] The distinct place of the Book of Parables among early Enochic writings is also reflected in the fact that next to the other books, which are subject of commentary by Ref. [54], the Parables of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 37–71) are subject of a separate commentary, together with the Book of the Luminaries (*1 Enoch* 72–82): Ref. [55].

[58] 4Q201–202, 4Q204 columns (= cols.) 1–13; 4Q205 fragment (= frg.) 1 cols. 1–2; 4Q206 frg. 2 col. 2, frgs. 3–4.

[59] 4Q204 frg. 4 (*1 Enoch* 89:31–36); 4Q205 frg. 2 col. 1 (*1 Enoch* 89:11–14), col. 2 (*1 Enoch* 89:29–31), col. 3 (*1 Enoch* 89:43–44); 4Q206 frg. 5 cols. 1–2 (*1 Enoch* 88:3–89:16), col. 3 (*1 Enoch* 89:27–30); 4Q207 frg. 1 (*1 Enoch* 86:1–3).

[60] 4Q204 frg. 5 col. 1 lines 20–24 (*1 Enoch* 104:13–105:2); 4Q212 col. 2 (*1 Enoch* 91:18–92:2), col. 3 (*1 Enoch* 92:5–93:4), col. 4 (*1 Enoch* 93:9–10 + 91:11–17), col. 5 (*1 Enoch* 93:11–94:2).

[61] 4Q204 frg. 5 col. 1 lines 26–28 (*1 Enoch* 106:1–2), col. 2 (*1 Enoch* 106:13–107:2).

[62] 4Q201 col. 3 ll. 13–21 // 4Q202 col. 2 ll. 17–25.

[63] 4Q202 col. 6; 4Q204 col. 5 l. 19, col. 6 ll. 1–19.

[64] On intersections between the Enochic Book of Watchers and Daniel, such as Enoch's vision of the divine throne in *1 Enoch* 14 and Daniel 7, cf. Ref. [56] 12–29 at 20.

extensively narrating Enoch's heavenly ascent (*1 Enoch* 13:8–16:4) and otherworldly journeys (*1 Enoch* 17–36). These otherworldly journeys include an eastward localization of the "Paradise of Justice" (*1 Enoch* 32:3; 4Q206 frg. 3 l. 21). The representation of Enoch as the seventh antediluvian generation in a total of ten generations between Adam and Noach, with his closeness with the divinity and his heavenly ascent, has distant parallels from Mesopotamian cultural backgrounds. Ancient Mesopotamian texts also attributed distinct roles to seventh-generation antediluvian protagonists. These reportedly concern Sumerian primeval king lists[65] and various myths of seventh-generation antediluvian sages Adapa-Oannes and Enmeduranki.[66] Long-standing Mesopotamian contexts affirm the impression that the Enochic writings were embedded in Near Eastern antiquity.

Turning to the *Book of Giants*, a unique Qumranite addition to the corpus of Enochic writings, ancient Mesopotamian contexts become even more pronounced. That is, *4QBook of Giants*[b] *ar* mentions one "Gilgamesh" (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 l. 2), thereby referring to a legendary Mesopotamian hero, to whom the Gilgamesh epic is attributed.[67] According to the reconstruction by É. Puech, a further figure, "Kh[o]babish," further accompanied Gilgamesh (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 l. 2). Puech associates Khobabish with the Assyrian Khubaba or Sumerian Khuwawa, who in ancient Babylonian tradition would be "the living, the immortal," a divinely commissioned guardian of a forest of cedars, an adversary of Gilgamesh.[68] This text further turns to ominous dream visions of a watered garden going up in flames and of divine judgment by the "Ruler of the heavens" descending to the earth, which Enoch had to interpret for an assembly of Nephilin[69] and giants (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 ll. 1–24 // 6Q8 frgs. 3 + 2). In Puech's reconstruction, the first dream also alludes to the "flood," [*mabul*]*ah* (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 l. 12).[70] The larger setting of this narration clearly implies interdiscursivity with Mesopotamian traditions and protagonists in the Enochic *Book of Giants*.

Palaeographically dated between the early second century BCE and the late first century BCE, the *Astronomical Enoch* (4Q208–211) at Qumran has been compared with the Book of the Luminaries in *1 Enoch* 72–82 as concerning observations on sun, moon and calendrical practices. References to the solar year in terms of 364 days (*1 Enoch* 72:32, 74:10.12)[71] may constitute an astrological background to the symbolical

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[65] Cf. Ref. [57] 5–6 on ten antediluvian kings in Berossus' account of the Flood, "derived from a Sumerian version of the story" (6).

[66] Cf. Ref. [58] at 66, who account for the great variation, even amounting to "contradictory accounts," as due to oral transmission in varying Mesopotamian contexts, but traces parallels to Enoch's heavenly counterpart and his conceptual double in the figure of Noach back to old Mesopotamian traditions.

[67] See Ref. [52] 31 on Gilgamesh: "le nom du héros légendaire de l'Épopée suméro-akkadienne, roi d'Uruk, et devenu même une divinité chtonienne." Cf. Ref. [59] at 155 and nn. 24–25 about the apocalyptic perspective of the Qumran *Book of Giants* on the wavering strength of Gilgamesh, otherwise known for prototypical strength in the epic Gilgamesh tradition, in face of stronger angelic powers (4Q531 frg. 22 ll. 1–12 at ll. 4–7).

[68] Ref. [52] 30. Cf. Ref. [57] 93 on Gilgamesh and Enkidu, who "demolished Humbaba the mighty one of the Pine Forest" (Gilgamesh tablet 8, col. 2).

[69] 4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 ll. 6 (*nphilaya*) and 21. "Nephilim" are also present in the prelude to the biblical Flood narrative in Genesis 6:4.

[70] Ref. [52] 28. Divine judgment by the Flood leaving giants no escape features in the Hebrew Qumran text 4Q370 (*4QExhortation Based on the Flood*) col. 1.

[71] A 364-day solar calendar further occurs in *Jubilees* 6:32.

age of 365 years attributed to Enoch in Gen 5:23.[72] The focuson astronomical observations may also be situated against broader cultural backgrounds of the ancient Near East, where the Chaldaeans were reputedly the most ancient and renowned experts in the field of astrology.[73] *Astronomical Enoch* further contains references to "East" and "West," as part of Enoch's explanation to his son Methuselah how they are related to the movements of the heavenly bodies (4Q209 frg. 23 ll. 1–7 // 4Q210 frg. 1 col. 2 ll. 14–18; *1 Enoch* 76:13–77:3) and to beneficial and harmful winds from various wind directions (4Q210 frgs. 1 col. 2 ll. 1–9; *1 Enoch* 76:3–10). As already noted before, 4Q209 frg. 23 l. 9 refers to the "Paradise of Justice" as a probably mythical "third space" (cf. § 2.1 above).[74]

3.3 Enochic traditions in other second temple Jewish literature

Beyond the Enochic writings and their ancient Near Eastern contexts, Enoch and Enochic traditions were also broadly represented in other Jewish literature of the Second Temple period. The survey below highlights four examples, ranging from Sirach to Jubilees, Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus. These examples also illustrate their significance across various settings of Early Judaism, including Jewish Hellenism.

3.3.1 Sirach

The biblical figure of Enoch is not confined to apocalyptic tradition,[75] but he is also part of sapiential tradition, as his presence in the Book of Sirach, a Jewish wisdom book from the early second century BCE,[76] illustrates. As part of his "hymn to the fathers" (Sir 44:1–50:24), concerning famous ancestors of Judaism, Sirach also praises Enoch. Enoch figures at the beginning of his survey of primeval figures, patriarchs, Moses and Aaron, Phinehas, Joshua and Caleb, judges, kings, prophets, and high priests up to Simon son of Onias. Sirach 44:16 reads: "Henoch pleased God, and he was changed, an example of repentance for generations" (NETS [43]). In this setting of sapiential praise, Enoch has become a positive biblical stereotype, an example (*hypodeigma*) across generations. This also accords with words in the introduction to the Enochic Book of Watchers that Enoch's discourses were not "[for thi]s generation, but for a [fu]ture generaton" (4Q201 col. 1 l. 4; *1 Enoch* 1:2).[77] Enoch not only figures at the beginning of Sirach's "hymn to the fathers," but also stands out as a unique character after praise of Nehemiah's memory in Sirach 49:13. Sirach 49:14

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[72] Cf. Ref. [58] 66 on comparison of the Enoch figure with the Mesopotamian city Sippar as "the center for the cult of the sun god Shamash, which is reflected in the figure 365 as the number of days in a solar year and the amount of Enoch's years on earth."

[73] Diodorus Siculus, *Bib.hist.* 2.29–31. Cf. Ref. [60] 132–88 ("Writing Angels, Astronomy, and Aramaic in the Early Hellenistic Age") at 186: "the *Astronomical Book* reminds us of the continued vitality and prestige of Mesopotamian sciences and scholasticism."

[74] In this regard, 4Q209 frg. 23 l. 9 differs from *1 Enoch* 32:3, where the "paradise of righteousness" is situated in an eastward journey (*1 Enoch* 30:1, 31:1, 32:1.2), but it also differs from *1 Enoch* 77:3, where the "garden of righteousness" is situated in a tripartite "north" (*1 Enoch* 77:3).

[75] The "early Enochic literature" yet firmly belongs to ancient apocalypticism, standing at the beginning of a survey of Jewish apocalyptic literature in Ref. [61] 43–84.

[76] Cf. Ref. [62] 88; 89–90 on the textual transmission from Hebrew, witnessed by fragments from Qumran, Masada and the Cairo Genizah, to Greek translation which is part of the Septuagint.

[77] Translation from Ref. [24] 399.

reads, "No one was created on the earth such as Henoch, for he too was taken up from the earth" (NETS [43]), after which Sirach 49:15–16 honors Joseph, Shem, Seth, and Adam. It has been argued that *1 Enoch* and Sirach share certain thematic and social connections.[78] This further illustrates that the interdiscursivity of Early Judaism with Enochic traditions cannot be limited to apocalyptic thought.

3.3.2 Jubilees

Enoch and his works also figure in the parabiblical account of discourses attributed to Moses in *Jubilees*, of which the composition has been dated to the mid-second century BCE.[79] Like *1 Enoch*, the only virtually complete textual witness to *Jubilees* is in Ethiopic.[80] The Dead Sea discoveries also include Hebrew fragments of *Jubilees* (4Q216–224 [4QJub^{a-h}]; 4Q225–227 [4QpsJub^{a-c}]), and the book of *Jubilees* appears to be quoted as an authoritative text in the *Damascus Document* (CD 16.3–4 // 4QD^f frg. 4 col. 2 l. 5)[81] and in 4Q228 frg. 1 col. 1 ll. 9–10. In its review of the biblical past, *Jubilees* 4.16–26 narrates Enoch's birth, his learning regarding the signs of heaven, his dream visions, his witness against the Watchers, his transference to the garden of Eden and his witness regarding judgment of the world. The Hebrew text 4Q227 (4QpsJub[?]^c) frg. 2 ll. 1–6 further mentions Enoch's witness against the Watchers for the broader purpose of admonition "[so t]hat the j[ust] would not stray" (l. 6).[82] Perspectives on the genre of *Jubilees* range from "a borderline case for the apocalyptic genre"[83] to "Rewritten Scripture."[84] As such, the significance of Enoch in *Jubilees* further illustrates the importance of Enochic traditions in Second Temple Judaism.

3.3.3 Philo

Enoch also figures in the Jewish Hellenistic philosophy of Philo of Alexandria. In his treatise *On the Life of Abraham* 17, Philo describes repentance from sins and improvement as a matter of importance next after hope. In this connection, he mentions Enoch as the embodiment of a better way of life, introducing him as follows: "who is called Enoch by the Hebrews, as Greeks would say 'pleasing'".[85] Philo subsequently cites the Greek Bible translation of Genesis 5:24. Enoch thereby appears a figure of discursive importance between East and West, between the world of the Hebrews and that of the Greeks.

In his treatise *On the Posterity of Cain*, Philo also presents a philosophical understanding of the figure of Enoch. He introduces an understanding of the name Enoch, *Enōkh*, as "your gift," *kharis sou*, which may yet be interpreted in two directions. That

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[78] Ref. [63] has argued for "literary similarities and connections" as well as a "social connection" between author milieus of *1 Enoch* and Sirach regarding the theme of divine wisdom and interrelated milieus of scribe-sages and priests.

[79] Ref. [64] at 43–44.

[80] Ref. [64] 41–43 further refers to fragmentary Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Latin witnesses to the text of *Jubilees*, next to four complete Ethiopic manuscripts.

[81] Thus e.g. Ref. [65] 78.

[82] Translation from Ref. [24] 483.

[83] Ref. [61] 83.

[84] Ref. [66] 61–62.

[85] In Philo's Greek (transliterated): *hos kaleitai para men Hebraiois Enōch, hōs d' an Hellēnes eipoien kecharismenos*.

is, in *Posterity* 40–43, Philo distinguishes two Enochs, one the descendant of Cain (Gen 4:17–18),[86] the other the descendant of Seth (Gen 5:21.25).[87] Philo juxtaposes these two in terms of Cainite self-perception of everything as "a free gift of their own soul" over against a Sethic race of people "who do not claim as their own all that is fair in creation, but acknowledge all as due to the gift of God" (*Posterity* 42).[88] In Philo's understanding of the biblical Enoch, the latter type comes to stand for "the better people" (*hoi ameinones*, *Post.* 41), "lovers of virtue" (*philaretoi*, *Post.* 42), "a race of those who escape the treacherous, reckless, and perverse (way of) life which is amassed with passions and full of vices" (*Post.* 43). Interpreting Genesis 5:24,[89] Philo generalizes this to a "sort which is very hard to find (*dyseureton*)" in the following way: "For those who have been well-pleasing (*euarestēsantas*) to God, and whom God has translated and removed (*metebibase kai metethēken*) from perishable to immortal races, are no more found among the multitude (*para tois pollois ouketh' heuriskontai*)" (*Post.* 43).[90] Philo's interpretation elaborates on the well-pleasing (*euērestēsen*) character of Enoch toward God, on the situation of Enoch not being found (*ou hēurisketo*), and on the divine agency of taking Enoch up (*metethēken*), all of which occur in LXX Genesis 5:24.

Philo's philosophical digression on the two biblical Enochs in Genesis 4–5 also implies a sense of ambiguity, which opens a discursive space for reflection about the "gift" of humankind and how people could be disposed to it, either in a self-centred, anthropocentric way or open-minded to the "primary cause" (*prōton aition*, *Confusion* 123) behind creation (*Posterity* 40–43; *Confusion* 122–123).

3.3.4 Josephus

In the Greek *Jewish Antiquities* of Flavius Josephus, Enoch, called *Anōkhos*, is really more a footnote to the lineage and genealogy of Noach than an extensively described protagonist by himself (*Ant.* 1.79, 1.85, 1.86). When Josephus mentions seven generations (*hepta geneas*) since Adam, who "continued to believe in God as Lord of the universe and in everything to take virtue for their guide,"[91] after which degeneration took hold of subsequent generations who abandoned ancestral customs (*Ant.* 1.72),[92] he omits reference to Enoch as that "seventh generation."[93] Josephus does describe astronomical discoveries by the descendants of Seth in the antediluvian age (*Ant.* 1.69), which conforms with the literary agenda of incorporating astronomical lore in Enochic writings (cf. § 3.2 above). According to Josephus, these generations also erected two pillars, of brick and stone, "in the land of Seiris," possibly an ancient Near

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[86] In *On the Confusion of Tongues* 122–123, Philo elaborates on the Cainite descendant Enoch as denier of God as "the primary cause of things," who attributes everything to his own intellect.

[87] In his treatise *On the Change of Names* 34, Philo also briefly refers to the Sethic descendant Enoch, as described in Gen 5:24.

[88] Translation from Ref. [67] 351.

[89] LXX Gen 5:24, *kai euērestēsen Enōkh tōi theōi kai oukh hēurisketo, hoti metethēken auton ho theos*.

[90] Translations from Ref. [67] 351 and 353.

[91] Translation from Ref. [68] 33.

[92] Josephus describes this degeneration in terms of "zeal for vice" and of deeds which would resemble "the audacious exploits told by the Greeks of the giants" (*Ant.* 1.73). Translation from Ref. [68] 35.

[93] Cf. the "Apocalypse of Weeks" in *1 Enoch* 93:1–10; 91:11–17 at 93:1 on Enoch's introduction of himself: "I was born the seventh in the first week, and until my time righteousness endured." Translation from Ref. [45] 140.

Eastern locality,[94] to teach posterity about these discoveries in case of destruction through deluge or fire, as allegedly predicted by Adam (*Ant.* 1.70–71). The historian's approach of Josephus cuts back legendary layers of biblical tradition, such as the incredible ages of antediluvian generations in terms of hundreds of years, including that of Enoch (Gen 5:23). In this connection, Josephus makes the following reader-oriented observation: "The reader should not examine the ages of the individuals at death, for their lifetimes extended into those of their sons and their sons' descendants, but should confine his attention to their dates of birth" (*Ant.* 1.88).[95] Yet the figure of Enoch is not entirely depleted of mystery. For in *Ant.* 9.28, Josephus singles out Elijah and Enoch, "who was before the flood," *tou genomenou pro tēs epombrias*, as the two about whom no one knew of their death.

The above survey may illustrate the breadth of Enochic writings and traditions in Early Judaism between the ancient Near East and the Graeco-Roman world. A recurrently attested tradition in Early Judaism pictures Enoch as the progenitor of astrological observation relating to calendrical knowledge and to claims of visionary disclosure of events through the lens of eschatological judgment.[96] The latter aspect also looms largely in Old Testament pseudepigrapha with a distinctly Christian transmission history, such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.[97]

Beyond the Second Temple period, the Jewish reception history of Enochic traditions in late antiquity ultimately became submerged in Merkavah mysticism with Enoch transformed into the angel "Metatron" in *3 Enoch*.[98] This was an altogether different world of thought from that versed in ancient sciences in the *Astronomical Book* of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 72–82, 4QEnastr[a–d] ar) of the early Hellenistic age.[99]

4. Enochic traditions in early Christianity between east and west

Within this broader context of cultural perceptions of East and West and of Enochic discourse in Judaism and Jewish Hellenism, it is time to turn to the discussion of Enochic traditions in Early Christianity. It is beyond the scope of this essay to investigate all possible forms of intertextuality and interdiscursivity with Enochic traditions in early Christian literature in their broadest sense, which may be a project by itself.[100] This essay instead focuses on three canonical New Testament writings, where Enoch is explicitly mentioned: Luke, Hebrews, and Jude. These three texts also contain evidence

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[94] Ref. [69] 2201 s.v. *Seiris*, speculates that this could perhaps be "Syria." Ref. [68] 33 n. *e* observed that "Seirah" is unidentified, but compared it with "sculptured stones" in the story of Ehud in Judg 3:26 and noted a tradition about an "ancient monument with an inscription in unknown (?Hittite) characters."

[95] Translation from Ref. [68] 43.

[96] E.g. *Jub.* 4.17–18.19; Pseudo-Eupolemus *apud* Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.17.8–9.

[97] See *T. Sim.* 5.4, *T. Levi* 14.1, *T. Judah* 18.1, *T. Dan* 5.6, *T. Naph.* 4.1, *T. Benj.* 9.1 for eschatologically loaded admonitions against various types of iniquity with reference to Enoch's writings as prooftext.

[98] See Ref. [70] at 225 on literary attribution of *3 Enoch* to the Palestinian Rabbi Ishmael during the Bar Kokhba revolt, and 229 on the provenance of its final redaction in Babylonia.

[99] See Ref. [60] 138–147 ("The Enochic *Astronomical Book* and Ancient Sciences").

[100] For broad surveys, see recently Ref. [71], who incorporate many articles which concern phenomenological comparison, such as those regarding "altered states of conciousness" (19–30), "revelatory experiences" (31–44), "unusual births/birth narratives" (45–72, 73–104), "heavenly beings" (105–128), "forgiveness of sins" (153–168), "demonology" (215–244), and "priestly tradition" (285–316). Cf. Ref. [72], with four articles on *1 Enoch*.

of strongly implied intertextuality and/or interdiscursivity with Enochic traditions. Next to these writings, this essay will briefly highlight where Enoch is further mentioned in other early Christian literature. This section will highlight in which ways Enochic traditions are part of early Christian discourse and how this may be significant for the subject of including the Ancient Near East as "Western identity."

4.1 Luke

At first hand, it would seem strange to look for ancient Eastern traditions in Luke's Gospel among all Synoptic Gospels. There is a long-standing tendency to attribute to Luke a "Greek instinct" with the more polished use of Greek language as compared to supposedly more local Semitic colors in Mark and Matthew.[101] And yet there is an equally long-standing qualification of Luke's Gospel in terms of literary interchange, i.e. code-switching, between standard and Semitized ("Hebraistic") registers of Greek.[102] The idea that Luke's Gospel would systematically lessen Semitic colors of narrative discourse and of poetic discourses of Jesus has been greatly nuanced and corrected in recent years.[103]

In his genealogy of Jesus (Lk 3:23–38), Luke traces Jesus' ancestry ultimately back to being "the son of Adam, the son of God" (Lk 3:38), including Enoch (Lk 3:37) along this lineage. This lineage of the Lucan Jesus runs along the lines of Semitic ancestry ("son of Shem", Lk 3:36) and goes back to the antediluvian age with its setting in the ancient Near East and its mythical Eden.[104] As such, Luke traces Jesus' divine sonship ("Son of God,"[105] Lk 3:38, RSV) back to descent from Adam, thereby squarely putting Jesus' humanity among all created humankind,[106] even though the Lucan infancy narrative also links Jesus' divine sonship with the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:35; cf. Lk 3:22). The genealogical list of Luke 3:23–38 depends on biblical tradition for the timespan of ten generations from Adam to Noah, of whom Enoch counts as the seventh antediluvian generation. This is the Enoch who descended from Adam through Seth (Gen 5:1–24 at vv. 21–24) rather than the Cainite Enoch (Gen 4:17). This implies an emphasis on lineage from Adam "in the likeness of God" (Gen 5:1) through Seth in Adam's "likeness" (Gen 5:3) rather than through Cain who had turned away from God (Gen 4:8–17).

If genealogy functioned in ancient envisioned communities as legitimation, as "ancestral credentials," as an assertion of high status in history, even of "divine origins," as various commentators have asserted,[107] this further invigorates the importance of the primeval figure of Enoch among the ancestral lineage of antiquity in which the Lucan Jesus was rooted.

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[101] Ref. [73] 85.

[102] Ref. [74] xlix wrote: "He (Luke) can be as Hebraistic as the LXX, and as free from Hebraisms as Plutarch. And, in the main, whether intentionally or not, he is Hebraistic in describing Hebrew society, and Greek in describing Greek society." Cf. more recently in Ref. [75].

[103] Cf. Refs. [76, 77].

[104] Cf. Ref. [78] 7 on Gen 5:24: "Babylonian tradition also reports that the seventh hero before the Flood was taken by God, i.e. translated (2 Kg 2.11)."

[105] On the Synoptic Jesus as "Son of God," cf. Mark (= Mk) 1:1, 3:11, 5:7, 15:39; Mt. 4:3, 8:29, 14:33, 16:16, 26:63, 27:40.43.54; Lk 1:35, 4:3.9.41, 8:28, 22:70.

[106] Cf. Ref. [79] 189 on Lk 3:38 as "Jesus' solidarity with all humanity."

[107] E.g. Ref. [79] 189; Ref. [80] 134.

Beyond the literal mention of Enoch, Luke's Gospel contains evidence for several intersections between Jesus' traditions and trajectories of thought in the Enochic writings. In the brief survey below, I will highlight three examples from the discourses of the Lucan Jesus, which range from uniquely Lucan passages to verses paralleled in Matthew.

First, the Lucan "Sermon on the Plain" (Lk 6:17–49), which is otherwise paralleled by the Matthean "Sermon on the Mount" (Mt 5–7) in many respects,[108] contains a unique Semitically structured antithetic parallelism between blessings of the poor (Lk 6:20–23) and woes against the rich (Lk 6:24–26).[109] The latter verses with woes are uniquely Lucan, without parallel in Matthew. Luke 6:20–23.24–26 (RSV) reads as follows in translation, schematically presented in terms of poetic parallelism:

Blessed are the poor,	Aa
for yours is the kingdom of God	Ab
Blessed are you that hunger now,	Ba
for you shall be satisfied.	Bb
Blessed are you that weep now,	Ca
for you shall laugh	Cb
Blessed are you when men hate you,	Da
and when they exclude you and revile you,	Ea
and cast out you name as evil, on account of the Son of man!	Eb
Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy,	Ea′
for behold, your reward is great in heaven;	Eb
for so their fathers did to the prophets.	Db
But woe to you that are rich	Aa′
for you have received your consolation.	Ab′
Woe to you that are full now,	Ba′
for you shall hunger.	Bb′
Woe to you that laugh now,	Ca′
for you shall mourn and weep	Cb′
Woe to you, when all men speak well of you,	Da′
for so their fathers did to the false prophets.	Db′

The strongest forms of antithetic parallelism are in Luke 6:20-22a.23f//Luke 6:24–26 (Aa//Aa′, Ab//Ab′, Ba//Ba′, Bb//Bb′, Ca//Ca′, Cb//Cb′, Da//Da′, Db//Db′), while the blessing Luke 6:22b–23 contains a double inversion specifically turning to those who face adverse consequences of following Jesus as the Son of man.[110] This antithetic discourse of the Lucan Jesus, which implies a chasm between the miserable poor and the careless rich,[111] is not without parallel in Enochic discursive traditions with a setting in instruction in the two ways (*1 Enoch* 94:1–5). The Epistle of Enoch is full of judgment in terms of woes against abusive, violent, and rich people (*1 Enoch* 94:6–95:2, 95:4–7, 96:4–8, 97:7–10). These woes are interchanged by exhortations of righteous people to be hopeful despite suffering and persecution (*1 Enoch* 95:7, 96:1–3, 97:1–2). This Enochic discourse also addresses righteous people who have been

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[108] The Lucan "Sermon on the Plain" (Lk 6:17–49) is consecutively paralleled by, among passages from the "Sermon on the Mount," Mt. 5:3–12, 5:43–44.38-42.46–47.45-48, 7:1–2, 7:3–5, 7:18.16–17.19-20, 7:21, 7:24–27, but also by Mt. 12:15–16, 15:14, 10:24–25, and 12:33–35.

[109] On the Semitic poetic structure of Lk 6:20–23.24-26, cf. Ref. [77] 334.

[110] Antitheses are here exclusion and reviling vs. rejoicing and leaping for joy (Ea//Ea′) and vilification on account of Jesus as Son of man (on earth) vs. a greatly rewarding lot in heaven (Eb//Eb′).

[111] This chasm has a narrative sequel in Luke's parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19–31).

persecuted as follows: "Fear not, you who have suffered, for you will receive healing, and a bright light will shine upon you, and the voice of rest you will hear from heaven" (*1 Enoch* 96:3). A comparable tenor of encouragement about the ultimate inversion of stakes of suffering righteous and abusive sinners may underlie the more radically formulated blessing in Luke 6:23. Among the apocalyptic woes, one woe against the rich may further parallel Luke 6:24, namely that in *1 Enoch* 94:8: "Woe to you, rich, for in your riches you have trusted; from your riches, you will depart, because you have not remembered theHighest in the days of your riches."[112]

The broader discursive context of a chasm between two groups, abusive rich vs. suffering righteous, as well as the specific formulation of woes alternated by exhortations qualify Enochic traditions as an important context of apocalyptic thought. The interdiscursivity between the discourse of the Lucan Jesus (Lk 6:20–23.24–26) and the discourse of the Epistle of Enoch, including the two against the rich (*1 Enoch* 94:8),[113] has remained understudied in certain commentaries on Luke.[114] The Enochic discursive tradition of apocalyptic woes against rich people who had become godless in their behavior must have been an important undercurrent in the Judaism of Jesus' days, for the Epistle of Enoch is otherwise attested in the Qumran Aramaic fragments (§ 3.2 and n. 60 above), dated to the second century BCE, and constituted a significant model for testamentary instruction.[115] As such, the Lucan Jesus phrased his beatitudes and woes in language familiar from Scripture and couched in interdiscursive concerns also known in apocalyptic currents of thought to the Judaism of his days, thereby making sure that his message was heard by his earliest audiences in Roman Palestine. Beyond the early Jewish context, ideas about divine providence combined with social criticism had a broader outreach in the Graeco-Roman world from East to West,[116] as subsequent audiences to emerging Christianity[117] and readershisp of Luke's Gospel may illustrate.

The second Lucan passage which merits interdiscursive comparison with a view to Enochic traditions is Luke 12:54–56. This passage contains an eschatologically loaded admonition of the Lucan Jesus concerning a crisis of right perception of circumstances. It reads as follows in translation:

> *54 He also said to the multitudes, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, 'A shower is coming'; and so it happens. 55 And when you see the south wind*

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[112] Translations from Ref. [45] 145 and 146.

[113] Cf. Ref. [81] at 46–47.

[114] For instance, Ref. [79] 267 only relates scriptural parallels regarding divine providence for the hungry and the poor (Ps 107:36.41), social criticism against the mistreatment of the hungry and the poor (Isa 32:6–7), and injunctions to social justice (Isa 58:7.10). Ref. [80] 222 goes beyond parallels from canonical scriptures, mentioning Sirach (Sir 25:7–11), *2 Enoch* (42.6–12, 52), and Tobit (Tob 13:12.15–16) regarding formal parallels to beatitudes and woes, but *2 Enoch* is dated to the late first century CE and the other two texts (Sir, Tob) do not concern social criticism regarding the poor and the rich.

[115] Ref. [45] 10 and 12. See also the ubiquitous references to Enochic writings in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*; note 97 above.

[116] To the extent that Essene Judaism intersected with Enochic Judaism, which was the object of discussion in essays on "The Enochic-Essene Hypothesis Revisited" in Ref. [82] 327–435, one may also surmise the allegedly "irresistible appeal" of their religious views to a broader audience in the Graeco-Roman world, as stated by Flavius Josephus in his *Jewish War* 2.158.

[117] Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 63, "He (Jesus) won over many Jews and many of the Greeks"; translation from Ref. [83] 51.

> *blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky; but why do you not know to interpret the present time?" (Lk 12:54: –56, RSV)*

This passage is only partly paralleled in Matthew 16:2–3, which also mentions weather circumstances interpreted from the color of the sky, but does not refer to wind directions, as Luke 12:54–56 does. These observations about wind directions and their impact as described in Luke 12:54–56 have been generally characterized as "indigenous to Palestine."[118] Also, in this case, the possibility of interdiscursive connections with Enochic traditions has remained understudied in several commentaries on Luke.[119] As a matter of fact, the Enochic Book of the Luminaries (*1 Enoch* 72–82), paralleled by Aramaic *Astronomical Enoch* manuscripts from Qumran, contains an extensive chapter on wind directions with beneficial and harmful impacts: *1 Enoch* 76. This chapter mentions "gates" from which winds emerge, including a gate toward the "west," from which "there emerge dew, rain, locusts and destruction" (*1 Enoch* 76:9), and a gate toward the "south," from which there "emerge drought, destruction, burning, and devastation" (*1 Enoch* 76:13).[120] Thus, the observation of signs of nature was ingrained in the astrological lore of Enochic traditions.

Yet there is more. The moral exhortation with which the Lucan passage concludes in contrast to the ability to observe the signs of nature is not without a formal parallel either. Turning to another Enochic writing, the Book of Watchers (*1 Enoch* 1–36) provides repeated injunctions to contemplate and observe the ways of nature (*1 Enoch* 2:1–5:3), including their signs (*1 Enoch* 2:3, 4:1) as evidence of an appointed order in God's creation, which receive a follow-up in words of indictment. These words, addressing the enemies of righteous people (*1 Enoch* 1:1), are as follows: "But you have not stood firm nor acted according to the commandments; but you have turned aside, you have spoken proud and hard words with your unclean mouth against his majesty. Hard of heart! There will be no peace for you!" (*1 Enoch* 5:4).[121] This transition from observance of the signs of nature to moral judgment characterizes both this Enochic discourse and the discourse of Jesus in Luke 12:54–56. In the Enochic context, the indictment concerns unfaithfulness to the commandments and the appointed order of the creation as "works of God" (*1 Enoch* 2:2, 5:4). This discursively addresses a "distant generation" beyond the fallen Watchers (*1 Enoch* 1:2.5). In the Lucan context, judgment apparently concerns the lack of a moral compass regarding faithfulness and watchfulness in settings of eschatological anxiety, including matters of war and peace (Lk 12:35–48.49-53.54–56.57-59).

The third example of potential interdiscursivity between Lucan discourses of Jesus and Enochic traditions concerns broader contexts of eschatological ideas and

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[118] Ref. [79] 511: "where the west wind would bring moisture inland from the Mediterranean (cf. 1 Kgs 18:44–45) and the south wind would bring the heat from the Negev desert"; cf. Ref. [84] 712.

[119] Neither Ref. [79] 511, nor Ref. [84] 712 made comparative reference to Enochic literature.

[120] Translations from Ref. [45] 105–106. *1 Enoch* 76 is partly attested in Qumran Aramaic fragments, in 4Q210 (4QEnastr ar) frg. 1 col. 2.

[121] Translation Ref. [45] 22. For Qumran Aramaic witnesses to *1 Enoch* 2:1–5:4, cf. 4Q201 (4QEn ar) col. 2 and 4Q204 (4QEn ar) col. 1. The indictment of no peace recurs various times in Enoch's commission as intermediary addressing the fallen Watchers (*1 Enoch* 5:5, 12:5, 12:6, 13:1, 16:4).

beliefs,[122] which are also related to apocalyptic exhortations that employ imagery of the primeval Flood. There were interlocking traditions about Enoch and about the Flood in Early Judaism, as may be illustrated by imagery of "deluge" and "Nephilin" in the Qumran *Book of Giants* and from the incorporation of chapters on the birth of Noah in *1 Enoch* 106–107. The apocalyptic discourses of Jesus in Luke 17 and Matthew 24 both include imagery of "the days of Noah" and of the Flood (Lk 17:26–27 par. Mt. 24:37–39), thereby imagining the unexpected future of the kingdom of God and the coming of the Son of man. This use of imagery may perhaps be compared with Isaiah 54:7–10, which also mentions "days of Noah" (Isa 54:9),[123] but the Isaianic context emphasizes assurance of the covenant to Israel, swearing that "the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth" (Isa 54:9, RSV), notwithstanding a brief moment of wrath (Isa 54:7–8). The dark overtones of destruction in Luke 17:27.29 as setting for the "the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk 17:30, RSV) may also be compared with an Enochic emphasis on "great destruction" in Noah's time (*1 Enoch* 106:15), subsequently increasing evil across generations (*1 Enoch* 106:19–107:1)[124] until the rise of "generations of righteousness" (*1 Enoch* 107:1). Yet the reference to Noah also implies the notion of a remnant saved from destruction, and early Jewish contexts of thought emphasize the unrepeatable phenomenon of the Flood.[125]

4.2 Hebrews

The Letter to the Hebrews provides further evidence from the canonical New Testament about Enoch. The biblical figure of Enoch is one of three primeval figures (Abel, Enoch, Noah; Heb 11:4–7), who set archetypical examples of faith as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1, RSV). This enumeration of three examples of faith from primeval generations is followed up by an extensive list of further examples of faith from Israel's biblical past, including Abraham (Heb 11:8–19), Isaac (Heb 11:20), Jacob (Heb 11:21), Joseph (Heb 11:22), Moses (Heb 11:23–28), the people (Heb 11:29–30), Rahab (Heb 11:31), judges, king David, prophets, martyrs (Heb 11:32–38), all of whom "did not receive what was promised" (Heb 11:39, RSV).

Enoch (Heb 11:5) stands in the opening section of this enumeration in Hebrews 11, representing one of the examples from primeval generations, "men of old" who "received divine approval" by faith (Heb 11:2, RSV). These ancestral examples represent a long chain of being to the addressees of Hebrews, who are "surrounded by so great a cloud of witness" (Heb 12:1, RSV). "Faith" here also means "perseverance" and "endurance" (Heb 12:1–2) in faithfulness to the word of God (Heb 11:3). These examples of faith in Hebrews 11 have also been considered to be part of a

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[122] It is beyond the scope of this essay to go into possible connections between messianism in the "Parables of Enoch" (*1 Enoch* 37–71) and Jesus traditions in the Gospels, on which see e.g. Ref. [85]. However, an older minority viewpoint by Ref. [86] argued for a late antique, Christian provenance of the "Parables of Enoch," in view of their complete absence among Qumran Aramaic textual witnesses to *1 Enoch*, which instead contain an additional "Book of Giants" (§ 3.2 above). This author remains skeptical about risks of circular reasoning and the burden of proof that the "Parables of Enoch" are not the product of "Christianization" or "Christian transmission history" and thereby evades this discussion.

[123] Cf. 4Q176 (*4QTanhûmîm*) frgs. 8–11 ll. 5–12, which further cites Isaiah 54:4–10.

[124] Cf. the "generation" language in Lk 17:25 on the rejection of the Son of man by his generation.

[125] See 4Q370 (*4QExhortation Based on the Flood*) col. 1 l. 8, "[and never again will] the water of the flood [come] for [destruction, or will] the turmoil of the waters [be op]ened." Translation from Ref. [24] 733.

larger discourse on "the faithfulness of Jesus and the faithfulness of the ancestors" in Hebrews 10:32–12:13.[126] This alignment addressed the needs of a community, whose suffering of hardships (Heb 10:32–34) all but alienated them from teachings (Heb 5:11–14).[127] The retrospective view on ancestral examples for imitation of faith in Hebrews 13:7 has led scholars to date Hebrews to the late first century CE.[128] The examples of steadfastness in faith from a long line of ancestral tradition probably served to uphold and legitimate the faith life of the addressed community of Hebrews.

Within this larger context, Hebrews 11:5 introduces Enoch as an example of deathless faith: "By faith, Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was attested as having pleased God" (Heb 11:5, RSV). These words about Enoch are basically related to Genesis 5:24. Even though Hebrews 11:5 does not go beyond biblical tradition,[129] the appeal to examples from the ancestral tradition, including primeval forebears in praise of their faithfulness, may have an analogy in the sapiential tradition of "praise of the fathers" in Sirach, which also conceived of Enoch as an example across generations (Sir 44:16; § 3.3 above). The fact that ancestral examples from Israel's biblical past are an integral part of Hebrews, of which the structure has been compared with Graeco-Roman rhetorical persuasion through *exempla*, has led James W. Thompson to situate the author of Hebrews "between cultures, (because) he has adopted elements from the Jewish homily and from Greco-Roman rhetoric."[130] As such, Hebrews 11:5 illustrates the biblical example of Enoch as a figure from the distant, mythical past of the ancient Near East. Enoch's ancestral faith also mattered for the "West," for a community of addressees that lived in the Graeco-Roman world greeted by "those who come from Italy" (Heb 13:24).

4.3 Jude

The third text from the canonical New Testament writings, the Letter of Jude, may further illustrate that Enoch was not only a biblical figure to early Christianity, but also a discursive tradition. In fact, the citation of a prophetic saying attributed to Enoch in Jude 14–15 indicates that, beyond interdiscursivity with Enochic traditions, early Christian literature also includes a case of intertextuality with Enochic writings. The citation in Jude 14–15 has generally been identified as a quotation from *1 Enoch* 1:9, that is, from the beginning of the Book of Watchers.[131] I will turn to this citation in a moment. Yet it should be noted from the outset that there is more intertextuality with Enochic traditions in Jude. The evocative language of fallen angels (Jude 6) and of wild behavior as "wandering stars" (Jude 12–13 at v. 13) presupposes intertextuality with the narrative of rebelling, fallen Watchers in *1 Enoch* 6–11,[132] but also with

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[126] Ref. [87] 19.

[127] Cf. Ref. [87] 6–10 at 9 on persecution and social ostracism of the early church by Roman authorities as a new religious movement, who further critiques earliers scholarly views that "the readers (of Hebrews) are Jewish Christians who are tempted to return to Judaism," arguing that the letter never indicates this as such.

[128] Ref. [7] 422; Ref. [29] 405.

[129] Ref. [87] 233: "The author's reflections are based not on the extensive literature on Enoch but only on Gen 5:24, which he follows closely."

[130] Ref. [87] 10–20 at 20.

[131] Cf. Ref. [7] 480; Ref. [41] 420, "he cites the book of 1 Enoch as Scripture (v. 14)"; Ref. [88] 471; Ref. [89] 217; Ref. [90] 189, 209–210, 215–216; Ref. [91] 61–62, 103–109.

[132] Cf. Ref. [89] 179, "In describing the fall and punishment of the rebellious angels Jude presupposes the extrabiblical account that is best known from the Book of Watchers in *1 Enoch* 6–11."

passages about wandering, "disobedient stars" (*1 Enoch* 21:1–5). Even beyond *1 Enoch*, narrative references to Cain, Balaam, and Moses (Jude 9, 11) have led scholarship to identify Jude's familiarity with extrabiblical traditions "otherwise mainly attested in Palestine."[133]

The rich intertextuality with Jewish traditions has led scholarship to attribute a Jewish-Christian perspective to Jude, with possible connections to Syro-Palestinian milieus of tradition.[134] The purpose of Jude's exhortations versed in Jewish traditions is to warn against intruders into the addressed community, "ungodly persons" (Jude 4), who have generally been associated with opponents or false teachers.[135] These opponents are characterized in terms of reviling judgments lacking authoritative understanding (Jude 8, 10) and defiling behavior through immorality (Jude 7–8, 12). The latter aspect is substantiated in Jude 7–8 as oppressive lust[136] and in Jude 12 as "shameless banqueting" (*suneuōkhoumenoi aphobōs*) and "self-shepherding" (*heautous poimainontes*) rather than caring for others. Jude 12 thereby targets opponents as those who pose as leaders, "shepherds," but instead only care for themselves. In this setting, where intruding opponents disturb the "love feasts," *agapai*,[137] of the congregation (Jude 12), Jude 11–13.14–16 antagonizes these opponents with intertextual references to *1 Enoch*, including the citation of *1 Enoch* 1:9 in Jude 14–14. Jude 11–13.14-16 reads as follows in translation:

> *11 Woe to them! For they walk in the way of Cain, and abandon themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error, and perish in Korah's rebellion. 12 These are blemishes on your love feasts, as they boldly carouse together, looking after themselves; waterless clouds, carried along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars for whom the nether gloom of darkness has been reserved forever.*

> *14 It was of these also that Enoch in the seventh generation from Adam prophesied, saying "Behold, the Lord came with his holy myriads, 15 to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness which they committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." 16 These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own passions, loud-mouthed boasters, flattering people to gain advantage (Jude 11–16, RSV).*

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[133] Ref. [90] 182, referring to "targumim (the Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible)."

[134] Ref. [29] 424; Ref. [89] 183; Ref. [90] 182. Cf. Ref. [91] 10, who contrasts Jude's detailed knowledge of Jewish traditions to the lack of evidence for interdiscursivity with pagan Greek texts: "Die gelegentlich vermutete Benutzung pagan-griechische Texte lässt sich nicht nachweisen," cf. p. 24 on Jude's familiarity with Palestinian-Jewish apocalypticism.

[135] Cf. Ref. [41] 420, "false teachers who have invaded the Christian community"; Ref. [89] 180–182 ("The Opponents"); Ref. [88] 411–415 ("Opponents"); Ref. [90] 183–186 at 183 on Jude's opponents as "intruders" who "come from outside the congregation and are acting as teachers or authority figures"; Ref. [91] 27–37 ("Die Gegner und die Situation der Adressaten") at 28, on text-internal indications (Jude 4, 22) of "wandernder Lehrer oder Propheten."

[136] The biblical example of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19) in Jude 7, which refers to immorality (*ekporneusasai*) and "going after other flesh," in Greek *apelthousai opisō sarkos heteras*, may denote an oppressive sense of lust. This oppressive sense could be heightened, if a Hebrew sense of "pursuing, persecuting" (*halakh akhar*[*y*] or *radaph akhar*[*y*]) stands behind this Greek.

[137] See also the early second century CE evidence of Ignatius, *Letter to the Smyrnaeans* 8.2, explained by Ref. [92] 191 n. 110 for *agapè* as "love feast" or "fellowship meal," which "was a congregational meal which (almost certainly) included the celebration of the Eucharist at some point."

The prophecy of judgment in Jude 14 extensively cites *1 Enoch* 1:9 regarding God's judgment of the ungodly with their impious ways. The form of the citation in Jude 14–15, in which the subject "Lord" (Greek *kurios*) differs from *1 Enoch* 1:9, has sometimes led scholarship to interpret it as referring to judgmental overtones of the Parousia of Jesus Christ as Lord.[138] While these overtones cannot be excluded regarding the Christology of Jude (cf. Jude 25), it should be noted that Lord (*kurios*) is also a designation for God in the Greek Bible. Enochic traditions also include theocentric appellations of God as Lord, such as "Lord of majesty, the King of the ages" (*1 Enoch* 12:3).[139] Lord is an appellation of God in both Hebrew and Aramaic literary contexts, as, for instance, 4Q200 (4QTobit^e) frg. 6 l. 9 (Tobit 13:4)[140] and 4Q529 (*4QWords of Michael ar*) ll. 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12[141] may illustrate. In the Qumran *Book of Giants*, one passage, which refers to God pronouncing sentence surrounded by a thousand thousands, calls God "the Ruler of the heavens" (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 l. 16).

The strongly implied sense of divine judgment on earth directed against the impious in Jude 14–15 is also that which Jude shares with Enochic traditions. Both the Book of Watchers, which refers to the coming of God to judge the wicked (*1 Enoch* 1:9; cf. 4QEn^c ar col. 1 ll. 15–17), and the Qumran *Book of Giants*, which mentions a dream vision that "the Ruler of the heavens came down to earth" to proclaim judgment on all flesh (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 ll. 16–19),[142] have an earth-bound orientation of divine judgment. In this respect, the vision of God surrounded by myriads in his judgment is further paralleled in the throne vision of Daniel 7:10, but this scriptural text is less explicit about the earth-bound setting of judgment than the Enochic traditions, from which Jude 14–15 draws its intertext.

The divided reception of Jude in subsequent early church literature has been related to Jude's citation of *1 Enoch*, which was not included as a canonical text except in the Ethiopian church, and to its allegedly mythological worldview.[143] Nevertheless, Jude is attested in ancient textual witnesses and was already mentioned in the "Canon Muratori" dated 200 CE.[144] It has further been emphasized that a "biblical canon" did not yet exist when the letter of Jude was written.[145] Thus Jude's citation of *1 Enoch* 1:9 witnesses the pluriform situation of authoritative texts in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, before canonization became part of their dominant cultures. With this pluriformity as background, Jude illustrates openings for transmission of ancient Eastern traditions in more "Western" settings of Graeco-Roman composition of texts.

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[138] Ref. [91] 105–108.

[139] Translation from Ref. [45] 31. For fragmentary Qumran Aramaic witness of *1 Enoch* 12:3, see 4Q204 (4QEn ar) col. 5 l. 19.

[140] Hebrew *hu adonaikhe*[*ma*] *whu eloh*[*ekhema*], "he is yo[ur] Lord, and he is [your] Go[d]"; Ref. [24] 398–99.

[141] Aramaic *rabbi mar olma*, "my Great One, the Lord Eternal"; Ref. [24] 1060–63.

[142] Translation from Ref. [24] 1065.

[143] Cf. e.g. Ref. [90] 189; Ref. [91] 4–8.

[144] Major ancient textual witnesses to Jude include Greek papyri (P72, P74, P78) and codices (Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, Ephraemi Syri rescriptus, Porfirianus, Athous Laurensis), and various minuscule manuscripts.

[145] Ref. [91] 103–105 at 104.

4.4 Other early Christian literature

In order to illustrate that references to Enoch and Enochic traditions were not a matter of scattered examples in Early Christianity, I will provide a brief survey of further examples from early Christian literature, before turning to an evaluation and conclusions.[146]

From as early as the late first century CE and the early second century CE, literature of Apostolic Fathers further includes references to Enoch. *1 Clement* 9.3 mentions Enoch as an example of a biblical figure "who was found righteous in obedience and so was taken up and did not experience death."[147] This reference is part of a survey of biblical examples (*1 Clement* 9–12), which is perhaps not unlike that in Hebrews 11, except for the fact that Enoch is associated with righteousness in obedience by Clement, as compared with his exemplification of faith in Hebrews 11:5. The *Epistle of Barnabas* provides an eschatologically oriented exhortation against "the deception of the present age" through lawlessness, which it contrasts with "the age to come" (*Barn.* 4.1). As part of this exhortation, this text also refers to Enoch, in apposition to "the Scriptures,"[148] to signal that "the last stumbling block is at hand" (*Barn.* 4.3). In this connection, Enoch or Enochic traditions appear to be a source of encouragement: "For the Master has cut short the times and the days for this reason, that his beloved might make haste and come into his inheritance" (*Barn.* 4.3).[149] Perhaps *Barnabas* 4.3 here picks up on elements of Enochic discourse, such as the inheritance of the earthy by the righteous (*1 Enoch* 5:7), the shortening of years in the days of the sinners (*1 Enoch* 80:2), and the exhortation to the righteous that they may hope for the quick end of sinners who persecute them (*1 Enoch* 96:1). Yet broader intertexuality with scriptural and parabiblical sources may not be excluded, in view of the apposition between "the Scriptures" and Enoch in *Barnabas* 4.3.[150]

Various early church fathers also refer to Enoch in their discussions. In his *Dialogue with Trypho*, the second-century CE author Justin Martyr attributes universal goodness to primeval figures Enoch and Noah (*Dialogue* 45.4). In his *Stromata* 4.17.105.3, Clement of Alexandria (150–211/215 CE) again cites the evidence of *1 Clement* 9.3 regarding Enoch's righteousness through obedience. The Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 17.4.3 and 18.13.6 also mention the biblical figure of Enoch. In his fourth-century CE *Preparation for the Gospel* 5.4, Eusebius of Caesarea further compared the giants of the age of the Flood with demons and legendary lore, albeit in light of Greek mythology of titans.

This brief survey of further references to Enoch in early Christian literature may indicate the significance attributed to the biblical figure of Enoch as a primeval example of goodness and righteousness for humanity in an ancient Near Eastern setting.

5. Evaluation and conclusions

Enoch is a biblical figure with a genealogy from the primeval age, while Enochic writings are pseudepigrapha which does not by themselves belong to the "Antiquity"

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[146] For a further reception-historical review with special attention for Ethiopian settings, cf. Ref. [93] at 21–39 ("Reception of Mäshafä Henok in Ethiopia").

[147] Translation from Ref. [92] 39.

[148] Literally, "that which is written."

[149] Translations from Ref. [92] 281.

[150] Cf. 4Q385 (*4QPseudo-Ezekiel*) frg. 4 l. 3 on the protagonist's hope that "Indeed the days are hastening on so that the children of Israel may inherit"; translation from Ref. [94] 38.

of the mythical age before the Flood. And yet, many parts of *1 Enoch* are also attested among Qumran Aramaic manuscripts, of which the composition is dated between the late fourth and the first centuries BCE. Enochic writings are conversant with the mythical lore and ancient astronomical sciences of the Near East. When Enochic writings refer to "tablets of heaven" (*1 Enoch* 81:1.2, 103:2), this is also a cultural metaphor related to tablets as writing materials and to scribal culture in the ancient Near East. As such, Enochic writings reimagine the primeval age as an archetypical tale of antiquity in the Near East.

There are late antique demurrals about the extra-canonical status of Enochic writings and their mythological worldviews to exclude it from consideration in terms of antiquity. For instance, Augustine rejected Enochic writings "with fables about the giants" because of an obscure origin in pseudepigraphy (*City of God* 15.23). Yet one should bear in mind that the canonical Scriptures also incorporate phenomena of pseudepigraphy.[151] The argument from canon is relative since *1 Enoch* is included along with other pseudepigraphical writings in the canon of the Ethiopian church and even in that of Ethiopian Judaism.[152] It depends on how one understands apocalyptic discourse in *1 Enoch*, whether and in which ways labels of a "mythological worldview," "fables" and "legendary lore" are applicable or not. Apocalyptic discourse has sometimes been understood as being tantamount to fatalism and to abdicating human responsibility.[153] Upon this understanding, *1 Enoch* would have "fallen angels" rather than human beings to blame for sin.

Yet this mistakes the archetypical narrative discourse of *1 Enoch* and early Jewish traditions of moral exhortation based on the Flood.[154] The archetypical figure of "giants," progeny of the "Watchers" who were originally held in high regard as "sons of heaven" (*1 Enoch* 6:2), provides apocalyptic illustration of what happens when a civilization held in high regard degenerates into a manner of growth which consumes all flesh on earth (*1 Enoch* 7:1–5), begetting bloodshed, violence, desolation and hate-inducing charms (*1 Enoch* 9:1.8–9), and moving beyond a realm of "forgiveness of sins and all mercy and peace and clemency" (*1 Enoch* 5:6).[155] No matter how high and mighty they deemed themselves, the "giants" were held accountable for their deeds and became the ominous prototype of eschatological judgment in the imagination of the Enochic writings. In this primeval domain of antiquity, where lines between myh and history are blurred, Enoch stands out as "the scribe of distinction," *sᵉphar parsha*, known for his dream interpretation according to the Qumran *Book of Giants* (4Q530 frgs. 2 ii + 6 + 7 i + 8–12 l. 14).

As we have seen with Enochic traditions, Enochic discourse had its ancient Near Eastern settings regarding ancient sciences and the observance of the solar calendar; regarding primeval myths about ten antediluvian generations of which Enoch was

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[151] Cf. e.g. the pseudepigraphical phenomenon of Deutero-Pauline Letters and the literary attribution of, for instance, Proverbs to king Solomon (Prov 1:1), even though Proverbs has been understood as a compendium of sapiential instruction from a later period.

[152] See Ref. [95] at 946: "The Beta Israel canon includes all the books of the OT as well as a number of apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, such as Tobit, Judith, *1–3 Enoch*, Sirach, and perhaps most importantly *Jubilees*."

[153] Cf. Ref. [96] at 203 regarding apocalypse as a traditional trope in ecocritical discourse, as represented by Ref. [97] 85–107 at 89.

[154] 4Q370 (*4QExhortation based on the Flood*). The *Damascus Document* provides an apocalyptic review of the past, including the mythical fall of the "Watchers of the heavens," comparing their height with cedars and their bodies with mountains (CD 2.17–21).

[155] Translation from Ref. [45] 22.

the seventh; and regarding ancient literary heroes called Gilgamesh and Khobabish. Enochic traditions were also part of early Jewish literature oriented toward the "West," such as in Greek Sirach, Philo and Josephus. Voices that would brush *1 Enoch* aside as extra-canonical and mythological fail to recognize the cultural exchange between "East" and "West" in terms of discourses of encouragement and moral exhortation embedded in Enochic traditions. Such voices would further brush aside the pluriformity of Second Temple Judaism among which Early Christianity had its origins.

The significance of Enochic traditions in early Christian literature, starting with the New Testament writings, has been demonstrated about Luke's Gospel, the Letter to the Hebrews, and the Letter of Jude. Enoch is not only a biblical figure whose ancestral lineage is part of the genealogy of the Lucan Jesus, but interdiscursivity with Enochich traditions also plays a part in the discourses of Jesus in Luke's Gospel. Beyond interdiscursivity, the citation of *1 Enoch* 1:9 in Jude 14–15 and allusions to other parts of *1 Enoch* in the Letter of Jude even illustrate intertextuality with Enochic traditions. If identity is a narrative discourse, the engagement with Enochic traditions in early Christian literature may illustrate that there was an interplay at work between "East" and "West" in Early Christianity's discourses of cultural and religious identity. Since the history of Christianity is considered a cultural and religious heritage of the "West," this interplay should also be recognized in discourses of "Western identity."

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Section 3

Linguistics

Chapter 7

Perspective Chapter: Βάλτοι – The Reception of Western Asian Colors-Cardinal Points System along the Boundaries of the Hellenic Oikumene

Moreno Bonda

Abstract

This contribute delineates a "cultural history of language" along the boundaries of the Hellenic world from antiquity to the Byzantine period. The aim is to conceive an area where separate linguistic labels – Greek, Illyrian, Slavic, and so on. – cannot represent the complexity of a koine in which East and West mingled. Specifically, the *encyclopaedic meaning* of several toponyms carrying the *dictionary meaning* "white" – *λευκός*, *βάλτος*, *ἄσπρον* – is examined to confirm the hypothetical acquisition of the *accessory meaning* "western" or "northwestern" borrowed in Greek as a semantic calque following contacts with the Turkic-Slavo-Persian oikumene. In the region outstretched toward the Hindu Kush, the Little Altai, and the Sarmatic Plain, certain place names and ethnonyms signal a marked Western Asian influence on Greek perception of vast spaces, both linguistically and cognitively. Implementing the methodological principles of cognitive linguistics, this reflection about the cultural meaning of ethnonyms and choronyms as *Baltoi* and *Baltiyul*, *Lucania* and *Indike Leuke*, and *Leukosyroi* and *Leukosyria* offers a cultural and historical perspective alternative to the merely philological one and underscores the necessity to conceive the northeastern part of the Classical World as a place where faded boundaries connected, rather than being separate, with people belonging to distinct nations but part of a common *Sprachbund*.

Keywords: color-cardinal point system, Baltia, Baltoi, Baltiyul, Leukosyria, Indike Leuke

1. Introduction

'Without the Asian Greece, land of fruitful experiences, the European Greece would not have been Greece' [1]. When Gustave Glotz, formulated this intuition, he was probably referring to a cultural milieu broader than that of the Milesian thinkers: both water, as the creative principle, and the cosmogonic earth of Thales,

Anaximander, and Anaximenes were rooted in the cognoscitive frame that had produced the *Enūma eliš* of Akkad [2]. Thales' water anticipated silt, then dust, and, finally, soil or earth as in the Babylonian creation myth. Likewise, the biblical *'Elohim* fashioned *'ādām* "man", "earthling" by the means of a mixture of ᵃ*dama* "earth" and water. Most likely, as skillfully proven by Giovanni Semerano, this specific type of generative soil – ᵃ*dama* – of the semitic world coincides with the cosmogonic ἄπειρον of Anaximander, given the Semitic *'apar* "dust" or "earth", Akkadian *eperu,* and the biblical *(adam) afar* "(the man) [of] Earth" [2]. Furthermore, Anaximander could have conceived the animating breath – the biblical *rūah* – as the generative principle capable of giving life to earth only against this background of intellectual koine.

Despite the influence of nineteenth century German philosophers, who created the all-permeating idea of a Greece cradle of civilization, classical Greek sciences were characterized by a common element: a mutiny against the limitations imposed by the dominating local culture, either Western or Eastern. The beginning of the ancient science was an achievement of the Babylonians as well as of the Egyptians and the Greeks: 'Science is an alliance of free spirits rising in rebellion against the local tyranny that every single culture imposes to its children' [3]. The evidence of this assertion emerges from the above cogitation about the Milesian scientists' cosmogonic theories, as well as in the complexion of the language they adopted to formulate those concepts.

The hybrid nature of both their science and their language was evident to the Asian Greeks, but even the "European Greek" Plato proved his awareness in this matter:

> **Hermogenes**. *What do you say of πῦρ ["fire"] and ὕδωρ ["water"]?*

> **Socrates**. *I am at a loss how to explain πῦρ; either the muse of Euthyphro has deserted me, or there is some very great difficulty in the word. Please, however, note the contrivance which I adopt whenever I am in a difficulty of this sort.*

> **Hermogenes**. *What is it?*

> **Socrates**. *I will tell you; but I like to know first whether you can tell me what is the meaning of πῦρ?*

> **Hermogenes**. *Indeed, I cannot tell.*

> **Socrates**. *Shall I tell you what I suspect to be the true explanation of this and several other words? My belief is that they are of foreign origin. For the Hellenes, especially those who were under the dominion of the barbarians, often borrowed from them.*

> **Hermogenes**. *What is the inference?*

> **Socrates**. *You know that anyone who seeks to demonstrate the fitness of these names according to the Hellenic language, and not according to the language from which the words are derived, is rather likely to be at fault.*

> **Hermogenes**. *Yes, certainly.*

> **Socrates***. Well then, consider whether this πῦρ is not foreign; for the word is not eas-*
> *ily brought into relation with the Hellenic tongue, and the Phrygians may be observed*
> *to have the same word slightly changed, just as they have ὕδωρ and κύων [dog], and*
> *many other words [4].*

Opting for a more modern terminology than that of Socrates, the character of Plato's dialog is discussing *lexical borrowings*, commenting examples of phonetically and morphologically *adapted* and *integrated loanwords*. However, the Hellene points at a cognitive issue when investigating the etymology of certain terms: the awareness of diatopic and diachronic semantic variations is largely precluded to speakers of whatever Greek language, for those meanings were devised in the lands 'under the dominion of the barbarians [4]'.

Vast coastal areas of the Pontic steppe fronting the Black Sea were the cradle of a Greek-Scythian community at least until third century CE, when the Sarmatians captured Crimea. The latter had been a region of great syncretism since the second millennium BCE, for the Scythians absorbed here much of the Assyrian advanced science and metallurgical knowledge, only to divulge them further to the north: 'think of the Balto-Slavic *knīga* "book", Old Hungarian *könyü*, Chinese *kʻün*, Old Babylonian *kanīku* "sealed document," and Old Assyrian *kunukku* "sealed wax tablet"' [2].

Likewise, the Greek colonies in central Anatolia underwent an intense process of cultural and linguistic assimilation with the Phrygians after the 8th century BCE, as noted by Socrates in the fiction of Plato's dialog. His comparative effort recognizes a *cognate word* to the Homeric Greek ὕδωρ "water" in the Phrygian ΥΔΩΡ, though Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215 CE) – in the fifth book of *Stromata* – struggled to trace a relation between ὕδωρ and the Phrygian ΒΕΔΥ (also meaning "water"), due to the ignorance of Cappadocian Greek βουδόκκο "water jar", both obvious cognate to the Slavic *vodá* and Gothic *wato* [5]. However, in the Greek of the Athenian Philyllios (5th–4th c. BCE), the loanword βεδυ clearly underwent a *semantic shift*, being used to mean "air" [6].

In Anatolia and southern Levant, several regions of the oikumene had been under the rule of Assyrians and Medo-Persians well before Alexander feats, and the name of Sargon I of Akkad resonated from Elam to Cyprus across the Aegean islands and the whole Mediterranean from Lemnos to Tarquinia: Assyrian *Šarru-kīnu*, Etruscan *Tárchon*, and Latin *Tarquinius* [2]. Further to the east, the land corridors along the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea served as trading posts, where concepts, goods, peoples, and the terms to refer to them were borrowed and interpreted: the "eastern Greeks" called Κεφῆνες the Persians, thus borrowing the Aramaic *kēp* "rock", used to translate the ethnonym Αρταῖοι, to indicate the inhabitants either of the Bokovoy range, in the Caucasus, or of the Little Altai, assuming the quite common ρ > λ for Αλταῖοι [2, 7].

Coherently with this mosaic of people, words, and meanings, 'anyone who seeks to demonstrate the fitness of these names according to the Hellenic language, and not according to the language from which the words are derived, is rather likely to be at fault' [4]. The fictious Socrates' words fittingly illustrate the problems emerging from philological studies in which languages and words are univocally attributed to clear-cut national identities. The consequence of such an approach is that certain Greek ethnonyms and toponyms – defined exclusively in the frame of the Greek *forma mentis* and language – remain 'unexplained' and 'unclear' as it is for the Λευκόσυροι "White Syrians" of Strabo's *Geography* [8] or for the 'ambiguous' thalassonym Ερυθρὰ Θάλασσα "Red Sea" [9].

Explicitly, in studying certain Greek terms, some studies fail to recognize that those words were possibly devised against a background of cultural and linguistic koine, in which people of distinct descent shared a common perception of the world but represented it by different linguistical means. That is to say, the investigation of Asian Greeks' *forma mentis* and language should consider that the speakers were part of a multilingual but culturally united *Sprachbund* (for terminology, see § 1.2.) that extended from the Pacific to northeastern Europe. Such an approach could facilitate the representation of a network of relations in a classical antiquity outstretched toward the Hindu Kush and the Little Altai, though the opposite image of a Western Asia and a Sarmatic Plain prolonged toward the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean could probably better represent certain historical dynamics.

As an example, consider the semantic shift observed in koine Greek Ερυθρός, which carries the undisputed *dictionary meaning* "red". The chronological and geographical distribution of the attestation of the accessory (*encyclopaedic*) meaning "southeastern" indicates a possible *semantic calque* from a lending *linguaculture*. Accordingly, this specific term for "red" was used in Greek to name places more often than to refer to reflections of light. Precisely, the toponymic use of *red* was not attested before the eighth century BCE; it emerged in Assyrian sources in the seventh century BCE; it was more frequent in Greek oeuvres of the fourth and early third centuries BCE, while it was extensively attested in the period between the third century BCE and the first century CE, especially in the Pontus [9]. Such a chronological and territorial spread permitted to formulate the hypothesis that it was the nomadic Scythe people of the Eurasian steppe who lend the cognitive nexus "red equal south" to the people of the eastern Mediterranean, especially considering the undisputed attestation of the color-cardinal points system in Turkic, Mongol, Slavic, and Chinese cultures, that is, in the territories inhabited by the Scythians (§ 2.).

This northern area, delineated by the activity of the prophets of the metempsychosis during the Axial Age, was a place where the concept of "northwest" was often expressed by terms whose *dictionary meaning* was "steppe" or "swamp". In a variety of languages, these terms incorporated the *accessory meaning* "white", which, in turn, was often conveyed by the same root *bal-* attested in the Balto-Slavic, Turkic, Illyrian, Thracian, Phrygian, and Greek languages [10]. I suggest that due to contacts and borrowings, or simply by imitation, other Greek stems meaning "white" acquired the accessory meaning "west" or "northwest" and were used in the formation of toponyms. The truthfulness of this assumption is the hypothesis investigated in the present study.

The analysis of the dynamics outlined above and of the resulting linguistical milieu could impact the understanding of ancient toponymy in regions quite distant from the Hellenic world and consequently the comprehension of the perception and conception of certain territories and their borders in classical antiquity. The correct understanding of the Greek ethnonym *White Syrians*, mentioned in Strabo's 12th book of *Geography*, could easily contribute to reconstrue a cognitive frame capable of explaining toponyms as disparate as: *Witland* "White Land" mentioned in the Old English Orosius to refer to the Prussian lands (and deemed etymologically obscure [11]); the name of the Baltic Sea (i.e., "White", cf. Lithuanian *baltas* "white", etymologically "swamp") [10]; the ethnonym *Bijeli Hrvati* "White Croats"; the name *Baltiyul* used to refer to the northwestern part of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistani Little Tibet, near the Karakoram mountain range (*Kara* meaning "black" in Turkic languages, cf. *Kara Deniz* "Black Sea" and Kara Sea in northwestern Russia); the choronym *Lucania* attributed to some territories in the Italic Peninsula; and so on.

Nonetheless, this hypothesis has not been systematically explored. Equally vague and poorly investigated are the boundaries of the *linguaculture* in which the nexus colors-cardinal points was intelligible and linguistically productive. Specifically, the studies about the cultural effects of substratum interactions between Greek, Turkic, Illyrian, and Balto-Slavic languages are insufficient. In particular, moving from the concrete to the general, this unawareness (1) led to strong criticism of theories relating the etymology of the name of the Baltic Sea to the Baltic term *baltas* in the specific sense of "white-west" due to an ancient Greek mention of that region named *Baltia*, thus by the means of an homophone term apparently unrelated with Baltic languages; (2) negatively affected the capability to contextualize in a common cognitive frame a plethora of toponyms – from the city of Bălți in modern Moldova to the Baltiyul region in the Little Tibet – while confining the academic research to a mosaic of supposedly unrelated, and thus unconvincing, etymologies; and (3) prevented the formulation of an historiographic model capable of explaining and representing a continuous and undivided classical oikumene outstretched from the Mediterranean toward the northeast.

1.1 Sources and method

A review of existing literature reflecting on the ancient Greek perception of boundaries was preliminarily necessary to reaffirm the concept that the conceiving and representation of vast spaces was not a purely Hellenic endeavor but rather the result of long-period and wide-range interactions with Western Asia. Namely, the *topos* of a civilized world surrounded by four seas – which is incompatible with the geographical position and borders of classical Greece – was explored by systematically surveying Greek *peripli* from a corpus that had been already defined in my previous studies on the topic [9].

These accounts of the circumnavigation of seas, or simply descriptions of portal cities around a sea – such as the anonymous *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, Arrian's *Periplus*, and other Hellenistic seafarers' firsthand or reported (Pytheas', as an example) descriptions – constituted the primary sources of this study. These oeuvres were compared with Greco-Latin geographical treatises attempting a representation of the entire globe: Strabo's *Geography*, Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*, and Pomponius Mela's *De situ Orbis*. These primary sources were compared with Western Asia – i.e., Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian, and Canaanite – geographical oeuvres such as the royal inscriptions of the Sargon dynasty, the so-called texts of the king Tiglath-Pileser III, and the annals of Shalmaneser [12].

For the toponymy of the northeastern regions of the Hellenic world in medieval times, the main references were the *Secret History of the Mongols*, written in the second decade of the thirteenth century CE, and Ahmad ibn Fadlan's *Risala* (921 CE) [13, 14]. The Byzantine toponymy is mainly represented by Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica* (sixth century CE), a sort of dictionary of ancient place names. For ethnonyms, the reference is P. M. Fraser's Greek Ethnic Terminology [15].

Other secondary sources, surveyed for the sake of a systematic approach, include *The Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, *Brill's Companion to Ancient Geography*, W. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, and Shamsiddin Kamoliddin's *Ancient Turkic Toponyms of the Middle Asia: Ancient Turkic Place-names in Ancient and Early Medieval Sources* [16–19]. The Slavic perspective is represented by L. M. Maksimovich's *A New and complete geographical dictionary of the Russian State*, which, despite several imaginative etymological explanations, was of great interest

since it listed place names as they appeared before the Soviet toponymic reform (which create numerous new "red" places) [20].

With reference to secondary sources, a review of modern literature about the perception and naming of the maritime space in ancient Western Asia served to reconstrue a geographical model shared by learned people belonging to a variety of nations. The chronological and geographic limits of this review are well represented by the study of K. Yamada about the development of seas names in Assyrian royal inscriptions [12] and the monographic study of J. Bacic, *Red Sea-Black Russia: Prolegomena to the History of North Central Eurasia in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* [21]. Of particular interest in the latter is the representation of Scythe people as a link between the Rus' people and the Byzantine world. 'In this book, the Red Sea to the south, the White Sea north-west of Black Russia and the Black Sea to the south-west delimit the civilization besieged by the barbarians of inner Asia, until the defeat of the Blue and Golden Hordes' [9].

The method of investigation selected to examine the sources was necessarily comparative on a large scale both chronologically and spatially. These chronological and spatial limits could be defined by four "ethnic cardinal points" – toponyms and ethnonyms that appear 'unclear' and 'without etymology' when studied as the linguistic products of a single culture but nonetheless fit the cognitive frame emerging from a cultural and linguistic koine: *a.* the Balti peoples (inhabiting the *Baltiyul* in the central Asiatic area of Baltistan and Little Tibet); *b.* The Baltic peoples (inhabiting the *Baltia* described by Pliny the Elder, supposedly to refer to the Baltic Sea); *c.* The *Lucania* of the Italian Magna Grecia, inhabited by *Lucani* (cf. Greek *leukos* "white"); and *d.* The *White Syrians* mentioned in Strabo as the Cappadocian Syrians.

The act of place-naming is cultural and linguistic at the same time; therefore, the analytical tools of cognitive semantics seemed appropriate to retrieve the ancient Greek-Illyrian-Slavic-Turkic *encyclopaedic meaning* of certain toponyms. This approach is mostly unrelated to the etymological investigation and the philological method: contrary to historical linguistics, cognitive linguistics is characterized by empirical approaches prioritizing the analysis of corpora to retrieve the meaning of lexical units as it emerges from the usage in the context, rather than from vocabulary definitions. Accordingly, in the present research, historical place names were not studied as isolated words but rather as recurring labels adopted to represent a common perception of the boundaries of the oikumene in an interrelated network of correspondences.

Explicitly, it is not a matter of listing place names because of assonances, orthographic coincidences, or a certain affinity with the meaning "white". The larger corpus of toponyms exhibiting the stems *balt-*, *aspro-*, and *leuko-* was refined basing precisely on the parameter of 'usage in context' central to cognitive linguistics methodology. Precisely, no terms were considered *per se* but only in relation to other toponyms expressing a chromatic and, supposedly, geographic opposition. Finally, whenever possible, a comparison with other historical manners of indicating relative cardinal directions in toponyms was used to confirm the hypothesis: classical w*hite/black* and *red* corresponding to modern n*orth(ern)* and s*outh(ern)* or to medieval *great(er)* and *little* (or *lesser*). The overlapping of these terms in the naming of the same places was considered a further proof of the historical memory of a typically classical system of representation of the geographical space (see §2.1.). In passing, one should note that the abovementioned terminological transition probably occurred around the thirteenth or fourteenth century, since in Marco Polo, there are already mentions of the 'Grande Arminia' and 'Picciola Arminia' that are coherent with the

coeval reference to Grater and Little Tibet and with fifteenth and sixteenth centuries' tradition of place-naming in newly discovered lands, for example, Greater and Lesser Antilles.

1.2 Terminology

The specific interpretation of the terminology the author adopts in these pages deserves a preliminary clarification. The concept of *linguaculture* is borrowed from K. Risager [22], but in this study, it is used specifically to describe language as a meaning-making cultural practice peculiar to each sociocultural context. In other words, it is the environment that attributes a culture-specific (*encyclopaedic*) meaning to transcultural signifiers (i.e., words, e.g., *red* meaning "south" in certain cultures but not in others).

The expression *culture-specific meaning* and *encyclopaedic meaning* are used interchangeably to refer to semantics in the cognitive frame elaborated by R. Langacker: since language itself does not encode meaning, terms, and speech in general serve – in a manner very similar to the process, H. Bergson defined to explain the interaction between matter and memory – as connections to wider and subjective repositories of knowledge and experiences. That is, the meaning of a term could be formally defined (in a dictionary, as an example) to provide, at least, a common ground for communication – a *dictionary meaning*. However, in the memory and subjective knowledge of each individual, the same term carries one or more accessory meanings or serves as a connection to a 'broader cognitive domain,' which is named *encyclopaedic meaning* [23]. This expression is adopted to define the meaning as subjective, culturally related, dependent on personal knowledge, and variable in time [24].

The formal categories of *Sprachbund* and *Sprechbund* elaborated by S. Romaine are too strict to be of any utility in a diachronic study. Therefore, with the former label, the author refers to speech bonds that are both 'shared ways of speaking going beyond language boundaries' relating distinct languages (*Sprechbund*) and 'similarities between linguistic forms in related languages' (*Sprachbund*) [25]. Specifically, in this study, the term *Sprachbund* is used to refer to a community of speakers sharing common semantic means to refer to the four seas surrounding the inhabited world, such as the use of color names to mean cardinal directions, even though the lexical means used to name those colors were different in each linguistic group.

2. From Black Russia to the Red Sea. The colors-cardinal points system to name the four seas surrounding the world

The existence of an ancient, well-defined, and shared system to indicate cardinal directions using terms normally representing colors has been recognized and scientifically investigated in three areas: the historical Turkic lands (the southern part of central and western Asia), China, and North America [26]. The attestation of this same system in the historical regions of Persia and Indus Valley is poorly studied. In the Slavic world, it is often investigated as a specifically Russian system and usually only by historians, rather than by philologists. In the Baltic region, it is highly debated and often refused due to identity-related issues [10]. In the Hellenic world, several historians perceived the same color-cardinal points system was linguistically and cognitively productive, but – to my knowledge – there are no systematic studies beside my recent publication, which, however, focused specifically on the "red-south"

connection [9]. Summing up, this manner of naming cardinal directions by color names is generally considered in the "western world" a phenomenon related to inner Asia and inherited from Turkic people.

To exemplify, in a Turkish perspective, the Mediterranean is not the "sea between lands" but rather the western of the four seas surrounding the land and coherently named – in counterclockwise order – Black (*Kara Deniz*), White (*Ak Deniz*, the Mediterranean), Red (*Kizil Deniz*), and Celestial Blue (*Hazar Denizi*, the Caspian). While it is obvious to recognize this Turkic system in the Anatolian Peninsula, it emerges with the same clarity in China.

The Chinese recourse to the color-cardinal points system is usually traced back to the period of contact between Turkic peoples and pre-dynastic Khitai. Precisely, it was the Kara Khitai "Black Khitai" (cf. the Kara Sea in northern Russia and the abovementioned Turkish *Kara Deniz*, the Black Sea) that served as a cultural and linguistic bridge toward China where they were known as the Western Liao dynasty or, alternatively, Great Liao. It is evident, in these ethnonyms, the coincidence of different systems to name the same relative position with *black*, *great,* and *west*. This manner of naming cardinal directions is well attested in Chinese historiography and folklore since the mythical age of the *Three Augusts and Five Emperors*: the Yellow Emperor governing the central region of China, the Black Emperor of the north, the Blue one ruling the east, the White to the west, and the Red to the south. It is not only the oral tradition to preserve traces of this system.

In historical geography, the name *Shin hai* "four seas" used to roughly indicate modern China – cf. Italian *Cina* [ʧiˈna] and English *China* – is a direct reference to the idea of four seas surrounding the civilized world: the Yellow Sea, the Red Sea (i.e., the Indian Ocean or the South China Sea), the White Sea (i.e., *Xi Hai*, the Caspian – *xi* 西 meaning "west" but also "white"), and the Black Sea to the northwest. The latter was the name given to lake *Quinghai* "Black Sea", which, however, in Mongolia is known as *Koko Nor,* literally "Blue Lake".

Two elements emerge as particularly relevant from this survey. Firstly, the system of colors-cardinal points is well attested from Eastern to Western Asia, especially in its northernmost regions. Secondly, even though the relation between colors is apparently statical, the color names used to indicate certain directions are subjective and change depending on the perspective chosen by the observer. The Yellow River of the Chinese language – *yellow* precisely because of its central position in China – becomes the *Xökh Mörön* "Celestial Blue River" for the Mongols, since from their observation point, it is an eastern river. Because of this subjective perspective, the Mongols referred to those Mongols living in the east – that is, in the territories of the Black Kithai – as *Köke Mongol* "Blue Mongols" or "Celestial Mongols". Accordingly, in Russian historiography, the Mongols were divided in the Blue, White, and Golden Hordes.

In the historical territories of the Kievan and Muscovite Rus', "black", "white", and "red" toponyms and choronyms are frequent. The already mentioned Kara Sea in the north – named with a non-adapted Turkic lexical borrowing – is flanked to the west by the White Sea, while the *Zolotoe More* "Golden Sea" (i.e., "Red", to indicate the modern Black Sea) delimits the southern border. This maritime tripartition is specular to that of the Rus' interland where Latin and Slavonic sources distinguished a *Ruthenia Nigra* (Muscovy) to the north, a *Ruthenia Rubra* (part of nowadays Ukraine) to the south, and a *Ruthenia Alba* (modern Byelorussia) to the west [26].

On the shores of the Baltic Sea, the system of colors-cardinal points seems attested, but – as mentioned above – there is a tendence in the academic world to

refuse this assumption mainly for ideological reasons (i.e., avoid the politically unfeasible idea of the existence of a Balto-Slavic-Illyrian *linguaculture*). Nonetheless, the mention of *Witland* "White Land" to refer to the Prussians in the medieval Orosius, the historical presence of the *Bieli Hrvati* "White Croatians" south to the sea, the suspicious coincidence of Lithuanian *Baltas* "white" with the names *Baltija* and *Baltic* to refer to the sea west of Sarmats' lands, the numerous water basins named alternatively black (*niger*) and white (*albus*) north of Bothnia in Olaus Magnus' *Carta Marina* [26], and, lastly, the 'innumerable data proving that the term *white* was used in the Baltic to refer to the west', [27] all these facts strongly suggest the western limit of this colors-cardinal points *Sprachbund* reached, at least, the eastern Baltic Sea.

Notably, one of the strongest philological arguments in favor of the impossible relation between Greek *Baltia*, *Baltic*, and Lithuanian *baltas* in the specific sense of "white-western" is a mention of these remote regions of the north in Pliny's *Natural History,* where the toponym *Baltia* is used. It is said that the term is phonetically and morphologically too reminiscent of *Baltia-Baltic* to deem it accidentally coincident. Accordingly, and since in Latin and Greek, the stem *balt-* is supposedly not related to the meaning "white" and certainly not to "white-western", the etymology should be a different one [10]. Finally, it is claimed that classical Latin and Greek languages and culture were refractory to the Turkic system using colors' names to indicate geographical directions [10]. While I believe I have already convincingly proved the existence of this manner of naming cardinal directions in the classical Greek world, the present study could demonstrate the Greek usage for place-naming of the stem *balt-* belonging to the common linguaculture, rather than to a specific nation or language.

2.1 The four seas in the Mediterranean tradition

The survey of secondary sources indicates a historiographic and cognitive context validating the notion that Greek, Hellenistic, and Byzantine civilizations perceived the boundaries of their oikumene as geographic limits, not as national borders. This thesis is coherent with the perception of a civilized world surrounded by four seas symbolically placed in the four cardinal directions theorized in the *Historical Library* of Diodorus the Sicilian and in Agatharchides of Cnidus' *Peri ten Erythran Thalassan*.

As an example, Diodorus (first century BCE) affirms that 'Ἀραβίας παρὰ τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν ἕως Ἰνδῶν καὶ τοῦ πέρατος τῆς οἰκουμένης' (I, 19), observing that the sea lapping against Arabian and Indian coasts constituted 'the limits ["border" or, better preserving the etymological sense, "perimeter"] of the oikumene' [28]. Quite remarkably, this sea delimiting the southwestern part of India is named by Diodorus *Erythrán thálattan* "Red Sea", thus distinguishing it from the *Arabios Kolpos* – the modern Red Sea. The identical distinction between the Indian Ocean, called *Mare Erythraeum*, literally Red Sea, and the *Sinus Arabicus* – the modern Red Sea – is constant in Roman cartography and historiography too.

In his oeuvre, Diodorus Siculus is frequently referring to a Northern Ocean and a Southern Sea opting for a "Mesopotamian-style" reminiscent of Assyrian and Sumerian annals. Not rarely the term *Great* is used apparently interchangeably with Mediterranean or Indian Ocean. In any case, those seas clearly indicate the limits of the civilized world, chiefly in the south, because especially India is defined by seas since it 'is four-sided in shape and the side which faces east and that which faces south are embraced by the Great Sea' (II 35) [28].

Similarly, to refer to other cardinal directions, Diodorus consistently mentions water bodies delimiting the perimeter of geographical spaces at the manner of Strabo.

However, in the Sicilian's perception, even political entities must be delimited by seas. Accordingly, the territory of the Scythians occupies an area between 'the Ocean and the *Lake Maeotis* [the Sea of Azov]' (II 43, 2). Then, when mentioning that the Scythians further extended their domains, he specifies that they did it 'on the one side as far as the ocean to the east, and on the other side to the Caspian Sea and Lake Maeotis' (II 43, 2) [28].

The idea of an oikumene surrounded by four seas was inherited by Roman historiographers through their Greek sources. Dionysius Periegetes' *De situ Orbis* (c. 115 CE) and *De situ orbis libri III* by Pomponius Mela (c. 43 CE) describe an inhabited world enclosed between two Oceans of which the Caspian Sea constitutes an inlet of the Northern one, while the Persian Sea and the Arabian Sea (i.e., modern Red Sea) belong to the southern one. The definition of boundaries in the two Latin geographers is certainly a remnant of the Greek *forma mentis* expressed by their sources, chiefly Eratosthenes and Hipparchus.

However, it was Strabo to provide an explicit formulation of the concept:

> *It is the sea more than anything else that defines the contours of the land and gives it its shape by forming gulfs, deep seas, straits, and likewise isthmuses, peninsulas, and promontories; but both the rivers and the mountains assist the seas herein. It is through such natural features that we gain a clear conception of continents, nations […]. And since different places exhibit different good and bad attributes, as also the advantages and inconveniences that result therefrom, some due to nature and others resulting from human design, the geographer should mention those that are due to nature, for they are permanent, whereas the adventitious attributes undergo changes.*
>
> *(Strabo II.5, 17)* [29]

Despite some alternance between the Northern Ocean, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea as the bodies defining the northern limit, it is precisely the author's emphasis on symmetries and oppositions between the four seas that contributes to a better understanding of the whole cognitive frame: *Erythra-Red* is the sea opposite to those delimiting the northern border. As a matter of fact, in the whole *Geography*, the cardinal points coincide with the seas: the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea indicating northwest and northeast, the Mediterranean for due west, and *Erythra* for the southeast, while the Persian Gulf coincided precisely with the southern border.

> *[…] The Exterior Sea along the ocean many gulfs, of which four are very large. Of these four gulfs the northern one is called the Caspian Sea […]; the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Gulf pour inland from the Southern Sea, the one about opposite the Caspian Sea and the other about opposite the Pontus; and the fourth, which far exceeds the others in size, is formed by the sea which is called the Interior Sea, or Our Sea; it takes its beginning in the west at the strait at the Pillars of Heracles.*
>
> *(Strabo II.5, 18)* [29]

Herodotus's terminology, resembling that of Diodorus Siculus, is reminiscent of a millenary Mesopotamian and Elamite tradition that was thoroughly summarized in Keiko Yamada's *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea: The Development of the Names of Seas in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* [12]. Admittedly, 'In ancient Mesopotamia, "the Upper Sea" and "the Lower Sea" were the common appellations for the Mediterranean

and the Persian Gulf respectively' [12]. The author then confirms these classical names 'were often used in a pair', that is, in the oppositive sense we are looking for. The researcher further specifies that this naming practice 'originated in Sumerian literature […], was inherited into the Akkadian literary tradition at the time of the Sargon dynasty […], and a half millennia later […] was revived in full extent as is expressed in the inscriptions of the late Neo-Assyrian kings' [12]. The identity with the Greek tradition of sea-naming becomes even more evident when considering that the *thalassonyms* the Upper Sea and the Lower Sea were used 'to refer not only to the two major seas but also to other "seas" such as Lake Van and Lake Urmia north of Assyria' [12]. Finally, noticeable is the dynamicity of those toponyms, since they were attributed to different water basins demarcating the borders of newly conquered territories. Typically, in passages describing military expeditions from the times of Shamshi-Adad I (ca. 1813–1781 BC) up to Ashurbanipal (668-ca. 630 BC), the same name could be attributed to different water basins extending progressively in a northwestern direction to reflect the successes of military campaigns. To exemplify, The Upper Sea – i.e., *tamtu elenitu* – referred to Lake Van in the records of the Nairi campaign of Tukulti-Ninurta I, but it indicated the Mediterranean Sea several hundred years later in the texts of Sennacherib [30]. In passing, it should be noted that together with the army, the manner of naming seas and cardinal directions reached the shores of the Mediterranean where the Greek world was forming through contacts with its eastern partners.

Apparently, the expression "from the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea", which is constantly used in Assyrian annals, must not be considered a reference to specific seas but rather a conventional formula to indicate 'the whole country'; thus, it possibly was a propagandistic or ideological expression meant to reaffirm a king's control on the entire "national" territory [12, 31].

The synonymic or alternate use of "Upper" and "Greater" in the Mesopotamian tradition has remarkable parallels in European cartography and Asian toponymy. In the reports narrating the Amurru campaign, *tamtu elenitu* "Upper" is used alternatively to *rabitu* "Great" [12]. The Pattern repeats to the east, where different lakes are indicated as the always-extending limits of the territory in a manner like that of Diodorus. As an example, in the annals account of the Zauma campaign, the border coincides with Lake Zeribor in western Iran called alternatively Great or Upper [32]. Regardless of the synonyms adopted, 'quite frequent was the reference to two or more seas to define the extension of a territory' as it would become standard in the Greek or Chinese traditions [12].

The Persian tradition makes no exceptions. In Persian historiography and cartography, the reference to the four seas delimiting the land is 'attested in more than 1200 maps and 200 historical accounts' [33]. However, differently from the Mesopotamian tradition, in the Persian one, usually two northern seas are mentioned in opposition to two southern seas. Frequently, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea defined the north; The Arabic Gulf and the Persian Gulf indicated the south. The historical names of the Caspian Sea, in particular, indicate an area of cultural and linguistic koine.

In a political discourse aimed at underlying the necessity to recognize and respect the cultural and linguistic variety of the different peoples inhabiting the shores of the Caspian Sea, while openly referring to the cultures mosaic, Seyyed Rasoul Mousavi indirectly, and possibly unconsciously, confirms their belonging to a common linguaculture. The idea that the numerous different names of the Caspian Sea reflect an equally large number of different communities serves the opposite concept, revealing a common approach to its naming:

> *Some names for the Caspian Sea include Absokoun, Agh Deniz (White Sea),*
> *Albany (Albanium Mareh), Arghania, Astarabad, Astrakhan, Baku, Babol*
> *Abvab, Caspi, Shirvan, Gozgun Deniz, Deylam, Akghoureh Darya, Hobban,*
> *Jeylan, Jorjan, Ghalzam, Ghez, Gorgan, Gilan, Hirkani, Caspius Zowa, Kharazm,*
> *Khazar, Khezran, Khorasan, Mazandaran, Mokhan Sala Darya, Khalinskoy*
> *Mureh, Sarabi, Xi Hai Tabarestan (Chinese), Zarayeh and Roukasha [34].*

The reference to colors and cardinal directions emerges in most of the names. Dominant is the "white-west" reference explicit in the translation agh–/ak- with "white" for Turkic-related toponyms – *Agh Deniz*, *Akghoureh Darya* (cfr. Turkish *Ak Deniz*, the Mediterranean Sea). With reference to colors, it should be noted that the name Astrakhan was attributed to the sea by the Golden Horde, and the yellow color is embedded in the historical Persian name of this sea mentioned in the list above as *Astarabad* and in its modern form *Gorgan*, literally "yellow city", because of the homonymous nearby city where the Great Wall of Gorgan passes.

Possible evidence of the interchangeability of color names and cardinal points in the limnonyms mentioned in the list unfolds in the Khazars-related names of the sea – *Khazar*, *Khezran* – in relation to the Chinese tradition naming the same sea – *Xi Hai*, *xi* meaning "west" but also "white" (西, cf. Shaanxi and Xi-an, the region in northwest China and its capital city). While the Chinese name undoubtedly indicates the Caspian as the White Sea because of its position relative to Golden China, the term *Khazars* is loosely related to the color blue, specifically "celestial blue", in the Chinese naming tradition: Khazars were mentioned in Chinese historical sources as *Tūjué Kěsà,* with the specification *Tūjué* used in Chinese for naming Göktürks, unquestionably meaning "Blue Turks" or "Eastern Turks", especially in the light of the name of the ruling dynasty, the Ashina "Deep Blue" (cf. Saka, i.e., Eastern Iranian, *ashina* "deep blue").

While each singular etymological note discussed above is individually quite weak as evidence of the proposed hypothesis, nonetheless all these loose references to colors and directions contribute to the image of a multitude of people and tribes moving and inter-acting across large spaces and naming those spaces themselves. The Persian occupied the central stage in this area, but the Hellenic world interacted with the southeastern part of that territory, while Turkic tribes and Chinese people were crossing the oikumene from sea to sea. All of them were naming those seas with intersecting terms, claques, loan-words, and semantic borrowings, not rarely misunderstanding foreign words when the physical and cultural distance between the interacting people was too great.

Possibly, this is the case of the Greek corruption of the abovementioned Eastern Iranian name for the Black Sea, *Ashina* "Deep Blue" and corresponding Persian *Akhshēna* "Black". Due to the unintelligibility of the eastern colors-cardinal points system in the European Greece, the Persian exonyms for the Black Sea, *Akhshēna*, was assimilated for purely phonetical reasons to Greek *áxeinos*, from which the apparently antiphrastic *Póntos Áxeinos* "Inhospitable Sea" (Strabo I.2, 10) was later modified into *Póntos Éuxeinos*, "Hospitable Sea" [35].

Despite a certain lexical and toponymic incertitude, it seems this system of colors-cardinal points was integrated in western Greek toponymy, thus demonstrating it became gradually understandable and productive even in the central Mediterranean region.

2.2 White spaces at the boundaries of the Hellenic Oikumene

In Greece and in the Hellenistic kingdoms, there are proofs of the vitality of the color-cardinal points system. However, a certain degree of discernment is required to

distinguish the original Greek contribution from the passive adoption of preexisting traditions. As a matter of fact, several Greek toponyms make use of the Byzantine *aspron-*, meaning "white", to reproduce ancient non-Greek place names. On the other hand, certain uses of the Greek *leukos*, also for "white", apparently point at a progressive acquisition of an accessory shade of meaning, that is, a semantic calque. Finally, across the entirety of the northern boundary of the Greek oikumene, numerous toponyms display a conscious recourse to the colors-cardinal points system but name those places using the koine root *baltos*, which is at the same time Illyrian and Greek, Balto-Slavic, and Persian.

In Greek historiography, *leukos-white* is attested in remarkably oppositive contexts to indicate northwestern India and the Syrians inhabiting territories northwest of Syria proper. *White India* is mentioned in Greek and Parthian sources of the first century CE to refer to the Indo-Iranian frontier, that is, Arachosia. This region of cultural and linguistic exchanges is mentioned in the 19th book of Isidore of Charax's *Parthian stations*, a description of first century trade route from Antioch to India [36]. Some historians consider the mention of *Indikè Leuké* "White India" an attempt to underline that Arachosia was not a Persian Satrapy but rather part of an Indian kingdom where Greeks maintained a presence until quite late [37]. And indeed, the city of Alexandropolis mentioned in *The Parthian stations* (quite probably the city of Alexandria Arachosia) is described as a Greek trading post even at such a late time:

> *Beyond is Arachosia. And the Parthians call this White India; there are the city of Biyt and the city of Pharsana and the city of Chorochoad and the city of Demetrias; then Alexandropolis, the metropolis of Arachosia; it is Greek, and by it flows the river Arachotus. As far as this place the land is under the rule of the Parthians [36].*

The quotation shows a structural calque of a Parthian expression. The lexical choices are purely Greek with both *Indika/-è* and *leukos/-é* well attested in geographical treatises. However, the technical meaning of the choronym must have been unintelligible to the Greek author since he refers the name as a Parthian toponym. However, it is specifically the relative position of White India compared to that of India proper that is revealing: the specification *White* is used to refer to a territory to the northwest, that is, toward the Iranian plateau and Western Afghanistan.

This kind of opposition between the mainland and a northwestern exclave is not occasional in Greek geographical treatises. Syria and White Syria – more precisely Syrians and White Syrians – are mentioned in Strabo in the same relative position and by the means of an identical lexical set:

> *As for the Paphlagonians, they are bounded on the east by the Halys River, which, according to Herodotus, 'flows from the south between the Syrians and the Paphlagonians and empties into the Euxine Sea, as it is called'; by 'Syrians', however, it means the 'Cappadocians' and, in fact, today they are still called "White Syrians", while those outside the Taurus are called "Syrians" (XII,3) [28].*

Strabo, defining the lexical choices of Herodotus, distinguishes between two types of Syrians separated by a river that flows from the southeast to northwest and empties into the Black Sea. Then, the historian names the *Leukosyroi* "White Syrians" as the Syrians living in Cappadocia and Anatolia. These regions are located in the area northwest of those inhabited by the Syrians, and the specification *White* occurs in an undoubtedly geographical context.

In the defined period, "white" toponyms are common across the Hellenic world specially to name places at the western border. This is the case, as an example, of the city of Leukos on the westernmost promontory of the island of Karpathos. Likewise, the region of Acarnania was described already in Homer's *Odyssey*, but it was Strabo to call it *Leucas*, recurring to the root λευκ- "white". Similarly, in front of the coast of the Ionian Sea, the island of Λευκάδα (modern Greek Lefkada) reinforces the impression of a northwestern border of the Greek oikumene rich in "white toponyms" [9]. Furthermore, the same attribute appears in the naming of the western region of Λευκανία, the *Lucania* of modern southern Italy, a region part of the western colonies of the Magna Grecia founded during the fifth century BCE. The name *Leukania* was attributed in the period of conflict with the local population, which was named in Greek *Leukani* "whites" in a manner closely resembling the cognitive frame that generated the ethnonym *Leukosyroi* and the toponym *Leukosyria*.

The Greek-named Italian area of Lucania reveals other toponyms preserving Greek roots conveying the meaning "white". In the contexts of Diodorus, the Sicilian and Strabo's commentaries underlining that seas, rivers, and mountains should be considered to define the limits of the world, noticeable is the occurrence of Greek *aspron* – a Byzantine Greek term for "white"– to name the most evident morphological feature of Lucania's territory, the *Aspromonte*. This compound name was already attested in the archaic Grecanic dialect well before the area became part of the Roman state; therefore, the relatively recent Byzantine Greek ἄσπρον possibly reflects a previous, non-attested and more archaic term [38].

In any case, the reference to white mountains in historical western Greece stimulates the contrastive mention of the Black Mountain of *Montenegro* delimiting the territory north of Greece. In the context delineated in these pages, the fact that the historical Montenegro was inhabited by the population of *Nigri Latini* – certainly not a reference to the color of their skin – is quite suspicious. The *Nigri Latini* were called like that undoubtedly to distinguish them from other *Latini* in a manner reminiscent of the distinction Syrians-White Syrians. And the suspect of a color-cardinal points reference in the Balkan area is reinforced by the parallelism with the *Morlacchi* people of ex-Yugoslavia, that is, the μαυρόβλαχοι – "Black Vlachs" – of medieval Greek historiography (e.g., Hesychius of Alexandria's *Lexicon*). These herdsmen inhabiting the northeastern shores of the Adriatic Sea were named Black Vlachs to distinguish them from the βλαχοι of the south (modern Greece, Albania and Macedonia), making it feasible the suppose that black was used in Byzantine historiography to indicate a different relative geographical position [34].

The region between the Adriatic Sea and Thracia, that is, the northwestern border of the Hellenic world, is rich in toponyms connected by the oppositive relation black-white. Nonetheless, in these northern areas, the Greek-Illyrian and Balto-Slavic term *baltos* "white" is more common. In Slavic languages, it is preserved in the historical toponym Ballanstra, a locality (near the present-day village of Jarlovtsi) situated on the shores of the *Bela Reka* "White River. North of it, not far from the border with Serbia, historical sources speak of the *Czarna Rieka*, the "Black River" [39]. Though difficult to identify with certitude, this opposition is reminiscent of a much more evident one just across the border in nowadays Serbia. The river Timachus, or Timok, preserves the Indo-European *tm-akwa* "black, dark water, river" (cf. Old Bulgarian ТЬМА "darkness"), but it is known in Serbian as Great Timok (*Veliki Timok*) with the same terminological coincidence Black-Great or Northern-Great already observed in the diachronic evolution of numerous toponyms. This eastern Serbian tributary of the Danube has its counterpart in the *Beli Timok* the "White Timok" in the northwest, almost parallel to the Serbian-Bulgarian border.

Despite these examples being related to the Slavic languages, relevant is that precisely along these faded boundaries between the northern plain and the center of the Hellenic world, the investigated system was used and adapted; it became intelligible and, occasionally, loanwords to express it were integrated in the Greek lexicon. Two foreign roots carrying the meaning "white" entered the Greek lexicon and became particularly well integrated and morphologically adapted in the Byzantine period: the stem *bel-*, just mentioned above in the context of Slavic languages of the Adriatic and Balkan regions, and the related Balto-Slavic-Illyrian *balt-*.

The root *bel-* is easily recognizable in the Thracian name of the Ορβέλος mountains and in the identical Greek form attested in many historical and geographical sources (e.g., Herodotus 5, 16). Even the modern name of this mountain range, *Belasitsa*, preserves the etymological meaning of White Mountains and the Greco-Thracian-Slavic root *bel-* (cf. Phrygian *βελον*, Bulgarian *бел* "white", Slavic *bjal-* "white") [40]. In other regional languages geographically close to the Hellenic world, the name of this mountain range was reinterpreted, but the – possibly Thracian – loanword carrying the accessory meaning "white-north-western" was preserved: 'The Macedonian name of the Ορβέλος was Βάλάκρος, which Georgiev sees as Βάλ-άκρος – White top' [40]. Unfortunately, the revealing interlinguistic reflection elaborated by Serafimov did not consider the close relation these Slavic and Thracian terms had with the Greek language, because the only Greek stem appearing in the comparison is *leukos*:

Thracian bal	*Slavic bel*
Latin alpus	*Greek leukos*
Lithuanian baltas	*English white*

[40]

Nonetheless, the stem *balt-* with the meaning "white", "swamp", and accessory meaning "west" or "northwest" was attested in Greek, quite probably resulting from a borrowing. The Greek *balt-* etymologically cannot be related to Proto-Indo-European *b^helH-* ("white") 'because the Greek reflex of PIE *bh is φ' [41]; thus, it is considered an Illyrian substratum word, and its integration into the Greek lexicon is traced back to a Medieval reinforcement from Slavic *bel-* and *byal-* with the double meaning "swamp" and "white" (cf. Proto-Balto-Slavic *bálʾtas* with the same polysemy, cf. also Lithuanian *báltas* "white" and *balà,* etymologically "swamp") [42, 43]. Notably, traces of a more archaic penetration of this koine word into Greek are preserved precisely in this mentioned 'Greek reflex of PIE *bh φ' that is displayed in the term *phalios* "having a white patch", which points at Thracian and Phrygian *Balios*, the name of one of Achilles' immortal horses with a white spot on the forehead (see e.g., Statius' *Thebaid*). In this perspective, the Greek *baltos* could also be connected to the Dacian toponym *Βάλαυσον* as in Procopius of Caesarea's *De Aedificiis* (XLIV, 1), where it refers to a white castle. While in modern Greek βάλτος preserves exclusively the meaning "swamp", the stem appears related to "white" in the name of Plutarco's nymph Βάλτη. Moreover, the studies of M. Vasmer about Slavonic toponymy in Greece and the commentaries of his followers evidenced a common pattern of 'geographical terms' – among which *baltos* – systematically adopted by Slavic settlers in Greece to form place-names: 'βιρός, βάλτος, λόγγος, παγανειά, πολιάνα, σοποτός [...]' [44]. Finally, βάλτ- is attested in written form with its nominative and vocative

plural forms βάλτοι firstly to mean "swamp" and then, in the derived form *Byaltae*, to represent choronyms and ethnonyms in Ptolemy [45].

Further to the northeast, along the northern shores of the Black Sea, in the region between the Danube, the Dniester, and the Don rivers, close interaction with the Greek are demonstrated by borrowings or semantic calques as shown by the Greek name of the Dniester, *Τύρας*, with a loanword from Scythian *tūra* "rapid stream" possibly in the sense of "white waters" and loosely related to white (cf. Lithuania *tyras* "pure", "transparent" especially of water, "candid" but also "swamp"). The homonymous city of Tyras, a major trade port funded in the 6th century BCE, was significantly built on the west shores of the Tyras (i.e., Dniester) river, and hence, in Byzantine Greek, it was known as *Ασπρόκαστρον* "White Castle", with the root *aspro-* already recognized in the oronym *Aspromonte*. With a structural calque from Greek, it was named *Album Castrum* "White Castle" in Latin and consequently *Cetatea Albă* "White Citadel" in Romanian. In Ottoman Turkish, it was *Akkerman* "White Castle". Furthermore, in the *Πρὸς τὸν ἴδιον υἱὸν Ρωμανόν* written by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (fourth emperor of the Byzantine Empire from 913 to 959), the fortress on the opposite side of the river, that is, on the eastern shores of the Dniester, is named Μαυρόκαστρον "Black Castle", thus exhibiting the expected geographical position-colors opposition [46]. It should be noted, however, that in the anonymous *Toparcha Gothicus*, the whole settlement including eastern and western shores is named *Maurokastron* from which the *Maurocastro* of the later Genoese traders settled in this city [47].

Further northeast along the Hellenic world boundaries, a "white" area is evidently opposed to Serica – the name Greeks used to refer to northwestern China (as an example in Stephanus of Byzantium's *Ethnica*) – in classical and Byzantine historiography. This region roughly coincides with the Kara-Khanid Khanate and with the later possessions of the Qara Khitai or Western Liao dynasty, also known as Great Liao. Note the use of the Turkic term *kara* for "black" (attributed by 19th century historiographers) and the Chinese term *Kala-han* (喀喇汗) for "Black Khan", an ethnonym attested since the time of the Western Zhou dynasty which in turn exhibits, in its Chinese transcription – 西周, the character *Xī* meaning "white" as already discussed above.

The connection between these remote lands and the Hellenic world is indeed Ptolemy's recourse to the stem βάλτ- to name the Balti people of Baltiyul and Baltiyul or Little Tibet itself. This mention is truly paradigmatic of the cultural and linguistic milieux depicted in this chapter. The Greek term used to refer to this region is *Byaltae* with the stem *byal-* identical to the Slavic root for "white" appearing, as an example, in the Polish city name Białystok. This similarity in such a remote area might seem coincidental but revealing is the Balti people settled in the historical White India, along the upper reaches of the Indus River and precisely at the foot of the Karakoram mountain range, which shows the already familiar Turkic *kara* for "black-north" in the oronym. The apparently accidental use of the stem *balt–/byal-* is contextualized in an interconnected network of "colored" toponyms. Furthermore, to the north of Baltiyul, the Western Liao or Great Liao occupied the region north of both Great Urals and Ladak, a region 'also known as Great Tibet or Mariyul "Red Country"' [48, 49].

In this context of colors-cardinal points in which the familiar "Great" and "Little" appear systematically in connection with black ethnonyms and red toponyms, it is consequential to conclude that the encyclopaedic meaning of *Balti* and Greek *Byaltae* is "northwest". The Balti settled in 'Baltiyul, which is also known as Little Tibet, or The Northern Province […] in the Little Urals, that is the *Annibi montes* of classical

geographers (τά Ἄννιβα ὄρη in Ptol. 6.16; *Anniva* in Amm. Marc. 23.6)' [50]. While the author of the Greek geographical dictionary reminds the reader that 'this area of the historical Northern Schytia, to a certain extent, corresponds to the land of the Balti people, not to be confused with the Balts inhabiting the shores of the Baltic Sea' [50], I would like to emphasize precisely the common lexical material, the same accessory meaning and the same cognitive approach to the representation of large spaces that connect the two ethnonyms.

> *After the Mughal annexation of Kashmir in 1586 Mughal possessions adjoined both Lesser Tibet and Greater Tibet. Lesser Tibet, called in Persian as Tibbat-i-Khwurd, was called "Baltistan" by the inhabitants. […] Greater Tibet was called in Persian as Tibbat-i-Buzurg or Tibbat-i-Kalan, while by the natives it is called Lhata-Yul [49].*

Lastly, it should be noted that the Greek themselves became a passive referent of this same system in the easternmost regions of their oikumene. In the Chinese historiographical oeuvres *Records of the Grand Historian* and *Book of Han* tell of the *Dayuan* "Great Yuan" [51, 52], people are mentioned as a constant counterpart of the Han dynasty who finally defeated them just before 100 BCE, during the Han-Dayuan War. The term *Yuan* used in the ethnonym was a Chinese rendition of Sanskrit *Yavana* meaning "Ionians", that is, Greeks. Indeed, the Chinese explorer Zhang Qian, in 130 BCE, indirectly refers to the Dayuan as the subjects of the Greek polis Alexandria Eschate (modern Khujand, Tajikistan). Accordingly, the proper rendition of Dayuan is "Great Yuan" or, literally, "Great Ionians". In the context outlined above, the appellative Great to name the Greeks inhabiting the Ferghana valley in Central Asia is an evident reference to the color black for "northwest", from a Chinese perspective, as it was for the Qara Khitai alternatively known in China as the Western Liao dynasty or Great Liao.

3. Conclusion

Summing up the argument, the cognitive investigation of several toponyms attested along the boundaries of the Hellenic world and carrying the dictionary meaning "white" confirmed the possibility that their encyclopaedic meaning was "western" or "northwestern". Λευκός is attested in the choronym *Indikè Leuké* "White India" in Isidore of Charax's *The Parthian stations*, where it is used to name the historical region of Arachosia positioned northwest of India. Similarly, the ethnonym *Leukosyroi* "White Syrians" is used in Strabo's Geography to describe the "White Syrians" as the Syrians living in Cappadocia and Anatolia – regions that are located to the northwest of those inhabited by the Syrians. Ἄσπρον appears, as an example, in the Byzantine Greek Ἀσπρόκαστρον "White Castle", to name the trade port of Tyras, on the west shores of the Dniester River. Illuminating is the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus mention of the fortress on the opposite side of the river, that is, on the eastern shores of the Dniester, as Μαυρόκαστρον "Black Castle", a toponym exhibiting the expected geographical position/colors opposition. The thesis of an accessory meaning "northwestern" for *white* is reinforced in territories where both *leukos* and *aspron* are used together to name the northwestern regions of Greece: in the Magna Grecia historical region of Lucania (**Leukania*), the most prominent mountain range is designated by the Grecanic term *Aspromonte*.

Challenging was the scrutiny of toponyms displaying the cognate stems *balt-* and *byal-* associated to Greek βάλτος, modern Greek "swamp", Byzantine Greek "white". Firstly, the Greek term is certainly a loanword from other languages; therefore, its primary and accessory meanings could have been borrowed together or separately. Furthermore, it was not possible to univocally identify the lending language, since the accessory meaning "white" was often conveyed by the same root *bal-* attested in the Balto-Slavic, Turkic, Illyrian, Thracian, and Phrygian languages, cf. Lithuanian *Baltas* "white" and etymologically "swamp". Nonetheless, the toponymic use of balt- is attested in several place names across the northern boundaries of the Hellenic world. In Pliny the Elder's Naturalis Historia, the toponym *Baltia* is possibly an allusion to the Baltic Sea region, while Ptolomy's chose *Byaltae* to name the Baltiyul region in the Little Tibet; the same stem with apparently the same northwestern reference appears in the oronyms Βάλάκρος and Ορβέλος.

It is concluded that due to contacts and borrowings, or simply by imitation of the use of *Baltos* and *Baltoi* and generally of the transnational colors-cardinal points system, other Greek stems meaning "white" acquired the accessory meaning "northwest" and were used in the formation of toponyms. Statements like 'Beyond is Arachosia. And the Parthians call this White India', attested in Isidore of Charax, testify of the conscious adoption of a borrowed expression and a manner of representing spaces but also of the lexical choices to convey those meanings.

As a result of this brief "cultural history of a syncretic linguaculture", this chapter depicted an area of the classical world where separate linguistic labels – Greek, Illyrian, Slavic, and so on – cannot represent the complexity of a koine in which East and West mingled. In this region, outstretched toward the Hindu Kush, the Little Altai, and the Sarmatic Plain, place names and ethnonyms are just one of the aspects signaling a marked Western Asian influence on Greek perception of vast spaces, both linguistically and cognitively. Furthermore, this research underscored the necessity to conceive the northeastern part of the Classical World as a place where faded boundaries connected, rather than being separated, with people belonging to distinct nations but part of a common *Sprachbund*.

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The usages of the past, and of antiquity, were felt throughout history, reflecting the fabric of apologetic and ideological narratives. Antiquity is studied to understand time to understand the way in which the past is received, integrated, and used. This work gathers seven essays featuring case studies on ancient cultural identity via interdisciplinary approaches. Interdisciplinarity, thanks to the intersection of history, archaeology, and linguistics, corresponds to the transversal, comprehensive, and complex look essential to understand the intrinsic value of antiquity in each time and in each present. Ancient history and archaeology demonstrate how diverse the ancient world truly was. Socio-cultural change and dynamics in contact situations between groups of distinct cultures produced constant innovations and adaptations. In this book, the reader will access debates on intercultural experiences from the perspective of Phoenician colonists in Spain; the formation of a particular Greek identity built by Greek colonists in Sicily; the dramatic social and cultural transformations in the southern Levant following the regional transition to the Bronze Age; the integration of pre-Islamic Somalia in a trade network connected to the Mediterranean, from the Bronze to Iron ages; the multicultural influences inspiring the Book of Genesis; the cultural identity of early Christians as the New Testament is developed under the influence of Near Eastern traditions; and the complex multi-cultural and multi-ethnic dialogue behind the process of formation of Koine Greek during Byzantine times.

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