

cautionary remarks. The first is that it explains only the psychological state which made certain types of men receptive to the phenomenon of Gnosticism. It does not explain the origins of the varied religious and philosophical ideas which go to make up Gnostic doctrine. Secondly, this explanation runs the risk of exaggerating the role played by Judaism in Gnostic origins. It cannot be denied that there are Jewish elements in the pseudo-Christian forms of Gnosticism even though these sometimes show a strong anti-Jewish bias. Moreover, Jewish influence is often present in non-Christian *Gnoseis*, and there is a characteristically Gnostic strain even in heterodox Judaism itself. While the question remains a disputed one, the limited information available does not warrant the attribution of a primary role in the movement to Judaism.

Other Sources. As for the sources upon which Gnosticism drew for its strange mixture of ideas, only the following general observations can be made. Gnosticism grew out of the confrontation of a broad syncretistic movement which flourished especially in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor, and eventually in Rome, with Christianity. The syncretism consisted in a tendency to adopt into one pattern of thought elements from all the religions and philosophies current in the Hellenistic world. To this amalgam ancient Iranian religion contributed the cosmic dualism that forms a basic element of nearly all varieties of Gnosticism. From Egypt came elements of the cult of Isis and Osiris; from Babylonia the influence of astrology and the planetary gods; from Syria, Greece, and Rome cultic features of the mystery religions and magic; from Judaism a host of Old Testament figures and many variations on the creation story; and from Greece, again, the philosophical currents of Stoicism and Neo-Pythagoreanism. Platonic influences felt in Gnosticism were transmitted only through the medium of later popularizations; Gnosticism was never a rigorously philosophical system of thought. Finally, Christianity lent to the syncretistic movement the role of the Savior Christ.

This is but a brief list of the currents that entered the syncretistic movement of Gnosticism, but little more can be said with certainty at the present stage of research. It is disputed whether or not there was a pre-Christian Jewish Gnosticism or even whether it is proper to speak of Gnosticism at all before the encounter with Christianity. The second question may be resolved in part by adopting the terminological distinctions suggested at the beginning of this article.

See Also: GnosticisM, Jewish; Gnosis.

Bibliography: Sources. W. VÖLKER, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der christlichen Gnosis* (Tübingen 1932). R. M. GRANT, *Gnosticism: A Sourcebook of Heretical Writings from the Early Christian Period* (New York 1961). C. SCHMIDT and W. TILL, *Kop-*

tisch-gnostische Schriften (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 45; 3d ed. Berlin 1959). W. TILL, *Die gnostischen Schriften des koptischen Papyrus Berolinensis 8502* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 60; Berlin 1955). G. HORNER, *Pistis Sophia* (London 1924). Studies. C. COLPE, et al., *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (3rd ed. Tübingen 1957–63) 2:1648–61. K. PRÜMM, et al., *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche* (Freiburg, 1957–66) 4:1021–31. J. QUASTEN, *Patrology* (Westminster 1950) 1:254–277. J. DORESSE, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics*, tr. P. MAIRET (New York 1960). R. M. GRANT, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York 1959). H. JONAS, *The Gnostic Religion* (2nd. ed. Boston 1963). R. M. WILSON, *The Gnostic Problem* (London 1958). W. C. VAN UNNIK, *Newly Discovered Gnostic Writings* (Studies in Biblical Theology 30; Naperville, Ill. 1960). H. CORNÉLIS and A. LÉONARD, *La Gnose éternelle* (Je sais, je crois 146; Paris 1959). H. A. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, v.1 (Cambridge, Mass. 1956) 495–574. F. L. SAGNARD, *La Gnose valentinienne et le témoignage de saint Irénée* (Paris 1947). G. G. SCHOLEM, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York 1960). H. C. PUECH, “Gnosis and Time,” *Man and Time: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks* (Bollingen Series 30, v. 3; New York 1957) 38–84. R. M. WILSON, “Some Recent Studies in Gnosticism,” *New Testament Studies* 6 (1959–60) 32–44. S. SCHULZ, “Die Bedeutung neuer Gnosisfunde für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft,” *Theologische Rundschau* 26 (1960) 209–226, 301–334.

[G. W. MACRAE]

GNOSTICISM, JEWISH

Under the influence of Hellenism certain Jews of the Greco-Roman period indulged in speculations that can rightly be called Gnostic, even though this Gnosticism had its own typically Jewish character. Its early manifestations can be seen in the esoteric traditions contained in the Jewish apocalyptic writings and in the DEAD SEA SCROLLS; its later development is evident in the mystical speculations of the rabbis of the Talmudic period and in the so-called *merkābā* mysticism; its climax is reached in the Book of YESIRAH and in the Gnostic elements of the Book of Bahir.

Jewish Hellenism and the Phenomenon of Gnosis.

After the 3rd century B.C., Judaism came in contact with Hellenism. The first result of this contact was the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible made in Egypt. In the field of philosophy, Stoicism and Platonism had an especially strong influence on Judaism. The Platonic concept of God came the closest to the Jewish concept of a divine Creator supreme over all, while Stoicism allowed Judaism to identify the laws of the Torah (Mosaic Law) with the laws of the universe according to which nature is governed and man should live; God conceived the order that, as the natural law, is inherent in the world and, as the Torah, is binding for man. This idea, intimated as early as the middle of the 2nd century B.C. in the com-

mentary on the Pentateuch by the Alexandrian Jew Aristobulus, was then further developed by PHILO JUDAËUS. Following the speculation on wisdom in Prv 8.22–30 (see also Jb 28.27) according to which wisdom was created by God before the creation of the world as “the firstborn of His ways,” Jesus ben Sirach, at the beginning of the 2nd century B.C., equated this wisdom with the Torah (Sir 24.22–27). This led then in rabbinical speculation to the notion, already present in a similar form at the beginning of Philo’s *De Opificio Mundi*, that the Torah was the instrument used by God in creating the world (e.g., *Pirke Avoth* 3.14; *Midrash Gen. rabba* 1.2). Similar ideas were in the Manual of Discipline of the QUMRAN COMMUNITY (1QS) 3.15–17; 11.11 (see Schubert, *Die Religion*, 13–25).

Especially clear was the influence of Hellenism on the anthropology of Judaism. Ancient Israel, as the ancient Near East in general, did not yet have the concept that became current in Greek philosophy, of the soul as a vital principle existing independently of the body. The rabbis, however, were already familiar with the idea, as seen, for instance, in *Sanh* 91b (2nd Christian century): “Antoninus asked Rabbi, ‘When does the soul enter into man? At the time of conception or during the formation of the embryo?’ He answered, ‘During the formation of the embryo.’ But the other objected: ‘Without salt can any piece of meat be kept for three days without spoiling? It must be at the time of conception.’ Rabbi said that Antoninus had convinced him in this matter.” [See R. Meyer, *Hellenistisches in der rabbinischen Anthropologie, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament* 4.22 (Stuttgart 1937).] Also in the field of art the influence of Hellenism was unmistakable. [See B. Kanael, *Die Kunst der antiken Synagoge* (Frankfurt am Main 1961).]

Motifs Common to Jewish and Non-Jewish Gnosticism. Jewish Hellenism had the following seven distinctive motifs of Gnostic thought, without, however, their having here the specific significance that they had for the pagan or Christian-pagan Gnosticism. (1) Aristobulus and Philo made a distinction between the all-high God outside the world and a divine power that produced the world; in Gnosticism there was a radical opposition between the all-high God and the power that created the world. (2) A distinction was made between body and soul whereby the body was judged the lower and the soul the higher; thus, e.g., in *Midrash Lev. rabba* 4.5 (end of the 2nd century B.C.): “Rabbi Hiyyah said . . . , ‘In the world to come soul and body will stand before the judgment seat. What then will the Holy One (glory be to Him!) do? He will leave the body aside and deal with the soul. Then the soul will say to Him, ‘Lord of the world, we both sinned together; why do You put the body aside

and deal only with me?’ He will say to it, ‘The body is of the lower regions where sin is committed, but you come from the upper regions where no sin is committed before me. That is why I leave the body aside and deal with you.’” The idea, however, that the soul, in order to be free, must release itself from its confinement in the body, remained alien to the Jews. In clear opposition to this, Judaism developed the idea of the resurrection of the body. (3) Radically dualistic ideas appeared in the apocalyptic literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here, however, in opposition to Gnosticism, dualism was eschatologically limited, whereas Gnosticism, instead of postulating an apocalyptic waiting, purported to show the way here and now to the transcendent realm of light. The dualism of Gnosticism was absolute and cosmic and, therefore, in many cases entailed the removal of moral teachings, whereas the dualism of the apocalyptic writings and the Dead Sea Scrolls was more relative and ethical and sought a strict compliance with the traditional law. (4) Gnosticism and apocalypticism had an equally negative attitude toward the concrete world; however, whereas the Gnostic wanted to flee from the world, the apocalyptic writer hoped for a glorified world, a “new” world. (5) Both Gnosticism and apocalypticism, especially in the Dead Sea Scrolls, entertained the notion of a hidden knowledge that was limited to a small group of the saved. In Gnosticism, however, this knowledge meant salvation itself or at least the way to salvation, whereas in the apocalyptic writings and the Dead Sea Scrolls salvation was the possession of the elect community exclusively. Here the emphasis lay less on knowledge or knowing in itself than on the idea of election. The knowledge proper to apocalypticism was the insight of those who belonged to the remnant of Israel. (6) Both apocalypticism and Gnosticism had a keen interest in angelology and cosmology. To be sure, Judaism, too, had the notion of fallen angels who seduced men and ensnared them in sin. But according to Judaism, their power was not absolute, and as they were created by God, they would be stripped of their power and destroyed at the end of time. (7) In individual Jewish texts, to be treated later more in detail, certain motifs appeared that were current in pagan Gnosticism, but they were regularly adapted in the Jewish texts to the presuppositions of Biblical monotheism.

It is impossible to determine here with certainty whether in these cases the Jewish texts were influenced by developed forms of pagan Gnosticism, or whether, on the contrary, the influence was in the direction from Jewish circles to Gnosticism, or whether it was merely a matter of parallel developments. In one basic case, however, that of the portrayal of man’s ascent to the vision of God’s throne, this motif, which later became important in Gnosticism, though in a form adapted to specifically

Gnostic dualism, can be traced back in Judaism as far as the first half of the 2nd century B.C. (e.g., in Ethiopic Enoch 14). On the basis of this fact, much can be said for the statement of Scholem: "Initially, Jewish esoteric tradition absorbed Hellenistic elements similar to those we find in Hermetic writings. Such elements entered Jewish tradition before Christianity developed, or at any rate before Christian Gnosticism as a distinctive force came into being" (*Jewish Gnosticism*, 34).

Possible Development of Gnosticism under Jewish Influence. Several attempts have been made to regard Judaism as the source of Gnosticism as such, since this is first evidenced in the Syro-Palestinian and Anatolian area. But all these efforts, plausible though they may seem individually, are not entirely satisfactory. G. Quispel [*Gnosis als Weltreligion* (Zurich 1951); "Der gnostische Anthropos und jüdische Tradition," *Eranos* 22 (1953) 195–234; "Christliche Gnosis und jüdische Heterodoxie," *Evangelische Theologie* 14 (1954) 474–484] calls attention to Jewish anthropological speculations according to which the fall of Adam was conceived of as a falling from Paradise's realm of light into the world of birth and death. In this, however, he is relying heavily on rabbinical citations that are more recent than the Gnostic teachings that are supposed to depend on them. In these cases it is a matter of rabbinical HAGGADAH being influenced by Gnostic material rather than of Gnostic concepts being influenced by Jewish motifs. J. Doresse himself [*Les Livres secrets des gnostiques d'Égypte* (Paris 1958) 324–329] describes as merely hypothetical his theory according to which the Essene settlement of Qumran may probably be meant by the place name Gomorra in the so-called Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit that is found among the still unpublished Coptic texts of Chenoboskion. R. M. L. Wilson ["Simon, Dositheus and the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 9 (1957) 21–30] and, following him, J. Daniélou [*Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme* v.1 (Tournai 1958) 82–85] see in the strange and much-discussed figure of DOSITHEUS OF SAMARIA the missing link between the Essene community of the Dead Sea Scrolls and later Gnosticism. Although the theory is certainly intriguing, the evidence, nevertheless, appears too weak to permit its being followed without reservation. The statement of the PSEUDOCLEMENTINE Homilies that SIMON MAGUS and Dositheus were disciples of John the Baptist does not bear an unqualified stamp of historic credibility [see T. Caldwell, "Dositheus Samaritanus," *Kairos* 4 (1962) 105–117]; moreover, the historical contact in ideas that no doubt existed between John the Baptist and the Dead Sea Scrolls should not be overrated. R. M. Grant [*Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York 1959) esp. 34–35, 41] is

of the opinion that the collapse of the apocalyptic eschatological hopes in Judaism, especially after the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70, had a stimulating effect on Jewish Gnosticism. Here, indeed, the psychological agreement between apocalypticism and Gnosticism in relation to the concrete world has been rightly perceived; but sufficient consideration has not been given to the fact that, although the year 70 is a landmark in the history of the Jews, such is not the case in the history of Gnosticism. The thesis, nevertheless, is supported further by the fact that between apocalypticism and the special phenomenon of Jewish Gnosticism there is an undeniable relationship. At any rate, the relationship of "Jewish" Gnosticism to the rest of the Gnosticism is much less clear than would be wished.

K. Rudolf [*Die Mandaer* v.1 (Göttingen 1960) 266] sees in the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls "a heretical Judaism already influenced by Gnostic trends." The Qumran people offer, according to Rudolf, "a valuable example for showing the existence of a syncretistic form of Judaism that lost essential roots of its own parentage and therefore gave in to other influences." However, one cannot speak of a heretical Judaism in these early times, because there was no normative "orthodox" Judaism until after A.D. 70. However, since the Essenes, about whose APOCALYPTIC character the Hellenizing Flavius JOSEPHUS is silent, went back to the movement of the HASIDAEANS or so-called early *ḥāsīdīm* (pious) more radical than the Maccabees, the Essenes were deeply rooted in the apocalyptic tradition of Judaism. They cannot therefore be taken as an example of a form of uprooted syncretistic Judaism. In spite of this, however, it is again admittedly difficult to overlook the fact that there is an intimate connection between the Dead Sea Scrolls and Jewish Gnosticism. Moreover, many ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls go back to foreign influence also. All these theses attempt, therefore, to offer explanations for the state of the case that is not yet completely explainable concerning the relationship of Judaism to Gnosticism, and so it is well for the time being to treat Jewish Gnosticism as a phenomenon *sui generis*; only as such was it, in any case, of significance for the development of the later CABALA.

Esoteric Traditions in the Apocalyptic Writings and the Dead Sea Scrolls. In Dn 11.33, 35; 12.3 the members of the group behind the historico-apocalyptic parts of the Book of Daniel (most likely the Hasidaeans) are called *maskilīm* (the wise, the understanding ones), which is equivalent to saying that they were those who were initiated into the apocalyptic traditions of the community of the elect. In the ten-week apocalypse of Ethiopic Enoch, which, like the historico-apocalyptic parts of Daniel, was written about the time of the Maccabean re-

volt (168–164 B.C.) and likewise arose in a Hasidaean milieu, it is stated that, at the end of the period represented by the seventh week, “the just elect of the eternal plant of justice [cf. Is 60.21] will be chosen to receive the sevenfold instruction on the whole creation” (Enoch 93.10). The apocalyptic groups were, therefore, of the opinion that they were the guardians and preservers of esoteric traditions. Included among these traditions were speculations on the heavenly world, the related questions about the calendar, and detailed accounts of the fall of the angels and the destructive power of these fallen spirits. The Essenes of Qumran carried this esoteric character to the extreme. Flavius Josephus spoke of this in his well-known account of the Essenes (*Bell. Jud.* 2.8.7), and in the Manual of Discipline of Qumran [1QS (DSD) 4.5–6] it is said of the just: “They conduct themselves humbly with all prudence and with ability to conceal the true secrets of knowledge.” The word knowledge has a strongly Gnostic character in the Thanksgiving Psalms of Qumran. The Qumran psalmist, for instance, thanked God that He let him “know the mystery of His truth and understand His marvelous deeds” [1QH (DST) 11.4].

In connection with Ezechiel ch. 1 the motif of the ascent to God’s throne is found already in the older apocalyptic writings. The oldest piece in question, Enoch 14.8–25, which most likely was written in the first half of the 2nd century B.C. and knew only three heavens, in contrast to the later notion of seven, is composed as follows. After traversing the first two divisions of the heavens, the heavenly wanderer enters the third and highest heaven. “Its floor was like fire, its upper part was formed by lightning flashes and whirling stars, and its ceiling was blazing fire.” There stood the throne of God, on which the *kābôd*, the Splendor of God, was visible. “His raiment was more splendent than the sun and whiter than pure snow. None of the angels could enter this house and look upon His face because of the glory and majesty, nor could flesh behold Him. Blazing fire was all around Him, and none of the angels drew near Him.” A similar motif is found also in the Testament of Levi ch. 2–3 and in Enoch ch. 71. In the Dead Sea Scrolls that are so far known such description of an ascent to God’s throne, with God’s glory made visible, has not yet been found. But there is indirect testimony to it in the Manual of Discipline. There [1QS (DSD) 11.3–8] it is said that the initiated man “beholds a salvation that is hidden from the man of knowledge . . . a fountain of justice, a pool of strength, and a spring of glory” (*ma’yan kābôd*). The spring of glory is apparently the same as the glory of God revealed on the heavenly throne and surrounded by angels. This knowledge is exclusively the secret salutary possession of the elect, for “to those whom God chose from among the men of flesh He gave this knowledge as

an eternal possession; He let them participate in the lot of the saints and united their community with the sons of heaven (i.e., the angels) to form the council of the assembly.” Possibly a certain angelic liturgy, which is supposed to be an early form of the later rabbinical *merkābâ* visions, belongs in this context. See J. Strugnell, *Vetus Testamentum* Supplement 7 (1960) 318–345.

Mystical Speculation of the Rabbis. While the notions discussed in the preceding section reach back as far as the 2nd century B.C., the corresponding rabbinical traditions are known from the 1st Christian century on. Apart from individual, and in parts very obscure, data in the TALMUD and in the great midrashim (see MIDRASHIC LITERATURE), there are available a number of smaller tractates from rabbinical circles that are of inestimable value as references. (They are cited and briefly discussed by Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 5–7). It is advisable not to date the ideas contained in these tractates too recently. The oldest ones come probably from the tannaic or early amoraic period, i.e., from the 1st to the 3rd century (Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 40). These texts belong to the Gnosticizing circles of normative Judaism that was the successor of Pharisaism, while the apocalyptic writings and the Dead Sea Scrolls came from non-Pharisaical circles. Like the latter, the rabbinical Gnostics were pure monotheists who rejected the absolutely dualistic character of pagan Gnosticism. Even if these rabbinical Gnostics may have been able to form their own separate conventicles, they shared with the whole of Judaism the high esteem for the Mosaic Law and rejected every kind of antinomianism. In one of the rabbinical Gnostic tractates (*Hekalot rabbati* 20.1) it is expressly demanded of one who aspires to a vision of the divine throne-world that he should apply himself to the whole Bible, as well as the Mishnah and Midrash, and he should strictly observe all the commands and prohibitions of the Jewish law. Rabbinical tradition knew quite well how to distinguish such Gnostic teachings as were possible within the framework of official Judaism from those that would necessarily lead from it to general Gnostic dualism and antinomianism. The example of the great scholar of the 2nd century, Elisha ben Abuya, who, after his fall into dualism and antinomianism, was known only as Aher (another), shows this quite clearly. The fact, however, that Aher (according to *Hagigah* 14b), like other authorities who remained within the bounds of normative Judaism, entered “into paradise” and thereby became a sinner, proves how close to its pagan counterpart official rabbinical Gnosticism must have stood.

Speculations on the “Glory.” In the Mishnah *Hagigah* 2.1 it is stated: “One is not permitted to lecture to three on the laws of incest, to two on *ma’āsê berê’sît* (story of creation, i.e., esoteric speculations in connection

with Genesis ch. 1), or to one on *merkābā* (chariot, i.e., esoteric speculations in connection with Ezekiel ch. 1), unless he is wise and knowing because of his own knowledge. For anyone who speculates on [the] four [following] things, it would have been better if he had never been born: what is above, what is below, what is ahead, and what is behind [cf. Eph 3.18]. For anyone who does not have the proper respect for the glory [*kābôd*] of his Creator, it would have been better if he had never been born.” Therefore, the special subject of rabbinical Gnosis pursued in the esoteric circles was again the *kābôd*, the “glory” of God. As is perfectly clear from a comparison of Tosephta *Ḥagigah* 2.1 with *Ḥagigah* 14b, the concepts of *kābôd* and *ma‘asê merkābā* (story of the chariot) could be used synonymously. Studies on *kābôd* or *merkābā*, therefore, were considered unusually dangerous and were thought possible only when extraordinary measures of prudence were employed. As in Enoch 14, so here again fire was a characteristic accompaniment of the sphere of the *kābôd*. Used synonymously with *kābôd* and *merkābā* was the term paradise, a concept that was already used in the oldest esoteric literature as a technical term for the heavenly paradise (Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 16–17, where reference is made to 2 Cor 12.2–4). According to Syriac Baruch ch. 51, the resurrected just ones dwell in the heights of the heavenly world and are like the angels and the stars. Also, “the expanse of paradise will be spread before them, and the beauty of the greatness of the living beings under the [divine] throne will be shown them” (51.11). What the just all together will come to know after the resurrection, the rabbinical Gnostic wished to attain in his own lifetime. Only in this sense can the well-known passage of the Tosephta, *Ḥagigah* 2.3–4 and *Ḥagigah* 14b be understood: “Four entered into paradise: Ben Aṣai, Ben Ṣoma, Aḥer, and Rabbi Akiba.” That this is concerned with nothing else than the notion of an ascent to the glory (*kābôd*) of God that appears on the heavenly throne surrounded by the heavenly living beings, follows from two definite indications. In the tractate *Ḥagigah* 15b it is stated in this connection: “Rabbi Akiba ascended in peace and in peace descended again”; and shortly after that it is said: “The ministering angels also wanted to drive even Rabbi Akiba out again. Then the Holy One (praised be He!) said, ‘Let this old man, who is worthy, enjoy my glory (*kābôd*).’”

Speculation on the Seven Heavens. The scanty information in the Talmud and Midrash is supplemented in a valuable manner by a few remnants of the rabbinical Gnostic literature that have been preserved. In the *Hekalot rabbati* ch. 15–23 the journeys of the Jewish Gnostics are extensively described as leading through the seven palaces that are in the seven heavens, in the seventh of which stands the throne of God. Just as in the non-Jewish

absolutely dualistic Gnosticism the one ascending is hindered by the hostile rulers of the seven planetary spheres, so in monotheistic Judaism, the one ascending is restrained by the ministering angels who guard the gates to God, unless he can show seals inscribed with secret names. In *Hekalot rabbati* 15.1 it is stated: “According to Rabbi Yishmael, Rabbi Neḥunyah ben Hakanah said, ‘In the seven palaces lives Totrosiah, the Lord, the God of Israel, in room inside of room. At the entrance of each palace are eight gate keepers, four to the right of the threshold and four to the left.’” The further the Gnostic advances, the greater become the dangers that threaten him. The sixth and seventh palaces are especially dangerous. According to the *Hekalot sutrati*, the dangers at the gate of the sixth palace consist in the fact that the shimmering marble stones there are mistakenly taken for water (Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 14–15). That a well-known motif from as early as the 2nd century is involved here is clear from *Ḥagigah* 14b: “Rabbi Akiba said to them, ‘When you come to the stones of pure marble, do not say, ‘Water, water!’ For he who tells lies has no standing in my eyes.’” However, in *Hekalot rabbati* 23.4 it is said of him who passes the dangers that he “enters and stands before the throne of His glory (*kābôd*).” Another dangerous moment in the ascent to *kābôd* of God is the fire of the *merkābā* sphere. In *Hekalot rabbati* 3.4 it is said: “The fire that issues from the man who looks down burns him and consumes him.” This fiery characteristic is especially stressed in Hebrew Enoch, which is evidently somewhat more recent than the *Hekalot sutrati* and the *Hekalot rabbati*, since it comes from the 5th or 6th century (Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 7): “Rabbi Yishmael said, ‘Metatron, the prince of the [divine] presence, said to me, ‘When I was taken from the sons of the Deluge generation, I was brought up to the highest heaven on the pinions of the breath of the SHEKINAH. I was allowed to enter the great palaces that are in the heights of the *arabot* heaven [*arabot* being, according to *Ḥagigah* 12b, the seventh heaven], where there were the throne of glory [*kābôd*], the Shekinah, and the *merkābā*, the hosts of fire, the flaming armies, the blazing sparks, the fiery Cherubim, the glowing Ophanim [angelic “wheels”], the flaming ministering angels, the flashing lightnings, and the Seraphim. There I was placed, to serve day by day before the throne of glory [*kābôd*]’ [A. Jelinek, *Bet ha-Midrash* 2nd ed. (Jerusalem 1938) 173–174].

The connection between the rabbinical Gnostic speculations on the ascent to the *kābôd-merkābā* sphere and the old apocalyptic writings is becoming clear through the eschatological significance of the *kābôd-merkābā* vision. In *Hekalot rabbati* 16.5 it is said: “When will he descend who descends to the *merkābā*? When will he see

the heavenly Majesty? When will he hear the last day of redemption? When will he see what no eye has yet seen?"

Gnosticism in the Book of Yeşirah. The book of Yeşirah (creation), c. A.D. 500, is, in spite of its short length, one of the most difficult works of all Jewish literature to understand. It shows strong late-Hellenistic and Gnostic influence. It is based on a magical picture of the world. In the view of its author, the numbers and letters, as well as their combinations into different words, have creative power. The abstract figures are considered as metaphysical principles of the universe and stages of creation. In the Yeşirah they are called Sefirot, a term that later in the Cabala signified the stages of the divine creative development. The creative letters are called *'ôtiyôti yesôd* (element letters), that is, letters of the alphabet that represent the elements and correspond, therefore, to the Hellenistic-Gnostic idea of $\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\tau\alpha$, which can mean also elemental spirits and constellations, as well as elements (cf. Gal 4.3; Col 2.8, 20). God achieved the work of creation with the help of 32 hidden ways of divine wisdom, 10 Sefirot and the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The latter were subdivided into three "mothers" (aleph, mem, and shin), seven letters with double pronunciations (the six *begathkephat* letters and *rêš*), and 12 simple letters. It is said of them in Yeşirah 2.2: "He engraved, fashioned, purified, evaluated, and exchanged the 22 letters, and He formed with them the entire creation and whatever else was to be created." The idea behind this is evidently ideal creation through ideal and abstractly conceived Sefirot (Sefirot *be'limâ*, of abstraction) and real creation through the combination of the letters as elements of speech.

Although the Sefirot doctrine includes no logically developed theory of emanation, yet for the first four Sefirot the emanation of one out of the other is expressly affirmed. The first Sefirah is the "breath [spirit] of the living God," the second is "the breath of the breath" and is considered the principle of the air, which results from the condensation of the "breath of the living God." To it correspond the 22 letters of the alphabet. The third Sefirah, the principle of water, proceeds from the air. Here is the place of cosmic chaos. The fourth Sefirah, the principle of fire, proceeds from the water. Here is the world of God's throne that is described in Ezechiel ch. 1; the fourth Sefirah corresponds, therefore, to the *merkâbâ* sphere. Particularly the three "mother" letters correspond to the functions of the second, third, and fourth Sefirot. The points of correspondence are *aleph* for *'âwîr* (air), *mem* for *mayim* (water), and *šin* for *'êš* (fire). The remaining six Sefirot correspond to the six directions of space (up, down, east, west, south, and north). To the six spatial dimensions correspond six of

the seven letters with double pronunciations, while the seventh, the "Place of the Sanctuary," contains them all. The ten Sefirot are not Neoplatonic stages of emanation, but rather dynamic powers that, even where explicit mention is made of an emanation process, are united with each other, despite the distinction into stages, to form a single unit. In Yeşirah 1.7 it is said of them: "Their end lies in their beginning, and their beginning in their end, just as the flame is united to the coal." In all of them the one God is operating.

Combined in different ways, the letters, which are all consonants, can give opposite meanings, e.g., ' *n g* can be either *'onēg* (pleasure) or *nega'* (plague). To the three "mother" letters of air, water, and fire correspond, in the universe, heaven (fire), earth (water), and air, which lies in between. Likewise in correspondence to them are summer (fire), winter (water), and the temperate seasons (air), as well as the head (fire), the stomach (water), and the trunk of the body (air). The seven letters with double pronunciations give occasion for the Yeşirah to develop the doctrine of the opposing pairs, which is already evidenced in the dualistic doctrine of the Manual of Discipline (1QS) of Qumran and *Hagigah* 15a. In Yeşirah 4.1 (4.3) it is said: "Doubles that complement each other: the complement of life is death, the complement of peace is evil, the complement of wisdom is stupidity, the complement of riches is poverty, the complement of attractiveness is ugliness, the complement of sowing is destruction, and the complement of lordship is servility." To the seven letters with double pronunciations correspond also the seven planets, the seven days of the week, and the seven organs of sense (two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth). The 12 simple letters, too, have their equivalents in the cosmos, in time, and in man.

Certain traditions, as they are developed in the Yeşirah, are evidenced as early as the time of the Talmud (3rd to 4th centuries), e.g., in *Sanhedrin* 65b, 67b. They are connected with the Golem doctrine, that is, with the notion according to which living creatures can be produced from lifeless matter by the proper recitation of the creative letter combinations. See G. Scholem, "Die Vorstellung vom Golem in ihren tellurischen und magischen Beziehungen," *Zur Kabbala und ihrer Symbolik* (Zürich 1960) 209–259.

Gnosticism in the Book of Bahir. In the early cabalistic book of Bahir are contained elements of an otherwise forgotten Jewish Gnosticism. While in the Hekalot tractates the Gnostic doctrine of Pleroma (fullness) was modified into the realm of the "Throne of Glory" and the doctrines of the AEONS, in connection with Ezechiel ch. 1, into the "*merkâbâ* world," in the Bahir the originally Gnostic terminology is found extensively. The Greek

word *πλήρωμα* (Pleroma, fullness) is rendered in Hebrew either literally as *hammālē* (the fullness) or as *hakkōl* (the entirety, all). In Bahir ch. 14 “all” is equated with the cosmic tree from which the spirits proceed, and in Bahir ch. 85 it is written: “And what is this tree? He said to him, ‘All the powers of the Holy One (blessed be He!) lie one above the other and resemble a tree. As this tree brings forth its fruit by means of water, so the Holy One (blessed be He!) increases the strength of the tree with water. And what is the water of the Holy One (blessed be He!)? That is wisdom.’” In contrast to the idea of the Pleroma, there is no exact Hebrew equivalent for the concept of the Gnostic Aeons, the powers of the Pleroma, even though the Aeon doctrine is distinctly and extensively evidenced in the Bahir. Instead of the term Aeon, a number of symbolic designations are used. The Sephirot of the Book of *Yeṣirah* are the Aeon for the Bahir. Although the term Sephirot itself is found only in Bahir ch. 87, it is presumed as something well known. The ten fingers on the hand are “indications of the ten Sephirot with which heaven and earth are sealed.” These ten Sephirot correspond also to the ten commandments, which include the 613 commandments. The Bahir is acquainted with the ten Aeons. Like the older rabbinical Gnostic texts, the Bahir rejects all absolute dualism. Evil comes from the left side of God. Out of these assumptions the later Cabala developed the concept of *sitrā aḥera* “the other side” of God, a concept that became decisive for its image of the world.

Bibliography: L. BAECK, “Zum Sepher Jezira,” *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 70 (1926) 371–376; “Die zehn Sephirot im Sepher Jezira,” *ibid.* 78 (1934) 448–455. M. FRIEDLÄNDER, *Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus* (Göttingen 1898). L. GOLDSCHMIDT, *Das Buch der Schöpfung* (Frankfurt am Main 1894). G. G. SCHOLEM, *Das Buch Bahir* (Leipzig 1923); *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (3rd ed. New York 1954); *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York 1960); *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala* (Berlin 1962). K. SCHUBERT, *Die Religion des nachbiblischen Judentums* (Vienna 1955); “Problem und Wesen der jüdischen Gnosis,” *Kairos* 3 (1961) 2–15; J. HÖFER and K. RAHNER *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*, (Freiburg, 1957–66) 4:1024–26. J. MAIER, *Vom Kultur zur Gnosis* (Salzburg 1964).

[K. SCHUBERT]

GOA

A former Portuguese enclave on the west coast of India, a metropolitan see since 1558. Captured by Afonso de Albuquerque from the Muslims of Bijapur on Nov. 25, 1510, Goa was once the capital of Portuguese India and of the entire Portuguese empire in the East. In 1759 cholera epidemics forced the removal of the capital five miles west to Pangim (New Goa), and Old Goa became



Fresco painting, depicting a male saint holding a sword, Goa, India. (© Paul Seheult: Eye Ubiquitous/Corbis/Bettmann)

a city of ruins. With the rise of the Dutch and English as maritime powers in the late 17th century, Goa declined. It was annexed by India on Dec. 18, 1961, and attained full statehood within India in 1987.

Beginnings. After Vasco da Gama’s arrival in India in 1498, Portugal began to acquire small coastal areas (Goa in 1510 and Daman [Damão] in 1559) to create Portuguese India. Until 1514 the area was ecclesiastically under vicars-general of the Order of Christ, which was entrusted with the overseas Church. In 1514 it came under the newly created diocese for overseas lands, Funchal on Madeira Island, whose bishop resided in Lisbon. Pope Clement VII erected the Latin See of Goa on Jan. 31, 1533. In 1534 Goa was made a suffragan see to Funchal with territory reaching from the Cape of Good Hope to the Moluccas. On Feb. 4, 1558, Pope Paul IV detached Goa from the province of Lisbon and raised it to a metropolitan archdiocese, having as suffragans the dioceses of Cochin and Malacca (Melaka). On March 15, 1572, Pope Gregory XIII acknowledged the archbishop of Goa as the Primate of the East. As Goa grew in prestige, other suffragans were added: Macau (1576), the short-lived Funai in Japan (1588), the former Syro-Malabar Metropolitan See of Angamaly (1600), and Mylapore (1606). In 1612 the prelate of Mozambique was attached to Goa. In 1690