

Eldad Ha-Dani

Submitted as a rabbinical thesis in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Rabbi.

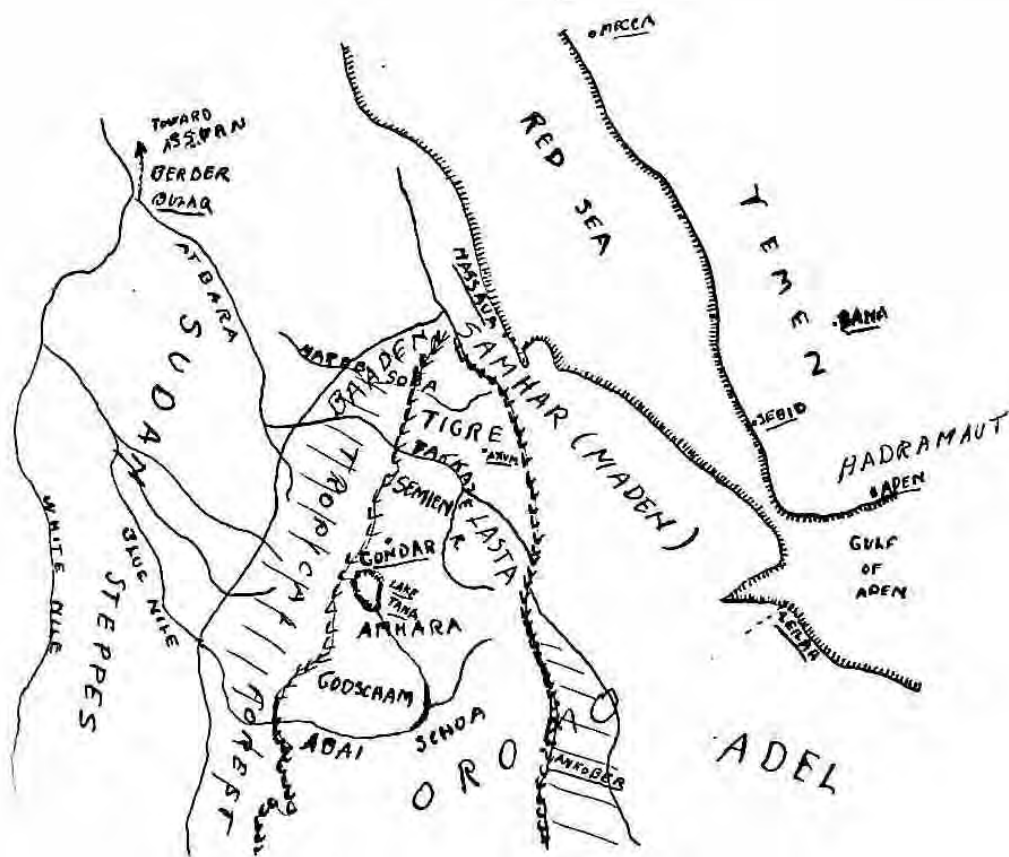
by Ralph Blumenthal

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The writings ascribed to Eldad Ha Dani, like much of the Jewish literature of the early middle ages, have been relegated to an obscurity which has been undeserved. If the legends and ritual laws which he wrote were not misunderstood, they were arbitrarily condemned as spurious or stamped as one of the many mythical productions characteristic of the period. And if they have been the recipients of unstinted praise, the adulation has been misplaced as it was throughout the Middle Ages when his words enjoyed an authority hardly less than that of Scripture and when Eldad himself acquired popularity far out of proportion to his intrinsic merits. But if our credulous predecessors thus erred in overestimating Eldad and his literary productions, our contemporaries, with few exceptions, have underestimated the authority, historicity and significance of the accounts of the Four Tribes, the Bnai Moshe, and the Ritual. What is most necessary, therefore, is a calm and judicious appraisal of Eldad which will restore him to his proper niche in the halls of historical fame. This is the avowed aim and purpose of my efforts. Yet it is not only interest in the man himself that can be an incentive for this undertaking but also the valuable information about the life and customs of the Falashahs in Abyssinia which can be derived from such a study. It is thus the interesting combination of history and folklore that lends it so much fascination.

In recent years much valuable data germane to the subject has been gathered together as a result of the patient researches of ethnologists, geographers, and philologists. But the greatest

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contribution has been made by Abraham Epstein in his erudite and enlightening study. To him as well as to others like Müller and Schloessinger I owe whatever information I may be able to impart. I am, of course, indebted to my worthy guide, Dr. Mann, for his counsel.

My method of presentation grew out of the nature of the material. Since much of the contents of this study deal with elementary textual criticism they have been incorporated primarily in the notes. It is thus only the general conclusions that have been incorporated in the thesis proper and I have tried to compare them in such a way as to make the text^{of} the thesis more or less independent of the notes.

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Introduction

to be a member

Towards the end of the ninth century there appeared in Kairowan, North Africa, a traveler who had apparently previously visited Egypt and Babylonia, and who claimed to have been a descendant of the tribe of Dan. He said that this tribe together with three other tribes, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, had founded, after the destruction of the first temple, an independent Jewish kingdom on the other side of the Ethiopian River in the old goldland Havila. In addition to this account of the Four Tribes and the ritual which they observed, Eldad gave a description of the Levites, the B'nai Moshe, who in a miraculous manner had come to Africa from the vicinity of Babylon, had settled in the neighborhood of the Tribes, and had been enclosed by the Sambatyon, a river which flows only sand and stones. Naturally, Eldad did not fail to narrate his own adventurous travels from Havila to Asia and North Africa; and in connection with them he described the other six of the lost tribes who had remained behind in Asia. The ^{people} ~~inhabitants~~ of Kairowan, questioning the veracity of some of the statements made by Eldad, turned to Zemach Gaon in Sura for an endorsement of this man. The answer of Zemach was on the whole favorable to Eldad. From that time forth, the writings of Eldad acquired a great authority and increased in prestige so that throughout the Middle Ages, with two exceptions, his ritual was quoted and cited as authoritative by Talmudic scholars and his narratives were accepted as truth by the people.

I. THE NARRATIVES

A. Source Material.

For purposes of study and analysis the narratives of Eldad will be discussed first. The material we now possess is found in print and in manuscripts. Much of it has come down to us in a well-preserved state, though, of course, some of it, has in the course of transmission suffered additions and deletions to suit the various purposes of the scribe or copyist. Yet a collation of the many recensions made by Epstein, and after him in a more thorough manner by Müller,¹ reveals all of them to be very similar. The minor variations, nowever, are very significant, for they have been the cause of much unnecessary mystification. They will be given in notes to a brief summary of the contents of the Eldad material. Müller supplemented and improved Epstein's edition of the text in the following way. He printed separately two of the manuscripts which Epstein utilized but failed to publish.² He also brought to light some new manuscript fragments,³ as well as a fragmentary Arabic version of the Eldad narrative.⁴ In general, all the material can be traced to three main sources:⁵ 1) The inquiry which the people of Kairowan sent to Zemach Gaon and his answer; 2) The letter which Eldad was supposed to have sent to Spain telling about his adventures and the life of the tribe; 3) The various versions of the Sefer Eldad which are written in

the form of official reports of communities addressed to a Beth-Din.⁶

Epstein arranged the material into six versions; the first version contains the material found in the question sent to the Gaon and his answer;⁷ the second includes the letter Eldad is supposed to have sent to Spain;⁸ the third is an Eldad story found in a Prague manuscript of Berashit Rabbati;⁹ the fourth¹⁰ and fifth¹¹ are based on the testimonial accounts mentioned above; and the sixth¹², whose contents are somewhat different from the first five, is an extract taken from Judah Hadassi's Eshkol Ha-Kopher. Muller, on the otherhand published eight versions, five of which are equivalent to the first five of Epstein,¹³ and the additional three¹⁴ are based on some manuscripts which Epstein had used but not published as well as on some new manuscripts which Epstein had never seen. These two scholars, however, failed to agree on the relationship of the texts,¹⁵ especially regarding the age of the so-called Letter of Eldad. Epstein asserted that it was the oldest source, whereas Muller considered it apocryphal, holding its date to be more recent than all the other versions of Eldad.¹⁶

In general, the most authoritative of the sources is the question sent by the people of Kairowan to Zemach and his answer. Next in authenticity one might class the Eldad Letter which contains more of the facts than any other version, Muller's objections notwithstanding. These two sources contain most of the details of the narrative which will now be related in a connected fashion, reconstructed from all the available material. At the conclusion of ^{the} summary of the narrative,

and also in a few notes, will be indicated the more important variations and additions according to the different recensions.

This interesting legend seems to have had an almost universal fascination since we find it in, not only the important sources mentioned above, but also in translations; Arabic, Latin,¹⁷ Judaeo-German¹⁸, in the writings of Prester John, (who will be discussed later), in Bartolucci's *Bibliotheca Rabbinica*¹⁹ and in Eisenmanger's famous *Judenthum Entdecktes*.²⁰

B. Summary of Narrative with Explanatory Notes.

The narrative itself is a construction of four loosely connected parts²¹: 1) Eldad's travels and adventures; 2) The description of the six tribes who live in Asia; 3) The migration of the four tribes of Dan, Gad, Asher, and Naphtali; 4) the B'nai Moshe.

(1). At the beginning of the narrative Eldad tells what happened to him in his travels. He and a Jew from the tribe of Asher on leaving the land,²² embarked on a vessel to trade. The vessel sank in a storm. After floating on a plank prepared by God, they were cast on the shore of a land inhabited by a people called Rumrum²³, wild, swarthy, man-eating Ethiopians. They slew and ate his friend because he was fat and healthy. Eldad, however, was very thin because he had been sick during the storm at sea, so they put him in a pit and brought him all kinds of good food. But Eldad ate nothing and hid the food, replying when questioned that he had eaten. He was with them for some time until God prepared a miracle by sending against these cannibals a great army of fire-worshippers who captured many of the Ethiopians together with Eldad. Eldad remained

with them for some time and witnessed their ceremony until they brought him to Azim.²⁶ There a Jewish merchant from the tribe of Issachar purchased him for thirty-two pieces of gold. He took Eldad with him by sea to the land where dwelled the tribe of Issachar in the high mountains near Media and Persia.²⁷

(2) They dwelled in peace and security, suffering no evil or plague. They are independent, submitting only to the yoke of the Torah. Their land extends ten days journey on every side. Their pasture land is extensive, providing large flocks of camels and asses. They have no horses, nor do they possess any weapons except the slaughtering knife. They never oppress or steal. Their neighbors are fire worshippers who marry their ~~own women to maid-servants and sisters~~. They have no agriculture, nor do they possess vineyards. They purchase everything with money. They have a judge whose name is Nachshon. They execute the four kinds of capital punishment. They speak Hebrew, Persian, and Arabic.²⁸

The tribe of Zebulun encamps in the hills of Paran in the neighborhood (of Issachar)²⁹. They live in skin tents, occupying the land extending from the province of Armenia to the Euphrates.³⁰

The tribe of Rueben faces them from behind the mountains of Paran. Peace, brotherhood, and amity dwells among them. They go to war together and afterwards divide their booty equally.³¹ They follow the highway of Mecca-Bagdad when they go plundering.³² They speak Arabic³³, and possess Bible, Mishna, Talmud, and Aggadah. Every Sabbath they preach in Hebrew and translate into Arabic.

*begin sermon with a Hebrew text
& comment on it in Arabic*

The tribe of Ephraim and half of Menasseh live in the mountains of Negd, not far from Mecca.³⁴ They are wild, merciless horsemen, living solely upon plundering in which they are fearless.

The tribe of Simon and the other half of Manasseh are in the land of the Chazars³⁵, a distance of six months journey from the sanctuary.³⁶ They are exceedingly numerous and exact tribute from twenty-five kingdoms³⁷ and from some of the Mohammedans.³⁸

(3) When Jeroboam arose, he sought the aid of the Danites who were the warriors of Israel, against Rehoboam of Judah.³⁹ The Danites refused to aid him and prepared to leave Israel. They crossed⁴⁰ the river Pishon⁴¹ to the land of Kush, a very fertile country and took possession of the territory and made a covenant with the Kushites. Afterwards Sennacherib arose and exiled Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh to Chabor and to *nḥ*, and the River Gozan and the cities of Media. Then followed a second exile by Sennacherib of Naphtali, Gad, and Asher to Assyria.⁴² After the death of Sennacherib these three tribes migrated to the land of Kush, where they waged war with the seven kingdoms of Kush.

Those four tribes inhabit Havila, the land of gold.⁴³ It is a fertile land. They are always at war and are aided by the kingdom of Adenuth.⁴⁴ Every year they wage war with the seven kingdoms of Kush.⁴⁵ They dwell *beyond the river of the Nile* across the river Kush.⁴⁶

These four tribes possess much gold, silver, precious stones. They sow and reap, dwell in skin tents. They migrate from one place to another. The extent of their territory is a journey of two hundred days square.⁴⁷ Their camping ground is always fertile.

They have a king named uzziel, a prince by the name of

Elizafon of the house of Ahilaab, and a judge named Abdon ben Mishaël⁴⁸ who has the power to execute the four kinds of capital punishments. When they go to war they are summoned by the Shofar and march forth 120,000 strong to the strains of a war song with a banner for every 1,000 men.^{48a} Each tribe takes its turn in the battle-field for three months. The soldiers only dismount on the Sabbath when they are not hard pressed. At the end of three months the tribe in the field returns bringing all the booty to King Uzziel who distributes it in the following manner. Uzziel takes his portion first, then gives a portion to the scholars,⁴⁹ while the remainder is distributed among the others. They possess the complete Scriptures but do not read Megilla of Esther because they do not know of that miracle. Nor do they read Lamentations because of its disheartening influence.⁵⁰ They speak no other language except Hebrew. Their Talmud⁵¹ contains no references to the talmudic sages but ~~all~~ laws are introduced in the name of Joshua,⁵² who had received it from Moses to whom was given the divine dispensation.⁵³

(4) On the other side of the River of Kush dwell the B'nai Moshe.⁵⁴ When the Israelites were exiled to Babylon the Chaldeans ordered the Levites to sing songs of Zion^{54a} and because many refused they were slain on the spot. The remaining Levites, however, cut off their fingers⁵⁵. During the night a cloud enveloped them and by the light of a pillar of fire God led them and their tents, flocks, and herds to Havila.⁵⁶ They awoke in the morning to find themselves

surrounded on three sides by the sea, and on the fourth⁵⁷ by the River Sambatyon,⁵⁸ so that they are cut off completely from mankind. The extent of the river's width is two hundred cubits and it rolls sand and stone every day in the week except the Sabbath when it rests. The noise it makes is so great as to be heard at night the distance of a day's journey. At sunset on the eve of Sabbath a cloud descends upon it so that no one may approach it till the end of the Sabbath. Across the river, on the side of the Four Tribes, a fire burns throughout the Sabbath so that it is unapproachable for a distance of a mile⁵⁹ (from the land of Princip⁶⁰). But there are places in that river no wider than 60 cubits so that the tribes and the B'nai Moshe can engage in conversation and exchange gossip. When they wished to communicate or negotiate they do so by means of carrier pigeons⁶¹. They dwell in beautiful houses and in towers which they erect on elephants in times of rejoicing⁶². They do not have among them any wild animals or unclean animals, birds, or insects, nor frogs, scorpions, or snakes. Their cattle, sheep and oxen, as well as their fields bear twice a year. Their products are olives, pomegranates, figs, melons, onions, garlic, and wheat. One seed produces a hundred plants. They have precious stones, silver, and gold. They have no slaves. They lend to each other. They are wise, pious, and never swear by the name of God. He who swears prepares death for his children.⁶³ No child dies during the lifetime of its parents, who often live to see three or four generations. They are ashamed to close their houses at night, having no fear of theft. A child will shepherd their flocks alone for many days, having no fear of anything, neither of wild beasts, demons, or any kind of evil

Because they are holy, clean, righteous and pious. All are Levites and they speak only Hebrew.⁶⁴

The legend found in Eshkol Hakopher varies exceedingly from the other versions.⁶⁵ It tells how Eldad and his companion were exiled in Kush and Havála, how his companion was eaten by cannibals while Eldad was able to escape at night and return to his native land where he related to everyone the following story.

This is an old story
It seems that there dwelled near a large lake surrounded by fertile land a tribe of pygmies. In a nearby hill dwelled enormous birds. On a certain day every year the pygmies and birds would engage in fierce battle and many casualties were sustained by the pygmies whose eyes were bored out or skulls pierced by the claws and beaks of the birds. One day there came into their midst a tall warrior⁶⁶ from the people of Koshtandya⁶⁷. He was shipwrecked on that land. When the day of the annual battle arrived he led the pygmies to victory. After that he escaped from their land...⁶⁸

all will
histories
The righteous men from all the tribes of Jeshurun are hidden away across the river Smbatyon and they dwell in tents and they came there before the exile from Jerusalem. The truth of this is found in its being mentioned in Chronicles and in the Sefer Eldad Ha-Dani who came from them and told of their piety and righteousness in the laws of God, without Mishna or Torah or lunar calendation⁶⁹. They ride camels, travel through the desert, cross rivers like the Smbatyon which rolls stones and water all week except on the Sabbath.

= Constantinople (viz Byzantium)

II. RITUAL

A. Source Material .

Like the narrative material the ritual prescriptions are also contained in a number of prints and manuscripts which after adequate collation by Epstein and Schloessinger, the two investigators who have contributed most to the study of the halachic portion of Eldad, yields a clear and reliable text.

The ritual of Eldad is found in two recensions, one of which (B) is founded on the description of the ritual contained in the inquiry to Zemach Gaon⁷⁰ which Schloessinger after careful analysis⁷¹ has managed to clarify by removing many of the later interpolations. The ritual found in the responsum is naturally in a condensed form⁷² which might also explain the reason for the additions made by copyists who wanted to present it in detail. An examination of the text reveals that (1) the form of the responsum has undergone extensive alteration under Talmudic and rabbinic influence,⁷³ (2) the original halachot of Eldad have been changed completely in a number of instances so as to make them agree with the Talmudic and rabbinic halachah,⁷⁴ (3) the Responsum has been enlarged through numerous later additions some of which are altogether inconsistent with the preceding halachot of Eldad.⁷⁵ After stripping this recension of most of its obvious interpolations and alterations what remains is an approximation of the original epitome of Eldad's ritual. As such, aside from its intrinsic value, it is highly important as a means of controlling recension A. ⁷⁶

The other recension (A)⁷⁷ contains more data and is based upon

five manuscripts. They are: 1) Citations from Eldad's ritual in Ibn Gama's "Clear Treatise on Ritual Slaughtering of Animals"⁷⁸; 2) ritual contained in MS. Parma de Rossi Cod. 327,22⁷⁹; 3) a Genizah fragment⁸⁰; 4) a quotation from Eldad in Glosses on the Mordecai by a German Rabbi⁸¹; 5) a brief quotation in Mordecai, beginning of Hullin, cited from Rabbenu Baruch⁸².

On the basis of these two recensions A and B we are able to obtain a fairly adequate idea of the nature of the ritual of Eldad which consists only of dietary regulations⁸³.

B. Summary of Ritual with Explanatory Notes.

The ritual has been called by various names. Eldad himself called it Hilchot Shechita and Bedika of Joshua ben Nun.⁸⁴ It was known to rabbinic authorities as Halakot Omar Jehoshua⁸⁵ and also as Hilchot Erefzr Israel by which name it is referred to in the works of later authorities.⁸⁶ The ritual itself was divided into four or five distinct parts⁸⁷, each of which opens with the introductory formula:⁸⁸

וְיָדָא בְּיָדָא דְּרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נִּון

The five sections may be conveniently entitled: 1. Hilchot Shechita⁸⁹; 2. Hilchot Terefot; 3. Piggulim; 4. Hilchot Hayyah 5. Hilchot Oaf. A brief summary of the contents, following the outline by Schloessinger⁹⁰ is given below:

1. Hilchot Shechita⁹¹ (Rules of Slaughtering): The five rules which are discussed and enumerated are: Shehia⁹², Derasa, Chalada, Hagrama, and Ikkur.⁹³ These are the five different ways an animal may be disqualified as food, respectively: pausing in the act of slaughtering, pressure upon the knife, drawing the knife under the

surface of the skin, slaughtering above or below certain limits, and tearing out the trachea or esophagus from their proper position.

(2) There follows a collection of laws dealing with disqualification due to various imperfections and diseases and injuries to which the slaughtered animal has been found subject upon examination.⁹⁵ They deal with such typical injuries as perforation of the meninges, fracture of the skull, paralysis of the central origin⁹⁶; different conditions of the lung; its color and disease, atrophy of a lobe, union of lobes, ~~with~~ union of lobe with trachea, esophagus, or heart; injuries of the other organs, such as perforation of the esophagus, trachea, or heart; adhesion of the gall bladder to the peritoneum, union of lobes of the lung with the ribs,⁹⁷ injuries of the spinal cord; finally, disqualification of domestic animals attacked by beasts, fallen in a pit, or in a stream.

(3) The following section is somewhat less unified in subject matter. It opens with a requirement to face north during the act of slaughtering because this is the direction of the sanctuary from the land where the slaughtering takes place⁹⁸. Disqualifications for the act of slaughtering, e.g. without blessing, drunkenness, nakedness, nocturnal pollution, mourner, eunuch, leper, woman, youth, or ~~elder~~^{old man}⁹⁹. In the case of two-headed animals if the head on the right side is used by the animal for eating it is permissible to kill it, but if the left is used, slaughter is forbidden.¹⁰⁰ Animals with deformed extremities and animals with congenital arthritis¹⁰¹ may not be killed. Then follow two cases in which the act of slaughtering is not required in order to make the animal fit for food: a) case of the young born while the parent is being slaughtered¹⁰²; b) the case of the fetus

only half-emerged when the parent was slaughtered. Prohibition, according to the Levitical law, of slaughtering, of oxen and young on the same day (Lev. XXII:28) follows.¹⁰³ There is also a prohibition of boiling the flesh of a kid in the milk of its mother (Ex. XXIII:19)¹⁰⁴.

(4,5) This section opens with a statement of the distinguishing marks of clean and unclean game. Then follows a brief summary of the regulations concerning domestic animals that have suffered fractures of bones or injuries which can be applied to game animals.¹⁰⁵ It closes with an injunction to cover the ground where the blood of the slaughtered game animal has fallen with ashes, even if one must burn part of his garment when no dust can be found.¹⁰⁶

C. Its Authenticity.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the authenticity of Eldad's writings in general, it is advisable at this point to discuss the authenticity of the ritual proper, inasmuch as it seems to be from all evidences a more genuine product of Eldad's than the narratives.

Schloessinger says, rather unhesitatingly:¹⁰⁷ investigation reveals that Eldad himself wrote halachah only. The study of this material points to the conclusion that the halachot contained therein are in substance the dietary ritual observed by the Jews of a particular country ... the form in which we have the ritual, can properly be attributed to Eldad". His next statement, is somewhat exaggerated: "With regard to the personality of Eldad, the conclusion is that the only authentic source of information in the account of him and his reports is preserved in the responsum. The narratives found in the Sefer Eldad, and ascribed to him, cannot be trusted. Eldad is the

hero, not the author, of the Sefer Eldad."¹⁰⁸

Due to the diversity of material which has in the course of time entered into the text of the original halachah, many investigators have concluded that the whole ritual is a fabrication, especially Jacob Reifmann. Because he found no less than nineteen passages taken, as he believed, from the Babylonian Talmud Hullin, he concluded that Eldad was an ancient imposter who gathered his material from our talmudic and Gaonic writings and other halachic works no longer extant.¹⁰⁹ The citations by older rabbinic authors¹¹⁰ and from the Hilchot Eretz Yisroel were not, according to him, quotations from Eldad's ritual, but rather the sources utilized by Eldad who must have lived at least before Jacob ben Asher the author of the Turim who died in 1340. He comes to his view from the fact that in four instances there occur identical passages in both.¹¹¹

Epstein, on the other hand, in order to substantiate his view that the form in which the ritual has come down to us is genuine attempted to reconcile conflicting passages by subtle and ingenious explanations and textual emendations. He says¹¹²: "Indeed, it is possible that when Eldad came to Babylon and Kairowan he read the Talmud and either intentionally or unintentionally made additions to the subject matter of the Shechitah from laws which he found were familiar to him. Thus among the terefot under the category of fallen animals he inserts the laws about animals attacked by beasts or birds of prey, while in the Talmud they fall into separate categories."¹¹³ In many instances it seems that Eldad utilized the word of the author of Halachot Gedolot¹¹⁴, especially in the case of shechitah done by

01/11/17 .¹¹⁵ But it is possible that the identity in the laws of

shechitah done according to *Or Nidp* is merely accidental, and the resemblance in expression is due to the fact that the Soferim taught and thus transmitted together the statements of both."

Thus we have two extreme views: that of Reifmann and Epstein. Schloessinger takes a position midway between them in extracting the genuine from the spurious by means of a critical analysis¹¹⁶. He is certain that the ritual was written by an individual: "While the subject matter of the ritual represents the religious practices of the Jews of a particular country, the form, the remarkable systematic and schematic arrangement is doubtless the work of an individual¹¹⁷... throughout this work there was a definite schematic arrangement of the subject matter which is unique in halachic literature¹¹⁸." He goes on to prove that Reifmann's theory is a *lucus a non lucendo*. He says: "It is, however, to my mind, an even greater difficulty to comprehend the psychology which would account for the invention of a system of halachot - a phenomenon, as far as I am aware, without a parallel in Jewish literature The description of gid (paralysis of the central origin) - a very frequent disease among sheep - and the explanation of it as caused by parasites in the brain¹¹⁹, the account of the swelling of the heart¹²⁰, the fine distinction drawn between simple and purulent pericarditis, and likewise the description of cholecystitis,¹²¹ the suggestion that it is the formation of a blood-clot on the omentum of the liver, which makes it seem as though the animal had two livers,¹²² and likewise the suggestion that in the case where only one kidney is found it should be weighed in order to determine whether it is sufficiently large to perform the function of excretion normally

carried on by two kidneys,¹²³ the method suggested by him for identifying the young of an animal,¹²⁴ the observation that all species of doves are distinguished from all other species of birds by the possession of a double crop¹²⁵ - all this, of which no trace can be found in our halachah, cannot well be the product of an individual's fancy. It registers the careful observation of facts in the course of generations, and rests on the long experience of a people in its practical life.

"Internal evidence of this character would go far to prove that this ritual represents a body of laws and practices actually observed at some time or other and in some country or other At a distance from the Babylonian and Palestinian centers and independent system of halachot could easily have developed. Even in the absence of all schismatic tendencies, such a system, although basing itself on the Mishnah, would nevertheless develop features of its own, having their origin in an independent observation of animal life and in the distinctive customs of a given country in the course of time the need would be felt for the codification of the body of halachit thus developed.

"It is important to note here that in the period of the Gaonim or at least as early as the time of Jehudai Gaon (760-764) the work of systematizing religious observances and setting them forth in short manuals, for the purpose of giving definitions to religious practice, and facilitating instruction began

"The divergence between Eldad's halachot and ours seems less peculiar if we bear in mind the period to which Eldad belongs. The halachah, particularly in regard to shechitah and terefot, had

not yet become entirely fixed and rigid in the period of the Gaonim. It was still in the process of development.... The sudden appearance of halachot at such a time and their subsequent disappearance without any abiding influence on the general halachic movement is therefore not altogether incomprehensible. It is still more intelligible, if we assume as there is ample reason for it, that this system of halachot represents divergent practices of a country or district somewhat removed from the high-road of Jewish life and Jewish religious practice and therefore not lending itself to the ready acceptance of the halachot based on the practices of the Palestinian or Babylonian Jewish community."

III. LANGUAGE OF ELDAD

Before attempting to locate the independent Jewish kingdom which Eldad described from an analysis of the geographical references and by a comparative study of the customs and type of existence led by the tribes, it would be advisable to analyze first the language ascribed to Eldad in order to find some clue as to the whereabouts of these mysterious people. To be sure Eldad evidently did resort to the questionable habit of assuming ignorance of a language which he must have known, namely, Arabic. Whether it was done with the commendable intention of fascinating his audience or whether it was merely a device intended to cover up the fact that he was a fraud and a forger as some critics have called him, can never be finally settled. We know that he said he spoke only Hebrew. This statement was at first not accepted by the people. The report which they sent to Zemach said that he uttered many words which they had never heard and they quoted three as examples¹²⁶. So suspicious were they at hearing the strange speech of Eldad that they tested him in the following manner as is reported in the responsum¹²⁷: "We wrote down many of the words which he spoke, showed them to him, and asked him to translate them into Hebrew, which he did; and after a lapse of time we questioned him again about these same words, and we found that he used these words as at first." In general we can say that the community of Kairowan believed that he spoke a pure Hebrew as did the old lexicographers who cited him as an authority for the explanation of Hebrew words,¹²⁸ such as Jehudah ibn Kuraish, Hisdai ibn Shaprut, Dunash ibn Tamin, and Tanchum Yerushalmi who lived in

no lexicographer

2

Explanations of strange words or foreign usages of common words referred to Eldad are also not to be found in the extant material

A critical philological study demonstrates that Eldad was influenced by Arabic and Syriac; the former, however, predominates.

The general characteristics of Eldad's language are the following:

than that of the Mishnaic or of the Talmudic-Gaonic literature¹³⁴, nevertheless it manifests dialectic peculiarities of its own, such

as: a) his preference for the highest

c) Use of Hebrew words in a sense in which they do not occur:

with the free movement of an animal's legs during the act of

with the free movement of an animal's legs during the act of

slaughtering.

d) The use of words of Syriac origin (sometimes in Hebrew formations) which are not found in Hebrew.

We can account for the foreign expressions in Eldad if we take into consideration his obvious desire to write in Biblical Hebrew and his attempts therefore at forcing biblical words into new conceptual molds so as to make them express ideas for which the Bible had no terms.¹³⁵ Nor are these foreign expressions accidental since they are used by Eldad in many different places but the use of Biblical Hebrew by so-called historians was rather common at the time of Eldad. The author of Yosippon and the author of Sefer Ha-Yashar are representative.

Eldad's Hebrew is saturated with Arabisms. This is incontrovertible testimony that he was influenced by Arabic. Epstein says that there was no language among the rabbinical authors comparable to the language of Eldad except that of David Reubeni who came from Arabia to Europe in the fifteenth century. The striking resemblance between David and Eldad comes from the fact that both grew up in a land in which the people did not speak the language of the rabbis.¹³⁶ On the presence of the Arabisms Rapaport based his theory that the version found in the Shalshet Ha-Kabala and in the Editio Princeps of the Responsum (Recension A) are merely different translations from an Arabic original but this seems to be untenable since there is not a single feature in the language of the responsum which betrays an Arabic original.¹³⁷ Schloessinger comes to the conclusion that we cannot be certain that Eldad knew and spoke Arabic since he says that there are other instances of Jewish writers who did not know

the Latin or French origins of the words used by them.

Arabic, but who, nevertheless, used a Hebrew style which showed Arabic influence. Moreover, the language of Eldad contains Syriac and Arabic elements, although the influence of the Syriac is not very marked. It would therefore be logical to assume that Eldad also knew Syriac. He concludes: "It is, however, possible that the language of the country in which Eldad lived was influenced by the Arabic!"¹³⁸

Frankel whose contributions to this problem were negligible acknowledged that Eldad used Arabic words. However, in discussing the origin of the three words which puzzled the people of Kairowan, he tried to prove that two of them, namely *עין* and *כח* were of Greek origin and therefore thought it plausible that Eldad's mother tongue was Greek. For, according to him, the people of Kairowan knew Hebrew and Aramaic from their studies, Arabic as their mother tongue, and Ethiopic from their commercial relations. Therefore Greek would be the only language unintelligible to them.¹³⁹

Epstein, on the contrary, believed that Eldad spoke Arabic, and was accustomed to clothe his ideas in it with the result that he could not escape using Arabic words as well as using Hebrew roots with their Arabic meanings.

The general evidence we possess for the various theories is shown in the following facts:¹⁴⁰ 1) Arabic words, some of which are given a Hebrew form¹⁴¹; 2) Arabic idioms which at a later time became rather common in the Arabicized Hebrew¹⁴²; 3) Arabic constructions in grammar and syntax such as placing the demonstrative

same
 pronoun before its noun,¹⁴³ the use of the Siffa (indeterminate relative clause),¹⁴⁴ and many other specifically Arabic constructions. Thus the only indisputable fact we have is the unmistakable Arabic influence in Eldad's writings. All other assertions - that Eldad knew and spoke Arabic are conjectural; and from the evidence adduced above we can be reasonably certain that Eldad's assertion that he knew only pure scriptural Hebrew is at best contrary to the facts. But we have gained from this brief philological analysis a confirmation of the genuineness of much of Eldad's writings. At least we may say that he was certainly neither a forger nor a swindler as Frankl has called him, though we may question the authenticity of some of the legends that have been attributed to him.

What then can we learn from the language itself concerning the country in which Eldad lived? Obviously the land was within the sphere of influence of the Arabic language, but since during the ninth century Arabic was spoken throughout a vast region comprising at the very least the realm of the Mohammedans proper, we cannot by the linguistic method alone ascertain a very definite location. But this method used in conjunction with other data will gradually narrow the limits of the territory of the Four Tribes. Before, however, coming to any conclusions we must necessarily fix the limits of time as well as the location.

IV DATE OF ELDAD'S APPEARANCE

When did Eldad live? Toward the solution of this particular problem Graetz has made the greatest contribution.¹⁴⁵ His conclusions establish the date of Eldad's appearance in the community of Kairowan at about the latter half of the ninth century. The actual data we possess consists of three dates: a) in the Constantinople MS. 1516¹⁴⁶ there is found in the conclusion the rather indefinite statement that Eldad sent "this letter to Spain in the year 43¹⁴⁷." Rapaport thinks this is equivalent to 883¹⁴⁸ but Graetz says the date is indefinite; b) in Shalshet Hakabala there is found a statement which says in short that Zemach Gaon heard from Rabbi Isaac Gaon that he saw Eldad in the year 880, though this date has also been disputed since it is found nowhere else¹⁴⁹; c) in the same document is found the statement that the people of Kairowan sent their question to Zemach Gaon who was in Mata Mechasyah. Since there were only three gaonim by the name of Zemach who all held office between the years 872 to 938, namely, Paltoi (872-890), Hayyim (889-896), and Hofni (936-938), two of whom resided in Pumbeditha, the reference must be to Zemach Hayyim of Sura or Mata Machasya. This conclusion is confirmed from another source. In Hasdai ibn Shaprut's letter to the Chazars he wrote: "And in the days of our fathers there came to us a learned Israelite, a descendant of the tribe of Dan who traces his genealogy to Dan, the son of Jacob, ^{and spoke} who speaks a pure Hebrew"¹⁵⁰ Eldad was therefore known in Spain at least a generation before the time of Hasdai's succession to the office of Nasi in the year 940. This eliminates Hofni as the gaon of the Responsum. Further proof is found in the

all this unreliable. Co. based himself on a Fishkowitz forgery

letter of the Karaite Ali b. Yefet who said that his father adopted an opinion which he learned from Kuraish who as we know quoted Eldad.¹⁵¹ Ali was a younger contemporary of Saadia and therefore his father lived about 900 and Kuraish still earlier. The language of the Responsum also indicates Hayyim's authorship. Another responsum, ~~appears~~¹⁵² addressed to the community of Kairowan, contains an expression not found in the responsa of any of the other Gaonim but which is identical with one found in the Eldad responsum.¹⁵³ Landauer and Munk try to establish the fact that Eldad was a contemporary of Dunash ibn Tamim¹⁵⁴, commentator of the Sefer Yetzira, on the basis of his statement which says that he received through "Abudani" and "David of Fez" the Sefer Yetzira and Saadia's commentary, and "that he learned from the Bnai Hadani principles of comparative philology." Graetz remarks concerning this: "It is incomprehensible to me how a critic could identify Eldad with Abudani. Dunash knew very well that Abudani came from Fez, and if so, could Eldad have made the people of Kairowan believe that he came from afar, from the tribe of Dan?"¹⁵⁵

Thus far we have established the fact that Eldad appeared in Kairowan during the ninth century, and not during the tenth, although we have no definite proof that Eldad did not make his appearance during the Gaonate of Paltai who preceded Hayyim by a few years, but both Paltai and Hayyim lived and officiated almost at the same time; therefore the result is not materially affected.

V. THE COURSE OF HIS TRAVELS

Considerable doubt has been expressed by Graetz in the regard to the possibility that Eldad was ever in Babylon. The former comments on the statement supposed to have been made by Zemach in his Responsum¹⁵⁶ that the "hachomim told him that they heard from Isaac ben Mar and Rabbi Simchah that they saw this Eldad."¹⁵⁷ He says that it has been erroneously concluded that Eldad was in Babylon simply because of the above statement found in the Responsum. The title "rabbani" is not necessarily Babylonian.¹⁵⁸ If Eldad had been in Babylon surely the heads of the schools would have heard reports about him. Although Frankl also wondered at the unusual silence of the Gaonim in their writings he tried to substantiate the above statement in the Responsum by citing a Gaonic source which he contended referred to Eldad.¹⁵⁹ Epstein, however, regards Frankl's citation as unconvincing, believing that the story cited by Frankl is a forgery.¹⁶⁰ Epstein concluded, however, that Eldad was in Babylon and that Isaac and Simchah saw him. For if they had seen him in another place far from Sura Zemach would have mentioned this place.

As to Eldad's appearance in Spain we have only the letter of Shaprut to the King of the Ghazars which will be discussed in a chapter below. This ^{same} obscurity, hovers over all the meagre evidence we possess in regard to his actual journey and the route he took. That he was in Africa there is no doubt as we shall demonstrate later. From the fragmentary testimony one could reconstruct the order of his travels: He was born in East Africa, near the Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf of Aden, where dwelled the Four Tribes.¹⁶¹ According to his

Red Sea

account he traveled from his native land twice. And according to the story related in Eshkol he went on his first trip to Egypt and then returned home. The stories that have reached us tell only of a second journey. While travelling by sea he fell into the hands of the tribe of Rumrum and was finally brought to the province of Azin¹⁶², there he was purchased by a Jew from Issachar with whom he returned along the Indian Sea up to the east end of the Persian Gulf where according to Eldad's words lived the tribe of Issachar. From there we may suppose that he went by land alongside the mountains which he called Parouta to Babylon. From there he went to North Africa, and thence to Spain.¹⁶³ Yet, we cannot be sure that Eldad did not arrange his story in such a manner as to make it harmonize with the facts supposedly known to the people of Kairowan, namely, that at first he was in Babylon and afterwards in Arabia. It is therefore necessary to seek more reliable testimony on the basis of internal evidence. For the sake of convenience it is advisable to discuss first the evidence yielded by the ritual, since according to Schloessinger it is the most genuine of Eldad's writings.

VI. SURVEY OF VARIOUS THEORIES ON THE RITUAL

Critical evaluations of the halachic material began as early as 1873 with P.F. Frankl's unfulfilled promise to analyze the confused halakot of Eldad¹⁶⁴. Jellinek concluded that Eldad could not have been the author of the halakot simply because the people of Kairowan in their question to Zemach said that Eldad's language was unintelligible to them. He explained the halakot as part of the "Tendenz" writings against Karaism¹⁶⁵. Pinsker believed that the halakot comprised the literature of some of the many sects which flourished during that period and that they inclined in part toward the Samaritan doctrines since they ascribe all laws to Joshua and know nothing of the sages of the Mishna and Talmud, both of which are characteristic of Samaritan writings; and in part toward Karaite doctrines, especially in regard to the use of *וְיָבֹא* instead of *וְיָבֹא*, and the use of *לְכָל* instead of *לְכָל*. He also remarked that Eldad's use of pure Hebrew with Arabic is similar to the language used by the early Karaites who began to write in Biblical Hebrew and translated from the Arabic into Biblical Hebrew as in the case of Nissi ben Noah of Judah HaDassi¹⁶⁶. Greatz endeavored to prove his thesis that Eldad was a Karaite by arguing that two of the most important Karaite principles of ritual slaughter are found in the Ritual. The first of these is the requirement to face Jerusalem since the act of slaughtering was considered a holy function. This view of Shechitah naturally disqualified performance by women, unclean persons, and inebriates, or if it was done without a blessing.¹⁶⁷ The

second is the requirement to remove all the blood.¹⁶⁸ The Karaites held that it was indispensable to cut through not only the esophagus and wind pipe but clear through the blood vessels of the neck; the latter injunction is especially emphasized in Eldad's Ritual. The obvious fact that Eldad's Ritual contained some rabbinic laws is explained away by Graetz in his statement that Eldad was a secret Karaite who mixed rabbinic and karaitic doctrines in order not to completely undermine rabbinism.

Schorr¹⁶⁹ attacked Pinsker's pro-Karaitic theory in the following manner: First he exposed the weakness of Pinsker's statement that the sect which Eldad was supposed to represent knew nothing of the Talmud. He pointed out that there is a significant statement in the Responsum which says that they had a Talmud¹⁷⁰ even if it failed to mention the sages of the Mishna; Second he says that the Samaritans were not the only writers who used ךנכ instead of ךעכ and כנכ or כעכ instead of כנכ , since we find כנכ used instead of כנכ in Mishna Hullin 82 and T.B. 18. He also claimed that the early rabbinites used the same kind of language as the early Karaites and therefore the use of unusual expressions in Eldad proves nothing.

Gottlober¹⁷¹ refuted Graetz's explanation for the fact that Eldad mentioned the existence of a Talmud among the tribes in order to discredit the rabbinite Talmud in the eyes of the Rabbinites. He demonstrated that one could argue from the same fact the opposite, namely, that Eldad wished to enhance the value of the Talmud, especially by ascribing it to Joshua which signified that its source

was a divine revelation. Chwolson and Runn also rejected the Karaitic theory¹⁷². I.H. Weiss¹⁷³ also felt that Eldad's Ritual does not prove him to be a Karaite. He said that the more rigorous regulations and injunctions found in the ritual are not Karaitic; he cited as examples disqualification for slaughtering because of nocturnal pollution, nakedness being a minor under 18. He says further that the requirement to face the sanctuary and the disqualification by virtue of failure to bless are found for the first time in the ritual laws of Samuel Maarabi who lived during the latter half of the thirteenth century.

Neubauer agreed with Graetz in his pro-Karaitic theory though he offers no additional proofs for his contention.¹⁷⁴ It was not until the appearance of Epstein's work that any great step in advance was made. Although J. Halevy¹⁷⁵ opposed the latter's Falasha theory the few points on which he disagrees with Epstein are negligible.

Epstein came to the conclusion that all the evidence which he amassed from an analysis of the ritual points to Arabia and northeast Africa as the homeland of the four tribes. This conclusion he reached by a process of elimination. He was certain that the homeland of the tribes must have been a great distance from Palestine and Babylon since the only satisfactory accounting for the divergence between Eldad's halakot and those of the Talmud is found in the explanation that the Talmudic laws were not practiced simply because they were not known. The same supposition would also explain why the few Talmudic laws such as the laws of ^{p3 110 > and 112 1/4 141/16} etc. which did ~~not~~ reach them were not well understood because of ^{175a} the great distance which practically isolated the Four Tribes. There

is proof that the Jews who observed these laws dwelled among the Mohammedans. This is found in the close resemblance between some of their regulations and those of the Mohammedans. Examples are: the law of killing the young, tying the feet of the cattle at the time of the slaughter, and the injunction to place the animal on his left side so that his right side is on top. These are not found in rabbinical tradition. Nor could Eldad have come from Ethiopia.

The language of the Jews in Ethiopia was formerly Geez and later it was Amharitic. But the language of Eldad shows no traces whatever of these languages.

Epstein says that it is even more improbable to say that the homeland of the tribes was in Egypt. After the destruction of the temple of Onias, the oral tradition spread gradually even into Egypt. Rabbi Joachanon the Sandler is supposed to have been an Alexandrian, and in the days of the Amoraim we know that the Egyptian Jews sent questions on religious matters to the sages in Palestine.¹⁷⁶ Indeed in the days of Eldad the Talmud was already found in Egypt.¹⁷⁷ Great scholars came from Egypt at the time of Eldad, the greatest of whom was Saadia. Even the Hebrew the Egyptians used indicated their familiarity with the Talmud.¹⁷⁸ Questions were sent from Egypt to the academy at Babylon a short time after Eldad.¹⁷⁹ Thus far we have eliminated every possible place of habitation of the Four Tribes except Arabia and ^{South West} Northeast Africa.

Both of these lands have all the qualifications necessary for fulfillment of the conditions which the homeland of the tribes demand. The Jews of Arabia, living among the Arabs, acquired many of their

We know now
that Yemenite Jews
corresponded with 31.

The Babylonian
Geonim
chief

manners and customs even those which were warlike. There were for a time independent tribes who had their own king and received tribute from the Arabians. The Jews observed rabbinical oral laws and were familiar with the rabbinic haggadot; but the Talmud was not known to them. Nor do we know of a great biblical scholar or savant of the halachah who lived among them since Benjamin of Tudela, whose accounts are trustworthy, failed to mention any distinguished scholar, when he described the life of the Jews of Khaibar and Tema. The Jews of Teman who dwelled in the southern corner of Arabia knew even less of the Talmud because of the greater distance from Babylon. Maimonides¹⁸¹ said that in Teman the Jews studied very little of Talmud and recognized only the Derush while the Jews of Africa (131) know nothing of the written Torah and keep no religious practices except the Sabbath and circumcision. Although the spiritual state of the Jews of Yemen improved after the time of Maimonides when they produced such books as the Machberes ¹⁸² which J. Sapir brought from there and the Midrash Hagadol and the book VaYikro, the Talmud was never well known. Sapir himself says that hardly one in a thousand knows even the shape of the Talmud. Their studies are based chiefly on the Yad of Maimonides.¹⁸² On the other hand the Yemenite Jews, according to Sapir, study assiduously Bible and grammar, and know how to read Scripture with the vowels and cantillation signs with perfect accuracy. The Yemenite Jews are, however, very superstitious and are well versed in magical sorcery;¹⁸³ yet they deny many of the fundamentals of religion such as the return of the soul to the body after death.¹⁸⁴ An example of the Hebrew language used by the people

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of Aden before the time of Maimonides is found in the tombstones of Aden though there is a difference of opinion in regard to the date of one of them.¹⁸⁵ All this proves that the Jews of Yemen knew Hebrew although they used unusual words. The same general characteristics are found to apply to ^{South} Northeast Africa on the mouth of the Gulf of Aden. In ancient times Jews dwelled in this land but were gradually driven into the hinterland by the wild natives until they finally settled in Abyssinia.¹⁸⁶ Though we know nothing of the cultural status of those Jews we do know that they intermingled with the peoples who dwelled by the Gulf of Aden. These lands were considered as one land and were therefore called by the same name.¹⁸⁷ Sometimes the kings of Yemen ruled over the peoples of Africa and vice versa and at intervals the Arabians in Yemen burst into Africa although even before that time there were Arabian colonies in North East Africa as far as Azania.¹⁸⁸ Both Jews and Arabians migrated to Africa taking with them the culture of Yemen; therefore we can reasonably conjecture that the Jews in Northeast Africa were in most respects like the Jews in Yemen.

So far then, an examination of the ritual has given evidence that it is a product of a group of Jews living in ^{Yemen} northeast Africa or thereabouts and that it was not the ritual of a sect either Karaitic or Samaritan or some combination of both. Epstein believes that the ritual of Eldad is actually the product of a writer who lived among or knew the Falashahs.

VII. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RITUAL

All this is written in the Torah

An analysis of the ritual shows that it involved a certain conception of the purpose of shechitah: the removal of all the blood from the animal at the time of the slaughter. This is why there are so many rigorous regulations which are merely precautions against any hindrances to the end in view. For instance, the law of shechia concludes with the statement "lest all the blood should not be poured out."¹⁸⁹ Likewise the *geresa* and the *geramah* disqualify the shechitah

because all the blood is not drained. This conception is the result of viewing shechitah as a holy act, as equivalent to the slaughter of consecrated objects and the offering of sacrifices to God. In ancient times no flesh was eaten unless the fat and blood were offered to the deity; therefore whoever desired to eat flesh was forced to slaughter his animal in order to remove and offer the blood and fat to God, for the blood was the soul and the soul was a part of the deity. Throughout the period of the Judges until the building of a Temple in Jerusalem every sacrifice made by a Jew was accompanied by an offering.¹⁹⁰ But after the erection of the Temple a distinction

was made between slaughter for eating and slaughter for sacrificial purposes.¹⁹¹ This distinction explains the difference in the laws of Shechitah between the talmudists and the kabalists, the latter *former* being more strict in their prohibitions of offerings outside Jerusalem¹⁹² etc., in order to make as great a distinction as possible between the two kinds of slaughtering. One of the distinctions emphasized pertained to the draining of the blood. Thus according to the rabbis,

(לא ידעו להוציא דם)

in regard to holy matters it is necessary to cut the veins and put them in a vessel for the blood,¹⁹³ because the blood flows easily from the veins and in "Kodoshim" blood is required; but in the slaughter of profane things it is not necessary to cut those veins since the blood is not needed for anything.¹⁹⁴ In general, then, draining the blood in this case is not fundamental.¹⁹⁵

But those who deny the holiness of Jerusalem (Ten tribes and Samaritans) and those who do not keep the prohibition and offer sacrifices outside Jerusalem (The Egyptians who built the temple of Onias and the Falashas in Abyssinia) consider slaughter a holy act whose purpose is to bring forth the blood as an offering to God although it is not sprinkled on the altar. Therefore they are very strict in regard to the shechitah, and warn to remove all the blood which is God's portion.

Among the Arabians every slaughter was originally a holy act and blood was drained and sprinkled upon their holy stone. Later they ceased sprinkling blood when slaughtering for food. However, they retained an ancient custom of turning toward the holy One and calling upon some deity and of prohibiting slaughter by a foreigner and of watching the removal of the blood although this custom was unnecessary for any kind of worship.¹⁹⁷

Thus among the Samaritans, Karaites, and Falashahs the shechitah retained its original sacred character as an offering even when the blood was not sprinkled. This explains why many of the regulations of the ritual of Eldad coincide with those of the

old man

Arabians, Samaritans, Karaites, and Falshahs.

Since the removal of the blood is a holy act and the table of man is an altar, Eldad admonishes one to turn during the shechitah towards the sanctuary and for the same reason he prohibits shechitah if it has not been preceded by a blessing.¹⁹⁹ Similarly he prohibited shechitah if it was performed without a shawl upon the head, or by a mourner, unclean person, leper, eunuch, youth, elder, woman, drunkard, and a naked person.²⁰⁰ And he used in reference to this the word "pigul", a biblical term used in reference to sacrifices, Yet Eldad recognized the distinction between the two kinds of sacrifices.²⁰¹ The strict regulations are included in the ritual because even the slaughter of profane things has a certain holiness

about it like a korban; likewise among the Karaites, shechitah has a sacred character inasmuch as their sages prohibited shechitah and eating of flesh in the exile because in the exile the offering of sacrifices is forbidden.²⁰² Although they permitted shechitah at a later date there remained the disqualification of the performance of the shechitah by a child and drunkard and the failure to bless. There also remained the custom of turning of the slaughterer towards Jerusalem.²⁰³ Petermann²⁰⁴ relates that the Samaritans when offering the Paschal sacrifice put on a mantle or tallith and gather the blood into a hole. The Mohammedans prohibit shechitah performed by one under fifteen who has not had a nocturnal pollution and they admonish one to cut the vains and to place the animal with ^{its} right side upward.²⁰⁵ Even the injunction of Eldad to remove ropes from the

P. Ismael of Maghreb

legs of the animal before it dies thereby allowing to kick about so that all the blood may run out finds a parallel in the laws of the Karaites in R. Maaravi²⁰⁷ who also mentions the removal of the ropes. This law is still observed among the Jews in Abyssinia. The Abyssinian Jews of today also have laws of bedika very similar to those of Eldad.²⁰⁸ Eldad relates that when a piece of skin or worn clothing is found in the entrails of the slaughtered animal it is considered unclean (rekas) and is cast to the dogs and wolves.^{208a}

But there are many differences between the Ritual and the Karaite, Samaritan, and Arabian laws. The Karaites permit shechitah of unclean things, and shechitah by a mourner, naked person, and eunuch. The Moslems permit shechitah by an ignorant or a drunkard.²⁰⁹ The Karaites have no laws of bedikot or terefot. Eldad permitted eating of the embryo but both the Karaites and Samaritans forbid it. In general we see that the laws of Eldad are rooted in an ancient method spread throughout many sects. In fact there is mention of it even in the Talmud²¹⁰ although of all the commentators only Rashi followed Eldad's system²¹¹.

In brief an analysis of the Ritual has revealed one indisputable fact, namely, that it has much in common with the Falashahs, more than with any of the other Jewish sects that are known, namely, the Samaritans and Karaites etc. But since the other factors known about the Samaritans and Karaites: their origin, history, and habitation, show nothing in common with the factual and legendary material found in the narrative portion of Eldad's writing we can eliminate them from consideration. There remains then the Falashahs and in general the Jews of Yemen.

The evidence from the ritual is of course not conclusive though it is quite plausible;²¹² but more conclusive evidence can be obtained only by an analysis found in the narrative portions of Eldad. In them we are able to detect valuable clues from the geographical data and from the peculiar customs and habits of those people.

VIII. SIGNIFICANCE OF NARRATIVE

A. History of Critical Theory.

The earliest of the scientific investigators of the narrative of Eldad was Steinschneider. He believed that the narratives were written as an apologetic to refute the Christian doctrine that the disappearance of the Jewish state was proof of the rejection of Israel.²¹ I.B. Levinson²¹⁴, Jellinek²¹⁵, and A. Harkavy²¹⁶, interpreted the literature as a polemic against the Karaites. Pinsker, on the other hand, argued that Eldad was a Karaite emissary from eastern Babylonia who invented the tale of his origin in order to conceal his mission of propagating Karaite doctrines among the Rabbinite Jews of the Maghrib.²¹⁷ But Graetz, Chwolson, and P.F. Frankl, did not even ascribe serious motives to Eldad. Graetz²¹⁸ dubbed him an adventurer and a charlatan. Proof for his contention he found in Eldad's statements that he was a Danite, that the Danites still have an independent state, with a King Uzziel at their head, that their tradition is in a direct line from Moses through Joshua. For Graetz all these assertions indicated that Eldad had nothing in mind but intent to mystify. Graetz felt that the conclusive proof of Eldad's deception was found in his claim that certain words he used were Hebrew whereas in actuality Semitic studies prove them to belong to an utterly different language.²¹⁹ Chwolson shared this opinion with

Graetz though he did not subscribe to the latter's theory of Eldad's Karaism.²²⁰ Frankl was even harsher in his verdict. He called him a swindler and a knave.²²¹ He also objected to the statement of Graetz; since the Karaites never accepted Eldad as one of their one. As additional proof he argued that Judah HaDassi, the most skillful polemicist of the Karaites, only mentioned Eldad for the purpose of discussing the wonders of divine creation, fearing that a thorough study of the laws of the Danites would demonstrate that they lived completely according to rabbinic norms. Neubauer characterized Eldad as a cunning emissary of the Karaites.²²² Riffmann denied the authenticity of most of the Eldad literature.²²³ Metz was the first to suggest that the four tribes might be identified with the Falashahs.²²⁴ He found proof of his theory in the similarity of the geographical places mentioned in the narrative with the names of the places and kingdoms in Abyssinia. Epstein adopted and elaborated upon his theory. He is the latest and best authority on the subject. His conclusion was that the writings of Eldad can best be explained as a description of the life of the Falashahs who lived during the time of Eldad or of a Jewish community in southwest Arabia. The only other serious endeavor to locate the Four Tribes outside the sphere of Arabic speaking countries was made by Graetz who, though he believed that all of Eldad's writings were fabrications, felt that the geographical names and descriptions of the life of the tribes were based on the actual existence of various Jewish groups of which Eldad had heard. He explained his theory in the following manner: He said: "When Eldad placed the Four Tribes toward Kush and Havila he chose the location of the former Himyaritic kingdom. When he placed the tribe of Ephraim and half

of Manasseh in the mountains near Mecca or Medina he utilized the reports which he heard about the warlike tribes of Nadhir, Kuraiza, and Halbar. The other two tribes, Simon and the other half of Manasseh he placed directly facing the land of the Chazars. Zebulun and Reuben he placed toward the mountains of Paran and had them speak Turkish." Paran he identifies by arbitrarily amending it to Chorsan because his theory is based on the report of Benjamin of Tudela about a warlike independent kingdom of Jews living in the mountains of Nishapur which is part of East Chorsan.²²⁷ All this is far from illuminating.²²⁸

B. The Historicity of the Narrative.

Epstein's profound and exhaustive treatment of the Eldad aggadah makes his Falashah theory the most plausible of all those that have been proposed. In fact new data yielded by subsequent investigations merely confirm his theory. His explanation of the patent admixture of truth and legend is simple as it is profound. Eldad was a man of his age, for practically all the travellers of his time were prone to mingle fact with fiction. This habit was especially characteristic of the historians and writers of antiquity, the Arabians as well as the Romans²²⁹.

The first part of the narrative from the beginning of Eldad's travels to his entrance into the dwelling place of Issachar is apparently wholly fictitious. we have no means at our disposal to decide what amount of truth if any is contained therein. Eldad probably called his corpulent companion an Asherite because of the biblical verse: "As for Asher, he shall be fat" (Gen. XLIX:20).²³⁰

It is wholly fictitious, but how can it contain an amount of truth?

12 (10/1)

and Keturah

The narrative about the worship of Moloch ~~is~~ not the product solely of Eldad's imagination but is based on legends about Moloch and fire-worship. Epstein believes that Eldad incorporated ²³¹ this material from some Midrash. After this recital of his adventures Eldad proceeds to a description of the Ten Tribes.

His obvious purpose was to relate: 1) the location of each tribe; 2) the origin of each tribe; 3) and their laws and customs. Here we find historical truth and legend joined into an organic whole and cemented together by a small amount of fabrication in order to give the narratives continuity as well as interest. The tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, and Reuben he describes as dwelling in the region of the Gulf of Persia, ^{Simeon,} Ephraim and Manasseh far away in the land of the Chazars. These six tribes inhabit Asia but Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, dwell in Africa, in Havila, east of the rivers of Ethiopia as far as the river Sambatyon.

In the lands bordering Persia during the time of Benjamin of Tudela there lived independent Jews who claimed that they were the descendants of the four tribes. ²³² Likewise there were in Arabia independent Jews who claimed to be related to the Ten Tribes. These facts substantiate the truth of much of Eldad's description of the tribes in Asia. Eldad, incidentally, mentioned only one of the many places in Arabia where the Jewish tribes dwelled, namely, Negd. ²³³ He does not even mention the ancient kingdom of the Jews in Hymeria. Eldad probably heard of the Jewish kingdom of the Chazars; perhaps he believed that this was the home of Simon and Manasseh. He was

Himjar

probably unaware of the proselytization of the Chazars which took place in the eighth century. But this is not surprising when we consider that Hisdai ben Shaprut also believed that the Chazars were Jews exiled from Israel.

In regard to the tribes in Africa we know that there were Jews in southeast Abyssinia,²³⁴ which is a plain on the shore of the Red Sea; there, according to Eldad dwelled the Four Tribes. Although Eldad does not mention specifically that the Jews were in Abyssinia we can identify the Four Tribes with them on the basis of evidence which shall be adduced below,²³⁶ as well as that mentioned above.²³⁵ Eldad does not mention Abyssinia and he speaks only of a plain "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" according to Zephania III:10 which Eldad himself quotes.²³⁷ There Eldad obviously refers the verse to the habitation of the tribes, although the verse does not refer to Kush itself as do all the other verses mentioning "Kush". Even the Targumim translate Kush by the word ק'ש' which is the equivalent with them to Havila of the southeast part of Abyssinia.²³⁸ The ancient writers did not know Abyssinia proper because it is situated on high and steep hills which ^{are} practically inaccessible. But they did know ²³⁹ of the surrounding country which is a plain. Homer and Herodotus already knew of the wonders of the land "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." All authors from the author of the Book of Jubilees to Bertinoro located Paradise in that region, which might account for the unusual fertility of the land in which Eldad places the Bnai Moshe. According to Eldad

the extreme northern tribes: Simeon and half Manasseh, and the extreme southern tribes: Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, mark the identical boundaries of the land which was, according to the Book of Jubilees, allotted to Shem. Now, this land was allotted to Shem because it had always been considered a territory which was especially blessed; even according to Greek tradition this territory was regarded as the dwelling place of Apollo and of just and righteous men who were long lived, happy, and care-free,²⁴⁰ i.e. the Hyperboreans.²⁴¹ This then explains why Eldad placed the Bnai Moshe in the land which the author of Jubilees considered to be the location of the Garden of Eden.

The story that Dan left Israel before the destruction of the Temple is based on an old aggadah as Zemach Gaon remarked and as is mentioned in many other sources.²⁴² But the details describing how Dan went to Kush via Egypt are to be credited or discredited to Eldad. The remaining nine tribes, according to Eldad, were exiled to Asia by the kings of Assyria. Then the tribes of Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, went from Asia to Africa and settled together with Dan. The former tribes were the "children of maidservants" whereas the other tribes who were the children of Rachel and Leah would scorn them, calling these three tribes "children of maidservants". Fearing the outbreak of war three tribes left Asia and joined Dan who was also the son of a maidservant, Bilhah.²⁴³ Since we could hardly say that Eldad accidentally had Dan come to his land via Egypt and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, come via Asia, an explanation must be found. The Jews who came from Abyssinia and northeast Africa came from two directions, from the North through Egypt, and from the south and east through Arabia.²⁴⁴ The Jews who came from Egypt were undoubtedly

very different from those who came from Arabia and it was not difficult for Eldad to recognize the difference between them. surely each had traditions of its origin and this Eldad would quite naturally incorporate in his stories.²⁴⁵ Eldad named the Jews who came via Egypt the descendants of Dan and he called those who came via Arabia the descendants of Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. Since an old tradition that Dan left Israel before the exile of the Ten Tribes ^{the fact} and that in Egypt there were many Jews even during the days of the First Temple, Eldad was clever enough to say that Dan left his homeland during the days of Jeroboam and came to northeast Africa via Egypt. But since in all probability the Jews came to Arabia at a later date and emigrated from there to Africa even later than the Jews from Egypt, Eldad had the Arabian Jews descend from the Ten Tribes who did not leave Israel until after the death of Sennacherib. This was after the departure of the Danites from Israel. The probable reason why Eldad had the Jews from Arabia consist of only three tribes is to be found in his desire to group the tribes according to their ancestry; those who were the children of the mothers in Israel and those who were descendants of maidservants.

The description of the life and customs of the tribes is likewise founded upon verifiable facts. Little of it is a product of sheer fancy. Eldad was careful to distinguish between the tribes in Africa and those in Asia. Of the former he relates that they were under the sovereignty of a king, a prince, and a high official and that they waged a well-organized war against the Ethiopians; but of the latter ^{that they} he tells that they have no king, being subject to no one and, went

no Rabbis is
mentioned, neither

Talmud or Aggadah

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also

marauding in bands. The tribes in Africa, according to Eldad, know only the holy tongue whereas those in Asia speak only Persian and Arabic. The "Talmud" ²⁴⁶ of the African tribes is different from the "Talmuds" of the rest of the Jews because it is written "in pure, holy script and contains no hochmoh from the Mishna or Talmud". But Eldad says of Zebulun and Reuben "they have Mikroh, Mishna, Talmud, and Aggadah", which is equivalent to our Talmud. These distinctions can easily be explained from our knowledge of the difference between the life of the Jews in ^{South} ~~northeast~~ ^{East} Africa and Asia. We know that the Jews in Abyssinia and northeast Africa had kings who subjugated the peoples living in the adjacent land ²⁴⁷ while the Jews in Asia in the time of Eldad were subject peoples. ²⁴⁸ We know also that the Jews in Abyssinia, the Falashahs, know nothing of our Talmud. They possess only a "P'COH" which is simply a commentary on the Pentateuch. ²⁴⁹ But Zebulun and Reuben who dwelled near Persia surely were acquainted or at least knew of a Talmud since they were near the Teshivot in Babylon. Likewise the facts which Eldad relates about the tribes who were near the mountains of Persia: that they do not raise horses, that they speak Persian, and follow the customs of the kings of Media and Persia, are very similar to those ascribed to the people who lived in that region by Strabo. ²⁵⁰ Eldad also related that there were fire-worshippers near Issachar which tribe inhabited the territory nearest Media and Persia and that these fire-worshippers married their ~~wives~~ and servants to women. ²⁵¹ Of all the nations of antiquity the Persians were the first fire-worshippers to practice this custom. ²⁵² Eldad mentions specifically that the four Tribes

read neither Megillah of Esther nor Lamentations; the Palashahs likewise do not celebrate Purim or Hanukah nor do they read the Meggillah of Esther and Lamentations.²⁵³ The story told about the method of communication by pigeon-post and conversation across the Sambatyon is certainly fictitious. It was a device used by Eldad to link the story of the Four Tribes with those of the Bnai Moshe.^{253a}

2 The sources for the story of the migration of the Bnai Moshe to the wondrous land of Mavila are found in Psalm 137 and in the legends which in the course of time elaborated and supplemented this Psalm. It relates how the exiled Jews resting by the rivers of Babylon hung their harps upon the willow trees. When the Babylonians requested the Jews to sing songs of Zion they cried broken-heartedly "How can we sing the songs of Zion in a foreign land". Out of this grew the following legend which Eldad probably utilized.²⁵⁴ Briefly the legend is this: "Nebuchadnezzar said to the Jews: 'Why are you sitting and crying?'; and he called the Levites and said: 'Prepare yourselves to play for me when I eat and drink before the idols;' the Levites conferred with each other and replied: 'Was it not enough that our Temple was destroyed because of our iniquities? Must we now stand and play before this dwarf? and before these idols?' Immediately they arose, hung up their harps, put their fingers in their mouths, and bit them off."

2 The description of the Utopian life of the Bnai Moshe is of course nothing but autopeia. Every nation of antiquity possessed similar legends of Paradise.²⁵⁵ Yet many aspects of the life and customs of the Bnai Moshe are not mere products of the imagination of Eldad. Even the description of the Sambatyon, the legend of which

had been in existence long before Eldad may not be altogether a product of folk-lore but may be founded on fact. Epstein has shown that even before ^{the time of} Eldad the river was believed by many to be located in Africa where Eldad places it. ²⁵⁶ Although the origin of the word itself is still uncertain the most probable etymology traces it to the Ethiopic "Sambat" corresponding to the Hebrew "Sabbat". We also know that "Sambat" is ^{a word} used by the Falashahs for "Sabbath". ²⁵⁷ But we possess even more convincing evidence than this.

Borchardt ^{claims} that the fabled river has its counterpart in the region of the Takazze and Abai rivers in Abyssinia. There one encounters chasms eroded by the water to a depth of 700-800 meters. These divide the Falashahs of Semien from the inhabitants of Schoa and Tigre. During the dry season these rivers fall to $3\frac{1}{2}$ meters but when the rainy season sets in they swell to the height of seventeen meters and make a roaring noise while flowing. It is only from October to April that the river may be crossed by caravans. The water is sand-colored from carrying the fertile soil from the Nile Valley. Borchardt thinks that this river is identical with the Sambatyon of Eldad. He says that we find here all the conditions necessary for Eldad's description of the Sambatyon. Here we have a river which sharply marks a boundary between two peoples. We have the roar of its waters, the sandy color and even the vapor which is formed in the cold mountain air over the hot gully. Perhaps the vapor and fiery columns of Eldad may be playful references to the many hot springs in the vicinity and the volcano Dagon which is still active. He explains the origin of the word from "Soba" which means river in the speech of the Kanama. ²⁵⁸ Perhaps it was changed to the word "Sabbat" because of its sudden changes in

height and movement. Or perhaps Sabbat was unconsciously formed from Saba and then an explanation was sought for it. According to Eldad the Sambatyon had as one of its many sources a large sea containing many fish. Perhaps this may be identified with the "Tana-see" whose fruitful shores are even today inhabited by Jews. *Gen 268*

There are some other interesting parallels to be found. Eldad speaks of a special class of warriors.²⁵⁹ They might be compared to a sect of Nazirites who exist among the Falashahs. Benjamin of Tudela relates of the Jews in Teman that "they go to plunder and despoil in the land of Nak, and they give a tenth of all they possess to their sages who dwell in the house of study as well as to the poverty-stricken, to the students of the Talmud, and to the mourners of Zion who refrain from eating meat or drinking wine and are attired in black clothes, dwell in caves or small huts, and fast all their lives except on the Sabbath and holidays." Today among the Falashahs²⁶⁰ there are three classes (in the order of their importance): Nazirites, priests, and learned men, called by them "Debterim".

The Nazirites are eunuchs who live by themselves at a distance from the community. They eat only food prepared by their fellow Nazirites; no stranger may step over their threshold. Besides their occupation with services in the house of prayers they teach Torah to the youths and cultivate the soil. In places where there are no Nazirites the priests function as the head of the community. They slaughter and receive the neck, breast, and leg of the animal. The Debterim have no special function.^{260a} They merely assist the priests in prayer and reading Scriptures.

IX. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CUSTOMS AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE FALASHAHS.

A review of the facts and interpretations presented up to this point seems to warrant the conclusion that the life and customs of the Tribes and the Bnai Moshe resemble more closely the life and customs of the Falashahs than the life and customs of any other contemporaneous group of independent Jews. This similarity is borne out even more strikingly in a comparison of the ritual regulations of Eldad with the corresponding laws of the Falashahs. The rigorous tone of Eldad's ritual finds its counterpart in the excessive precautions taken by the Falashahs in regard to slaughtering and in regards to the laws of ritual purity. For instance, in their Mesgeed or synagogue the Falashahs still have a sacrificial altar,²⁶¹ surrounded by a stone enclosure and by a fence. This stands in a large stone above which is a flat groove. The priests are the slaughterers. Their regulations of slaughtering provide for the removal of all the blood; before they boil the animal they are careful to remove every trace of blood.²⁶² Everyone must wash his hands before eating and after the animal is laid down incense is spread around it.²⁶³ The following blessing is pronounced: "God of Israelites, of all souls, be blessed". The Falashahs, however, do not prohibit mixing meat and milk thus interpreting this biblical injunction as the Samaritans and Karaites.²⁶⁴

Their laws of purity are very strict. Washing is required for every impurity: before eating and after touching a dead body; they have special huts, a) for the unclean in general, b) for menstruating women and women in labor. A dying person is taken to a special place away from the village and he is permitted to be visited only by the unclean who after having been in contact with a dead person must

remain isolated for seven days washing themselves on the third and seventh day. If a woman fails to arrive at this special hut before her menstrual attack her home and all the vessels in it are burned; and she is whipped forty strokes. After child-birth she must remain in the hut forty days for a male child and eighty for a female child.²⁶⁵

The keeping of the Sabbath also illustrates their rigorous laws. Everything must be prepared on Friday afternoon and everything is washed and cleansed because any kind of work is forbidden. White clothes are put on. Unleavened bread called "Bereket" is brought by the people to the Messgeed. The priest eats first and then the whole congregation partakes. This communal meal is called (ḥḥḥḥ). It is regarded as a substitute for sacrifice.²⁶⁶ On the Sabbath they extinguish all the lights and are not permitted to cross a river. The cattle are tended by the Abyssinian Christians. Even the milk given on that day cannot be used.

The observance of the holidays is also in keeping with the strict interpretation of the Biblical laws. In the past, according to Epstein, the Falashahs followed the chronological system found in the Book of Jubilees which they possess in all its details. This is proved by their method today of reckoning the days between Passover and Sabuoth, counting fifty days from the twenty-second of Nisan. At present, in their secular life they follow the solar year of the Abyssinian Christians. But in regard to fixing the date of the moedim they reckon according to the lunar calendar. They call the solar months by their Ethiopian names, the lunar months by their Aramaic names: "Lisan" or Nisan, Tammuz, Ab, "Lul" for Elul, Tishri,

50.
for פסח, etc.

Passover is kept scrupulously. They make a distinction between Passover and the other holidays in regard to work, not permitting even light work on Passover.²⁶⁷ Succot is called סוכות (סוכות) although a canopy is unknown to them.²⁶⁸ Sabuoth is called שבועות (שבועות). On the first of Tishri they have a holiday which they call יום כיפור though there is no reference to it being a Rosh Hashonoh. The Day of Atonement is called יום כיפור (יום כיפור). It is no longer kept as a day of atonement; it is observed only as a day of memorial to the revelation which God made to Jacob on that day. Even small children are required to spend this whole day fasting in the mesgeed.

They have a great number of whole fast days and half fast days. They fast every second and fifth day of the month,²⁶⁹ Every new moon Passover, first to ninth of Tammuz (as a memorial for the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar²⁷⁰), as well as many other fasts commemorating biblical events are observed. It is remarkable that many of these fasts and holidays are not even mentioned in any of their sacred books. It is testimony to their tenacity in keeping the ancient customs.

The Falashahs no longer have any original sources for their worship,²⁷¹ though they possess a number of important books sacred as well as secular. According to their own admission the direct sources were lost in their wars with the Gallas.^{271a} The books used today by the Falashahs are written in Geez, the old Ethiopic speech or in Amharitic, a modern dialect of this old language. The Falashahs now buy their books from the Christians because they have no scribes of their own. They are hand-written, large-sized folios with leather

binding. Geez is understood only by the learned scribes in every city who write the letters which are also in this language for the laity. Among their extant literature is an Ethiopic translation of the Septuagint accepted in Abyssinia by both Jews and Christians. It apparently came from Frumentius who introduced Christianity into Axum. It is called "Orit", the law. It is in the form of an Octateuch, including in addition to the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and some apocryphal material. The customs of the Falashahs in the sphere of religion are not based upon this translation²⁷² but on their *ḥalakah* or translation which is a commentary on the Torah. It is not in writing but is transmitted orally.^{272a} Another book considered by them to be very sacred is shared with the Christian Abyssinians. It is Enoch which we know only through the Ethiopic translation. A book very important as a source of many laws of the Falashahs is the Book of Jubilees, called "Kufale" from which Epstein draws many interesting conclusions.²⁷³ The book called "Te'ezaza Sanbat" or Sabbath Laws is according to Ratjens the only book that is of undisputed Jewish origin.²⁷⁴ Another type of literature is found in such books as Gadla Abraham, "Wars of Abraham"²⁷⁵ and the "Gadlas of Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. In addition to this the Falashahs have books dealing with apocalyptic material such as the book of Baruch²⁷⁶, and the Vision of Elijah. They also possess many books treating of the occult. There is a book called *ḥalakah* (*ḥalakah*) which includes all the secrets God revealed to the twelve disciples. The ascetics among the Falashahs claim that this book contains power

against sickness and demons.²⁷⁷ In this category may also be included a book on astrology.²⁷⁸ Some of their books deal with Christian heroes such as ג'ורג'וריוס (Gorgorius), the founder of an ascetic order in Wolkaut in the fourteenth century. Others which merit mention are: a translation of Josephus²⁷⁹, a book containing selections from the Pentateuch, Prophets, and Psalms which is used on the Day of Atonement,²⁸⁰ Altogether, according to the testimony of Epstein there are about twenty-five books among the Falashahs of today²⁸¹. They attest to the rather low spiritual and cultural level of the Falashahs, especially since their literature contains innumerable doctrines and beliefs accepted from their neighbors which are contradictory to their own fundamental doctrines and beliefs.²⁸²

Although at present the Falashahs possess no books in Hebrew there is evidence that in ancient times they had Hebrew books. An Abyssinian elder told the traveller Gobat²⁸³ that the Falashahs did have books in Hebrew until they were stolen by the Mohammedans. This seems to be an untruth, since none of the many other travellers to Abyssinia ever reported seeing such books in Hebrew. But in earlier times they knew Hebrew and had Hebrew books according to the statement made by the Falashahs to Berosus²⁸⁴. Ludolf²⁸⁵ also wrote that the Falashahs had the Pentateuch in Hebrew and that they spoke a language similar to that of the Talmud.²⁸⁶ The lunar months still have Aramaic names. Even after the Septuagint was translated into Geez there must have been men in Abyssinia who knew Hebrew, since according to Dillmann, in later times many emendations were made in the translation on the basis of a Hebrew original.²⁸⁷ But in spite of this difference of opinion in regard to their language one can say with assurance that

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the Talmud is not and was not known to the Falashahs.

X. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FALASHAHS.

A. Legends of their Origin.

A discussion of the historicity of the conflicting legends of the origin of the Falashahs is a necessary preliminary to a brief sketch of their history.

Among other things the Falashahs have three different legends of their origin. One of them²⁸⁹ which the Christians relate, regards the falashahs as the descendants of Menelik, son of Solomon by the Queen of Sheba. Menelik for a time was educated by his father at Jerusalem - so the legend runs, but when he became of age the Jews implored the king to send him back to his mother. Solomon finally consented, but only on condition that every Jew should send his first-born son with Menelik to Abyssinia. Thus it came to pass that Menelik was made king of Abyssinia by Solomon, and entered the country attended by 12,000 Jews, one thousand from each tribe, who contracted marriages with the native women. Though this legend cannot be verified it is reasonable to conjecture that a part of the present day falashahs came from or via Egypt to Abyssinia in early times. We know that under king Solomon several attempts were made to develop Israel as a sea-power by means of expeditions to the land of Ophir.²⁹⁰ Probably this period witnessed the establishment of a colony of Jews, even if isolated, along the harbors of the south Red Sea as a merchant people. Throughout antiquity the Jewish colonists had a portion of the commerce

between India and the Mediterranean Sea whose center of gravity lay in the harbors of the Red Sea. We also know that there were Jewish colonies as far as Philae in upper Egypt already in the days of the First Temple.²⁹¹

The second legend merely postpones the date of the coming of the Jews to Abyssinia to the time of the destruction of the First Temple. The third legend relates that the Falashahs were driven into the mountains of Abyssinia at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. The basis for the latter two legends is found in the two dispersions which naturally followed the respective destructions of the Temple. The continually increasing stream of immigrants who came at different period and from different places would explain the heterogeneity of the Jews in Egypt at the time of the erection of the Temple of Onias. They comprised Pharisees, Samaritans and members of the Ten Tribes and of Judah and Benjamin. This naturally produced a motley of doctrines and teachings such as we find in the Book of Jubilees and Enoch, both of which were produced in Egypt. Epstein believes that many of the Falashahs came from these different sects.²⁹²

Additional confirmation of the historicity of these legends is found in the scientific explanations offered by investigators. One of these offered by Louis Marcus²⁹³ was accepted by Metz²⁹⁴ but rejected by Ratjens²⁹⁵. The former endeavored to show from the reports of Philostorgios and Josephus that Alexander in the course of his plan to colonize south Egypt settled a number of Samaritans and Syrian Jews near Abyssinia. This would date the migration of the Jews into Abyssinia at approximately 350 B.C. At least we can be certain, regardless of the

plausibility of the theories of the origin of the *Malashahs*, that part of them came from Egypt.

It is not less logical to conjecture that others came from south Arabia across the Gulf of Aden. In fact all other theories not heretofore mentioned ascribe south Arabia as the original home of the *Malashahs*. One of these advanced by Halevy²⁹⁶ is questionable. He maintains that the *Malashahs* were transported into Abyssinia as captives of war by the Christian king of Abyssinia, Caleb, in his conquering expedition into the Himyaritic kingdom of the Jews in Yemen ruled by their Jewish king, Dhu Nuwas. This took place in the sixth century. The weakness of this theory is revealed in the fact that the *Malashahs* know only the Bible and do not have Hanuccah or Purim nor the custom of *tzitzit* or tefillin or *mazuzot*. All these customs and institutions would certainly have been known to the Jews of Yemen in the sixth century and would have been transported by them to Abyssinia.²⁹⁷ But the germ of truth lies in the fact that at the turn of the Christian era the commercial intercourse between southwest Arabia and northeast Africa probably brought about migrations between the two regions.²⁹⁸ We know that during the fourth and fifth centuries the Himyaritic kings of Yemen adopted Judaism and until the reign of Dhu Nuwas there was a flourishing kingdom in Saba and Hadramaut from which many Jews may have emigrated to Abyssinia.²⁹⁹ So one can surmise that the migration of the Jews along the west coast of the Red Sea followed in a similar manner the settlement of the Jews on the opposite shore in Southwest Arabia.

B. History proper.

The first reliable reports of the Jews in Abyssinia come from the tenth century. Although the reports during the interval are not altogether trustworthy they are very informative. The time when the Jews settled along the west coast of the Red Sea is not known.³⁰⁰ They probably settled there along with the Semitic south Arabians, especially the tribes of Habasat and Agazāan, (singular, Geez) who migrated in the last century before the common era into Eritrea and north Abyssinia³⁰¹ where they founded a small kingdom which later was welded into a state under the sovereignty of Axum. The state religion of the Axumitic kingdom as well as the small semitic kingdom was the same as in south Arabia.

How and when the Jews migrated into the interior is also problematical. It is, however, probable that after the introduction of Christianity into Axum in the fourth century³⁰² they were persecuted and that, while a part of the Jews may have been converted,³⁰³ many fled into the inaccessible stony wastes and mountain land of Semien and Quara.³⁰⁴ Already in the first century A.D. the chronicles of the patriarchs of Alexandria tell of an independent Jewish kingdom which established itself in the mountains in order to resist all attempts of the Abyssinians to subjugate them.³⁰⁵ It said that Gideon and Judāh, their king and queen resided on the inaccessible Amba Ambahay which is known today as the Jewish rock. Their daughter Esther³⁰⁶ married an official of a small province near Lasta which was also a region inhabited by many Jews. It is from the tenth

century that we hear of more than one report³⁰⁷ about a powerful independent Jewish kingdom though some of the details describing the revolution which took place at that time differ. It seems that in the middle of the tenth century the Jews under the leadership of another queen named Judith revolted, conquered, and destroyed Axum.³⁰⁸ Later another Jewish princess by the same name from the province of Lasta and Sague³⁰⁹ drove out the Christian king of the Solomonic dynasty, Delnood, and established a dynasty which lasted from 950 to 1268 when the Christians once more regained their power.³¹⁰ When the Christians were fighting the Mohammedans in 1321 the Jews revolted again, but this time they were forced back into the inaccessible fastnesses of Semien and Quara. Wars broke out at intervals between the Christians and Jews, each endeavoring to completely destroy the other although the Jews were gradually weakening. There was an interlude of peace until the Christian king, Lebna, Dengels, (1508-1540) suffered an invasion of the Mohammedans - the inhabitants of Galla - who drove back the king until all Abyssinia up to the Tigre was in the hands of the Mohammedans.³¹¹ The Jews transferred their allegiance to the Moslems but when the Christians regained power they^{former} became the victims of a bitter war of revenge and were again forced to retreat to their mountain stronghold. The last great battle occurred during the reign of Susenyos (1605-1632) which resulted in almost exterminating the Falashahs. Susenyos was converted from the Coptic belief to Catholicism by one of the many fanatical monks descendants of the inquisitors who in the course of the sixteenth century penetrated into the courts of the Abyssinian kings. Yet the Falashahs have managed in spite of continual persecution and attempts at conversion to remain a small autonomous group up till the present. Today there is no actual Falashah state. They are organized as a

religious community. They live in Quara, a province at the western rim of the Abyssinia highland at the west of Lake Tana in Dembea, in Woggara, Semiem, and Lasta. The chief portion of the land they occupy is a plateau, an island surrounded by the deep-lying wastes and steppes of the Red Sea coastland and the Sudan. It is between two thousand and three thousand meters in height and is a green and fruitful land. Situated in its center is the TanaeSea, 1750 meters high, whose waters have cut deep ~~ravines~~ in the plateau. Some of the mountain regions attain the height of 4,000 meters, especially Amba, an extraordinarily steep cliff. It has extensive summit surface offering not only a place for settlement but fields and meadows, and it is surrounded on all sides by almost inaccessible walls which make of it a natural stronghold. It is this natural fortress which has enabled the Falashahs to survive long sieges.

In their material culture the Falashahs are very much like their neighbors.³¹² In their appearance they are hardly distinguishable from them though travellers recognize them as Jews.³¹³ Yet today ethnologists cannot determine whether the Falashahs are descendants of Jews or of Hamitic converts. Most of the travellers report that they are of semitic type in contrast to the Abyssinians who though also semitic in origin have a strong admixture of Hamitic elements.³¹⁴ On the other hand they are considered Hamitic by most linguists and by theologians.³¹⁵ ³¹⁶ The word "Falashah" means exiles.³¹⁷ They speak an Agau dialect in their homes.³¹⁸ They are called Kaila in the region of Gondar, "Foggara" in the districts of Wolkut and Chelga, and "Fingas" by the Gallas. The word "Aichud" (Jew) is rarely used. There are also some rather wild tribes living near the Falashahs who have been converted to Judaism or who have taken over

some of their customs at one time or another. These include the Agaus, the Kamantans, and the Tabbibons. Their wildness and primitiveness of the Agaus might explain Eldad's report of the warlike nature of the tribes. The Kamantans were probably of Falašic origin but were later converted to Christianity. They know part of the contents of the Pentateuch, they consider Moses their prophet, and strictly observe the Sabbath.³¹⁹

XII. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ON THE FALASHAHS.

A. Benjamin of Tudela.

This brief sketch of the history of the Falashas not only substantiates all the statements previously made concerning the possibility of identifying the Falashahs with the Jews of the Four Tribes but it also makes us realize the value of the reports concerning the Falashahs by Jewish travellers which heretofore have been almost ignored. Notable among these is Benjamin of Tudela. In one section of his travels we read:³²⁰ "From there (the Arabian harbor of Sebid) it is a distance of eight days journey to "India" which lies upon the mainland called the land of B'Aden³²¹. This is ~~Aden~~ which lies in Telassar. The land is mountainous. Many Jews live there but they are subject to no one. They have cities and villages on the summits of mountains which descend into the land of Haamaten³²² called Nubia³²³ which belongs to the domain of the Christians. Heavily laden with booty they return to their homes which are inaccessible to everyone. The Jews from B'Aden are most numerous in Persia and Egypt." Until recently most investigators have identified B'Aden with the city or Aden situated on the south coast of Arabia.³²⁴ But recent geographers have demonstrated that Benjamin referred to the important Abyssinian harbor of Massaua on the west coast of the Red Sea³²⁵ which was called "B'Aden,"³²⁶ and which is a distance of eight days from Sebid. Here we find gold mines³²⁷ which gave Benjamin the opportunity of calling it "Eden in Telassar".³²⁸

Benjamin's description of the Jews from B'Aden whom he met in Persia and Egypt is important. He noticed especially the dark

complection of the "Indian" Jews in Kulam (Quilon). Since he is generally exact one must suppose that the Falashahs were scarcely distinguishable from the Arabic and Persian Jews. Probably in 1170 there had been little intermarriage between the Falashahs and the native Abyssinians.

He is also well informed about the geographical particulars of Abyssinia. One statement of his when properly understood sheds further light upon our problem. He says: "To Assuan there is a stretch of land twenty days distant. The road leads through the desert of Seba along the stream Pishon whose source is in the land of Kush, ruled by a king called Sultan of Habasch." Adler thought that "Seba" is the Sheba which is often mentioned in the Bible along with Egypt, Kush, and Havila.³²⁹ But Borchardt believes that it merely signifies "the river" which the road through the province of B'Aden partly follows.³³⁰ Thus the description of the old caravan route Massua to Kassalu is then perfectly clear.

B. Gerson b. Eliezer.

Equally interesting and valuable is the record made by Gerson b. Eliezer of his journey to Abyssinia in the early part of the 17th century.³³¹ His remarks are embodied in his *Sefer Gelilot Yisroel*.³³² In 1630 Eliezer was in Alexandria. There he heard that several thousand Jews had attacked the "land of the white walls, the land of Prester John, and had crossed over the boundary river Sambatyon." This report impelled him to go to Saloniki where he encountered a caravan laden with iron for Abyssinia. He followed the caravan route from Sana to Aden. From there he proceeded directly to Zeilah the "harbor of white walls", to the kingdom of Adel. Two days distance

from the boundary city whose name he does not know lies the Sambatyon and the land of the Jews. He describes a volcanic mountain and of the hot vapors which rise from the river. In the vicinity he noticed a great forest of olive trees and also he noted the abundance of sulphur.³³³ He describes the material culture of the Jews³³⁴, their weapons of war, their fiery horses fed with wine and meat, and mentions that they have twenty-four kings.³³⁵ He also mentioned that in 1628 eight imprisoned Jews fled to the king of the Palashahs who forced them to prove their nationality by asking them to read Hebrew books. This confirms the conjecture previously made that Hebrew books existed among the Palashahs until the invasion of the Gallas.³³⁶

XIII. ELDAD AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

A discussion of Eldad and his contemporaries will conclude this study, but it will also include all the significant references to him and his work made by those who lived after him as an additional means of shedding new light on the authenticity and historicity of his writings. First it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the social and psychological background of Eldad's contemporaries in order to explain the various attitudes which were taken by those who knew of him and his writings.

The period in which Eldad appeared was rife with sects differing from each other only in minor details but united in their opposition to tradition and the Talmud. Thus we can easily understand the great interest aroused by the appearance of a man like Eldad claiming to have come from a land inhabited by a people who left Israel before the Exile - a people who therefore knew nothing of the life and history of the Jews in later times. His statements would certainly be listened to with great eagerness by both the Karaites and Rabbinites each of whom would seek confirmation of the truth of their particular doctrine. But that his writings are neither Karaite or non-Karaite has been definitely proved. Whether he was activated by polemical and apologetic interests one cannot definitely ascertain. If we find evidence of this in his writings they merely indicate that Eldad was a "child of his age." But there was an even greater unfulfilled desire which his work would satisfy. Ever since the destruction of the Second Temple the Jews had been subject to the taunts of the Christian priests that they were a 'testes veritatis' - that a people and a religion without a country, a king, a court, sovereignty, and subjects, was false, and that this lack

of an independent Jewish state was nothing but proof of their utter unworthiness and degradation. So that Eldad's tale of the existence of ~~the~~ Tribes and the Bnai Moshe would naturally be more than welcomed by a people who had hardly learned to distinguish fact from fancy. Besides, the people had always cherished the belief that the Ten Tribes had never completely disappeared.³³⁷ And they had also probably heard of the existence of an independent Jewish community in the land of the Chazars. Not only this, but his travels would appeal to those who loved a story for its own sake. It would help satisfy the deeply rooted desire of man to see the world and its inhabitants. Eldad in other words, was a good story-teller. He knew how to adorn sober facts so as to capture the heart and stir the imagination.

yet we know that all he said was not accepted *prima facie*. The people of Kairowan at first doubted him and subjected him to a rigid examination.³³⁸ Then they sent a question to Zemach who put their minds at rest by explaining all the obscurities and reconciling all the inconsistencies which the people of Kairowan must have noted.³³⁹ In brief his reply stated that he had heard indirectly from Isaac b. Mar and Rabbi Sim~~eh~~ah that they saw Eldad and that they marvelled at his words which in part agreed with tradition and in part did not agree. Zemach says, however, that tradition agrees with Eldad in respect to the departure of Dan from Israel³⁴⁰ and also in regard to the four kinds of capital punishment.³⁴¹ He goes on to say that Eldad's story of the Bnai Moshe and the Sambatyon is also confirmed in a Midrash which tells the identical tale.³⁴² The Gaon then proceeds to smooth over the contradictions the people of Kairowan noticed between the ritual of Eldad and their own ritual laws by remarking that although

the Babylonian and Palestinian sages used the one and same Mishna they disagree in the exegesis of that Mishna in their respective Talmuds ^{as} ~~that~~/there are individuals who differ in their interpretation of the Bible.³⁴³ He even defends Eldad personally when he says that it is probable that any errors or changes made by Eldad in his statements were due to the hardships of his journey which taxed not only the body but the mind of a man.³⁴⁴ He continued thus: "You do not find one change either trivial or important except in the Talmud ^{which} because the Babylonians read it in Aramaic and the Palestinians ⁱⁿ speak the language of the Targum³⁴⁵. But the wise men who were exiled to Ethiopia interpreted their 'Talmud' in Holy script which is the only language they understood. Their Talmud does not contain any names of the sages simply because all the Mishna which the Israelites expounded in the Temple was done so anonymously!" "But the Torah" he says, "is one whether in the Mishna or Talmud and everyone drinks from one well. For it is not right to interpret everything (according to Scripture {Proverbs XXV:2})."³⁴⁶ The Gaon concluded his responsum with a typical exhortation to study the Talmud diligently since even the Danites pray first for the sages of Babylon before they pray for the rest of their brethren.³⁴⁷

Thus the reply of Zemach was a thorough endorsement of Eldad and probably helped to create that prestige which made him an authority in the Middle Ages. Eldad himself was quoted or cited as an authority. His contemporary, Kuraish, said that he learned one of the meanings of the root ~~ק~~ from Eldad. At least Ibn Janah quotes this statement of Kuraish to explain the meaning of this word in Proverbs V:19.³⁴⁸

Likewise R. Moses Ha-Darshon seems to have considered Eldad as authoritative as Scripture in ^{his} explanation of the meaning of the same word ³⁴⁹ Dunash ibn Tamim, who lived in the middle of the tenth century, said that he learned some of the principles of philology from "the Danites". ³⁵⁰ The Karaite, David ben Abraham, in his "Agron", seems to have referred to Eldad as the authority for the meaning of the word ³⁵³ in Lamentations IV:8. ³⁵⁴ Even R. Tanchum Yerushalmi who lived as late as the second half of the 13th century in Asia, referred his explanation of the same passage in Lamentations to its usage by a "Hebrew, living in the desert, known as the Danite, because of his relation to the tribe of Dan." ³⁵² Others who also referred indirectly to the language of Eldad were Samuel ibn Gama ³⁵³ and Hisdai ibn Shaprut who ^{said that Eldad} spoke a lucid Hebrew and ^{that} "to him nothing was obscure." ³⁵⁴

But Eldad was also regarded as even more authoritative in the realm of Halachah. ³⁵⁵ R. Hannanel b. Hushiel of Kairowan, who lived in the 11th century, copied the laws of Eldad which Samuel Gama who lived a century later utilized for his citations from Eldad's Ritual. ³⁵⁶ Rashi followed Eldad in his interpretation of a ritual law in the Talmud. ³⁵⁷ R. Abraham b. David cites some of the laws of Eldad in his Sefer HaEshkol and wrote that "they are found written in ancient laws." ³⁵⁸ Isaac of Vienna mentions Eldad by name. ³⁵⁹ Other important codifiers of the Middle Ages quoted extensively from his Ritual which proves conclusively his great prestige. ³⁶⁰ Yet here and there a dissenting voice was raised. Ibn Ezra remarked in his commentary to Exodus: ³⁶¹ "One cannot rely upon any books not written by well-known traditional authorities - for they will

undoubtedly contain statements contradictory to reason - books like Sefer Yerubbabel and Sefer Eldad HaDani. Meir Baruch of Rottenberg also attempted to disparage Eldad.³⁶²

The Aggadic portion of Eldad's writings met with the same reception. Some of his material was taken over without acknowledgment as was the custom by the compilers of Midrashic lore. Sp Epstein identifies two stories in Ber. Rabbati which he believes owe their peculiar form and content to Eldad.³⁶³ Abraham Maimuni when requested for the rabbinical authorities confirming the legend of the Ten Tribes refers in addition to various Talmudic and Midrashic sources, to material similar to Eldad's.³⁶⁴ Besides the extensive quotations from Eldad's Aggadah in the Eshkol HaCopher of Hadassi and the Shalshet Hakabala of ibn Tachya,³⁶⁵ we find references to the Bnai Moshe in Abraham bar Hiyya.³⁶⁶

Not only among the Jews was the Eldad account widespread but it was equally familiar to the Christians. In the 12th century a forged manuscript addressed either to Kaiser Friedrich or, the pope was circulated under the name of Prester John.³⁶⁷ It seems probable that Eldad's writings which emphasized the power and sovereignty of the Jewish tribe in Abyssinia gave rise to this apocryphal letter.³⁶⁸ The ostensible aim of the forgery was to show that Eldad's account not only exaggerates the facts but was false, that in reality there never existed in Ethiopia an independent Jewish state but that the Jews were actually in the power of a priest-king John. Evidence points to his knowledge of Eldad's account. One paragraph reads:³⁶⁹

"On the other side of the river which casts up stones, dwell the ten tribes of the Jews, who serve and pay us tribute, although they

fabricate for themselves a king." This can refer only to Eldad who reported the facts alluded to. Prester John seems to have also been acquainted with Eldad's description of the Bnai Moshe. The former said that in his land there is no poverty or theft, no slander, no frogs, scorpions, or snakes and that wealth is distributed equally.³⁷¹ These same virtues are attributed by Eldad to the Bnai Moshe. Undoubtedly Prester John depended upon Eldad for these details. But these are only a few of the many parallel passages.³⁷² The differences in presentation are due primarily to the different purposes of Eldad and Prester John. The latter sought to outdo Eldad in his tales of the marvelous.³⁷³ While Eldad devoted most of his writings to a description of the tribes, John placed himself in the foreground. Eldad praised the land of Havila by emphasizing its complete freedom from impure beasts and reptiles while the latter elaborated on the lack of many wild animals. The river which flowed through the kingdom of Prester John is called Ydonas. It arose in Paradise. In the narrative of Eldad the river/which flowed past the Danites is called Pishon, and, as we know, is one of the four rivers which arise in Paradise. Muller feels certain that Ydonas is a transcription or copy of Pishon. Even the most ridiculous passages in Prester John appear to have their basis in Eldad. The statement that land divers pass 3 or 4 months under water in order to fish for precious stones can only be clarified by the time spent by the warriors of the tribe in active service. Each tribe was given 3 months and one recension had 4 months. These 3 or 4 months were taken out of Eldad and transformed in the unskillful manner just mentioned. Thus we see that the circle of the influence of Eldad's writing was very great and

continued so until very recent times.

I conclude this thesis with the hope that one of the most puzzling phenomena in the history of Judaism has become less a mystery to the student of Judaism, and that the Saga of Eldad shall once more take its proper place as an invaluable source of insight into a little known place and a less known people. In brief, proofs from an analysis of the language of Eldad which show him to have been unquestionably in the sphere of Arabic influence added to the evidence from a comparative study of the rites and customs of all the contemporaneous Jewish sects known to mankind establish the fact that much of Eldad's writings are not only authentic, but historically true. And, we have seen that the Ritual of Eldad bears a greater resemblance to the rites of the Falashas in Abyssinia than to the rites of any other group of Jews who existed at that time. We have also demonstrated that, although the story of the Utopian life of the Four Tribes and especially the ideal existence of the Enai Moshe are the product of legend and folk-lore, the many other significant details concerning their life and customs, their independent warlike mode of existence, their religious institutions, their personal and geographical names, are historically true. At least we can be sure that Eldad Ha Dani can no longer be regarded as an apocryphal figure whom legend has invested with a glamor and interest to which he can make no just claim, and that henceforth his true significance shall be acknowledged by all.

NOTES

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NOTES.

1. The recensions which Epstein utilized are found in his book, pp. xlviii-li. Muller's work is devoted exclusively to the recensions and versions of Eldad's narratives. Schloessinger has done the same for the ritual though he also unearthed a few fragments of the narrative which he published in his Appendix.

A key for comparing Epstein and Muller follows:

<u>Epstein</u>					<u>Muller</u>
Story I	(קדוש)	is included in recension	A
Story II	"	"	"	"	B
Story III	"	"	"	"	G
Story IV	"	"	"	"	D
Story V	"	"	"	"	H
Story VI	"			is an extract from Eshkol haCopher of nadassi. Muller did not publish this.	

In general Muller's additional material merely confirms the general opinions of the authenticity of Eldad already held by Epstein. Epstein, himself, commented on Muller's unnecessary rearrangement of the recensions (in R.E.J. XXV, p.35) although he acknowledged the undisputed value of the new material published by Muller.

2. These are Codex Roma Casanatensis H.V. 11 and MS Jellinek which Epstein merely mentioned on p. 50. Muller made them into two additional recensions, calling them respectively, R. and J.
3. St. Petersburg I Coll. Warkowitsch 300 and 273 which he included in his recension D and 3 new Petersburg fragments which he made into a separate recension, calling it R.

In addition to this he published an Elhanan recension based on two Oxford manuscripts. It contains the story of Eldad in slightly changed form and with some unskillful additions. The

nero of this tale, however, is not Eldad, but a rich pious buyer by the name of Alhanan b. Joseph who on one of his commercial trips was cast on the land of Navila and there encountered the tribes concerning which he reports. To recension A, the responsum and inquiry of the people of Kairowan he has added 3 manuscripts: British Museum Add. 27129. God. Oxford Hebr. no. 11; Petersburg II Collection Firkowitsch, 1261. To recension G, Müller has added two Oxford Mss. No. 2399 and Ms. Hebr. no 11.

Schloessinger in App. I adds to the list a recently discovered Genizah fragment T-S. Loon 94, University Library at Cambridge, whose date cannot, he says, be later than the 13th century. It contains a) the end of the epistle (inquiry) to the Gaon; b) a passage from the middle of the Gaon's reply (see Note 7 infra)

4. The Arabic version (Müller, p. 34) consists of 3 pages which A. Harkavy recognized in the second Firkowitsch collection as belonging to the account of Eldad. Müller says it contains readings older than any extant recension.
5. Epstein, p. xlix and R.E.J. xxv, 35
6. According to Epstein (l.c.) these are identified by having at the beginning of the testimonial narrative *וְכֵן הָיָה לְפָנֵינוּ*, and at the end of the narrative *... וְכֵן הָיָה לְפָנֵינוּ*, This conjecture was confirmed by Müller - R.E.J. xxv, 38.
7. This account (Epstein, p. 2-8) is designated by Epstein as Story I. (Müller p. 16-20 published it in four parallel columns). He says concerning it "The original (Mantua 1480?) is no longer extant. My copy was loaned to me by Halberstam. On the first printing and in others (like Beth Hamidrash II, 102 ff) there is found preceding the question to the Gaon an account of the tribes (Beth II, 102-106)

which was added at a later time as a kind of preface to the question and answer. I removed it from there and placed it in another place (found in Epstein p.55 as Story V.). In the midst of this inquiry there is introduced the Ritual of Eldad which I also removed and published at the beginning of the Ritual proper so as to make the narratives and the Ritual distinct units."

Schloessinger says that these fragments are sufficient to prove that the account of Eldad and of his country which the Gaon received from the people of Kairowan was as yet unadorned with many of the most characteristic features of the story which now form part of the inquiry. These fragments also shed light on the fragments found in Codex Offord No.11, which Muller used, and on recension A and the Shalsholet Hakabala which Epstein (p.8) said was corrupt. Schloessinger says ^{that} ~~about~~ the text of Shalsholet ~~that it~~ is more accurate than Cod. Oxf. or Rec. A., and ^{that} in several respects ^{it} is more closely related to the Genizah text than either Oxf. or A. The ^{in the Shalsholet} absence of certain details/cannot be attributed to the intention or carelessness of the copyist. It merely proves that interpolations crept into the text of A. He adds that: "It is highly probable that the source of these editions was the developed Eldad legend but the recensions from which these interpolations were drawn, however, can no longer be discovered."

8. Part of the introduction of this Letter beginning with פ'33, וזו

פ'116, כ"ע, Epstein transfers to Story IV where it logically belongs. The ending of Story IV found there which says וזו פ'116

פ'33, וזו פ'116, is transferred here, since this is in letter form whereas Story IV is not. This is the "Letter" which Maimonides ^{Alfand} ^{Maimonides} ^{Maimonides} probably referred to when he said: פ'116 וזו פ'116 וזו פ'116

2. 9. Printed in Epstein p.42-45; in Muller it is Recension G, p.26. It is not concerned with the account of Eldad proper but is constructed of a selection in the so called Midrash Bereshit Rabbati, published after a manuscript from Prague. Muller confirms Epstein's and Jellinek's opinion that this Midrash was created from an Eldad story and not vice versa as Neubauer maintains. Concerning this problem see Magazin of Berliner, 1888, p.65 ff. This text is also found in Beth V, 15.
10. Beth V, 17; Epstein, pp.47-53. The latter says that the compiler of this story had made use of Story I and II and that he also used $\text{א/ב} \text{א/ב}$ since he mentioned פ' 321 131. Muller (p.28) says none of the recensions has had as great a circulation as this. The language in this recension is very abstruse.
11. Beth II, 102-107. Epstein, pp.55-60. This was transferred as mentioned above by Epstein from its original position preceding the responsum. Schloessinger (p.110 and 124) remarked regarding its original position preceding recension A: "The mere juxtaposition of these texts makes ~~it~~ probable ~~the~~ influence of the one on the other. It is probable that Recension H was at an early date prefixed to the responsum; the fact that it is printed in this way in the Editio Princeps would point to an earlier practice of the time."
12. Epstein, p.63-64. He says in his notes that this story is different from all other accounts, since it tells how Eldad came to Egypt and returned to his native land. It seems that the Karaites possessed one story of Eldad, which never reached us, where ⁱⁿ he relates his adventures in travelling to Egypt. Because he wanted to write a second story of his travels from his land Havila to the Tribes in

*This refers to another
v. person (from Constantinople)
p. 64*

Asia, i.e. to Issachar, he said in his first story that he returned
to his land from Egypt: (from Kush) *pe'n b'nj 133 (k)*

*rather
map to p. 31
16 21
22 11
23 11*

12. 11. 11. 11. Because the first story contained many details which the rabbis did not approve the scribes did not copy it and it was lost in the course of time. In general the story of Judah Hadassi does not contradict our other accounts. (cf. Graetz, V, 290). Epstein says (p. L) that this story was the source of the tradition of the Karaites that the schism of the ^{or}Rabbinites and Karaites dated from the time of Jeroboam (see Pinsker, Appendix to Likkute Kadmoniot, p. 100). Epstein concludes: "probably this story is a forgery by the Karaites."

13. See key in note 1.

14. They are according to Muller: Recensions R, J, and P. Of these R and J are based on the manuscripts which Epstein used but did not publish. Recension P consists of three fragments: the first seems related to Recension G; the second apparently contains another recension of the Letter of the people of Kairowan to R. Zemach which until now was extant in only one edition; the third is a letter of the eminent men of Kairowan to the exiled Jews about Eldad, sometimes in the first person, sometimes in the third person. Muller conjectures that here we have the first voluntary attempt to collect the Eldad recensions since this St. Pet. fragment Cod. Firk. 1261 had been collected from the three different fragments enumerated above. The third, the letter to the Diaspora does not contain any reference to the Bnai Moshe although it seems to have been preserved for is in complete form. Yet Muller hesitates to draw the conclusion from the absence of the episode in these fragments that the account of the Bnai Moshe is a later addition to the Eldad legend.

15. Muller gives a diagram of the relationship of the various recensions, how they were probably derived from one another (p.15).
16. R.E.J. XXV,30
17. The Latin version of Gilbertus Genebrarbus (Paris,1584). Muller, (p.29) using the second edition of this (1609), found upon analysis that it was probably based on a manuscript of Recension D.
18. Dessau, 1700; Jessnitz,1723
19. I,100
20. II, 527
21. This is the order of the narratives as found in the Eldad letter. Most of the other recensions have parts 1 and 2 after 3 and 4 (Muller p.20)
- 21a. The introd. of the Eldad Letter reads thus: וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּהן הָיִינוּ וְכֻנְנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
בְּחַדְתְּךָ בְּמִסְתָּרֶיךָ וְעַתָּה נִגְלוּ לָנוּ מִסְתָּרֶיךָ וְעַתָּה נִגְלוּ לָנוּ מִסְתָּרֶיךָ
22. וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּהן הָיִינוּ וְכֻנְנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
בְּחַדְתְּךָ בְּמִסְתָּרֶיךָ וְעַתָּה נִגְלוּ לָנוּ מִסְתָּרֶיךָ וְעַתָּה נִגְלוּ לָנוּ מִסְתָּרֶיךָ
Recension R has a different beginning. According to it Eldad and the Asharite Jew enter a small boat at night to trade with the merchants on the boat. But when the merchants saw they were Jews they seized them took them with them ,and sold them to a people named Rumrum.
(Muller p.70, col.3) Likewise the Elhanan legend is different there.
23. In Story V the kingdom of Rumrum is mentioned as being situated among the Seven Kingdoms of Ethiopia. Metz has compared Rumrum with the Tribe of Rum in Bogoland (Jüdische Literaturblatt 1877,no.41 and Monats. 1879,p.185). See note 224^{infra} for complete explanation.
24. In recension B and D it is forty years. In H and manuscripts it is "days" instead of "years".
25. In recension H there is given avivid description of their fire-worship. There it is related how the people would assemble at a specially

21a. The introd. of the Eldad Letter reads thus: וּדְבָרֵינוּ לְסֵפֶר לְאֵלֵינוּ
מִבְּרֵי יְהוּכָן בֶּן עֲסָק אֶלְדָּד וְנִבְלִי מִמֵּיזֵב כֵּךְ בִּנְיָאֵן נִינִי יִצְחָאֵל הֵכָּה
מִלְּאֵלְדָּד מִבְּרֵי יְהוּכָן בֶּן עֲסָק אֶלְדָּד וְנִבְלִי מִמֵּיזֵב כֵּךְ בִּנְיָאֵן נִינִי יִצְחָאֵל הֵכָּה
 22. וּבְמִנִּי צִבּוֹר עֲדָהּ דְּעִילָא וְכִךְ נִינִי יִצְחָאֵל מִמֵּיזֵב כֵּךְ בִּנְיָאֵן נִינִי

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23. In Story V the kingdom of Rumrum is mentioned as being situated among the Seven Kingdoms of Ethiopia. Metz has compared Rumrum with the Tribe of Rum in Bogoland (Jüdische Literaturblatt 1877, no. 41 and Monats. 1879, p. 185). See note 224 ^{infra} for complete explanation.

24. In recension B and D it is forty years. In H and manuscripts it is "days" instead of "years".

25. In recension H there is given a vivid description of their fire-worship. There it is related how the people would assemble at a specially

Will
and
all
with

Shinn

- [⊖]
cf. p. 32

Indian Ocean which has a very similar sounding name in Arabic. Muller (p.11) thinks it may refer to the Arabic "As-Sin" which word connotes the most wonderful sea-adventurers. Borchardt remarks that Muller's explanation is incomprehensible and that Eldad's liberators did not sell him at Sin, which is China, but at Sana, the old commercial city in Yemen. Here a Jew from Issachar could easily redeem him since this tribe could well have lived on the Persian Gulf and could have had trading relations with Arabia.

Eldad did not tell from what place the army came, only that they led him to their land and afterwards brought him to Azin and sold him to a Jew from Issachar who went with him by sea until he came to the Tribe of Issachar, that is, until the end of the Persian Gulf¹

27. It reads: וְכֵן הָיָה וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי

Epstein Story II, note 8, says that פִּלְחִי in Arabic means "the coastland" and here it means the mountains along the coastland.

Recension H reads

וְכֵן הָיָה וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי

This probably referred to the hills in Armenia which stretched from the shore of the Persian Sea to the East and North. Strabo, p.727, relates of the Armenians a similar description. Because they have no horses they use asses in war. It is related in the name of Nearchus that their customs and language were those of the Medes and Persians. All this is very similar to what Eldad related about Issachar and Reuben.

28. The text reads:

וְכֵן הָיָה וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיֵּהוּדִי

According to Graetz V, 290, 525, and V, note 19, the word וְכֵן signified the Tartars and the Turks. He says (note 19): "This recalls the report of Benjamin of Tudela who heard of native independent warlike

Jews living in the mountains of Nischabur who in the 12th century made a treaty with the Turks. It reads (ed. Asher, 73 ff.):

י"ח יום עונת ניסבון ויש שם אנשים מישראל באנץ פנס שנים משה
ואומרים כי בעזר ניסבון אנהצו שבתים מישראל ... ואין דעליוס עוד גו"ס
והנה בית למעממני עאנץ כוג צוק נמחברו.

Epstein (Story III, note 4) remarks that this is not probable because in the time of Eldad the Tartars had not reached Persia or Babylon nor were they known there. Thus it is impossible that Eldad would ascribe to the tribes a language not spoken in the place they dwelled. He argues that although it is true that Petachyah of Ratisbon used at the beginning of his 2/20 the word 137 to refer to the Tartars, he was speaking of a land beyond the Dnieper. On the other hand, Pseudo-Jonathan, Gen. XXV:13 and Targum, I Chron. XXXIX, make 137 synonymous with 222. Likewise the payetanim (Zunz, Synagogal Poetry, 445, 447,). The name 137 occurs in many ancient writings of the kings of Assyria in the sense of: "dwellers of Arabia".

29. Variants are פ'ק'ס . According to Epstein this name refers to the hills north of the hills of Carmania. They are in the district called פ'ק'ס א'ח'ר' by the Greeks, Parvata by the Jews, and Parouta by the Persians. The meaning of these names is "hill". In these hills and in the vicinity there were many Jews in the days of Rabbi Benjamin (I, 76, 83; II, 158). Graetz attempts to substitute פ'ק'ס for פ'ק'ס in accordance with his theory that Nischabur is part of East Persia.

30. ~~11~~ $\eta\eta\eta/k$ is the best reading. (Muller p.11).

31. That is Issachar, Zebulun, and Reuben. Issachar and Zebulun dwell by the hills and Reuben behind them on the west side near Arabia.

32. There are variants here in the other versions. The best reading is:
 וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם
 (Muller p.11) וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם וְכִנְיָם

x.

The expression ^{כונן} ^{כונן} ^{כונן}, according to Muller l.c. is a literal translation of an Arabic phrase called ^{אדם שחטף} which signifies "a robber", "a highwayman". Eldad therefore copied this. A similar phrase occurs in his ritual: ^{פסל דל יוסף לא יצא}

This indicates that Eldad used Arabic words since even in the Hebrew root the suffixes are Arabic. Muller remarks that in the Arabic commentary to the Book of Daniel by Yefet b. Ali, the Karaite (ed. and trans. Margulioth 136:21, 144:16) ^{מכאן} is also used for Mecca and ^{בגדאד} for Bagdad. Should this coincidence be merely accidental, or does it indicate that Yefet had already known of Eldad?

33. According to Muller (p.76) the best reading seems to be: ^{מנצחין}
^{בשרם קרב וצחנים מקרא ומעני ומלחמה ואצטו וכף ארז ורזא ע'א'חין}
^{צכא'א אצטין קצא ונעכא'א בשרם קצא}

This passage Graetz also emended in accordance with his theory that the tribes spoke Turkish. He emended it: ^{... ע'א'חין צכא'א וקרבא}
 Although some of the versions read ^{קצא} for ^{קרבא}, or ^{כנס} for ^{קצא}, none of them support Graetz.

34. Most of the recensions have the following: ^{והיה ארץ ויהי ארץ ויהי ארץ}
^{ע'א'חין ויהי ארץ ויהי ארץ ויהי ארץ}

Muller (p.76) says the proper reading should be: ^{מכאן}
 The most similar reading is in Recension G ^{מאק'א} ^{מכאן} and in H: ^{מכאן} ^{מאק'א} ^{מכאן}

35. There are of course variants: ^{כ'צא} and ^{כ'צא'א}, but ^{כ'צא'א} seems to be the original reading according to Muller (p.11 and 70) and according to Epstein.

36. Recension H has ^{מכאן}. Epstein thinks (Story III, note 6) ~~that~~ from this that the Eldad Letter was written from Jerusalem.

37. Only one version G has 28 kingdoms.

nothing to it. Ep.
 Letter of King Joseph of ...

38. The order followed in this account is that found in the Aldad Letter. According to Muller's arrangement of the recension in parallel columns the narrative ends here. In some recensions there follows a paragraph dating the narrative or containing a few typical superfluous poetical phrases as a fitting conclusion which I shall mention later. What follows then, according to the order of all the recensions except B, is found at their beginning. So Muller had arranged it. (p.52) (cf. also note 21 infra).

Most of the recensions have as the opening title: ספר אלהים ניצח
 although J adds: (ויואל מצר מצרן) ה' נחמנו ע'יו ומצרן וימלאים דא אחרב לב' א'עו וי' חונם.

H, however, has a longer superscription: אֲזַכֵּנִי יְיָ בְּכֶדֶד עֲלֵי עֲלֵי בְּמִנְחָה
נִיִּלְאוֹנִי סִפְּנֵי אֶלְדָּבָר וְנִבְּנִי מִצִּפּוֹר יִשָּׁן בְּלֵי שֶׁמֶן וּמִתְקִים וּכְמִצּוֹנִי עֵינֶיךָ מִצִּפּוֹר אֲבִרְנִים
בְּמִנְחָה עֲשֵׂה צִדִּיק וּבְכֶדֶד עֲלֵי עֲלֵי וְאֵלֶּכְךָ סִפְּנֵי יִתְּנִים נִיקְרָמִנִים וּבִיָּנוּחַ עֲשֵׂה צִדִּיק הוּא
תִּלְוִפִי בְּכֶסֶּלֶךְ מִיִּלְאוֹנִי וְנִבְּנִי מִצִּפּוֹר בְּקִרְוֵי לִבִּי וּבְעֵינֶיךָ אֶלְדָּבָר גִּשְׁוִיָּה עֲשֵׂה
צִדִּיק וְעֲשֵׂה צִדִּיק בְּפִיךָ וְטִרְפוֹךָ וְנִבְּנִי מִצִּפּוֹר מִצִּפּוֹר אֲבִרְנִים אֲמַלְכֵה
עֲשֵׂה צִדִּיק בְּעֵינֶיךָ נִיִּלְאוֹנִי וְנִבְּנִי מִצִּפּוֹר

39. All the recensions begin thus except the Eldad Letter which has one sentence preceding this which Muller (p.78), Epstein notwithstanding, believes is a late interpolation. It reads: *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל*

[illegible]

40. This is a paraphrase of the account which varies somewhat in the different recensions. Before going to Egypt they said: "Let us go to Edom, Ammon, and Moab, and occupy their territory" but Scripture forbade them' (Deut. II, 1, 8, 19).

references. So Epstein concludes that whenever ϵ/δ is translated by 1311 it refers to south Egypt; ^{likewise 1311} especially when it is found in Jonathan and Jonathan to the Prophets and the Targum to the Megillot. Thus when Jonathan translates Havila (Gen. 11:11) by 1311 it can easily refer to South Egypt. Not only the targumim but also Virgil (Georgics IV:29) and also the Fathers of the Christian Church, call the Egyptians and southern Arabians by the name of "Indians".

John Jonathan of Ephesus (6th century) said also that the lands in north Ethiopia are called ϵ/δ and those in south Ethiopia 1311 .

The land in Africa is also called Aden (1311) (Benjamin I, 95):

1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311

Recension H has in this place 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 it seems from this that Havila and Adama were identical. Many of the ancient writers thought that Aden was the site of the Garden of Eden and that it was southeast of Kush (Homer, Herodotus, Strabo, Pliny). Obadiah Bertinoro had the same conception (Jahrbuch Gesch. Juden. III, 222). Epstein suggests that it is perhaps the district at the end of Somaliland between the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean opposite Aden and Arabia, surrounded on the East, North, and South, by seas with its west side open to Galla-land. In this Garden of Eden the Bnai Moshe dwelled, according to Eldad, where he says: 1311 1311 1311 1311 1311 which means that they were surrounded on three sides by the sea and on the fourth, the west, by the river Sambatyon which cut them off from the rest of mankind. Just as Havila and Sheba were both in Asia (Arabia) and Africa so was Aden, because the people who dwelled south of the Red Sea came from both

sides, mingled with each other and called the name of the place to which they came by the name of the place from which they came. (Epstein p.33 ff.) More of this problem of identification will be discussed below (notes 321 and 326 infra)

44. This whole passage is badly corrupted. It reads: כְּנָנִי וְהַקְנִי
וְהַקְנִי בְּמַלְכּוֹת בְּנִי בְּמַלְכּוֹת בְּנִי בְּמַלְכּוֹת

Epstein thinks that since there is no mention of וְהַקְנִי and בְּנִי in Recension A and G and in other manuscripts it is a later addition. He explains that because it said that Havila is a land of gold, the scribe added: "And they are in בְּנִי" because in II Chron. III:6, it says: וְהַקְנִי בְּנִי. וְהַקְנִי is derived from "וְהַקְנִי" in the Letter of Prester John. Epstein quotes this statement which he found

in the Responsa of the Gaonim, ed. Harkavy, Chapter 316 // Recension וְהַקְנִי בְּנִי R and H have at this point an interpolation which Muller used to show the relationship of the various recensions. It reads: וְהַקְנִי בְּנִי

45. The seven names have many variants. Epstein (p.38) believes that there were originally two different readings from which are derived the present variations. Muller (p.11) says that on the whole the clue to their identification can only be found in the kingdom of Abyssinia, though He is uncertain. Epstein Cited resemblances which he found in Adel and Axum cited by Dillmann in Über Die Anfanges des Axumitischen Reiches. Also in the names mentioned in the Chronicles of the Kings of Bornu (Z.D.M.G. VI, 311, 314, 316; IX, 523, 527, 548, 549)

All the manuscripts have in common at least five of the seven names:

וְהַקְנִי - בְּנִי - וְהַקְנִי - וְהַקְנִי - וְהַקְנִי
וְהַקְנִי - בְּנִי - וְהַקְנִי - וְהַקְנִי - וְהַקְנִי

One recension A² mentions only five Abyssinian kings, therefore, according to Muller, it is probably that this explains ^{the} identity of

Jonathan of Ephesus mentions three kings in 103 and 4 in Kush, making a total of seven. (R.E.J. XVII, 166) (cf. Gen.X:6).

- ויום מחרת עניני כו"ס עק"מ גבולות צפוניו מחרת עניני כו"ס

(Zeph. III:9).

47. Many variants occur here. Muller believes they read back to an original reading of '2' or '3' which could easily be interchanged and from which could be derived either 4 days or two hundred days.

48. There are naturally variants for these names, but the variants are not always corruptions. At least according to Epstein (p.12) they have a biblical significance. It seems that Eldad used these names

for the purpose of describing thereby the character of the possessor of the names. The king is called $\oint K'3\gamma$ because of "plunder" and

8/13/18 because of "strength"; the judge is called /1322 and

another recension adds *refc GARN FERN 12* because among the judges of the twelve tribes there was a judge whose name was Avdon ~~who was among the judges of the twelve tribes~~. Avdon and Misnael are

the names of two cities in the Tribe of Asher (Joshua XXI:30). The prince (*ל'ק'י*) is called Elizaphan from the *ל'ק'י* of the Tribe of Dan (Ex. XXXI:6). Perhaps this is why Eldad's friend is called an Asherite because he was fat and healthy (Gen.XLIX:20) Yet there is a flaw in this theory because, as Epstein rightly says, according to this theory he should have called the judge Samson and the Nasi *ל'ק'י*.

49. Epstein (p. 11) thinks that the description of these sages:

וַיְהִי וַיִּמְלֹךְ דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בְּכָל הַיָּמִים
 אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מִלְחָמָה וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בְּכָל הַיָּמִים

indicates that these Four Tribes had a special class serving the Lord who never went forth to battle, but received a share of the spoils before anyone else.

50. The remainder of this up to the account of the Bnai Moshe is found only in recension A. All other recensions at this point enter directly into a description of the Bnai Moshe.
51. All other versions ascribe the Talmud in pure Hebrew to the Bnai Moshe. Epstein says (p. lxix), this was due to the changes made by the copyist, and that the fact as given here is correct since the oldest writers when citing the laws of Eldad called them "The Talmud of the Tribes" (Epstein p. 99) or "Talmud Eretz Yisroel", and not "Talmud Bnai Moshe" (Schloessinger p. 10, note 30).

The text as it has come down to us reads (from Recension A)

וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בְּכָל הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מִלְחָמָה וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בְּכָל הַיָּמִים
 אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מִלְחָמָה וַיִּשְׁמַע דָּוִד בְּכָל הַיָּמִים

(Schloessinger (p. 3, note 13) remarks: "Too much importance is not to be attributed to the word אֲשֶׁר in this context. It seems that "The Ritual on slaughtering" constituted the entire "Talmud of the four Tribes". The citations in the Kairowan responsum are taken from this Ritual exclusively." He believes that this ^{word} is a scribal interpolation made by someone who thought that this Talmud dealt with other matters beside the ritual. If it was present at all in the original it probably read אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמַר (so Jellinek Beth II, 108 and Weiss, Dor IV, p. 112, line 2). *It is not necessary at all.*

52. This phrase is characteristic of Eldad. It is the introductory formula of the halachic material. It is used by Epstein as a

means of identifying the anonymous excerpts in rabbinical writings which are Eldad's. This phrase usually reads:

וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד וְלִפְנֵי הָעָם וְלִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים

53. In the inquiry to Zemach at this point the Ritual law is given as the people of Kairowan heard it from Eldad. A summary of its contents will be given later in a separate section.
54. In the majority of the recensions the narratives enter abruptly into a description of the Bnai Moshe, their life, and land, their laws, and the River Sambatyon which surround them. For instance, the text of recension B reads:

וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד וְלִפְנֵי הָעָם וְלִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד וְלִפְנֵי הָעָם וְלִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד וְלִפְנֵי הָעָם וְלִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים

Schloessinger (p.119) explains וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד -- the origin is perhaps to be sought in an attempt to give ^{the} etymology of Sambatyon. There directly follows in the text a description of their houses. But in the inquiry to Zemach and in recension G, which is based on an old Midrash on Gen. XXX:24 וְהָיוּ לְעֵדָד, there is found an account of the origin of the Bnai Moshe the source of which is found in Psalm 137. (cf. note 9 ~~infra~~ supra). I have given a paraphrase of it in the following sentences of the text.

54 n Schloessinger (p.109 ff) says that his genizah T.S. 94 warrants the doubt that Eldad made any specific mention of the Bnai Moshe. Its version makes it probable that in Eldad's story as well as in the early midrashim it had been the Levites and not the Bnai Moshe who refused to sing the songs of Zion. This genizah fragment differs in other respects. ~~xxxxxx~~ Here the Levites do not carry out the act of self-mutilation upon which they have resolved. The divinely sent cloud does not bear them through the air together with their

wives, children and belongings on their journey to ancient Havila. It merely conceals them from their persecutors in their flight thither. Another feature which is absent from the genizah version is the statement that the country inhabited by the Bnai Moshe is free from unclean beasts and reptiles.

55. This aggadah is found in Pesikta Rabbati ed. Friedmann, p.144
56. This also has variants.
57. Epstein also uses this fact as a means of identification of the actual locality of the Bnai Moshe. (see note 43 supra.)
58. The legend of the Sambatyon is well known in rabbinic literature. See J.E. article "Sambatyon". The legend itself changed during the course of time. Epstein cites from this literature many examples (p.14 ff.) Among the many versions of the Alexander legends there is one which relates that Alexander came in the course of his travels to the south of Egypt to a river rolling sand three days and water three days (Zacher, Pseudo-Callisthenes, 135). This refers to the Sambatyon, only the writer, a non-Jew, did not want to write that the river stopped on a Sabbath so he substituted this version. The Arabian, ibn Faquih, in his commentary, said that this river of Alexander is the Sambatyon (Epstein after Noldeke, Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexander-Romans). In the writings of Prester John he speaks of a river of sand and stones, without water. He calls it (mare harenosum - literally, "sea of sand" (Kovetz al Yad IV, 14). (see J.E. article Sambatyon for translation of Prester John's description of Sambatyon). From this we have in Hebrew *יָם חֵרֶם* P'. It is possible that from this came the phrase *יָם חֵרֶם* in the Eldad account. (cf. note 44 supra)

In recension J it says

ישו סגהטין וברג וימלד וימלד
קורין אורג סגהטין

This is interesting since we know that the Falashahs say "Sanbat" for the Sabbath (Ludolf, Commentarius, no 68). Schloessinger comments on this in a different manner (p.121-122). Epstein also concludes that the Sambatyon was in the southern part of Ethiopia. This is, he says, confirmed also in the Alexander legend, since the latter found the river south of Egypt (Zacher, 135,137). The fact that Alexander went south is also related by the Persians, (Epstein after Spiegel Alexander-Saga der Perser, 27), as well as by the Talmudic sages who said he went to Africa (Tamid 33) or to k^3p k^3n (Y. Baba M. 53).

Schloessinger (p.103,122) shows that his fragment which he considers more authentic than recension A does not contain many of the marvelous details of the Sambatyon story. Instead of a river without a drop of water constantly rolling down a flood of rocks and sand, it tells of a stream the flow of which is swift enough to bring down sand and rocks. Whether in the original description given by Eldad this river stops flowing on the Sabbath cannot be answered with certainty from an examination of the text. If so, this is surprising, since this detail is as old as the legend itself.

59. This sentence is found only in the Eldad Letter.

60. The word *Principe* (principe) seems to be an addition made by a scribe

who read the Hebrew translation of Prester John. It reads:

(Kovetz IV, 15)

In the same letter it also reads:

בייטן זיין פאכט
ווייזט זיין פאכט
ווייזט זיין פאכט
ווייזט זיין פאכט

וצדו כי מלו נים של אבנים
 הוא גני אחד שיוצא מן ערב ויוצא
 (יחצול צבא של נים יו צו ניו)
 (אם אלו נן מתחיל)

According to this the Sambatyon does not flow between the four Tribes and the Bnai Moshe, but only between the Tribes and the land of the Princeps. Therefore the scribe added the above words.

61. This pigeon-post is found only in Recension B. The fact of letters being carried by pigeons is well known to antiquity and later times. (cf. Bochart, Hierozyicon, II,2 and Russ, Die Brieftaube and also ibn Ezra to Psalm 55:7 and Kimchi to Gen. VIII:7) It is probable that Eldad knew of carrier pigeons and ascribed them to the Bnai Moashe as he ascribed to them material and spiritual perfection. (Epstein p.40)
62. The word "גזש" is Italian from "liefante" and was probably added here by some Italian scribe in place of "ג'ז". In the letter of Prester John (Kovebz IV,16) he mentions "wooden-towers on 150 elephants". Also in the legends of Alexander towers on elephants are mentioned. (Zachar, 144). Also Petahyah (ed. Prague 1b) says that cities with 12 norsemen are built on elephants. In Pesikta Rabbati par. Matan Torah, the same idea is mentioned. Similarly we find a story of a king of Axum in Abyssinnia in 572 who sat during a festivity on a chariot of gold borne by four elephants.
63. This statement is found nowhere in rabbinic tradition. A statement resembling it is found in Sabbat 32b: פ'אן פ'א פ'א פ'א
פ'א פ'א פ'א פ'א
פ'א פ'א פ'א פ'א
פ'א פ'א פ'א פ'א
64. Epstein (p.15) says that the writings of Judaism make no direct reference to the life of the Bnai Moshe and their customs. He traces, however, some indirect references in Yerushalmi, Sanh. 10, Schoh Rabbati II and Pesikta Rabbati 31 which are made to the exiles

*inside the territory
surrounded by*

xxi.

from the river Sambatyon but they do not mention the Bnai Moshe.

There is also according to Epstein reference to the Bnai Moshe in Pseudo Jonathan to Ex. XXXIV, 10:

בני מנח ישרון אברהם בן יצחק

And also by Abraham bar Hiyya in his Megillat haMegillon, p.64.72.

According to Neubauer, J.Q.R. I, 95 ff. the date when the Bnai Moshe are first mentioned is not later than the middle of the 1st century.

Schloessinger (p.109) calls attention to a fragment published by A. Harkavy -(HaGat, Peters. 1897, p.65) which relates the travels of Jacob HaNasi a magician who lived in Susa between 1240-1276.

He asserted that he visited the Bnai Moshe in the land of Kush.

Harkavy calls this fragment

ספר נסיון הנשיא יעקב הנשיא
היה בלדי בני משה

Schl. also says that in Siddur Ashk. ed. Venice 1645 a

is printed with the following heading:

היה נשיא בני משה

היה נשיא בני משה

היה נשיא בני משה

Borchardt cites a source book for the legend of the Sambatyon in

Lewin - "Wo waren die zehn Stamme Israels zu suchen", Frankfort, 1901.

Although ^{they} seem to have been little known among Jewish writers, especially as described by Eldad, according to the narratives of the Arabians, it seemed that the Jews did possess a legend similar to Eldad's.

In the Koran, Sura VII:159 it reads: "And of the people of Moses there is a tribe that directs others to welcome the way of truth and itself walks in the path of righteousness." (Geiger, "Was hat Mohammed-

p.168). The commentator on the above passage introduces there the legends of the Bnai Moshe. Kozvani (2113k) (mentioned by Bacher,

Aggadah der Tannaiten I) sites in the name of ibn Abbas (6th-7th century) the story that the Jews said that in the city of Gabers at the eastern end and in Gabalk, at the western end, dwelled the Bnai

Moshe who fled there in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. No one could gain access to ~~him~~ and none knew their numbers. Ibn Abbas adds that: "One time Mohammed said to Gabriel: 'I long to see the tribe concerning which God said: " *וְאֵלֶּיךָ יָשׁוּבִים* "....' and Gabriel answered that the distance is six years journey and that they are separated by a swiftly flowing river of sand which ceases flowing only on the Sabbath." Nevertheless Mohammed was permitted to come there and this is what Mohammed said about them: "Their dead are buried by the doors of their houses in order to remind them of the day of death in their going forth and coming in morning and evening. All their houses are alike so that one man cannot exalt himself above his neighbor and that the fresh air may not be cut off from a lower house. They have no ruler or judge because all their deeds are righteous, and they give in good-will what they are obliged to give. They sow and reap according to the common need and each one takes what he needs. When one of them dies they rejoice in the knowledge that he died steadfast in his faith in God. They are sad when a son is born to them, saying they do not know if he will live in faithfulness. They have no usury, profit, or prostitution. They have no sick people among them since sickness befalls only one who has sinned." Epstein says: "Up to this point the narrative of Ibn Abbas is germane to the subject. Ibn Abbas was a nephew of Mohammed and rendered the Koran according to the many legends of the Jews which he learned from his teacher, Kab al Ahbar, that is, Kab, the teacher because he was well-versed in the narratives of the Bible and the legends of the Jews and therefore he is called *קַבְלָה* (Sprenger, Mohammed, III, cix). There is no doubt that Ibn Abbas heard the story of the Bnai Moshe from his teacher, Kab. This legend

attributes to the Bnai Moshe all the possible ideal qualities in the society of mankind."

The story of the Bnai Moshe are also similar in many respects to those related about the Essenes and Therapeutae (Reifmann, HaCarmel, VIII, and Magid, II:15 ff.)

65. See note 12, ed. p. 60, 61

It begins abruptly. Thus:

זכור כי פתחתי לך סודות מאד
אשר נספדו עליך ונחשבו בלתי
אפשרים ועתה נחשבו עליך
ועתה נחשבו עליך ועתה נחשבו
עליך ועתה נחשבו עליך

66. Epstein (p.65) is uncertain whether the legend of the war of the pygmies with the birds was known to Hadassi through the story of Eldad or through the story of the warrior of the sons of Koshtandinn. This war is also mentioned in the letter of Prester John (IV, 12 Kovetz). The letter says this occurred in the land of פיקוניה which probably means the same as pygmies. And in the story of Alexander in

Yossippon ben Gurion (ch.12) it says:

ויאמר לו
פיקוניה ויהי
בפיקוניה ויהי
בפיקוניה ויהי

The ancient Greeks had already related the legend of the battle of the pygmies in Ethiopia and India with the

Pliny H.N. 7,2

(Strabo 70% Strabo (p.821) says the Ethiopians are small in

stature and this accounts for the story of the pygmies.

It is probable that from פיקוניה is derived פיקוניה. Vide Levy in Kovetz 76 and 42, note 5. See also about pygmies in Africa today: Stanley, In Darkest Africa II, 9.

The extract from ^{Prester} John reads:

יש אצל אחי עקובין אלוה פיקוניה
ואשר נחשבו עליך ונחשבו בלתי
אפשרים ועתה נחשבו עליך
ועתה נחשבו עליך ועתה נחשבו
עליך ועתה נחשבו עליך

no. 6 protein does not

quote the further

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xxiv
page from Gospel


וְאִם אֵתָּה גִּבּוֹר וְנוֹחַ קְוֵי וְיִבְנוּ מִבְּנֵי קוֹסְלֵינָא (יִשְׂרָאֵל) סִינַי בְּיָמֶיךָ אֶלְדָּר

6'7.

68. There is a gap here just as translated.

69. The only other reference we have to the lunar reckoning is found in R:
(Epstein, p. 53) וְעַתָּה נִצְטַק בְּפִי אֶת הַלְוִי וְאֶת הַיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת הַכֹּהֲנִים

70. See note 7 *supra*

71. Schl. (p.6 and 17 ff) comes to ~~this~~ conclusions regarding the textual correctness of the Responsum (called Recension B) on the basis of comparison of the Mantua 1480 print with the recension of the Responsum preserved in the  (which was neglected by Epstein, p.8) and with the other Recension A of the Ritual itself. (Schl.p.106-109) The text of this Ritual found in the Responsum is found in Schl. p.91-103 and Epstein 83-87.

72. Schl. p.22 bottom.

73. Schl. p.19. He says: "Frequently the less familiar words, phrases, and constructions of the original have been replaced by the more usual terminology of Talmudic-Rabbinic literature, e.g. *וְנִסְתַּחֲפֵי* for *וְנִסְתַּחֲפֵי* for *וְנִסְתַּחֲפֵי*, etc.

74. Schl. (p.19) gives some examples. Where the original text found
in Recension A reads ^{וְהָיָה}
^{לֵב} "If the milt is perforated
in its thickest portion, it is pure", it was changed in the responsum to
^{וְהָיָה לֵב} ^{וְהָיָה לֵב} ^{וְהָיָה לֵב} in order to correspond with Hull. 55b (text
in Schl.p.97). He also remarks (p.98) that in Recension A "the strange
but thoroughly Eldadic proposition is set forth that broken ribs
do not render the animal unfit for food, if the numbers remaining
unbroken are equal on both sides is contradicted in the Responsum
which says: ^{וְהָיָה לֵב} ^{וְהָיָה לֵב} ^{וְהָיָה לֵב} which agrees with Hull.

52b and the codes."

75. Schl. (p.20). "At least in six instances passages are taken verbatim from Tur, Yoreh De'ah. It is of course, evident that these interpolations were taken from Tur and not, as Reifmann thought, that the Tur took these passages from the Responsum." For the details of this see Schl.1.c.
76. Schl. p.21
77. Published as one composite text - Recension "A" Schl. 56-87, separately by Epstein according to the different manuscripts.
- Thus Hal I (83-87) is equivalent to Recension B of Schl.
 Hal II (99-104) " " " " " " " " " " " "
 Hal III (111-121) " " " " " " " " " " " "
 Hal IV (132-134) " " " " " " " " " " " "
78. MS. Bodl. No. 793 (descrip. by Schl. p.10,11,14). Ibn Gama lived in North Africa in the 12th century. One of his chief sources was Hananel ben Hushiel of Kairowan who lived a century earlier. The citations from Eldad were either taken directly from a copy of the Eldad Ritual made by Hananel (according to Steinschn. JZ I,240,311) or from quotations in Hananel's works, perhaps from his commentary on Hullin. It was published inaccurately and incompletely in the *Sefer ha'Yotzer* ed. Goldberg and Barges, p.xix, ff. also in Filipowski *Shema* p.207 ff. Better edition in Epstein pp. 99-104. It includes (acc. to Schl.) the subdivisions:
- a). I *Shema* in entirety.
 - b). II *Shema* only in part - rules regarding examination of lungs and kidneys.
 - c). IV *Shema* only in part - " "
- slaughtering of hayyoh and off.
79. It is the longest continuous fragment known. (Schl.p.11). It includes:
- a). I *Shema* in entirety.
 - b). III *Shema* almost complete.

80. T-S Loan 110, University Library of Cambridge (Schl.p.12,15). It is older than MSS. P and O, dating from the 11th century. It includes:
- II, in part.
 - IV,, almost complete.
81. MS. Oxford. Neubauer 678 (Schl. 13 and 16) It includes III and IV of the Ritual.
82. Probably Baruch ben Samuel of Mayence (1221) in his non-extant *ḥanukhah* 100 . Schl. (p.13) did not publish it. It is, however, found in Epstein (p.137).
83. There seems to be no reason for supposing that Eldad wrote any more than this. In fact Schl. thinks that Eldad wrote only Halachah (p.8 and 4,note 18a). Likewise the older rabbinic authorities never mention any work of Eldad other than this Ritual. ^{Maimuni} Kovetz IV,62, refers to it as *ḥanukhah*. Epstein once thought that Eldad had written a treatise on loans (Magazin Berliner 1888,p.82) because of a passage in Midrash Bereshit Rabbati which opened with the familiar Eldadic formula *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל* but he later abandoned this view. (Schl.p.5)
84. Schl. p.12,note 45
85. Schl. p. 9,10, note 30 A title derived from the opening words: *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל*
86. This was probably derived from a misunderstood abbreviation of the correct title *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל* (Graetz V, 452) and (Reichmann, HaCarmel III,280). Epstein (138,note 1) conjectured that it might even prove that the laws came from the land of the lost tribes and was therefore not an intentional error. Examples of this are to be found: (Epstein p.137) *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל* and in the remark of Maimonides in the beginning of Hilcot Shechitah: *וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת הַלֵּל*

- 87.

88.

Epstein p.5:6 (same document) reads:

The letter of Hisdai ibn Shaprut (Ep.p.70) reads:

Schl. thinks it possible that the formula also contained $\sqrt{2}/2$ after

Ep.(p.88) presents the traditional basis for the ascription of

such legislative powers to Joshua. In Josh. XI:15 we find that

Also in Men. 99b which explains the Biblical verses in Ex.XXXIII:11

and Joshua 1:8 by the fact that God saw how much Joshua loved the

Torch was also the same idea. Many institutions are ascribed to

62b 62b (Ber.48b) (Erubin 17a). Except Moses,

...in a hyperbolic fashion: (Shabb. 104a):

... 18'2k3 18'N 17Nk1 /k23N 2N 17373 /k31/k1 12k
 . . . 11'1112 . 1N1k k2 /N /2 22111 1'N2
 "The time arrived when little schoolchildren spoke words the like

of which were not spoken even in the days of Joshua ben Nun."

The Samaritans also held Joshua in great esteem, though they did not accept all the Prophets who succeeded him. Joshua was really the first teacher of the oral law and therefore Eldad ascribed to him and his pupil Othniel ben Kenaz the laws of the tribes. No one other than Eldad (with the exceptions of those who ascribed the institutions mentioned above) ascribed Halachot to Joshua. This is why Epstein feels that such a formula, wherever found, indicates originally an Eldadian authorship.

According to Epstein,^(p. 88) a Jew, Abdallah ibn Saba, living among the Mohammedans, ascribed the same powers to Joshua as was commonly ascribed to Ali at that time.

89. Although these captions are more or less arbitrary, their choice has a logical and even linguistic basis. For instance, I is justified by the words introducing this part in the Responsum:
 17'1N1k 17'1k 17'1k 17'1k The others are derived in a similar manner, either from the introductory words or from the subject matter (vide Schl. p.25).
90. p. 26 ff.
91. These five rules were universally observed at that time and in fact are still observed by the Orthodox Jew of today. See J.E. article, "Shechita".
92. Epstein cites here as he does throughout the Ritual parallels found in the Talmud Yerushalmi, Halakot Gedolot, and Halakot

Pesukot, as does Schl. (see note 114 infra). At this point only a few pertinent identifications will be made. More of the resemblances to the above works found in the Ritual will be discussed in another section (note 114 infra). For instance the introductory statement that a slaughterer who is ignorant of the laws of Shechita is forbidden to eat the slaughtered animal is found in Hull. 9a (Ep.p89), also the law of ~~Shehia~~ Shehia is similar to Hull. 32a. The law of Shehia (pause during act of cutting) is used by Epstein to prove some significant hypotheses, therefore it is necessary to describe it in more detail than some of the other laws. Recension

A reads (Schl. p.58):
 קנינו מן ה' . וגדל נשחט עטמו ויהימי
 ואנסיו אנסו לו נשחט ונאכלתו מ' לו נשחט וי' לו
 לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו
 לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו
 לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו
 לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו נשחט וי' לו

In reference to this Epstein remarks that the reason for this law is found in the necessity of removing all the blood from the body of the animal. The same reason seems to be the basis of the precautions taken in the Ikkur. Now Epstein in order to strengthen his contention that one of the principles emphasized throughout the Ritual of Eldad is the complete removal of the blood says at this point that Rashi in his ^{that the latter} Ch.248 accepts the same reason for Shehia and explains by this the reason for prohibiting breaking the neck. Weiss, however, disagrees with him on this interpretation of Rashi. (HaHoker (1892) Sec.5.6 p. 158 ff.)

found in Paragraph 5 of Recension A (Schl. p.68).

95. cf. Hull 42a where the 18 kinds of terefot are given (Ep. p.122). See also Schl. (p.93) who arranges the 2 recensions and the Mishna Hul 42a in parallel columns.

96. Schl. (p.64) makes a significant comment on this point. He first reconstructs the badly preserved text and makes it read:

וְאִם גִּבְעָה נִמְצְאָה בְּתוֹךְ הַמֶּחֱסֵה וְעַל הַמֶּחֱסֵה
כְּמִין מִן הַמֶּחֱסֵה כִּי סוּם עֲדֵין הַמֶּחֱסֵה, וְגַמְלִים יִשְׁעֵיקָן קִנְיָן
לִפְנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה

He translates it: "If, however, you find that the brain is swarming with leak-colored worms and there is to be seen on the meninges something that has the appearance of meat when cooked in water, and when you put salt upon it gas begins to generate on the meninges, then the animal is not to be eaten"... He adds: "If the reading suggested is correct Eldad speaks here of paralysis of central origin or gid, a disease very common among sheep... So far as I know, this case of paralysis which is accurately observed and described here is mentioned nowhere else in rabbinical literature."

97. Here is set forth the strange proposition that broken ribs do not render the animal unfit for food if the numbers remaining broken are equal on both sides. The same principle is found with regard

to the lungs. It reads (Schl. p.69).
וְאִם שְׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים נִשְׁבְּרוּ בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה
וְשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה שְׁוָיוּ וְשֵׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים שְׁוָיוּ
כִּי שְׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים שְׁוָיוּ וְשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה שְׁוָיוּ
לִפְנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה

On the other hand, Recension B has here a passage which, according to Schl. (98) is made to agree with Hul. 52b and the Codes. It reads:

וְאִם שְׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים נִשְׁבְּרוּ בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה
וְשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה שְׁוָיוּ וְשֵׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים שְׁוָיוּ
כִּי שְׁנֵי הַקִּיבֹלִים שְׁוָיוּ וְשֵׁנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה שְׁוָיוּ
לִפְנֵי הַמֶּחֱסֵה

reads:

Epstein attempts to harmonize both passages (p.123,note 14).

- [illegible]

This is a significant statement from which and others like it, Epstein draws his conclusion that in the eyes of Eldad, Schéchita was a holy act, and therefore there was no distinction between slaughtering of profane things and a holy sacrifice. Epstein (p.126) compares the passage just quoted to a similar statement in Beracot 55a where it reads:

כך נאמר ויהיה קרבן
 ויהיה קרבן ויהיה קרבן
 ויהיה קרבן ויהיה קרבן

The Talmudic sages interpreted this passage in a figurative manner assigning the atoning power of the table to the fact of its being the cause of man's inviting guests to partake with him (vide Men. 96b). But the Alexandrian and Essenic Jews interpreted it literally, for in their estimation, a meal was equivalent to a Korban (R.E.J. XXI, 97). Although Eldad used the language of Beracot his meaning was not the same, since he considered the table to be a veritable altar, and therefore he identified many of the laws of secular sacrifice with those of religious sacrifice and therefore warned to remove all the blood. And for the same reason one was required to turn towards Jerusalem when slaughtering:

99. Rapaport (Keren Chemed V:226) says that in one respect Eldad agrees

with the Karaites that a man cannot slaughter until he has had sufficient time to learn the laws of Shechita and therefore the age limit was 13 years but Eldad made it 18 years. The law requiring washing from a pollution before slaughtering is found in various places in the Koran. See also Schl. p.78, note 332.

100. Schl. (p.76-77) says: "The ritual distinction drawn between the left and the right side is closely connected with the moon-cult or mooncycle. In the mooncult the West is considered as Kiblah ... Therefore " the right or upper side, i.e. the North, is favorable, while the left or lower side, i.e. the South, as also the East, where the Shekinah does not dwell (Baba B. 25b) are unfavorable. Eldad bases his theory concerning the favorableness of the right side or the North upon the fact that in the Bible always the right side is mentioned in connection with God and the righteous (similarly Plato: Laws IV;8 and Talmud: Ber. 5a) This represents not only the view of Eldad but also that of the Shi'itic ritual ... In the older form of the mooncult the North had the same significance as the West had later; so was the North, according to Eldad, the Kiblah for the Israelites in the desert.

101. So according to Schl. (p.77 note 32)
102. A miraculous story illustrative of this principle is given (Schl. 79).
103. The Scriptural passage reads:

In the case of *ואכל אלהים* Epstein says (p.128, note 48) that there was a difference of opinion regarding its interpretation. The contradicting opinions are found in Mishna Hul. 74a and Tosephta Hul. 82. One opinion believes in the literal application

Sh. 2 found in the womb of a slaughtered

of the law, while the other says that since the slaughtering of the mother makes clean (*אין איה*) the young, no slaughter is required for the young, but if one does prohibit the slaughtering of the young on the same day, the prohibition is enforced only for the sake of appearance (*לראיה*). The latter opinion agrees with Eldad's interpretation of the law. Eldad reads (Schl. 81).

*והוא אומר כי אם נאכל את האם לא נאכל את הבן
אם לא נאכל את הבן לא נאכל את האם. אמר ר' יוחנן
אין איה.*

In connection with this law Eldad states a law, which is, as Epstein says (p.128, note 50) had little sense. It reads: (Schl. p.82)

*אם נאכל את האם לא נאכל את הבן
אם לא נאכל את הבן לא נאכל את האם
אם נאכל את האם והבן יחד לא נאכל
אם לא נאכל את האם והבן יחד לא נאכל
אם נאכל את האם והבן יחד לא נאכל*

Epstein remarks that according to rabbinical tradition mother and young can be eaten together (Mishna Hul. 78a). Concerning this point the Karaites have different opinions: There are some who forbid both, permit both, or permit only that which has been slaughtered first. (*אין איה - איה - איה*) Eldad himself also cites three different opinions of the Talmudic sages but he does not include in this citation permission to slaughter both mother and son together. Instead he says that the flesh of the child is permitted to be eaten, while that of the mother is forbidden, an opinion not found among the Karaites. The opinion of Eldad is based on his making this law analogous to the law of *אין איה*.

104. The Scriptural passage reads:

104. (cont). Eldad also interpreted this law literally, according to which interpretation the meat may be eaten with the milk of any animal except the mother. However, he enforced it only because it was an expression of the principle of mercy or pity, as was the law of *לֹא יִשְׁתַּיֵּם אִתּוֹ חֵלֶב*. The ancient Samaritans also interpreted the law in the same manner (Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* III, 304, IV, 66, 126).

Philo also said that both these laws are based on the principle of mercy. (Meor Aynaim, Ch. 5). Likewise Rashbam to Ex. XXIII:19 and ibn Ezra; the latter said: ... *דֵּעֵם לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה*

On the other hand the later Samaritans and early Karaites interpreted the law similar to the interpretation given by rabbinical tradition (Geiger, l.c.) But we know that the Karaites of today (Flad, p. 20) follow the interpretation given by Eldad although they have no law of *דֵּעֵם לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה*. Eshkol HaGopher (p. 240) says:

לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה דֵּעֵם לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה ... דֵּעֵם לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה

Weiss, (HoHoker, 1892, sec. 5-6) objects to Epstein's explanation of the meaning of *לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה* in Eldad. Though he gives no reason for his objection other than it is not sound.

105. Eldad makes at this point an interesting statement (Schl. p. 102) in reference to the distinguishing mark of birds: *לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה דֵּעֵם לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה*

Epstein (p. 98) interprets the text to mean one crop and a gizzard and that the contents of the upper crop flow into the gizzard. According to this, Eldad's characteristics of a "clean" bird find no parallel in Gaonic, Rabbinic, and Karaite ritual laws. Schl. (p. 102 ff) however, says that Epstein has misinterpreted

the text, which simply means two crops. He states that among frugivorous birds, only in pigeons^{אֵלֶּה} is the second enlargement of the esophagus^{אֵלֶּה} sufficiently developed to be properly called a "second crop". There can, therefore, be no doubt that Eldad believes that pigeons are the only birds or fowl that may be eaten, probably because they are the only birds or fowls used as offerings in the Temple. The same view is held by the older Karaites, such as "Anan" (Harkavy, *Studien und Mitteilungen VIII "Zur Geschichte des Karaismus und der Karaieschen Lit."* 1903, p.67). The later Karaites are more liberal. Schl. quotes a passage from a polemic of Daniel al Kumisi against an unknown author whose views regarding the characteristics of "clean birds" seems to be those of Eldad. It is found in Kumisi's

אֵלֶּה הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים (Harkavy, l.c. p.187). It reads:
 כִּי הֵם הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים
 וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים
 וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים וְהַטְּהוֹרִים הֵם הַטְּהוֹרִים

He continues: "Such is the view not only of the author whom Daniel opposes but also of Saadia and Abba Jose ben Hanan" (p.102 note 102).

106. This is based on the Biblical law found in Lev. XVII:13. This halachah on ^{אֵלֶּה} ^{אֵלֶּה} as in Eldad (Recens. A - Schl. p.87), is also quoted in Mordecai on Hul. IV. Reifmann, for example, considered Mordecai as the source from which Eldad drew his forgeries.

107. p.8

108. p.9. The genuineness of these legendary accounts will be discussed under the section dealing with the language and style of Eldad.

109. Schl. p.18

110. See Epstein, p.66 ff for the text of the citation from his narratives and p.137 ff. for the references to his ritual.

111. See Schl. p.18, note 62 and p.94, note 26, p.95, note 27, p. 99, note 46 where the passages are printed in Rashi script and commented upon. Other interpolations from the Tur are mentioned by Schlessinger on p. 21.
112. p. xlv
113. p.86 Hal. I, no 28.
114. See in Epstein for examples of this Hal. i note 3; 5. 24, and for a discussion of the relationship of the Ritual to the Halakot Gedolot and Halakot Pesukot, see Epstein HaHoker I, p.326, and Schl. p.50, where he gives a list of parallel passages of both Halakot Gedolot and Pesukot.
115. Ep. Hal. II, note 10
116. His conclusions (p. 79 ff.) have already been mentioned. See notes 73, 74, 75 supra.
117. p. 50
118. p.25
119. See note 96 supra.
120. Schl. p. 68. Note 116a. In general Schl. is merely summarizing here, what Epstein has already pointed out (Ep. p.xii ff.)
121. ibid. note 117.
122. ibid, p.70
123. ibid.
124. ibid. p. 78
125. ibid.p.102, note 102.
126. Epstein (p.5). The Responsum reads:
 וְכֵן אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְכֵן אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 אֵינוּ מִבֵּין עַם מִלְּפָנֶיךָ כֹּה וְכֵן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְכֵן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ כֹּה וְכֵן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 קִוְּיָא גִּיטָא, צִיּוּר קִוְּיָא, פִּיפּוּל צִיּוּר

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127. Ep. p.xiii, and text on p. 5 No. 5.

128. More of this will be dealt with in the section dealing with the contemporaries of Eldad. Their statements are collected under the caption 'Cited by Ep. (p.66)

- 129.R. Tanchum Yerushalmi in his commentary to Lam. IV:8 cited and translated by Pinsker - Likkute, p.180

130. David b. Abraham Alfasi, a Karaite of the 10th century, in his dictionary, called Agron, likewise gives פֶּסֶח as the meaning of .פֶּסֶח in Lam. IV:8. He claimed the authority of the Mishna for this usage. Epstein (p.72) says that David ben Abraham meant by the term "Mishna" the usage of the word by a Yemenite Jew or Eldad. Pinsker, however, differs on this point, but Epstein refutes him (l.c.).


Also the usage of l'ce in Proverbs V:19 is traced by Janach in his Heb 120 to Kuraish who said: 'ס : ניק 131 14 YNEP

Frankl, however, (Monats. 1873, p.494 ff) says that

Kuraish does not mention Eldad in discussing the meaning of the root دع in the extant fragment of his Risale but Schl. (p.45) suggests that perhaps this is due to the fact that ibn Kuraish had already mentioned Eldad in the part of his work which we do not possess.

- 131.p. xiv.

132. In his glossary (p.32-45) he lists there 44 words besides the three specimens cited in the Responsum. See note 139 infra.
133. Epstein himself says that Eldad's style in its purity is found only in the Ritual, and in the two manuscripts containing the passage from Bereshit Rabbati and Pagio Fidai of Martini which constitute Recension G (R.E.J. XXV, p.30-43). This summary of the linguistic characteristics is taken from Schl. p.30 ff.

134. Epstein lists some usages peculiar to Eldad such as his use of  for נח; of אֲבִיבִין אֶרֶץ for אֲבִיבִין אֶרֶץ; of פֶּסֶח for פֶּסַח; of פֶּסֶח אֲבִיבִין for פֶּסֶח אֲבִיבִין אֶרֶץ.

Additional linguistic peculiarities of Eldad will be found in Epstein's article in R.E.J. and in his Eldad, p.x,xi. Weiss (Hahoker 1892, p.159) remarks concerning these so-called barbarisms: "We cannot say that Eldad's use of Hebrew is barbaric, inasmuch as Scripture itself uses these expressions as Eldad has written them." He shows that אֲבִיבִין, פֶּסַח, פֶּסֶח, in the sense of פֶּסַח, or the retention of the ' in the Kal of פֶּסַח or in the Hifil are not at all uncommon. As for the rest he shares Epstein's opinion that Eldad used a strange language and also knew Arabic and therefore lied to them when he said he knew only Hebrew.

135. Weiss, (l.c) also agreed with this explanation. He says: "The barbarisms in his speech were the result of Eldad's inability to use Biblical Hebrew and to express concepts which are not biblical and which require for adequate linguistic expression a knowledge of the language of the post-biblical period, of the Mishna and of the Talmud, and so naturally enough he chose a strange language that would startle his listeners into believing his inventions."

In conclusion we might say with Schl. that the language "bears the impress of a language spoken or written by Jews at some time and in some country and of an independent development there, similar to that of the halachah written in it. The language itself does not give evidence of having been created ad hoc."

136. p. XI

137. Schl. p. 32 and 115.

138. *ibid.* p. 131.

139. M.G.W.J. 1873, p.490-491. Various attempts have been made to explain the roots of these three mysterious words. (They are to be round summarized in Schl. p.43-44) The difficulty of reaching a satisfactory conclusion is increased by the fact that the text at this point shows various readings. Frankl attempted to derive ע'נ'ן' from *δριμος* (pepper) and כ'נ'נ' from *πευθριζω* (pigeon). As Neubauer remarks why then did not Eldad use, as a Jew speaking common Greek words like *τρυγών*, *περιστέρος*, *περὲρ*.

140. Schl. p.31.

141. Such as מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; ע'נ'נ' ; ע'נ'נ' .

They are treated in more detail by Schl. in his glossary, p.32 ff.

142. Such as מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' . See also Glossary.

מ'נ'נ' instead of the Hebrew מ'נ'נ' .

143. Such as מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' .

144. Such as מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' ; מ'נ'נ' .

145. Vol. V note 19. Epstein has not only utilized Graetz but has added a few more facts concerning this problem. The brief summary of the argument given at this point is based on the material presented by Graetz (l.c.) and Epstein (p.9 ff).

146. The principle source of recension B.
 147. *אשר אבדו ויבטלו מן הארץ ויבטלו מן הארץ*. Found at end of Story III
 in Epstein.
 148, According to Epstein p.10.
 149. It reads (Ep. p.10) *אשר אבדו ויבטלו מן הארץ ויבטלו מן הארץ*

Rapaport read פ"קא 800. Landauer and after him Furst and
Jellinek read פ"קא and understood thereby the Seleucid era, 1248, or
C.E. 937. Thus even this date is not indisputable. The parallel
passage in the editio princeps reads: *והיה ביום הזה*
והיה ביום הזה . 338/6

Graetz believes the latter reading to be correct and that Yahya's version in respect to the omission of Simha is corrupt. This also solves the contradiction that would follow, since according to Yahya'Zemach knew of Eldad only through tradition and was therefore not his contemporary. Proof of Graetz's contention is found in the fact that Eldad was considered by the people of Kairowan as one of their own generation:

150. Hebrew found in Gratz V, note 19. Also in Eps. p. 66ff.

151. *ibid.*

151. *ibid.*
152. Pardes 21b. He concludes his reply with the expression:
 פְּקַדְתִּי מִן הַיָּד הַזֹּאת וְהַיָּד הַזֹּאת
 פְּקַדְתִּי מִן הַיָּד הַזֹּאת וְהַיָּד הַזֹּאת

153. The Eldad Responsum concludes:

154. Notice sur Abulwalid, p.57,60.

154. Notice sur Abulwalid, p.57, 60.
155. Schorr has the same opinion. Meholutz VI, p.62 ff.

155. Schorr has the same opinion. Herodotus

156. The text is found in Eps. p.6. It reads:

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת קוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָבִיא אֶת הָעָם אֶל הָאָרֶץ וְיָבִיא אֶת הָעָם אֶל הָאָרֶץ

Epstein's comment is found on p. 17, note 15.

157. The remarks of Graetz are found in V, note 19 and V, p.528.

158. He cites proof of this: Isaac ben Joseph for whom the Bible codex with the supra-linear vocalization was written in the year 917 was called Rabbanah. Likewise the Gaon Amram sent his liturgical book to Spain to a Rabbanah Isaac.

159. Monats. 1878, p.423.

160. p.17, note 15

161. See note 43 supra.

162. ibid.

163. This is all based on Epstein in his Introd.

164. M.G.W.J. 1873, p.493, note 1. Schl. gives a very brief summary of the progress of the critical study of the halachah up to his time on p. 5 ff.

165. Beth II, p.xxviii

166. Likkute Kadmoniot, pp.108, 180.

167. Vol. V, note 19. Graetz cites the following passage from Eldad which parallels the Karaitic ritual laws as they are found in the Hilchot Shechitah of Judah Hadassi. Aaron of Nicomedia, Israel of Westlander and Elijah ben Moses Bashyazi in the latter's Aderet Eliyahu. It reads (cited by Mordecai in the beginning of

Hullin). (Text found in Epstein p.137.):

כֹּה נִזְכָּר דָּבָר וְאִינִי יוֹצֵא
וְיִשְׁכַּח עֲשֵׂה וְכֹל וְאִינִי יוֹצֵא
אֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד
וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד
וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד
וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד וְאֶת הַיָּד

112
Mogh
ch (Mo-
orah)

See also note 98 *supra*.

168. Graetz quotes: הנה כי ידוע כי אין להם

cf. note 92 *supra* for the parallel passage in *Eldad*.

169. HeHolutz, VI, 62-63

170. אין להם שום חלק

171. Bekkoret Toldot Hakkaraim pp. 64 ff. and 105 ff. (*Chwolson*).

172. According to Schl. p. 5, note 25.

173. Dor IV, 125

174. J.Q.R. I, 105, 110

175. Revue Critique, p. 463

176. See Notes 103, 104 *supra*

176. See Rapaport - Erch Millim, p. 102

177. Maimonides found a gemara written there in the 7th century (Halakot/
The paitanic language found in al Rayyum is the language of the
178. rabbinic paitanim. 15:2) See Steins. in Berliners mag. 1880,

p. 250. Epstein quotes a few lines from the poem (p. xvi). A similar
poem was discovered by Professors Muller and Kaufmann (in *Mitteilungen*
Aus die Sammlung der Papyrus Erziehung, Rainer, Part I and II, p. 40.

179. Gaonic Resppnsa, ed. Harkavy, ch. 45 and 290 - Ep. p. xvi.

180. p. 70

181. Letter of Maimonides to the Sages of Lunel: Ozar Nechmad II:4,

Epstein, p. xvii.

182. Even Sappir I:53, according to Epstein p. xvii. Neubauer, (J.Q.R. III)
disagrees with this statement of Epstein's. He says: "To affirm
that the Yemen Jews, although knowing and writing hebrew were complete-
ly ignorant of the Talmud, and the work of the Gaonim, is a premature
conclusion. The early history of the Jews in this country is not
so well known as to permit such a definite conclusion. even were

this proved we could not admit that the Jews of Yemen knew nothing of the oral law." The J.E. article "Yemen" says in reference to this point: "The Talmud or at least part of it was likewise known in Yemen. The Jews in Yemen must have been in close touch with Babylonia since they reckon time according to the Seleucid era and their chronology is found on their tombstones as early as the 9th century."

183. According to Sapir ~~and~~ (Eps, xvii). Epstein quotes here some interesting experiences of Sapir.
184. According to Maimonides in his Iggeret Teman and treatise on Resurrection.
185. Epstein (p.xviii) quotes the inscription after Levy in Z.D.M.G. XXI,p.156. He dates it 717-718 but J. Halevy in Revue Critique says that the correct date is 1717-1718. ~~Another~~ tombstone inscriptions published by Sapir dated 1100, 1200, 1029, 1068, according to the old Palestinian reckoning.
186. Proof of this will be discussed below.
187. See note 43 supra.
188. Epstein (XVIII) after Muller in Encyc. Britt. article "Yemen"
189. See note 92 supra.
190. Lev. XVII:3-7 and I Sam XIV:32-35
191. Deut. XII:20-24 express the attempt to remove from the "profane" slaughtering anything which might give it the character of a sacred slaughtering.
192. Mishna, Meg. 10a

גא' ו' חס' / כ' פ' ר' י' ל' ע' 137

101 Sel
1920
1029
1068
Sel

xlvi.
viz the anonym. statement
in the Mishna
Hullin

193. Tebahim 25a
194. Sesam Mishna Hul. "7:7a
195. Hull. 33a
196. "
197. Wellhausen, Reste Arabiens Heidenthums, p.114 (Eps. p/ xvii)
198. Epstein, p.117, sec. 25 see note
199. cf. I Sam. IX:13
200. Text, Epstein p.117, sec. 25, p.119, sec.30.
201. " " " sec.26
202. Eshkol 236
203. R. Israel Maarabi
204. Encyc. Herzog, art. "Samaria".
205. Minhag at-tahbin, ed. Vander Berg II,17, E-s. xviii.
206. Text Eps., p.102, sec.6
207. " " "
208. Flad - Abessinische Juden, 22. Flad was a missionary of the London Jews' Society who was stationed for a time among the Falashahs in the village of Dschanda.
- 208a. l.c.
209. Minhag at-tahbin, III, 298
210. The Tanna R. Judah who said that it was necessary to cut the veins even in a profane slaughter and that the eating of the blood even of the body or of the limbs warrants the death penalty (Kerituth 20b). He also follows Eldad in saying that the ischiadicus nerve is only on the one side, the right side. (H.,lin 90b) and in enjoining that every time one turns it must be right eastward (Tebahim 82b)

How
can
I do it
faster

that every time one turns it
on Eldad?

and in the distinction between the attack of a wolf upon a small fowl and that of a lion upon a large fowl, the attack of a hawk upon small fowl and of large birds upon large fowl (Hul 42a).

211. In commenting on a statement of Samuel who in Hiyya's name said that he who breaks the neck of an animal before it expires פ'ן/כ'ן פ'ן י'ד/כ'ן (Hul. 113a). Rashi commented according to the system of R. Judah. Rashi himself said (Pardes, ch. 248): "a little pause (in ritual slaughtering) at the throat, how much the more at the vein, makes an animal unfit. For so I learned from R. Elyaar ... (Epstein says this undoubtedly referred to Eldad) that a pause is forbidden in order to prevent the blood from being absorbed in the limbs." Weiss, HaHoker, 1892, p. 158 ff. thought that Epstein's proof was unfounded, saying that in reference to Hul. 113a the prohibition did not seem to be instituted in order not to פ'ן/כ'ן י'ד/כ'ן according to Rashi's commentary to the Gemara in Hul. 32a

212. For instance J. Halevy believes the Falashah theory untenable. He says (l.c.) that "in any case the ritual has nothing in common with the Falashahs who are a people of extraordinary simplicity and who never wrote in Hebrew. Eldad's writing gives us no indication that he knew Ethiopian or Agau." His whole argument is based on the theory that the Falashahs were brought to Abyssinia as captives taken in war by the Ethiopians. This theory is doubtful as will be explained later.

213. Die Geschichtesliteratur des Juden (1905) p. 14 ff. Schl. summarizes this on p. 1. I follow his order.

214. Beth ha Ozar, Vilna 1841, p. 245

215. Beth haMidrash II (1853) p. xxix. He considered recension B (the letter of Eldad) to be a report about Eldad. He says concerning the three parts he knew of (Recensions A, B, and the ritual in A which he thought was an interpolation): "They were circulated as Tendenz-Schrift against the Karaites ... For that reason Zemach in his answer defends rabbinism."
216. Note 75 to Graetz Hebrew ed. of Gesc. III, p. 267.
217. Likkute (1860) p. 109. He also thought that Eldad was a lexicographer since ibn Kuraish quotes Eldad as an authority for the usage of Hebrew words. See under Jonah ibn Jonah in section on contemporaries. Note 331 infra.
218. Vol. V, note 19. cf. note 167 supra. His attitude toward Eldad's narrative is best indicated in his words: "It is self-evident that Eldad fabricated all that he relates about his adventures and travels. They simply filled in with his aim to show that early Judaism was different from his time and was still retained in its pristine purity by these tribes."
219. cp. note 139 supra.
220. Acc. to Gottlober, Bekkoret LeToldot Hakkaraim (1865) p. 65 note 2. the latter also characterized Eldad as a deceiver:
 אִיזֵר אִיזֵרֵיכֶן דִּבְרֵי רַבִּי דִּבְרֵי אִיזֵרֵיכֶן פִּיזֵר
221. Monats. 1873, p. 481-496
222. J.Q.R. 1889, p. 95-114. His proof for Eldad's Karaism is not very original: 1) No mention of sages of Mishna as authors of Ritual.
 2) The Tribes have no Talmud. Says the Karaites followed step by step the Rabbinite congregations wherever they settled. Originated in Persia, installed themselves in Babylonia, formed

223. congregations in Palestine, were numerous in the Byzantine Empire and Egypt, and from there went to Morocco and Spain. All of which proves nothing.

223. HaKarmel VIII, 1800, p. 254 ff.

224. In Jud. Literaturblatt 1877, no. 41-43 and M.G.W.J. 1879, p. 184 ff. he believes that some of the mysterious names of the seven kingdoms of Kush (see note 45 supra) can be identified. For instance *ḥpō'a* might have referred to *ḥṣ'ā* which was the ancient capital of Schoḥ and the residence of the Christian dynasty driven out of Sogoe by the Jews. *ḥṣ'ā* resembles the name Koga or Coga, a place mentioned by Bruce, (Pt. II passim), which from the 14th to 16th cent. was the residence of a king or the capital of a land before Gondar became the capital. It is possible that already during Eldad's time Koga was the capital of an independent kingdom. Concerning *ḥpō'a* (one of the variants which I did not list in note 45 supra) and found only in one recension, H., see Muller for list, p. 10) he says: "The old Abyssinian Agaus in the province of Damot are called Swawa and by the Egyptians Ua-Ua. In the plural form the latter is expressed as *ḥpō'a*. In regard to Rumrum (see note 23 supra) which occurs twice in Eldad, he quotes the remark of a Richard Andrea, in his "Abyssinia, the Alpland under the Tropics", Leipzig 1869, p. 217, who says: "The whole north portion of Abyssinia from Massua to Mareb was, according to legend, inhabited by the Rom, a race of giants. The last member of the race was an enemy of religion and hurled his spear toward the heavens, in punishment for which an eagle descended and ate his head. The Roms are still celebrated in song and pointed stone-heaps mark their graves."

His conjecture in regard to these cannibals is confirmed by Borchardt who says that "at the south rim of the Gulf of Aden, the African east-horn, where Eldad was apparently cast ashore, lived the eromo, who did not begin to migrate westward until the beginning of the 16 th century. These are certainly the Romroms of Eldad. For in modern times they still offer ~~up~~ human sacrifices. (P. Paulitschke - Ethnographie, Nordost-Afrikas, vol. I, p.19.

~~f31k~~ he tried to identify with Robad, a tributary of the Blue Nile. Neubauer remarked: "The names of the countries are not to be identified at all.". None of these are very convincing. Metz, however, wrote an excellent history of the Falashahs (M.G.W.J. 1878) which did much to shed light upon the problem. His other remarks will be quoted in the appropriate context.

225. Thus J. Halevy locates the tribes in South Arabia. Most of the other students of Eldad either did not make a sufficiently profound study of him to be able to locate the tribes, or considered his narratives and adventures completely spurious. Thus Neubauer in his attempt to locate the Ten Tribes "Where are the Ten Tribes" J.Q.R. 1889, l.c., concludes that they are nowhere.
226. He explained Eldad's descriptions of the tribes and the Bnai Moshe by conjecturing that Eldad heard in Egypt of the existence of the Falashahs, in Constantinople of the Khazars on the Volga, in Palestine or Babylon of the Jews at Haibar in Arabia, and from these data he placed the ten tribes in these countries.
227. Travels, ed. Asher, p.73 ff.
228. For criticism see note 28 supra.
229. Kremer, Über die Sudarabische Sage, 50 ff.

230. *יְהוָה יִשְׁמַרְנוּ* -cf. note 22 and 48 supra.

231. See note 25 supra. The sources which Epstein utilizes for his explanation are: Movers, Phönizien, I, 382; Kreuzer, Symbolik II, 448. Every detail in this story, according to Epstein, has its source in Hamitic mythology. Also, the Arabians after the time of Mohammed erected in the valley of Nachla a temple to the god *ksiy*, that is, Venus; (In Yoma 67b the treatise on Azazel refers to *ksiy* and Azazel who were supposed to have been the kings who descended from heaven and enjoyed the daughters of the land) (Deut. Rab. Par. 11, Pesikta Rabbati, Par. 34) the *Ssabier* were supposed to have had a similar ceremony (Ssabier and Ssabismus II, 393, Chwolson). Benjamin of Tudela mentions the burning of children (ed. Asher, p. 92). The Kurds, called Dusik, (Z.D.M.G. XVI, 623) have a similar practice. Likewise the Christians (Greenbaum, XXIII, 620). Some of the Boraithot dealing with these practices, are, according to Epstein: Taanith 5b which cites the worship of the heretical sects and Kedarites in the name of Tanah; Echa Rabbati Par. I, ch. 38. (also in the Aruch under articles: *פ'י'י'י'י'י' ; פ'י'י'י'י'י'.*) See also Mikut Jeremiah ch. 77 and Sefer Hayoshor. Par *פ'י'י'.*

232. Ed. Asher, p.73 ff. Graetz uses this same source (see note 227 supra)
233. For text see note 34 supra.
234. From many sources which shall be cited in the description of the Falashahs and their history.
235. From language and from the contents of the Ritual.
236. From similarity in geographical description and from life and customs.
237. Text: Epstein p.45, sec. 5
238. For proof of this see note 53 supra.
239. Dillmann, *Über die Anfänge des Axumitischen Reiches*, para. 3
240. Epstein (p. xxxi) who is a specialist in the Book of Jubilees, quotes examples extensively to prove his case.
241. Pliny H.N. IV, 11
242. See note 42 supra. It appears that the people of Kairowan described to Zemach Eldad's story about the departure of the Danites and noted that it differed from the traditional account. In the responsa, of course, all we possess is the answer of Zemach who evidently tried to reconcile the conflicting accounts.
243. Text. Epst. p.6, sec.9.
244. Eps. p. xxxiii. Although there is no indisputable proof that the Jews came via Egypt since there were Jews in Egypt for many centuries before the time of Eldad, these two routes are most probable.
245. Ratjens, Juden in Abyssinia, (p.39) the latest of the authorities on the history of the Falashahs confirms these two theories of the origin of the Falashahs. They will be discussed in more detail in the history of the Falashahs and in other

places.

246. See note 51 supra.

247. From the 10th to the 12th century a powerful Jewish kingdom was in existence. It was noted for its conquering expeditions.

Ratjens, p. 16 ff. More about this below.

248. After the 6th century with the downfall of Dhu Nuwas, the Jews lost their power and independence. Ratjens p. 12 ff.

Encyc. Britt. article "Yemen".

249. Epstein describes its contents in more detail in his list of the literature of the Falashahs.

250. See note 27 supra.

250. See note 27 supra.

251. Text is found in Epstein, p.24, sect. 5. פ'רען פ'רען א'רען ע'ר

פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען פ'רען

252. Spiegel, Eronische Altertumsr Runde III, 679.

253. According to Flad, Juden, p.50 and Abbadie. See also Orient, 1848, p.25
J. Halevy also concurs: HaMaggid, 1868, p.356.

This is significant because most of the other holidays are observed by the Falashahs. In fact they are almost always celebrating some kind of fast or feast. The Karaites likewise do not celebrate Hanukah. But they do observe Purim.

253a. Schloessinger, p.122 finds that in Shalsholet and in his fragment ^{there is} no reference to the inhabitants on the opposite banks of the river conversing with each other. He thinks that: "It is possible this explanation has crept in here as a gloss from one of the other recensions of the Eldad legends."

254. Pesikta Rabbati פ'רען א'רען and Midrash Tehillim 137.

254a. the theme of biting off a finger is treated by Cassel, Mischle Sinbad, p.18, note 1.

255. For references in the writings of Judaism to the Bnai Moshe see note 64 supra.

256. See note 58 supra about the sources for the legend of this river.

257. Schl. p.122. in the Eldad recensions and in other literature there are of course variant readings. Bacher (Aggadah der Tannaiten, I, 290, note 2) believes that פ'רען represents the original form of the name and that פ'רען and פ'רען are derived from it according to the laws of language formation. He cites a parallel development of Σαββατῆς into Σαββατῆς.

258. Deutsche Exped. ~~Buch~~ in Ost Africa 1862-3, Gotha 1864, p.6.
- 258a. Anthropos - The River Mareb in the province of Baaden is called in the language of the Kunama Sona Soba, the River Sona.
259. See note 49 supra.
- 259a. Asher, ed. p. 70.
260. Epstein, p.164 ff.
- 260a. Ratjens, p.50. He quotes Lobo (Voyage Hist. d'Abyssinie) as saying that the Abyssinians borrowed their religious titles from the Jews. For instance their lowest ecclesiastical office is called Debtera. According to Dillmann this is derived from *ḏipṣera* through the Arabic into Ethiopic. the Syriac of IIK, XXV, 18 *ḏēn jō* is Kahna debaterēh.
261. According to Ratjens, p.71. He says that the presence of this sacrificial altar argues for the length of time the Falashahs have been separated from the Jews. And on the fact that this sacrificial custom has been retained only on the island of Elephantine (P. Luzzatto - (Memoire sur les juifs d'Abyssinie) - based his theory that the Falashahs came out of Egypt.
262. Epstein, p.170 ²
263. Ratjens, p.83
264. See note 104 supra.
265. Epstein and Ratjens (l.c.)
- 73 266. Epstein, (p.70) remarks that this meal is similar to the communal meal of the Essenes (Josephus, Wars, II, 8) and the meal of the Therapeutae (Philo - De Vita Contemplativa).
267. This is in accordance with their Ethiopic translation of the Septuagint of Deut. XVI, 8.
268. This is in accordance with the literal rabbinical interpretation of Lev. XXXII, 40 and not like the Samaritans and Karaites who refer it

- to the making of a Succah (Aderet Eliyahu - אדרת אליהו chapter 1.)
269. Not specifically mentioned as a custom in the Talmud but in ranchuma ed. Buber, Parashah כ"י chapter 16.
270. They have no fasts commemorating the destruction of the Second Temple. *is it a name?*
271. The following references to the literature of the Falashahs are to be found in Epstein p. 144 ff. and Ratjens, 80 ff.
- 271a. See text of notes 283-285 infra and note 311 infra.
272. reckoning the seven weeks between Passover and Sabuoth is not mentioned in this book. It has no word for Sabbath. *don't circumcise*
- 272a. Epstein suggests that this "Targum" may contain ~~many~~ of the strange and puzzling statements in the Ritual of Eldad. *don't*
273. From סעו, (division) here referring to a division in time. Epstein explains that this book was first obtained by Dillmann from the Christians in Ethiopia who then translated it into German. Epstein believes that the book was originally written in Hebrew and translated into Greek upon which was based the Ethiopian translation. He also believes that just as the Jews in Syria and Arabia received their "torah" from Jerusalem so the Jews in Abyssinia and vicinity received theirs from the sages who were at the Temple of Onias, whose object in building the Temple was to effect a compromise between the different sects of that time especially the Samaritans, Pharisees, and Essenes. One of the books received from the Temple of Onias was the Book of Jubilees which contains many laws both agreeing and disagreeing with the laws of the Samaritans. This would explain then why the customs of the Falashahs are mentioned in the Book of Jubilees and why their customs agree in part with those of the Samaritans.
274. Ratjens (p. 81) says that it affords a good insight into the views of the old Falashahs. J. Halevy has translated and explained it.

All this very doubtful

275. Because in it the righteous battle throughout their life with the evil spirit.
276. It is not the apocryphal Baruch but an apocalypse.
277. The same book is also found among the Christians in Abyssinia. Epstein holds the opinion that this came to the Falashahs from the Christians. Abbadie holds the opposite view that the Falashahs gave it to the Christians (Orient 1868, p.262).
278. Entitled *አላሳዕ (አገሪክ) /ላ*
279. Entitled *ጳጳስ /ላ (የጳጳስ አገሪክ)*
280. Entitled *አገሪክ የጳጳስ*
281. Epstein p.148. He based his list on the lists of Flad and Abbadie.
282. For instance, the book *አገሪክ* contains many of the things which ~~the~~ Jesus was supposed to have spoken to his apostles before his ascent to heaven. Epstein conjectures that it might be identical with "Evangelium dudoeim Apostolorum" (see Hofmann, Herzog-Real-Encyclopedia, XI, 328)
283. Orient, 1848, p.262
284. I, 532
285. He lived at the end of the 10th century. This statement is found in his "Historia Aethiopia", I, 14, 15.
286. Metz (Monats. 1879, p.188) does not believe this could be true. Neither does the author of the article "Falashahs" in J.E.
287. In his introduction to the Ethiopic translation which he published. At the end of the Ethiopian lexicon Dillmann listed Hebrew words which are in the Ethiopic translation. In a place where the translators could not translate, especially in Ezekiel, they left the Hebrew words without their translation. Epstein points out that we can hardly credit Christian Abyssinians with a knowledge of Hebrew since one of the changes made in the translation of Deut.

XXV,5 (Law of yibbum) aimed to harmonize the laws of the Falashahs with those in the Pentateuch. The Christians had no such motive.

288. So says Ratjens. p.82.

289. Flad, "Falashahs of Abyssinia", p.2

290. I K, IX, 28; X,11; XXII,49. Ratjens, (p.15) more than any of the other investigators of this legend considers it to be partly true especially that part of the legend not taken from the Bible which relates that among those Jews who were to institute divine worship in Ethiopia according to the Jewish ordinance was a high priest called Azariah. Solomon had an ark of the covenant prepared for the priests of Menelik to take to Abyssinia. They, however, stole the true ark of Moses out of the Temple leaving in its stead a false one in Jerusalem and brought it to Axum where it is supposed to still exist. By a miracle God prevented the discovery of their theft by Solomon. This legend according to Ratjens apparently arose after the entrance of Christianity into Abyssinia (4th century). He concludes from this fact that before the conversion of the Abyssinians to Christianity there were Jews among the people, since there would be no reason for Christians to boast of this legend, not even Judaeo-Christians. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the present day Christian church in Abyssinia still retains the ark and the tablets in its rites as well as a vast number of other customs and institutions obviously of Jewish origin.

291. Isaiah XI,11; XIX, 18,19; XXVII,13. The Jews of whom Isaiah speaks went to Egypt after the exile of the Ten Tribes. After the Babylonian exile many more from Judah came to Egypt. The Jews who went there with Jonathan b. Kerach settled in Migdal in Tahpenes, in Nof, and in Pisrom (Jere. XLIV,17) and built altars and sacrificed to the queen of heaven. This might also explain the prominent worship

accorded "Sanbat" the Goddess of the Sabbath. (the Falashahs not only pray to Sanbat but they bring her meat and drink offerings. they also burn incense and various burnt offerings.) From Egypt the Jews went farther south until they reached Kush as we see from Isaiah XI, 11.

292. Epstein, p. 189

293. Notice sur l'epoque de l'establishment des juifs dans l'Abyssinie
Nouveau Journ. Asiat. III, p. 409-431, IV, p. 51-73, Paris 1829.

His proofs are rather weak. He tries to identify the word with Semiem. He also mentions that in Abyssinia the Torah is called by the Syrians "Orith" (compare talmudic Oraitha).

294. M.G.W.D.J. vol. 27

295. ~~ibid~~ p. 14

296. Excursion chez les Falachas en Abyssinie XVII, p. 270, 294

Revue Critique, l.c. Melanges d'epigraphie p. 130.

297. So Metz. l.c. Epstein (p. 173, 174) says that the Falashahs believe in these commandments but for various reasons do not observe them. However, the contention of Metz that these facts show that the Falashahs could not have come as late as the 6th century from Yemen because at least some of the Rabbinical tradition was known to the Yemenites at that time, is confirmed by the literalness of the interpretation which the Falashahs put to these biblical laws which is therefore contradictory to the symbolic rabbinical interpretation. Metz mentions other objections to this theory. He finds it difficult to believe that the Christians who invaded Yemen probably to avenge the persecution of the Christians in the vicinity by the Jewish kingdom as well as to prevent the Jews from becoming too powerful would allow their Jewish prisoners to establish an independent kingdom.

298. See note 43 supra.
299. Roemer, Über Die Sudarabische Sage - Ratjens p.9
300. Ratjens, p.13
301. Ratjens, p.16 after Conti-Rossini. He is certain that the Jews were already well established in Abyssinia long before the introduction of Christianity. The presence of Jewish customs in the Abyssinian Church according to him is not due to the influence of the Judae^a Christian in South Arabia but to the presence of the Jewish cult which before the time of Frumentius was practiced by a strong Jewish community. (p.45).
302. Under Frumentius in the 4th century. According to Ratjens it was part of the policy of Rome to control the trade of India.
303. Ratjens says these converted Jews were the most intelligent part of the people and that the Abyssinian church owes to them its special character and its many customs which resemble those of the Jews.
304. Where they converted many of the native Abyssinians, especially the Kamanten who occupy the northern provinces of Tanasee, Bembea, Tschelga and part of Woggara. The Agaus who also claim to be Jewish probably became so more through intermingling than through any process of willing conversion. (Ratjens p.40,83)
305. Bruce, Travels to discover the sources of the Nile, Part I.
306. Or Judith, or Saat (Fire) or Fredda Gahez or Terdae Gabaz, according to the different chronicles.
307. Bruce, Ludolf, Heuglin, Ruppell.
308. According to Heuglin, Reise Nach Abyssinien, p.254.
309. Some of the Catholic chroniclers attempted to show that the Sague dynasty was not Jewish but evidence is against them.
310. Her success in ruling over a large part of Abyssinia can probably

account for the sudden cessation at that time of the custom of sending patriarchs from Alexandria to Abyssinia.

311. Ratjens, p.30. The Falashahs claim that they possessed Hebrew books up to this time.
312. For discussion of which see Ratjens (l.c. pt. V)
313. Epstein p.141.
314. Ratjens, Introduction.
315. Halevy, Dillmann, Praetorius, Littmann, Faitlovitch.
316. Stern, Fladd, and Nahum.
317. Epstein p.141.
318. HaMaggid, 1868, p.348 . This fact has been used to substantiate a theory that they came from Agau which is at the southern extremity of Abyssinia. (Z.B. M.G. xxiii, 642. Also see note 304 supra.)
319. Ratjens, p. 92
320. Travels. ed. Adler, 1907, p.67
321. Some manuscripts read Aden in place of B'aden. Borchardt remarks that only Lelewel (Geographie du Moyen Age, p.53) called it correctly B'aden, and identifies it with the kingdom of Bedja which extends east of the Nile from Assuan to Takkaze (Al Jaqubi - ed. Houtsma) He also believes that the "Adem" of Marco Polo refers to the same Harbor. Polo like the rabbis called Abyssinia "Abasch in Middle-India" and referred to Adem as bounding the "kingdom of the Mohammedan princes". (Yule, Book of Ser Marco Polo, London 1903, Part II, p.435). Borchardt also says that in his opinion this "Mohammedan kingdom" can only be Adel. Yule, however, believes that both Benjmain and Marco Polo erred, and interchanged Aden with Adel.

322. Adler incorrectly calls it the "land of the plains". Lelewel thinks the name should be identified with Hamamat in Tunis, but we know that the Arabs called the queen of the Jews Judith, "the queen of the son of Hamaten (Ratjens, p.19,26).
323. Metz (M.G.W.J., vol. 28, p.184), like Adler incorrectly believes that Lybia is meant instead of Nubia.
324. For instance, Adler who believed that the Jews lived in the hinterland and that they crossed the straits of Bab el Mondeh on an expedition of war against the Abyssinians; but this was impossible at this time because the Jews had already been completely driven back into Arabia.
325. Adler remarked that Benjamin "misplaced" Aden to the west side of the Red Sea.
326. Conti-Rossini - Giorm. Soc. Asiat. ital., 1903, p.16, and also Munzinger Ostafrikanische Studien 1864, p.114. It was called B'ade by the Arabs and in earlier times belonged to the kingdom of Bedja which according to al Jaqubi consists of four small kingdoms one of which bounds the Nubic Christian kingdom of Alua and that part which is between the rivers Atbara, Takazze, and the Red Sea is called Baaden whereas the coastland of Massaua, Samhar, is still also called Maaden. It is inhabited by the Kunama (Munzinger, p. 133). The letters M and B are in the language of the Kunama interchangeable.
327. Perhaps this explains the description of Eldad though it is probably a coincidence. See note 43 supra.
328. II K XIX:12. This was customary with Benjamin.
329. Benjamin also calls the land of "Al Habash" Havila. (Jeremias - Das A.T. in Lichte des Altes Orients 1916, p.86). Some of the old Jewish geographers called the island of Meroe by the name of Seba (Grunhut, Reisebeschreibungen des R. Benjamin, 1903, p.14)

330. See note 258 supra.
331. References to the Falashahs made by Jewish writers who lived in the interval between Benjamin of Tudela and Gerson b. Eliezer are neither particularly interesting or significant, since most of them relied exclusively upon the spurious writings of Prester John. Their names can be found in J.E., article "Falashahs".
332. Baratier's translation, vol. II, p.190-204. His exact translation has become valuable in spite of its original intention to reveal its falsity.
333. Borchardt says this is accurate. On the caravan route Zeilah to Ankober to Hawasch lie the famous hot springs of Bilen. There are forests along the river. Also an active volcano, Dofan, with its sulphur mines.
334. Borchardt doubts whether the Jews were ever forced back as far as Zeilah. He explains that these "Jews" were probably Gallas who were regarded as Jews.
335. Ratjens, p.27 also speaks of 24 judges among the Falashahs at that time.
336. See note 311 supra.
337. Neubauer, J.Q.R. I
338. Critics, especially Schl. believe that parts of the question sent to Zemach are missing and that the people of Kairowan ~~may~~ have questioned him much more closely than recorded in the present text. They also believed that Zemach's reply has suffered some interpolations and that it probably was weaker and less satisfactory than now recorded. p.113.
339. See note 126 supra. In addition to note 126 we see that the people of Kairowan were naturally puzzled about the unusual laws found

in the ritual which they sent to Zemach for explanation:

Text. Epstein, p.5, sec. 6: *לְהַשְׁמִיעַ לַעֲבָדֵינוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה וְאֶת הַמִּצְוֹת*

340. See note 42 supra. From the detailed reply of Zemach it would appear that the question originally contained the story of the departure of Dan for Kush noting that it differed from the traditional account. The fact that this is now missing also casts suspicion upon the reply of Zemach.
341. Sanh. 52b. Zemach says that the words of the sages are true since in the Torah death by strangulation is not mentioned and that the sages explained it from every general biblical reference. And since the Four Tribes deserved it it is surely an acceptable tradition with them. Text Eps. p.7, sec.13.
342. This is one of the points which Schl. (p.109), believes is a later interpolation. See note 54 supra. Text. Eps. p.7, sec. 14.
343. Text Eps. p.7, sec.16. In the preceding section (15) Zemach remarks that many of the variations in the laws of the Four Tribes were due to their constant preoccupation with war which caused them to forget the true laws.
344. Text Eps. p.7, sec. 17. Schl.(p.125) thinks this statement is a gloss.
345. He probably referred to Targum Jonathan or Jerushalmi whose language is that of the Palestinians. See Nedorim 66b and Num. Rabbah XIV:22. This Targum was already known to the Gaonim although it was not widespread at the time (Responsa of the Gaonim, ed. Harkavy, Ch.15,248). Yet, as Epstein concludes, one cannot be positive since the language of even Onkelos or Jonathan ben Uzziel is closer to the language of the Palestinians than to the Babylonians.

346. Text Eps. p.7, sec. 17.

1. xvi

347. Text Eps.p.8, sec. 18. Even this is doubtful since no mention is made of this prayer for the Babylonians in the corresponding passage in the responsum. Eldad says they pray thus because the best of the sages and prophets were exiled to Babylonia where they established the Torah and instituted the yeshiva in Persia from the time of Jehoikim. This is based on an old tradition. (II K, XXIV:16). See also Seder Olam Rabbah, par. 25 - Sifre Deborim 321 and Gitin 88a; Zunz - Gotts. V. 135, 235. Sherira Gaon wrote the same thing in his letter (Yuchsin ed. London, p.50)

348. Text. eps. p.71 ff. In his "Book of Roots" Janach says in reference to Eldad in Prov. V:19: שְׁנֵי בָנָיו יַדְּעוּן מִלִּבּוֹ "that two of his sons know from his heart" וְשֶׁהָיָה עִמּוֹ אֶת הַחֲכָמִים וְאֶת הַזְּקֵנִים וְאֶת הַגִּבּוֹרִים וְאֶת הַיָּסוּדִים וְאֶת הַיָּסוּדִים וְאֶת הַיָּסוּדִים
From this one statement Pinsker jumped to the conclusion that Eldad was a lexicographer. Against this see Schorr, l.c. See also note 130 supra.

349. Rashi in his commentary to Prov. V:19 quotes the following:

hi in his commentary to Prov. V:19 quotes the following:

נא' יצ' בצבני כ' נען ויגזל
והוא דמך ענה' והביא נא'יו כמו דמך ענה'
דמך ענה' וסוף וסוף אכילתא דשמי' ג.

Epstein (p.71) says that Moses quotes the words cited by Kuraish as if they were as authoritative as Scripture, that is, by his use of the word Qe. See also Toldot Rabbi Nathan (Rapaport note 47).

350. See notes 154 and 155 supra. Text Graetz V, note 19: Also Steins.

Intro. Arabic. Lit. of Jews in J.Q.R. XIII, 306 and 315 ff.

צו קני'תו אל'יו מאנ'ס יס'ול' אל'ב'צ' 3131 נ'ח'ר' ש'ין מ'ח'פ'נ'ג
פ'א'ס ב'צ'ם ס'פ'ר ל'ו פ'א'ר' מ'פ' ר'ב' ס'ד'צ'י' נ'פ'י'ג'ו'א'א' - ו'ע'ק'ר' ל'ו
ק'ב'ל'מ'י'ן מ'ן ב'ת' ל'י'צ'ת' נ'ב'א'י'ם א'ל'מ'י'ן מ'א'נ'ס י'ס'ר'א'ל

The whole passage is, however, obscure.

351. Text Epst. p.72. Commenting on פסוק קכג in Lam. IV:8, Abraham says: וְהָיָה כִּדְבַר הַמִּשְׁנָה לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
Epstein seems certain that David ben Abraham meant by "Mishna" the usage of the word by a Yemenite Jew or Eldad. He opposes Ginsker's view that this usage of מִשְׁנָה was common in the time of Abraham. and thus according to Epstein, Abraham uses the word מִשְׁנָה in the same way as Moshe ha Darshan used the word דָּבָר simply to mean authoritative. Epstein bases his proof on the explanation of this same passage given by Rabbenu Yerushalmi.

352. text Eps. p. 71.
ו'ל אגמ'א' כ'י שפא' אן ז'ל' ע'ב'י מ'כ'נ' ו'מ'צ'ב'
ו'י'צ'י' ב'י'ח'ו'ס א'ל' ש'ט' ב'ן ז'י'צ'ב'ק נ'ק'ר'א ז'צ'ב' ו'י'ע'ר'ן ז'ח'ז'

See also Schl. p.44 for further explanations.

353. See Schl. p. 30, note 66. His usage of certain words *ḡṣṣ* and *ḡṣṣ* are those peculiar to *ḡṣṣ*.

354. text. mps. p.70. Shaprut's remark concerning Eldad, as can be seen, is only incidentally concerned with his language. —

ובימי אהרונם נפל אצלנו איש ישראֵל נבון צבוי, ויני מ'חם בסבט
 צן עד שמ'ד עבן בן ידית ויני מ'בדו בדחוג וקרא שמו עכל צבוי
 נחמ'ק וכע צבוי לא נדעל ממנו. ובדחוג עבדו בדחוג כן ויני אומ'ר:
 עד נ'אל בן ית' קהל מ'י יו'שע מ'י מ'י וי'מ'ר.

this is a quotation from Letter of Snaprut to Ghazars printed at the beginning of the Khuzari with the commentary of A. Brecher, Prague, 1838.

355. Sch. 1. (p. 10) believes that he used Eldad's Ritual in its original form.

356. Gama probably took his citations in his "Clear Treatise on the Ritual Slaughtering of Animals" from either the copy made by

hananel (see Steins. J.Z., I, 240, 311) or from the latter's commentary on Hullin (see Berliner Migdal Hananel, p.xvii).

357. See note 211 supra. In his Pardes - Oh. 248 וְעַתָּה נִחְיָה וְנִחְיֶה
וְנִחְיֶה וְנִחְיֶה וְנִחְיֶה
וְנִחְיֶה וְנִחְיֶה וְנִחְיֶה

Quoted by Epstein p. xlvi.

358. Sefer Eshkol, Hullin Ch. 2. Although he does not mentions Eldad by name his concluding statement seems sufficient (according to Epstein p. xxiii) means of identification.

359. Or Zorua. (p. 387) וְעַתָּה נִחְיָה וְנִחְיֶה

360. Epstein has collected their statements in his work, p.137 - 8.

361. Commentary to Ex. II;22. text Epstein, p. xiv.

362. in his Responsa, 193: וְעַתָּה נִחְיָה וְנִחְיֶה
וְעַתָּה נִחְיָה וְנִחְיֶה
וְעַתָּה נִחְיָה וְנִחְיֶה

See Rapaport - Kerem Onemed V, 226.

363. Ep. p. 66. One is taken from Bereshit Rabbati 9, see Mag. Berliner 1888, p.81. The other is found in Pugeo Fidei of Martini p.385 and is quoted in the name of Ber. Rabbah Hagadol. After expounding the contents of the latter Epstein concludes that the doctrines contained therein find no parallel in rabbinic literature but only in the Christian literature and in the Koran. Both are ascribed to Eldad because of the similarity in expressions.

364. Text Eps. p.70. Also in Kovetz IV:63 This same Maimuni also undoubtedly refers to the ritual of Eldad in his answer to the same inquiry. (See Schl. p.4, note 18a)

365. See note 12 supra

366. See note 7 supra

367. In his Megillat HaMegillah Manus. Oxf. 160, p.64, 72. His statement is obscure.

Now printed

..... ואם גאנץ ניש ציט אונז כצנז חכמי ארץ ובתנ"י
..... צ"ה בקלנים פארשן משה משיבאלף ער אלס 33' ו 33' נ

368. In the Hebrew translations he is called *יחזקאל* or *יחזקאל*. His writings are now published in Hebrew in Kovetz IV.
369. So thinks Epstein, p.xxiii and Muller in his Int.
370. Par. 41, ed. Zarncke - Ultra fluvium vero lapidum sunt x.tribus Judaeorum qui quamvis fingant sibi reges servi tamen nostri sunt et tributarii excellentiae nostrae. In the old Hebrew copies all references unfavorable to the Jews were changed or omitted such as this one.
372. Sections 46,51, and 21 respectively. idem.
372. Muller lists them on p. 4.
373. This is shown especially in section 42 of Prester John. In Eldad the facts are presented soberly. The Bnai Moshe raise flax, cultivated the coccus worm and prepared beautiful clothes. Prester John transformed the coccus worm into salamanders: vermes quae lingua nostrum dicuntur salamandrae. The raiment served only to enhance the majesty of Prester John. There are many more examples which Muller points out.

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