

which envisioned the Jewish community of the later Roman Empire as moribund, and which also envisioned the 4th century as a disastrous period for the Jews of the Empire. However, I would slightly modify Professor Wilken's statement, in a section on 4th-century legislation on the Jews and Judaism, that "looking back on the fourth century from the perspective of the Middle Ages, it seems that the status of the Jews of the empire was changing rapidly during this period, but if so, these changes were probably not perceptible to the people living at that time" (p. 54). One wonders if the Gallus revolt, which involved a segment of Palestinian Jewry in the mid-4th century, and the shift in the pattern of Jewish settlements in Palestine during the latter half of the century reflected the perception of at least some Jews in Palestine that their situation had begun to change in the aftermath of the beginning of Christian rule.

I recommend this book to scholars, students, and all who are interested in Jewish-Christian relations and in the history of Judaism, Christianity, and paganism in the 1st century of Christian rule.

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#### GREENSPAHN'S *HAPAX LEGOMENA*

The hapax legomena of the Bible are a subject which has attracted scholars since at least the 10th century. Yet numerous questions arising from the presence of these unique words in the corpus have been seldom addressed. It is the treatment of these issues which makes this book such a welcome addition. Moreover, the detailed handling of selected hapax legomena makes this volume also a valuable reference tool.

The work was originally written as a doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Prof. Nahum Sarna at Brandeis University in 1977. The present volume is a thorough revision of the original, a point made abundantly clear by the numerous citations of recent books and articles.

The book begins with the usual survey of previous studies (pp. 1-16) and then proceeds to the thorny problem of defining exactly what constitutes a hapax legomenon (pp. 17-29). Greenspahn opts for the most restricted definition possible: "any word other than a proper noun which is the only exemplification of its root" (p. 29). Excluded, therefore, are dislegomena which appear in the same verse (e.g., פּרַכְר in 1 Chr. 26:18), in adjacent verses (e.g., אִבְעֵבֵוֹת in Exod. 9:9-10),

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\* Frederick E. Greenspahn, *Hapax Legomena in Biblical Hebrew: A Study of the Phenomenon and Its Treatment since Antiquity with Special Reference to Verbal Forms* (SBL Dissertation Series, 74). Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1984. Pp. xiii + 260.

or in parallel verses (e.g., אֲרִנְבָתָא in Lev. 11:6, Deut. 14:7), as well as instances where a common root is used twice in one verse (e.g., בִּרְקָא in Nah. 2:11) or several times in one passage (e.g., קִיִּקִּיּוֹן in Jonah 4:6–10). Omitting these nonabsolute hapax legomena leaves us with 289 absolute hapax legomena in the Hebrew Bible.

Having so defined the term, Greenspahn turns next to the question of the distribution of hapax legomena in the Biblical text (pp. 31–46). This section is the most original and significant part of the book and the conclusions emanating from the study of this issue are extremely important. The author uses statistical analysis and comparative study to demonstrate that the relative number of hapax legomena in the Bible is not higher than in other bodies of literature in other languages. He thus controverts a common assumption, and correctly states that a word's uniqueness or rarity is insufficient ground for resorting to the frequent solution by textual emendation. Another common assumption which is overturned is that the hapax legomena which appear in the Bible do so at random or by accident. That is to say, many scholars believe that had the canon been larger the number of hapax legomena would have been smaller. But this is not the case; statistically, a larger corpus would mean even more hapax legomena. Accordingly, those words which appear only once do so specifically because they were relatively rare in the language. By extension, it is shown that the use of hapax legomena can actually be a stylistic criterion, with poetry using more such words than prose.

The bulk of the book deals with the manner in which hapax legomena have been treated throughout the ages, specific chapters being devoted to the versions (pp. 47–60), Rabbinic literature (pp. 61–69), medieval studies (pp. 71–100), and the modern period (pp. 101–69). Particular attention is paid to the 140 verbal forms among the absolute hapax legomena. It is this section of the book which can serve as a reference tool. No one dealing with any of these words in the future will want to neglect Greenspahn's fine survey of all previous investigations.

The volume concludes with a summary (pp. 171–82), appendices, indices (pp. 183–208), and bibliography (pp. 209–60). The length of this last section (52 pages!) and the excellent footnotes throughout the work are an indication of the amount of work which went into this volume. And it is not only a question of quantity but also of quality and range. For it is clear that Greenspahn has control over the entire gamut of sources and approaches: ancient versions, traditional Jewish exegesis, and modern study.

The only errors I noticed were minor: on p. 118, n. 138, read *ḥtk* (not *htk*); on p. 187, אָבִי occurs in Job 34:36 (not 35:36). Naturally there are many comments that one is tempted to make concerning the verbs treated by Greenspahn. I limit myself to calling attention to the stimulating article by S. Gevirtz, "Formative *ע* in Biblical Hebrew," *Eretz-Israel* 16 (1982), 57\*–66\*. This concept can help explain several hapax legomena: (1) the context of עָבַשׁ in Joel 1:21 points to a meaning "dry out, shrivel," suggesting a relationship with עָבַשׁ; the oft-cited Arabic cognate *ʿbs* means "frown" and is not used in conjunction with dried or shriveled grain; (2) פָּרַעַע in Job 33:24 must mean "save, ransom" according to the context and thus should be related to the more familiar פָּרַדַּע; (3) and (4) the relationship of עָגַב in

Job 30:25 to  $\text{בָּנָה}$  and that of  $\text{יָגַע}$  in Ruth 1:13 to  $\text{יָגַע}$  has already been discussed by Gevirtz.

In reviewing this book one cannot help but refer to H. R. Cohen's *Biblical Hapax Legomena in the Light of Akkadian and Ugaritic*, which appeared in the same series in 1978. Lest one should think that there is duplication here, let it be noted that of the 140 verbs treated in detail by Greenspahn only two are among the 28 forms discussed by Cohen (*šḥṭ* and *kms*). Moreover, Greenspahn's book is more systematic and includes the aforementioned vital findings on the distribution of hapax legomena. *Hapax Legomena in Biblical Hebrew* is a volume to be read and utilized for years to come.

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#### TWO WORKS ON SHĪ'ISM\*

SAYYID MUḤAMMAD ḤUSAYN Ṭabāṭabā'ī (born 1903) is a major contemporary Iranian theologian and philosopher, and *Shī'ite Islām* is an authorized translation of one of his major works, entitled *Shī'ah dar Islām*. It therefore represents an authoritative manual of the history, dogmatics, and practice of Shī'ism as understood by modern Iranian divines.

Part I surveys the historical background of Shī'ism. Part II sets forth the methods of Shī'ite religious thought (the *uṣūl* ["roots"] of Shī'ite theology). Part III deals with Islamic beliefs from the Shī'ite point of view (God, the Prophet Muḥammad, eschatology, the theory of the imāmate, and the lives of the twelve imāms), and concludes with a summary of the spiritual message of Shī'ism. Four appendices deal with *taqīyah* (concealment of one's Shī'ite allegiance when facing mortal danger), *mut'ah* (temporary marriage), the differences between Shī'ite and Sunnite rituals, and the lore of demons (*jinn*). The book concludes with a list of Sayyid Ṭabāṭabā'ī's works and a bibliography of Shī'ism (mostly Arabic and Persian works). The translation is fluent and eminently readable, having been made by Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr, former dean of the College of Arts and Letters of the University of Tehran.

Professor Sachedina's (he teaches at the University of Virginia) work deals in greater detail with the Shī'ite theory of the imāmate as held by the majority (the

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\**Shī'ite Islām*, by Ṭabāṭabā'ī Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Translated from the Persian and edited with an Introduction and Notes by Seyyed (!) Hossein (!) Naṣr. [2d edition]. Albany: State University of New York Press [1977; 1st edition, 1975]. Pp. xiv + 253.

Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdī in Twelver Shī'ism*, Albany: State University of New York Press [1981]. Pp. x + 230.