

# Pesach and Eucharist

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## Abriss

Nach den synoptischen Evangelien stellen die Einsetzungsberichte der Eucharistie das Letzte Abendmahl Jesu als Pesachmahl dar. Schon in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments wird damit eine enge theologische Verbindung zwischen dem eucharistischen Mahl des Christentums und dem jüdischen Pesach gedacht. Die historische Rückfrage nach der Beziehung zwischen Pesach und Eucharistie muss neben dieser theologischen Entscheidung der neutestamentlichen Autoren und Kompilatoren nach Zeugnissen zur Rekonstruktion von Ritual und Verständnis des Pesach zur Zeit Jesu suchen und sie daraufhin befragen, inwiefern sie es erlauben, die sehr knappen Einsetzungsberichte mit zeitgenössischem Material zu ergänzen. Dabei ist nach der Feier des Pesach gegen Ende der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels zu fragen und gleichzeitig zu überlegen, inwiefern Ritualelemente des rabbinischen und nachrabbinischen Seder, vor allem die Pesachhaggada zur Erhellung der historischen Situation etwas beitragen können. Im vorliegenden Essay wird daher erstens gezeigt, warum die Einsetzungserzählung des alttestamentlichen Pesach aus dem Buch Exodus (vor allem Exodus 12) weder etwas zum Verständnis noch zur Ergänzung der in den neutestamentlichen Einsetzungsberichten angedeuteten Ritualelemente beiträgt. Exodus 12 ist eine ätiologische Erzählung zur Deutung des am Tempel in Jerusalem gefeierten Pesach. Zweitens wird aufgrund der Rekonstruktion der Geschichte der Entstehung und Erweiterung der Pesachhaggada gezeigt, dass dieser Text nicht nur erst im Mittelalter entstanden sein kann, sondern auch in den ersten Jahrhunderten der christlichen Zeitrechnung keinen Vorläufer im rabbinischen Seder oder einer Feier des Pesach am Jerusalemer Tempel gehabt hat. Manche Elemente der Pesachhaggada sind zwar als Reaktion auf christliche Theologie und Liturgie entstanden. Der Text der Haggada enthält aber nur Spuren von christlich-jüdischen Konflikten aus dem Hochmittelalter. Zukünftige Vergleiche zwischen Feiern des Pesach und der Eucharistie müssen von ihrem literarischen und kulturellen Kontext der griechisch-römischen Mahlkultur ausgehen und vor diesem Hintergrund nach den sich von diesem Hintergrund abhebenden Charakteristika christlicher und jüdischer Mähler suchen.

According to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus celebrated a Pesach meal before his death. It was held on the appropriate evening preceding the respective festival day in the calendar, the fifteenth of Nisan, which fell on a Friday in that year. The fourth Gospel describes a last meal that Jesus celebrated before his death on the thirteenth of Nisan. The fifteenth of Nisan of that year fell on the Sabbath according to John's narrative. As John makes one believe that Jesus died roughly at the same time when the Pesach animals were slaughtered at the Temple, he cannot have celebrated a Pesach meal that year. The pilgrims and

the inhabitants of Jerusalem would have eaten the Pesach animals in the night after Jesus' death according to John. Paul does not connect the institution of the Eucharist with a specific date of Pesach (1 Cor 11:23). As many explanations of the Eucharist understand this Christian meal as a continuation of a tradition that was founded during Jesus' last meal, the history of the Eucharist begins with the question of its relationship to Pesach. All traditions agree that Jesus died on – or right before Pesach.

The Gospels only hint at the shape and meaning of this meal. Thus, the mere descriptions of Jesus' last meal do not support the assumption of a particularly close connection between Pesach and the Eucharist. As these texts should eventually become the foundational documents of the Christian communal banquets and for the increasingly ritualized performance of the Eucharist, they bear the heavy burden of the legitimation of one of the most important rituals for many Christian denominations until today.

Studies of the development of the Eucharist must take that association seriously asking how the celebration of Pesach as a sequence of ritualized acts impacted on the shape and/or the meaning of the Eucharist in the Early Church. Thus reconstructions are required to provide more information about how late first century authors can have imagined Jesus celebrating a Pesach meal. It can be asked whether and how the acts and sayings that are narrated in Luke 22 (as the most elaborate source) deviate from customs to celebrate Pesach. Furthermore, Jesus or the author of the Gospel of Luke could have reinterpreted certain features of the contemporary celebration of Pesach, in order to convey certain messages to their audiences. Reading the Haggadah of Pesach, one may wonder whether celebrants of Pesach in Jesus' time were supposed to "see themselves as if they had left Egypt" or whether the literary Jesus lifted up a piece of unleavened bread saying "this is my body" in order to replace the recitation of "this is the bread of affliction" according to the Haggadah. Any affirmative answer to those questions would help fleshing out the scarce information given by the Gospels.

The following essay examines the Last Supper as reflecting bits of rituals embedded in a sympotic context and oscillating between Pesach and the Eucharist. It first shows that Exodus 12 does not add material for a reconstruction of the ritual acts performed at a meal like the Last Supper. Second, the comparison of several texts in the Haggadah of Pesach or texts related to the rabbinic Seder exposes the attempt to read the Last Supper in the light of the medieval celebration of Pesach as mere anachronism. Both the narratives about the Last Supper and the rabbinic laws regarding the Seder must be understood as instances of Greco-Roman communal meals rather than customs and rites that were only practiced by – and hence typical for – first century Judaism. The essay concludes with a summary of the consequences for the understanding of the Eucharist in the light of these observations.

## 1. The Last Supper and Exodus 12

The first way to reconstruct the early history of the Eucharist points towards Exodus 12 as a potential script for the celebration of Pesach in the first century. If Exodus 12 is read as a collection of regulations for the celebration of Pesach, one may read the institution narratives of the Synoptic Gospels against the backdrop of that chapter of the Old Testament. Even if a reconstruction based on this approach would not allow a thick description of

Jesus' last meal with his disciples, the authors of the Gospels could have had that chapter in mind when they created the narratives about the Last Supper. In that case, Exodus 12 would contain much that was left unsaid by the evangelists, just because it was as obvious to them as it should have been obvious to their prospective readers. Adding details from that chapter of the book of Exodus to the accounts of the Last Supper would be required, if Exodus 12 should contain liturgical rules for the celebration of Pesach in families (and groups in the case of Jesus and his disciples) outside of the Temple. In this instance, the participants in Eucharistic meals of the Early Church would associate the Eucharist with Israel's Exodus from Egypt.

Writing the history of the Eucharist, one must attempt to illustrate suppositions as they are presented in the first paragraph of this section in terms of hypotheses about ritual actions. If the Last Supper should have been a Pesach meal that was performed in accordance with the rules of Exodus 12, Jesus and his disciples must have eaten the meat of their Pesach animal (which they procured four days before the festival) in haste (Exod 12:11), garnished with bitter herbs (v. 8), holding staves in their hands, keeping their loins girded (v. 11), and trying hard not to break a bone of their animal (v. 46). They smeared the blood of the animal on their doorposts by means of a bunch of hyssop and remembered Israel's exodus from Egypt. However, all those details are lacking from the narratives. Hence it must be asked whether they were omitted because their performance was evident in the eyes of the prospective readers of the text. The following section is designed to show that the silence of the sources must be taken seriously in this case. A first century writer who imagined a celebration of Pesach would just not imagine a performance of the rules of Exodus 12 in a family setting.

Before embarking upon the discussion of the purpose of Exodus 12, the range of sources that can be consulted must be outlined. In this context, it is most important to ask for the circumstances of the celebration of Pesach, especially whether or not – or when and where – Pesach was celebrated outside of the Temple of Jerusalem.

### 1.1. Sources and Approaches

In terms of textual history, Pesach is first mentioned in Deut 16:1–8.<sup>1</sup> That text understands it as a celebration at the Temple of Jerusalem, which should have lasted roughly twenty-four hours, if all preparations went smoothly. The celebration is connected with a prohibition of the consumption and presence of leavened bread as well as with the commandment to actually eat unleavened bread for seven days (v. 3 [together with the meat of the animal] and v. 8). The participants in the celebration are required to leave the Temple (where they eat the animals) only after the end of that night. The meat must be consumed during the celebration. Thus, no piece of it could be carried outside of the Temple (Deut 16:4). The preparation of the animals takes place “at the time of your exodus from Egypt” (v. 6) which rules out any mimetic elements. The community of celebrants does exactly the opposite of what their ancestors did in Egypt. They settle down for a nightly meal in the courtyard of a building that they are forbidden to exit at the time when their ancestors got up in order to leave the country. The consumption of unleavened bread is explained and thus motivated by the association of the Exodus. The performance of eating does

<sup>1</sup> RAINER ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212.

not contain ritualized commemorations of the Exodus. Israel's foundational myth must be remembered "all days of your life" – not during an annual celebration at the Temple. It must be built into the Israelite's self, not performed as a ritual. The animals (sheep, goats, and cattle; Deut 16:2) are supposed to be cooked (v. 7). Deut 16:5–6 emphasizes that the Pesach animals must not be slaughtered "in one of your gates". Rainer Albertz assumes that this rule forbids formerly prevalent and popular celebrations of Pesach in the families.<sup>2</sup> As will be argued in following discussion, this prohibition tries to rule out the celebration of Pesach in other *temples* than the Temple of Jerusalem, not in families. Deut 16:1–8 cannot be counted among the evidence for a celebration Pesach outside of a temple, let alone in a domestic setting.

Festivals like Pesach were celebrated in Jewish temples outside of Jerusalem, like perhaps Leontopolis, whose cult is unknown, or Qumran, where remains point to highly ritualized acts of slaughter and processing of the meat that might have been performed as sacrifices.<sup>3</sup> A sacrifice of Pesach was certainly performed in the temple of *Yhw* in Elephantine. CAP no. 21<sup>4</sup> contains instructions to avoid unleavened bread (*kl mnd'm zy hmyr*) that fit to the context of Pesach as far as it is combined with the festival of Unleavened Bread. The text does not mention "Pesach", although there is a lacuna in the manuscript that allows the reconstruction of the term. Furthermore, CAP 22 can be regarded as a list of names of contributors of two Shekels each for the temple of Elephantine. Remarks in CAP 30 and 31 remove any doubt that the members of the Garrison operated a "temple of *Yhw*" there.<sup>5</sup> The performances at that temple originally included the offering of sacrifices.<sup>6</sup> The sacrifices are not mentioned in the putative answer to this letter, CAP 32.9 – perhaps with good reasons (cf. CAP 33 line 10–11). The idea – and perhaps later also the actual practice – of the centralization of the sacrificial cult in Jerusalem had reached Elephantine. Animal sacrifices are not mentioned any more in the latter document. Although lemmata like *psh* or *psh'* are not attested in this corpus of papyri, it is quite probable that the Jews of Elephantine celebrated Pesach or a similar festival there. Their conflict with the priests of the Egyptian ram god Chnum might have been started or at least enhanced by the circumstances of a normal celebration of Pesach. If the Jews of the garrison at Elephantine celebrated Pesach, this must be classified as a Diaspora celebration outside of the Temple of Jerusalem. It is also a celebration of the festival of Unleavened Bread and an instance of Pesach *inside a temple*, viz. the temple of *Yhw* in *Yb* (i.e. "Elephantine"). There are no traces of a celebration in families.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212.

<sup>3</sup> With due caution, JODI MAGNESS, "Were Sacrifices Offered at Qumran? The Animal Bone Deposits Reconsidered", supports this opinion in her contribution in this volume, 131–155. The thesis that Pesach was *not* celebrated outside of temples in the Diaspora before 70 C.E. is defended in the forthcoming study CLEMENS LEONHARD, "Tempelfeste außerhalb des Jerusalemer Tempels in der Diaspora" and cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, chapter 2.4.1 and pages 31–39 as well as LEONHARD, "Laubhüttenfest" with regard to the history of Sukkot and LEONHARD, "Herod's Days" for the Diaspora.

<sup>4</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 213 note 19 referring to the document as published in PORTEN, *Letters*, no. TAD A4.1 (419 B.C.E.).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. CAP no. 13.14 and no. 25.6.

<sup>6</sup> *mnh' lbwn' w'lw' l' 'bdw ...* CAP no. 30.21–22, 31.21; *w'lw' yqrwn 'l mdbh' zy yhw 'lh' ...* CAP 30.25–26, 31.25.

<sup>7</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 213 refers to the ostrakon TAD D7.6 (PORTEN, *Ostraca*, 158) where a writer asks for the date of Pesach. Even though the context speaks about provisions of nourishment for a child, the ostrakon

There is no attestation whatsoever that Pesach was celebrated outside of a temple before the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> Of course, it cannot be ruled out that a Jewish club should have held a festive banquet associated with the celebration of Pesach in Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> Jews in the Diaspora may have refrained from the consumption of leavened bread in that season.<sup>10</sup>

But which rituals were performed at the Temple in Jerusalem? Many biblical texts regulate rituals or hint at procedures at the Temple in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, numerous questions regarding customs, rules, and sacrificial systems are left open there. In order to create more or less thick descriptions of the Temple cult, the following approach commends itself, although it creates as many problems as it solves. For, one can add information from many diverse and widely separated sources – in a geographical as well as a temporal regard. The more bits of information are collected, the denser the description but the lesser the probability that it was actually performed exactly in that way at any one time and place. Three groups of sources support the modern reconstruction of procedures at the Temple in Jerusalem.

First, one can combine information from different biblical texts.<sup>11</sup> In the same vein, several texts from the corpus of the Dead Sea Scrolls can be read as contemporary opinions about how the cult of the Temple functions or how it should function.

Second, based on the assumption that the Temple in Jerusalem was operated in a similar way as other roughly contemporary sanctuaries, one may glean some details from Greek cultic laws, Near Eastern sources, and the analyses of archeological remains of other temples.

Third, after the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, the early rabbis collected some of their knowledge about procedures at the Second Temple as well as their opinions about how things should be organized at a future Third Temple. Thus, one would consult mainly tannaitic texts searching for descriptions of Temple procedures.

The second approach mentioned above has the advantage of providing data that are not impaired by ideologies of reception history. Nevertheless, it presupposes that temples in the Ancient Near East were organized in similar ways as the Temple in Jerusalem. The third approach fits perfectly into the time and place of biblical literature. It is, however, built on the shaky ground of the modern readers' distinction between old traditions and younger rabbinic inventions. Thus, the evidence from quotations from the Mishnah and the Tosefta in the following pages must be read with due reservation.

The history of Pesach is intertwined with the history of another festival, the festival of Unleavened Bread. That festival is mentioned in lists within the Hebrew Bible, esp. Exod

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does not indicate any context of the celebration of Pesach. It is not, therefore, a witness to a domestic setting of Pesach in Antiquity. After all, the ostrakon is addressed to a single person who is asked at which time a group of people performs their Pesach: "Send (word) to me when you [plural] make (= observe) the Passover" (PORTEN, *Ostraca*, 158). The edict to the Jews of Sardes in Josephus' *A.J.* 14.260, which allows them to perform their ancestral prayers and *thysias tō theō*, either refers to religious performances from the point of view of the authorities (not taking into account a kind of non-sacrificial cult in Sardes) or implies the existence of another Jewish temple or of the Jews' co-use of a non-Jewish sanctuary in that city.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. note 109 below.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. LEONHARD, "Herod's Days", 201–207.

<sup>10</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 271f: according to Eusebius' *Hist. eccl.* 5.24.6, the second century bishop Polycrates identifies the date when the Jews celebrate Pesach by their removal of leaven (only).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. note 29.

23:14–19, and combined with Pesach in Exod 12:14–20; Lev 23:5–8, and Num 28:16–25.<sup>12</sup> Albertz infers from the fact that Pesach is not mentioned in Exod 23:14–19 (a text of the eighth century which contains Temple festivals) that Pesach was only celebrated in the families at that time while the festival of Unleavened Bread would have been celebrated at the temple(s).<sup>13</sup> As mentioned above, Pesach appears in the written record for the first time in combination with the festival of Unleavened Bread (Deut 16:1–8). Speculations about a prehistory of separation of the two festivals are therefore based on Exod 23 only.

Pesach is understood as a Temple festival everywhere – except for Exodus 12. That chapter belongs to the most puzzling texts of this biblical book. Almost all of the literary layers and redactors of the book are said to have left their traces in this chapter.<sup>14</sup> The redundancy and internal tensions in this text beg for explanations of the text and for reconstructions of a long and sophisticated literary history. Such reconstructions of sources and their editing by successive redactors eventually creates an image of the celebration of Pesach in certain epochs of the history of Israel, especially in the late Second Temple period, when the text was available in its final form and could hence have been read as a set of rules for the performance of a ritual. Commentators of Exod 12 tend to present their reconstruction of the consecutive stages of the development of the ritual of Pesach as a consequence of their analysis of the text.<sup>15</sup> The literary development of this text is thus regarded as evidence for the historical development of the festival. Yet, many presuppositions about the historical development of the festival are based *only* on the reconstruction of the literary development of Exod 12. For the most important aspects of the historical development of the ritual, Exodus 12 is the only witness. Circular reasoning is palpable. The following four presuppositions are commonly taken for granted in analyses of the laws of Pesach according to Exodus 12.

First, Exod. 12 and Deut 16 are read as texts with universal force within Ancient Israel. Thus, prohibitions and commandments in these texts are understood as reflecting, shaping, or opposing ritual reality. After Deut 16:1–8, Pesach would not be celebrated in families any more.<sup>16</sup> After the exile, a priestly redactor should have added Exod 12:15–20 in order to make the Diaspora celebrate the festival of Unleavened Bread.<sup>17</sup> It is not regarded as problematic that this reverses the allegedly ancient order. For, Exod 23:14–19 understands exactly the festival of Unleavened Bread as typical performance for the temple(s), not Pesach.<sup>18</sup> Such theses reflect the presumption that the Hebrew Bible gives a complete and straightforward picture of ritual practice in ancient Israel. Of course, texts try to enforce rules and to persuade or threaten their readers to abide by them. Apart from the question whether or not they were successful, it must be emphasized that these rules are stated in the narrative source of the first part of the book of Exodus. They need

<sup>12</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212. Cf. CORNELIS HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 152–153 for a table of further attestations from the Hebrew Bible.

<sup>13</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212. This assumption presupposes that the two festivals could not have been linked in the calendar.

<sup>14</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*; 11–26, 206–219.

<sup>15</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212–213.

<sup>16</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212. JOEL MARCUS, “Passover”, 323 considers it as just evident that “Passover originated as a folk ceremony and probably continued to be so in later periods”.

<sup>17</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 210.

<sup>18</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 212.

not indicate what the readers were supposed to do. They can be part of a larger scheme of their narrative context. They may even distort well-known rules and customs in order to make them fit into the story and in order to teach their readers another lesson than that they should keep these rules.

Second, as soon as Exod 12 is a script for ritual performances, Israelites are said to have performed the festival in this way at some time in its history. Albertz emphasizes that the whole narrative of the Exodus is designed to tell its readers that this story should not be connected with any kind of historical background. He observes that the book does not even try to allude to the names of the Pharaohs who are mentioned many times in its first half and who play a central role in the plot: "Apparently Pharaoh is deliberately not designed as a historical person, but as a typical despot"<sup>19</sup>. It is amazing how easily scholars dismiss the whole historical framework of the Exodus narratives as total fiction and at the same time defend the rules governing the celebration of Pesach in Exod 12 as historical accounts of the most detailed events of a development of the celebration of Pesach in all of Israel's history. The following observations show that the ritual details are fictional in a similar way as their narrative context. Of course, the historicity of Pesach is as indubitable as the fact that Pharaohs ruled over Egypt in antiquity. The borderlines between fact and fiction are not, however, coextensive with the borderlines between rules for rituals and narratives about political history. For, several of those rules that are typical for Pesach according to Exodus 12 either contradict many others or are not attested anywhere else.

Third, reconstructions of the history of Pesach betray a secular form of salvation history, which does not any more lead up to Christ but towards a victory of reason over the dark forces of magic, animal sacrifice, and the belief in demons. Israel's liturgical performances thus appear as a progressing process from primitive and debased beginnings towards enlightened, almost anti-cultic and mainly educational performances. Thus, the apotropaic blood-ritual and the *mašhit* are regarded as survivals from a kind of nomadic pre-history of Israel,<sup>20</sup> whereas the preservation of the memory of Israel's liberation from Egypt appears as the apex of the development. To mention just one obvious objection against such reconstructions, Israel's younger literary history is teeming with angels and demons.<sup>21</sup> If the story calls for a mediator between God and Israel's enemies, it could also be the "all-powerful Logos" of Wisdom 18:15 instead of the *mašhit*. It is not more enlightened to have a *logos* perform the repulsive actions in God's name than to tell the same story with God himself or with a *mašhit*.

Fourth, not all inconsistencies and tensions that are observed in the text and which require the reconstruction of literary layers are evident. In other words, they are not independent of modern aesthetic preconceptions about features of its genre. While reconstructions of a sophisticated literary evolution of this text are by no means unwarranted,

<sup>19</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 30, paraphrase: C.L. The number of Israelites who left Egypt is likewise just fiction according to ALBERTZ: "Most probably, an Exodus of the whole of Israel from Egypt did just not happen" (*Exodus*, 33, paraphrase: C.L.). Cf. also HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 151 § i for a list of precepts that he considers as normative for the later history of Israel. MARCUS, "Passover", 306 n. 14 dismisses the discussion of Exod 12 in LEONHARD, *Pesach* by means of a rhetorical question: "This seems much less likely than that the domestic rite reflected in Exod 12 was later absorbed into the Temple cult; why would anyone have shaped the Exodus text in such an inevitably misleading way?" This question is answered below, cf. also LEONHARD, *Pesach*.

<sup>20</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 213. HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 153–162 reviewing older positions.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. with regard to Pesach: Jub 49.2, 4.

it is just taken for granted that information must not be repeated. In addition, it is taken for granted that rules about ritual performances reflect real practice. In the case of Exod 12 one's tolerance of disturbances of the literary quality of the text determines how many layers must be found in it.

The following brief observations suggest a generally different approach to this chapter and to the history of the celebration of Pesach. This is not intended to deny that the text of Exod 12 contains a number of paradoxes which can be explained quite well with recourse to theories about the literary development of the text. Some of those paradoxes stand out however, suggesting that the intended readers should actually understand them as tokens that the final composition has at least one false bottom which contains bits of *interpretation* of a liturgy rather than a sequence of normative scripts of how to perform it.

### 1.2. No Script of a Domestic Pesach but an Etiology of the Temple Cult

The twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus begins with a calendric norm that is neither patently wrong nor obvious. The passage Exod 12:1–12a, 13 is understood as an addition of a priestly redactor towards the end of the sixth or the early fifth century.<sup>22</sup> If Exod 12:1–2 thus belongs to a *young* layer of the text, its post-exilic readers must have wondered why the beginning of the year in spring was not as prevalent as this text from a remote epoch of the people's history seems to claim.<sup>23</sup> In the later liturgical history, it was utterly irrelevant.<sup>24</sup> The beginning of the chapter puts an unwarranted emphasis on that detail. It points to the fact that the ensuing narrative is less important in actual practice than it is in the text.

Other liturgical details are even more remarkable. The blood of sacrificial animals is poured at the base of the altar in the Temple.<sup>25</sup> According to Jubilees 49.20, this also applied to the blood of the Pesach animals. No first century celebrant of Pesach in Jerusalem would thus have had the opportunity to smear the blood of his lamb or kid on his lintel or doorpost. This rite is not, furthermore, attested anywhere else. Whether in a street of Jerusalem or in the mind of the writer of Luke's Gospel, Jesus and his disciples would not have covered the door-posts of the place where they celebrated a meal (that was eventu-

<sup>22</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus*; 21–22, 206–209. Cf. HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 147–148 for the older tendency to interpret Exod 12:1–14 as relatively young (priestly) layer.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 206 refers however to a new-year festival in Lev 23:23–25. This reads rabbinic laws into the Bible, because the month is called “the seventh” month (like Lev 16:29) implying a count that begins in Nisan. The festival is not, furthermore, called “New Year”. The Gezer calendar of the 10<sup>th</sup> cent. seems to imply a count of months beginning with Tishri; ODED BUSTANAY, “Gezer Calendar”. Exod 23:16 and 34:22 imply that Sukkot is connected with the turn of the year although the list of festivals begins with the festival of Unleavened Bread (23:14; 34:18); cf. HOUTMAN, *Exodus*, 167. The Yovel begins in the “seventh month” (Lev 25:8–10); cf. MAYER IRWIN GRUBER, “Year”.

<sup>24</sup> The biblical festival at the beginning of Tishri becomes Rosh Hashanah and *m. Roš. Haš.* 1.1 enumerates four “beginnings” of years. The spring month is just one among others of likewise secondary importance.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Lev 4:7, 18, 25; *t. Pesah.* 4.12; *b. Pesah.* 65b. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 66f and n. 149. The Yerushalmi (*y. Pesah.* 10.5 36d) observes: “Our fathers had three altars in Egypt”. This shows that the sages interpret the blood rite of Exod 12 as an anticipation of the *Temple ritual*. They do not envisage a bit of templization or sacerdotalization of an originally domestic, apotropaic ritual. Even though the Yerushalmi is by no means a reliable sourcebook for ancient history, the rabbis testify to the opinion or knowledge that there never was a domestic rite of Pesach. Of course, this Rabbinic observation can be dismissed as a bit of mere exegesis, because it supports their opinion that Pesach was only once in the history of Israel celebrated like it is described in Exod 12, i.e. on the eve of the Israelites' departure from Egypt.



ally called the “Last Supper”) with the blood of their lamb or kid. The blood remained in the Temple. Exegetes who claim that Exod 12 should directly reflect or decree ritual performances, must push the blood ritual that is not attested anywhere else into the dark ages of Israel’s prehistory. However, if Exod 12:7, 22 is read as an etiological legend and not as a set of rubrics, it describes the primordial Pesach in Egypt thereby interpreting the celebrations of the festival of Pesach at the Temple (of Jerusalem).

Another observation supports this explanation of Exod 12. It would have been unacceptable to make such primordial Israelites consume the blood of the animal – whether or not Gen 9:4 had already been written as part of the same course of the Biblical narrative.<sup>26</sup> The timeless commandment to smear the blood of the Pesach animal on one’s door-posts invites the readers to ask for the meaning of a normative text whose norms are by definition ignored in actual practice. Thus, the readers decode the reference of the blood rite in Exod 12:7 – as allegedly even part of one of the youngest layers of the chapter – as pointing to the one and only use of animal blood in the Temple: being tossed towards the base of the altar. Therefore, no child ever asked his parents why they should have covered door-posts with blood.<sup>27</sup> Learned interpreters of the Temple ritual could, however, tell the story of Exod 12 at the sight of the blood of the animals being carried into the inner courtyard of the Temple. Exod 12 does not contain rules for a domestic form of Pesach, but links the performance at the Temple in Jerusalem with the story of the Exodus. This hermeneutic key helps to decode several other puzzling passages of this chapter.

Asking again for first century celebrations of Pesach, Jesus and his disciples were of course supposed to remove the portions of the fat of the animal which must not be eaten. This is not, however, mentioned in Exod 12.<sup>28</sup> The burning of the fat of the Pesach animals is again taken for granted by Jubilees 49.20. It is, furthermore, a passable explanation why the consumption of the meal should be held at night. For, the sacrificers were probably not supposed to eat the meat of their animals before the portions of fat had been going up in flames on the altar.<sup>29</sup> Within a large crowd of pilgrims who expect a likewise large group of priests to operate the necessary procedure the individual cannot know when the fat of his specific animal was finally smoldering on the altar.<sup>30</sup> To err on the side of caution, it was best to wait until the last animals had been slaughtered and processed. In the course of the previous narrative, the prohibition of the consumption of the fat was evident. Yet, in the Egyptian village where the fabled Proto-Israelites held their Pre-Exodus

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Lev 3:17; 7:26; 17:10–14; Deut 12:15–16, 20–24. JACOB MILGROM, “Blood” calls this rule “a more universal law than the Decalogue”.

<sup>27</sup> Otherwise ALBERTZ, *Exodus*, 211–212.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *t. Pesah.* 8.14. LEONHARD, *Pesach*; 16–17, 28–29, 65–66 and n. 147. The burning of the fat is mentioned numerous times in the laws of Leviticus. In the narrative of the Pentateuch preceding Exod 12 and the giving of the Law at Sinai, Abel offers the fat of animals, Gen 4:4.

<sup>29</sup> ALBERTZ 2013, 207 refers to 1 Sam 2:13–16 and Judg 6:19 as a background for the reconstruction of general customs to prepare animals for consumption at temples. Judg 6:19 (including 20–22) is less illuminating, because the sacrificer does not consume the meat. The narrative of 1 Sam 2 might reflect the idea that God must be served before the human beings start eating.

<sup>30</sup> The consumption of the animals had to be finished before dawn, i.e. before the Israelites were supposed to leave the Temple (Deut 16:4, 7), cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 64 esp. n. 146. This reflects normal local and temporal restrictions of the consumption of sacrificial food. The fact that this rule is taken over in Exod 12:10 lends further support to the understanding of this text as an etiological legend explaining the celebration in the Temple.

Pesach, they could not dispose of the fat properly, because they did not yet have a temple. Furthermore, they had not yet received all those commandments either. In contrast to the problem of the consumption of the blood of the Pesach animal, Exod 12 passes over the vexed question of the fat in silence.

Other bits of behavior prescribed in Exod 12 could easily have been performed as ritualized acts in first century celebrations of Pesach in Jerusalem: eating the meat of the animal in haste,<sup>31</sup> wearing certain clothes and holding staves (12:11). Sandals, belts, and staves do not refer to bronze-age nomads, but to pilgrims. They came to Jerusalem, brought or procured an animal or joined a group of fellow pilgrims to share one. They had to prepare a place where they would roast and eat it. Some of them might have taken care to perform ritual purification.<sup>32</sup> They would have entered the Temple. Then they slaughtered and prepared their animal for consumption. Towards the evening, many of the pilgrims would eat their Pesach animal in quite unpleasant conditions. Thus, they would not come into a situation in which they would take off their sandals and belts in order to recline at an exquisite meal on nice couches. Exodus 12:11 can be paraphrased as telling the pilgrims in Jerusalem: “Look what you are doing! Even the less comfortable aspects of your celebration are nothing but a faithful imitation of the celebration of Israel before they left Egypt.” Thus, pilgrims in Jesus’s time ate their portions of a quickly roasted Pesach animal hastily somewhere outside of the Temple keeping their staves and their sandals. They did that not in order to perform Exod 12 as a ritual, but because few pilgrims could afford to recline in a nice *triclinium* on that occasion and because there were just too many pilgrims for a celebration within the precincts of the Temple. In this respect, the setting of the Last Supper in the “upper room” is not typical for Galilean pilgrims at Pesach in Jerusalem. If the description of the Last Supper is read into this situation, it presupposes that Jesus had a very wealthy patron who could afford to invite this group to celebrate Pesach as a banquet in a house. As Jesus is said to have joined several banquets in more affluent houses during his lifetime, readers of the Gospels had been prepared for such a situation.<sup>33</sup> In that case, Jesus and his disciples would not, of course, have eaten their animals hastily and with their sandals on their feet. Reception history supports this reading. Eating the Pesach animals “in haste” is one of the ritual elements that are even *ruled out* by the tannaim. It was not part of any ritual performance in antiquity.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 69. Deut. 16:3 explains the commandment to eat unleavened bread with the Israelites’ “haste” when they left Egypt. Deut 16 does not require the celebrants to eat the animals in any particular way. It legitimates the commandment of the consumption of unleavened bread.

<sup>32</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 28 and n. 32. Purification before the celebration of Pesach is mentioned by Philo in *Spec* 2.148 and Jub 49.13–14, 20.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the meal close to Pesach in Mark 14:3–9 par.; John 12:1–8.

<sup>34</sup> The verse is hardly expounded in the rabbinic sources. *Mek.* (R. Yišmael) pisha 7 and *Sip.* Deut 130 emphasize that nobody ever ate the Pesach animal hastily after the Egyptian ur-celebration; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 20. In terms of JONATHAN ZITTEL SMITH, “Bare Facts”, 116–117, the elements of Exod 12:11 did not belong to the ritual, but were mere parts of the “background noise” of the festival. Exod 12:11 endows them with significance and meaning. No pilgrim who knew Exod 12 could henceforth claim that they were meaningless or insignificant. The words of Plutarch’s priestess, Lysimache of Athens (SMITH, “Bare Facts”, 113) provide the interpretative key for the reception history of Exod 12. As long as the Temple of Jerusalem was standing and even some centuries after its destruction, Exod 12:11 provided a bit of interpretation of circumstances of the celebration. Only much later and certainly long after Jesus’ life-time, they “entered the ritual”.

Similar points can be raised regarding the question of the preparation of the meat. Meat is *cooked* in the cuisine of the Temple.<sup>35</sup> The Pesach animal is no exception from that rule according to Deut 16:7. Yet, it seems that roasting the animal was indeed allowed in this special case. An appeal to nomadic traditions is futile. One may instead imagine that there were just not enough (pure) vessels for the cooking of all animals of a large crowd of pilgrims. Roasting meat in makeshift ovens<sup>36</sup> requires, moreover, less fire wood than cooking. Exod 12:8 declares a compromise of the Temple ritual to derive from primordial rules of the festival.

In the same vein, the consumption of unleavened bread can be decoded without recourse to the fiction of a nomadic pre-history of Israel. Speculations about a merger of two festivals, *viz.* the festival of Unleavened Bread and Pesach, are important for the reconstruction of the history of Israel's temple cults. Yet, many sources refer to the prohibition of *leavened* bread in temples or any kind of combination of unleavened bread with sacrificial meat.<sup>37</sup> Whether or not Pesach was combined with the festival of Unleavened Bread at a given stage in Israel's history, the celebrants of Pesach would eat unleavened bread together with the sacrificial meat in the temple(s) or in its vicinity, just because they were not allowed to eat leavened bread. The standard practice of eating unleavened bread – i.e. abstaining from leavened bread – during the celebration of Pesach cannot be decoded unambiguously any more. It may refer to a merger of festivals, to general procedures at temples, or to both. The texts of the Hebrew Bible take their share in the attempt to obliterate the knowledge about the origins of this custom by claiming that the unleavened bread should be a mimetic token of the Exodus from Egypt (Deut 16:3; Exod 12:34). The pilgrims who eat unleavened bread in Jerusalem at the evening of Pesach have their own choice how to understand the custom, if they deemed it at all necessary to understand it.

The Pesach of Exod 12 must be eaten in “houses” (*bet*, Exod 12:4) and the animals taken for “your families” (*mišpaha* 12:21<sup>38</sup>) – a flexible rule, that allows to include one's neighbor in order to share a lamb or kid (12:4–5). Not all the instances where a father (or mother) is instructed to teach a “son” or “children” the reasons for a custom or law are connected with the celebration of Pesach: Exod 12:26; 13:8, 14; Deut 6:20f. Yet, it is a crude anachronism to interpret these passages in the light of the “four sons” of the Babylonian recension of the Haggadah of Pesach. The older form of the Haggadah, that is first attested in the tenth century, does not contain that famous passage. It is a medieval addition to the earlier Palestinian recension of the Haggadah. The biblical context does not suggest that the celebration of Pesach should contain that kind of ritualized instruction of children. Second Temple sources rule out that Pesach was eaten in “families” or by the members of one household.<sup>39</sup> Again as an argument from reception history, the rabbis hasten to emphasize that Pesach should not be celebrated in “families” in their time, too. One may even abandon one's neighbor in order to celebrate Pesach in a remote place to-

<sup>35</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 67f and note 29 for further intra-biblical support.

<sup>36</sup> This aspect of Pesach is either historically or in legitimizing retrospection supported by rabbinic texts, cf. *m. Ta'an.* 3.8, *t. Sanh.* 2.12.

<sup>37</sup> Lev 2:4–5, 11; 6:9–10; 7:12; 8:2, 26; 10:12; Num 6:15, 17, 19. By way of exception, the two loaves of *lehem tnuqa* are explicitly leavened and animals are “offered” (*lhaqrib*) “on” it. Cf. the narrative echo in Judg 6:19 and LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 68 n. 155.

<sup>38</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus* often describes the celebration of Pesach in the setting of a “family”.

<sup>39</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*; 16, 63–64.

gether with one's rabbinic friends.<sup>40</sup> While Luke 2:41–52 suggests that Jesus participated in the celebration of Pesach in Jerusalem within a larger group of relatives and friends (v. 44), the same Gospel takes it for granted that he should celebrate it later with his disciples only (22:1, 7–8). The rules of Exod 12 are neither fantasy nor fiction. The “house” and the *mišpaḥa* in which one should celebrate Pesach are most tangible and visible. The house is of course the Temple and the *mišpaḥa* is the assembled crowd of celebrants. In the narrative about the first, pre-Exodus Pesach in an Egyptian village, members of a *house* eat the animal behind closed doors, because this is the only way to survive God's or the *mašhit*'s destructive force. In all later epochs, Israelites assemble in that one “house” in order to leave other more or less real but in any case destructive forces outside.<sup>41</sup>

Wisdom 18:10–19 understands Exod 12 in the same way. It introduces the figure of the high priest as an agent of liberation from Egypt (18:21, 24). Thus, it interprets the celebration of Pesach in the time of the Second Temple as an imitation of a celebration that was held before the people of Israel left Egypt. It does not imagine Pesach as a domestic rite. Verse 9 refers to three elements of the primordial celebration of Exod 12 that it regards as typical: the performance of a sacrifice<sup>42</sup> “in a hidden way”, the acceptance of the divine Law by the Israelites implying to accept their share in their common fate, and the anticipatory singing of sacred hymns (*ēdē proanamelpontes ainoy*s) of the ancestors. None of them is mentioned in Exod 12. Each celebration of Pesach is said to imitate the first one, because that first one anticipated all post-liberation celebrations. After all, the narrative about that first one is created as an imitation of the later ones. Celebrations of Pesach should promote an actualization of a pre-liberation state among the diners as far as the description of the pre-liberation state is dependent upon the experience of liberation.

Jubilees 49.15 contains a different reading of Exod 12.<sup>43</sup> According to Jubilees, the celebration of Pesach does not make the celebrants recall the Exodus from Egypt, but reminds God that he should prevent Israel from suffering any plague during the upcoming

<sup>40</sup> “In regard to the Pesach of Egypt it is said: (If the household is too small for a lamb), a man and his neighbor next to his house shall take (according to the number of persons ..., Exod 12:4) – which does not apply to the Pesach (observed by the coming) generations. R. Shimon says: I say, also in regard to the Pesach (observed by the coming) generations, the same thing is stated. And why is all this so? So that a man should not leave his neighbor, who lives next door, and go and prepare his Pesach-offering with his friend. Thus is fulfilled the following verse: Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away (Prov 27:11)”; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 16–17.

<sup>41</sup> The narrative of Jesus' prayer and capture on the Mount of Olives may have been built on a similar understanding of these rubrics of Exod 12. According to Mark 14:26, 32–47 (Luke 22:39, not Matt 26:30, adds “according to a custom/as usual” to Mark's text), Jesus and his disciples leave the place where they held the meal right after its conclusion. They stay in the vicinity of the Temple. Thus, they abide by the rule, not to leave the Temple (which had to be extended to the outskirts of Jerusalem) during that night; cf. for this assumption the excursus to “Der Todestag Jesu C.6” in Str-B 2.833–834. The narrative leaves open whether or not they intended to flee into the desert right at dawn. This explains the emphasis in the story, that Jesus' enemies were so eager to capture him during that same night and to use a traitor in order to find him among the crowds of pilgrims in the dark. If such notions, should play a role here, Mark does not presuppose that Exod 12 was kept as a law, but that Exod 12 transfers the customs of Pesach at the Temple into an Egyptian village. Str-B is, however, based on much speculation and few facts here and the thesis did not enter the *communis opinio* about the narrative.

<sup>42</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 30. If *thysiazō* (18:9; not used in Exod 12 LXX) as a technical term implies “sacrifice”, the text even hints at the celebration in the Temple and excludes the notion of a celebration outside of the Temple or in the Diaspora.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*; 27–31, 240–245.

year because of their correct celebration of Pesach. Pesach is the festival of the salvation of the Israelite firstborn from the plague and not as the festival of the redemption of the people from Egypt. At the festival, Israel does not remember anything. God is the only one whose memory should be refreshed at that point. This reading is borne out by the context of Exod 12. The first Pesach is an apotropaic rite making sure that the Israelites' firstborn survive the tenth plague. Its immediate context, Exod 11,<sup>44</sup> is concerned with the tenth and final plague. Pesach (as well as Sukkot<sup>45</sup>) points to the immediate future, not the past.

It cannot be assessed, why individual pilgrims came to Jerusalem and how many people were interested in bits of interpretation of ritual acts and cultic performances that had nothing to do with redemption or freedom.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, this reading of Exod 12 has two consequences for the understanding of the narratives about the Last Supper.

First, the consumption of the meat of the Pesach animal was not performed as a fulfillment of the rules of Exod 12. Just the opposite, Exod 12 functions as a mirror of those customs. Exod 12 is not hence presupposed as a ritual background of the accounts of Last Supper according to the synoptic Gospels. The Jewish group of Jesus and his disciples could not have intended to perform Exod 12. The author of Luke's Gospel shows accurate historical background knowledge in his abstention from describing the celebration of the Last Supper as a Pesach meal in terms of Exod 12.

Second, the exclusion of ritual performances does not exclude theological speculation. For, if Exod 12 reinterprets a Temple festival as an imitation of a festival that was held by the Israelites just before their Exodus from Egypt, readers of the Gospels might have felt invited to see themselves as if they were celebrating their Eucharistic banquets in anticipation of their imminent redemption such as Israel celebrated Pesach in the night before they left Egypt. Yet, the early Christian references to Eucharistic celebrations as well as the New Testament narratives of the Last Supper do not mention Exod 12. Didache (9–10) and the last chapters of Justin's First Apology do not evoke this Old Testament text in order to explain the Eucharist or its prayer texts. The early Jewish groups whose heritage entered the literary memory of Christianity did not use literary imagery, ritual acts, or theological tenets of Exod 12 in order to interpret Jesus' last supper as a celebration of people in the evening of the day before their redemption. The silence of these sources is telling, too. They neither understood Exod 12 as a liturgical script nor as a basic metaphor for the Last Supper and the early Christian Eucharist. Christianity is not pulling clear from Judaism at this point, but stays in conformity with it.

## 2. Rabbinic Texts and the Haggadah of Pesach

In the previous section, the text that seems to contain the most explicit remarks about Pesach, Exod 12, has been removed from the set of sources that may be read into the accounts about the Last Supper in the Gospels. It cannot be used in order to enhance the understanding of their interests and to flesh out their sparse descriptions of ritualized

<sup>44</sup> ALBERTZ, *Exodus* considers Exod 11 as part of the literary unit that contains Exod 12.

<sup>45</sup> Except for the (in terms of the history of the text of the Hebrew Bible very young) pun on "Sukkot", that festival is not regarded as an occasion for the remembrance of the Exodus. Its purpose is not, furthermore, thanksgiving for the bounty of the harvest. It is designed to activate the cosmic and cultic machinery that should provide rain in the upcoming season (Zech 14 esp. v. 16), cf. LEONHARD, "Laubhüttenfest".

<sup>46</sup> Cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 70–72.

acts during the meal. The following parts of this essay will discuss a selection of Rabbinic texts as well as the Haggadah of Pesach in search of rituals or bits of interpretation that might help reconstruct the historical context of the Last Supper and how a late first century writer could have imagined an early first century celebration of Pesach. An analogous situation emerges from the comparison of the Haggadah together with the ritual as it is hinted at in the Mishnah.

For the present question, the most important sources are the manuscripts of the Haggadah that were preserved among the treasures of the Cairo Genizah. Most of them are still waiting to be included in a critical edition. The published material may be classed roughly but quite accurately into two recensions. The older Palestinian recension was taken over into the Babylonian recension *completely* with just minor adaptations, but almost without deletions.<sup>47</sup> The Palestinian recension of the Haggadah reads the text of Mishnah Pesahim 10 within a social context that has lost contact with the world of late Antiquity. This oldest form of the Haggadah makes one *recite* some of the laws of *m. Pesah.* 10 and *fulfill* some laws of the Yerushalmi on top of that. Thus, the oldest Haggadah quotes and expands the Mishnah. It adds a few biblical texts and quotes the texts of *brakot* and the Psalms of the *Hallel*. In short, it makes the Mishnah, what it never was intended to be: both a script for the celebration of the Seder that must strictly be adhered to *and* a text to be recited during the celebration.

Some of the oldest – ninth century – manuscripts of the Haggadah also indicate the role of the recitation of the text *vis-à-vis* the meal. They include two (and only two<sup>48</sup>) headings. Thus, the Palestinian Haggadot are divided into the two sections “*kidduš* for Pesach” before the meal and “*birkat ha-mmazon*” after the meal. The core of the Haggadah is contained in the first section. Birkat ha-Mazon is also adapted to the occasion of Pesach by means of single terms or short lines that are inserted into its text. The section *kidduš* has been expanded to a much greater extent than Birkat ha-Mazon. Later on, the brief Palestinian poetic expansions of Birkat ha-Mazon were extinguished in the Babylonian tradition. The Babylonian and the modern standardized forms of the Haggadah use the normal version of Birkat ha-Mazon. The fact that the older Palestinian Kidush was not expanded by means of poetry but by means of rabbinic (Mishnah) and biblical texts (Deut 26; Josh 24) probably caused this part of the celebration to attract further material becoming eventually “the Haggadah”. The Haggadah (and, of course, also much non-standardized table-talk in later centuries) is placed *before* the consumption of the festive meal and not after it on account of the medieval expansion of the text of the Kidush. The medieval Seder is, therefore, not a reversal of meal customs of Antiquity – i.e. to engage in learned table-talk *after* instead of *before* the meal. As an expansion of the Kidush it is not connected at all to any structure of second century celebrations of the Seder or Greco-Roman symposia. This indicates already that even the oldest form of the Haggadah originated many centuries after the origins of the Gospels and cannot, therefore, have exerted any influence on their depiction of the Last Supper.

<sup>47</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 102–117.

<sup>48</sup> Popular modern editions of the Haggadah present its more ritualized acts and its texts as divided into fourteen sections according to a piece of poetry that is often given at the beginning of the Haggadot (*kaddeš urhaš* ...; cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 101 n. 69). This short *piyyut* gives a structure to the Babylonian Haggadot – i.e. of the second millennium C.E. Dividing the Haggadah or the celebration of the Seder into fourteen sections blurs the basic twofold structure of the Seder.

Even if the rabbinic sages did not yet celebrate Pesach reciting a form of the Haggadah, they celebrated Pesach nevertheless. It must be asked what the *rabbinic* Pesach could have looked like. Analogous to the early traditions about the Eucharist, other rabbinic and Greco-Roman texts about meals help answering that question. Since Siegfried Stein's seminal paper,<sup>49</sup> *m. Pesah*. 10 and related texts have been regarded as specimens of *deipnon*-literature. Although Stein had considered the Haggadah (which is not, actually, an antique text) under this rubric too, he has shown the right way to the understanding of *m. Pesah*. 10. That chapter of the Mishnah is not a collection of rubrics which must be performed in a punctilious way. It talks about Pesach in a way that is useful for the performance of symposia at Pesach. Athenaeus' encyclopedia "Deipnosophists" was not, likewise, enacted or performed. It was designed to enhance its readers' ability to participate in erudite, learned, and hence pleasant discussions at meals. The president of the Seder remains responsible for the shape of the actual performance.

Historians of the celebration of Pesach would proceed to expound especially *m. Pesah*. 10 as the oldest accessible form of Rabbinic thinking about the Seder. This approach yields a number of significant results. As will be shown below, it gets also entangled in a number of insoluble problems. By way of example, it is just impossible to reconstruct any ritual based on what the Mishnah calls Afikoman or the like. The Babylonian Talmud further blurs the picture.

If the conventional notion that the Mishnah represents the oldest tradition of Rabbinic laws is given up and if it is assumed that another, similar corpus of texts, *viz.* the Tosefta, contains an older text than the Mishnah *in some places*, several liturgical and textual problems can be solved. Such an approach must of course be treated with great circumspection, because the historian must not succumb to the temptation to regard the easiest version as the best one.<sup>50</sup> Yet, in the case of Tosefta and Mishnah, and especially with regard to certain passages in the tractate of Pesachim, Shamma Friedman and Judith Hauptman have published a sufficient amount of data in order to show<sup>51</sup> that the Tosefta must be taken as a point of departure for the understanding of the Mishnah (and hence the Talmudim) and not vice versa.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, the relationship between several pericopes of *t. Pesah*. and the respective parallels in the Mishnah may be assessed in the following way: the Mishnah summarizes, expands, explains, or changes instructions of the Tosefta the knowledge of which is hence presupposed in order to understand the Mishnah. The Tosefta is then the basis for the Mishnah, not a commentary to the Mishnah. Where the Tosefta seems to explain a prob-

<sup>49</sup> SIEGFRIED STEIN, "Influence". HERMUT LÖHR, "Abendmahl als Pesach-Mahl" urges caution with regard to explanations of Jesus' Last Supper on the basis of the Haggadah of Pesach or *m. Pesah*. 10.

<sup>50</sup> For experts on textual criticism, the assumption of the longer text is in general more original than the shorter one seems counter-intuitive. Yet, the relationship between Mishnah and Tosefta cannot be assessed with the tools developed for textual criticism that tries to reconstruct the process of transmission of texts. The passages of Mishnah and Tosefta that are considered here are much more living literature, which epitomizes and expands in the interest of the rules and stories that are discussed and not a certain text that should be preserved by being copied.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. SHAMMA FRIEDMAN, *Tosefta Atiqta* and JUDITH HAUPTMAN, *Rereading*.

<sup>52</sup> The present approach does not assume that "Hillel's sandwich" (i.e. eating the Pesach meal in haste) was part of the ritual performance of Pesach in Second Temple times. MARCUS, "Passover", 307–308 is right in quoting Jubilees for the opinion that the consumption of the Pesach animal in "haste" was unknown in that writer's time.

lematic passage of the Mishnah, it is the text of the Mishnah that abbreviates the easier pericope of the Tosefta and not the other way round. Where both texts contradict each other, the sages of the Mishnah hold different opinions about a certain rule or custom. The respective texts of the Tosefta are, furthermore, closer to *deipnon*-literature than to rubrics of sacred rites. Thus, passages that are presented as two differing opinions may point to a sequence of rites to be performed. They could also represent alternatives to organize the celebration of Pesach. The ancient rabbis' opinions about how one should celebrate Pesach must, therefore, be collected from the tractates Pesahim/Pisha and Brakot (esp. *t. Ber.* 4–5) according to the Mishnah and the Tosefta. For later developments of the ritual and its interpretations, the Yerushalmi and the Bavli must also be taken into account.<sup>53</sup>

### 2.1. *Deipnon-Literature Instead of Scripts for Sacred Rites*

By way of example, Rabban Gamaliel's remark that the president of the Seder must explain the food that is served (i.e. the meat of the Pesach animal, the bitter herbs, and the unleavened bread) is a stereotype for every well-educated symposiarchos, actually every well-educated diner. Athenaeus' manual for the enhancement of the sophistication of table-talk teaches its readers bits of learned interpretation of foods served. They must know stories from the literary canon in order to be able to associate them with the food in front of them and to tell their stories in the dining room.

As an alternative to the president's entirely spontaneous interpretation of the food, the Mishnah proposes a special strategy in its paragraph *mah-nnistannah* (incipit). Thus, the president of the Seder could wait for a "son"<sup>54</sup> to ask a question – which echoes a situation in the Torah (Exod 12:14, 26; Deut 6:20). For that case, the Mishnah would not interfere with the celebration any more. Yet what happens if the "son" does not ask spontaneously and by himself? For that case, the Mishnah provides a remedy. The "father" teaches the "son" how to behave at a Greek dinner party. Thus, he tells him how and what he should ask: why bitter herbs are dipped twice, why the group only eats unleavened bread, and why the meat must be roasted – exactly Rabban Gamaliel's three concepts, that must be "mentioned".<sup>55</sup>

Rabban Gamaliel and the passage of *mah-nnistannah* mention roasted meat, i.e. the Pesach animal. Upon first glance, this seems strange, because the rabbis obviously avoid the notion that one should eat roasted meat at Pesach.<sup>56</sup> Yet, this text contains the rabbis' idea of the perfect way to celebrate Pesach – in their present state as well as in the distant

<sup>53</sup> Cf. BARUCH M. BOKSER, "Ritualizing".

<sup>54</sup> Cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 76–89: for the Babylonian Talmud, two sages who are not members of the same family can celebrate the Seder. Thus, the terms "father" and "son" are set in quotation marks above, in order to avoid the conclusion that the celebration of the Seder *requires* a family setting for the rabbis. It does not, of course, exclude it. According to the Mishnah, a real father may instruct his own son how to participate properly in a decent, Greek bit of table-talk.

<sup>55</sup> Only the older, Palestinian recension of the Haggadah contains those three questions. The later textual tradition is blurred by interferences of the texts of the Babylonian recension of the Haggadah; GÜNTER STEMBERGER, "Pesachhaggada", 149–150. Thus, the more recent versions of the Mishnah correspond more closely to the Haggadah. This is a case of liturgical influence of the Haggadah upon the textual tradition of the Mishnah and not a case of the Mishnah preserving different textual traditions from Antiquity.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. BARUCH M. BOKSER, "Todos".



future, when there will again be a Temple and a sacrifice. Meanwhile one can talk about it without eating it.

In the same way, one may explain Deuteronomy 26:5–(?) as a piece of text that should be expounded by the president of the Seder. The much later Haggadah abbreviates the biblical passage and makes it end with the Exodus from Egypt. However, the Mishnah rules that this text should be read “until he finishes the whole portion of text”. As it cannot be assessed what the sages of the Mishnah understand as the “end” of this text, it may of course be cut where the much younger Haggadah suggests that it should be cut. Yet, it may also be read until its literary end, where not the Exodus from Egypt, but the farmer’s entry into the Temple constitutes the climax of the passage: “And he brought us to this place (i.e. the Temple, where the farmer is standing in that moment) ... and now, behold, I brought the firstlings of the fruit of the land ...”<sup>57</sup>. A group of pilgrims in the future Third Temple may be envisaged to understand that passage as containing a message for them and their time. Like the farmer who brings his first-fruits to the Temple, they will then be standing at the very place that is mentioned in their text. A group of rabbis would be required to add a layer of interpretation that connects them to that situation via the past and future Temple.

Like other pieces of Greek or Roman literature that collect rules for behavior at banquets, Tosefta and Mishnah Pesachim 10 describe the celebration of Pesach as a club banquet. Thus, the rabbinic Pesach resembles many phenomena of the early history of the Christian Eucharist not because the Eucharist developed out of a celebration of Pesach, but because both are held according to the customs of Greco-Roman formal meals. Therefore, the texts that describe it must be compared with specimens of *deipnon*-literature and sources that contain instructions for the behavior at banquets. The reconstructed customs, recited texts, and usual implements must be compared with their counterparts in Greco-Roman societies.

Obviously, the rabbis did not only abide by the normal customs of their time. They also introduced changes into their celebrations. It is of paramount importance to locate those changes, because they point to the rabbis’ understanding of their group’s identity. Thus, they debate relatively short, small, or even hardly perceptible elements of the ritual such as tithing and pre-prandial blessings.<sup>58</sup> They also change larger parts of the ritual. It stands to reason that most of them would have disapproved of singing a *pean* to Dionysus, let alone pouring libations. They would have preferred to recite Birkat ha-Mazon at the same occasion during the meal. Some of these ritual elements can also be found within the early Christians’ set of predilections. Any claim of influence between the two must take into account that neither Christians nor Jews were the only ones who disliked certain traits of the usual ways to hold formal meals. As Andrew McGowan has shown,<sup>59</sup> there were other groups in the Greek and Roman societies who disliked or rejected the cuisine of sacrifices and its implications for the understanding of the society. The (texts about) meal cultures of rabbis, Christians, and Pythagoreans must thus be read as part of their Greek and Roman social context.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 108–117.

<sup>58</sup> LEONHARD, “Blessings”.

<sup>59</sup> ANDREW MCGOWAN, *Ascetic Eucharists*.

The discussion of the rabbis' and the early Christians' meals as part of the larger picture about meals is the subject of several papers of the present volumes. The following sections must, therefore, turn to the subject of Pesach in order to assess its relationship to the Last Supper and via Pesach also to the later Christian Eucharist, just in order to return briefly to the more general aspects in the section "2.7. Blessings and Cups" on page 304 below.

## 2.2. *In Every Generation One is Obligated to Regard Oneself as if One Went out of Egypt*

The earliest manuscripts of the (Palestinian) Haggadah of Pesach contain a line that is often quoted in order to substantiate the claim that second century rabbis should have regarded the commemoration of the Exodus a major component of the celebration of the Seder:<sup>60</sup>

In every generation one is obliged to regard oneself as if one went out of Egypt, because it is said: you should tell your son on that day, because of this God did this to me on my exodus from Egypt.

This line seems to be part of a longer quotation from the last chapter of Mishnah Pesaḥim within the Haggadah. The more or less ritualized remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt appears to be a primordial element of the celebration of Pesach.

This line of text is not, however, part of any of the manuscripts of the Palestinian recension of the Mishnah. It is also not expounded or quoted in the Talmudim. This line appears for the first time as an expansion of a quotation of the Mishnah within the oldest manuscripts of the Haggadah. This expansion of the Haggadot later influenced the medieval texts of the Mishnah. It is one of the rare cases, where the transmission of the text of the Mishnah was influenced by a piece of popular liturgy. Therefore, the line quoted above is a medieval expansion of the text of the Mishnah within the Haggadah.

On its own, this does not rule out that the commemoration of the Exodus was regarded as an integral component of the celebration of the Seder before the text of the Mishnah had been expanded. After all, the rabbinic instructions for the Seder create ritualized acts based on biblical texts that discuss or narrate elements of the Exodus from Egypt. The Mishnah commands the table-fellowships to eat "bitter herbs" – which recalls Exodus 12 (and Num 9:11). Only there this dish is mentioned as part of the menu in the night of Pesach. However, even the Mishnah is anxious to keep mimetic and commemorative allusions to the Exodus at a minimum. It just concedes that the ritual meal at the Third (and perhaps also looking back at the Second) Temple may have a few more mimetic links to the Egyptian Pesach than it is suggested in the Tosefta. For, the tannaitic instructions would normally increase the distance between the "Pesach of the later generations" (i.e. all instances of a celebration of Pesach throughout Israel's history) and the "Egyptian Pesach" (its first celebration according to Exod 12). As mentioned above, *t. Pesaḥ. 8.12* emphasizes that one is not obliged to celebrate Pesach in families – or "houses" which implies that "the Pesach of the generations" should *not* follow the rule of Exod 12:4 to join one's neighbor's house (if the group of celebrants is too small for the consumption of one animal during that very night). In the text of the Mishnah, Rabbi Shimon opposes

<sup>60</sup> Exod 13:8; cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 19–20 n. 12; STEMBERGER, "Pesachhaggada", 154–155.

this anonymously transmitted rule of the Tosefta and emphasizes that one should indeed celebrate Pesach with one's neighbor – instead of celebrating with a colleague (*haver*). According to the anonymous rule of the Tosefta, rabbis may meet wherever they want in order to celebrate Pesach among themselves. Nevertheless, Rabbi Shimon's opposition against the general instruction belongs to the few cases where rabbinic authorities consider Exod 12 as basis for the creation of ritual instructions.<sup>61</sup> It is significant that they decide against keeping that law.

A brief remark in the Yerushalmi explains the Mishnaic text ("Even a poor person in Israel should not eat anything before he reclined") saying (*y. Pesah. 10.1 37b*):

R. Levi s(aid). Because it fits to the way of life of slaves to eat standing, they (i.e. the diners at the Seder) should eat reclining, in order to make it known that they (also) went out from slavery to freedom.

Like the addition to the Mishnaic text quoted above, the Talmud Yerushalmi explains the Mishnah that even a poor person should eat reclining – neither sitting nor standing. This rule was mentioned incidentally in the Mishnah, which is interested in the beginning of the meal, but not in the posture of poor diners during the meal. Yet, the Yerushalmi associates the diners' posture with their freedom that is rooted in their being a member of the people of Israel. This does not make the rabbinic celebration of Pesach an imitation of the Egyptian Pesach or Exod 12. On the contrary, the rabbinic Pesach is said to bear the signs of the permanent social results of the Exodus from Egypt. The Yerushalmi does not imbue the normal Greek and Roman dining posture with the remembrance of the Exodus. It suggests an explanation for what it sees as an emphasis of the Mishnah on the diners' posture during the meal. By doing that, it avails itself of the same approach to the Seder as the line of the Haggadah that makes one "regard oneself as if one went out of Egypt". The posture of reclining makes "it known that they went out from slavery to freedom". The posture does not require an explanation during the meal, it is (claimed to be) its own explanation.

In the high middle ages when reclining had been replaced by sitting as part of normal table etiquette, it was transformed into a ritualized act and even influenced the liturgical texts. Haggadot of the Babylonian rite may add the question of why the table fellows are reclining that night to the originally three questions of *mah-nništannah*. Neither the old manuscripts of the Mishnah nor the Palestinian Haggadot contain that additional question.<sup>62</sup>

The Palestinian Haggadot continue answering the father's<sup>63</sup> three questions of *mah-nništannah* with "in ancient times, your fathers lived beyond the river ..." (Josh

<sup>61</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 15–24. *t. Pesah. 8.11–22* lists similarities and differences between the first Pesach in Egypt and all later celebrations. It observes several ritual elements that are typical for Exod 12 only and which are forbidden for later celebrations, e.g. the consumption of the fat of the Pesach animals (*t. Pesah. 8.14*).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. manuscript CJS Halper 211 4r l. 3–4v l. 3 ERNST DANIEL GOLDSCHMIDT, *Passover Haggadah*, 78.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. GOLDSCHMIDT, *Die Pessachhaggada*, 35f referring to Moses ben Maimon's *Mišneh Torah*, *hameš umaššah 8.2*: "... and they pour him the second cup and then the son asks (= *m. Pesah. 10.4*). And the reader says: *mah nništannah ...*" Cf. LEONHARD, *Pesach*; 94–95, 99 and JAY ROVNER, "An Early Passover Haggadah", 349 reading ms. JTS 9560, 1r l. 3–7: [Aramaic] "[one brings?] the (serving) table/tray and [sets before him?] lettuce, unleavened b[read], [roasted meats], bitter herbs, *haroset*, [*srrh?*], and pours for him the second cup, and he recites over it" *mah nništannah*. Ms. CJS Halper 211 4r l. 3 indents *mah nništannah* but adds it directly to the ending of the last pre-prandial blessing.

24:2). The younger, Babylonian Haggadot ritualize the Bavli's alternative to the quotation of that biblical verse and continue with Deut 6:21 "We were Pharaoh's slaves ...".<sup>64</sup> Thus the quotation that associates Israel's past as slaves follows only in the younger tradition of the Haggadah after the fourth question inquiring about the meanwhile obsolete and therefore ritualized dining posture of late antiquity. The interest in the commemoration of the Exodus came up and increased during the middle ages. Yet, "Exodus" refers to the people's leaving Egypt, not to the meal that was held right before it. The emergence of a ritualized commemoration of the Exodus in any of its meanings postdates Jesus' life-time by centuries.

### 2.3. *This is the Bread of Affliction – This is my Body*

Telling the story of the Last Supper, the Synoptic Gospels relate Jesus' saying "this is my body" and "this is the blood of the covenant" (or: "this is my blood") over bread and wine. This description seems to associate the section of the Haggadah of Pesach that instructs the president of the Seder to lift up the Seder plate (after having removed from it the symbolic dishes that are traditionally interpreted as a stylized and minimized mimetic reference to the meat of the Pesach animal as well as the meat of the *hagigah*, the festive offering) saying "this is the bread of affliction that our fathers were used to eat in Egypt".<sup>65</sup> If it could be shown that the passage *ha lahma anya* in the Haggadah dates back to the first century C.E., this passage could be compared to the words of institution in the accounts of the Last Supper.<sup>66</sup>

This passage emerges in Babylonian Haggadot in Geonic times.<sup>67</sup> Günter Stemberger observes that even the traditional Aramaic paraphrases of Deut 16:3 do not translate *lehem 'oni* ("bread of poverty") as *lahma 'anya* except for one of the youngest witnesses to the tradition, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan<sup>68</sup>. If *ha lahma anya* should have been the opening of a well-known and important liturgical text, one could expect the Targumim to reflect that tradition. Even Saadya Gaon, who wrote the oldest well-preserved manual of instructions regarding Jewish (rabbanite) liturgy in the ninth century, which contains a Haggadah of Pesach, does not yet know the passage beginning with *ha lahma anya*.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 78f. 103; STEMBERGER, "Pesachhaggada", 150.

<sup>65</sup> *Ha lahma anya ...*, MENACHEM M. KASHER/SHMUEL ASHKNAGE, *Haggadah Shelemah*, line 50; cf. Deut 16:3; SHMUEL SAFRAI/ZE'EV SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 109–112.

<sup>66</sup> MARCUS, "Passover", ch. 4.

<sup>67</sup> STEMBERGER, "Pesachhaggada", 148–149; cf. LEONHARD, "Die Pesachhaggada als Spiegel", 162–163.

<sup>68</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> cent.; AVIGDOR SHINAN, *Embroidered Targum*, 196–198.

<sup>69</sup> ISRAEL DAVIDSON/SIMCHA ASSAF/B. ISSACHAR JOEL, *Siddur R. Saadya Gaon*, p. 136 = fol. 101r. Ignoring the textual history of the Haggadah of Pesach, MARCUS, "Passover", 310–311 claims that the passage *ha lahma anya* reflects the ritual and understanding of Pesach in the first century. MARCUS, 315 quotes the relevant literature, but fails to note that the Palestinian Haggadot represent an older version than the Babylonian ones. Thus, passages that occur only in the Babylonian Haggadot are high medieval additions to a text that is first attested towards the end of the tenth century; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, ch. 3.2.6. The passages that Marcus quotes from Philo's works are, moreover, instances of biblical interpretation, not of ritual description. The connection of unleavened bread with the *hasty* exodus from Egypt is present in Deut 16:3 and Exod 12:11, 34, 39. Thus, the fact that Philo and the (medieval) Haggadah associate these ideas does not indicate more than that both read the Torah. Marcus' point that the Armenian text of Philo hints at Exod 1:14 (the "bitterness" of Israel's life as slaves in Egypt) is, however, well taken, because Exod 1:14 LXX does not use a derivative of Greek *pikr-* or *parapikr-*. Before the emergence of the sources of the *Hex.* (cf. FIELD ad loc.), the verbal association of "bitter herbs" Exod 12/Num 9 with Israel's "embittered" life as slaves was lost to the readers of the Septuagint.

Saadya quotes the third sentence of that section of the Haggadah: “Let all those who are hungry come and eat”. This sentence is a quotation of the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Ta’an.* 20b–21a) telling laudable stories about Rav Huna. That sage is said to have been used to send a representative to the market in order to buy all vegetables that remained unsold before the Sabbath. He destroyed them throwing them into the river. The Talmud objects that he should have given the vegetables to the poor which Rav Huna would reject, because it would make the poor rely on this kind of charity. They would henceforth refrain from buying vegetables at all. A few lines further on, Rav Huna’s generosity towards the poor is described by means of another custom: “When he made himself a sandwich” (*ki hwā kāreḳ riḫtā*), he opened his door and said: “Everyone who is in need, come and eat!” Feeling that this behavior sets a standard as a general ethical norm for rich sages, Rabbah objects “I can keep up all of these except for this (i.e. the invitation of the poor to dine with me), which I cannot do because there is such a large number of soldiers in Machoza”.

Wisdom – or the sage – who invites the simple-minded (*peti*) to participate in her meal is a literary stereotype.<sup>71</sup> Its combination with Pesach is medieval. For, the story about Rav Huna is necessarily independent of any form of a Second Temple Pesach for reasons of halakah. At that time, joining a group of participants in the consumption of the meat of one Pesach animal at the time when the meal begins is ruled out. For, one must be registered as a member of such a group before the animal is slaughtered (*m. Pesah.* 8.3; *Mek. of R. Yishmael pisha* 3; *m. Zebah.* 5.8) or, according to another opinion, before its blood has been poured out at the base of the altar (*m. Pesah.* 8.3<sup>72</sup>). Opening the doors and inviting the poor to join the celebration when the table is set can only be conceived for the rabbinic Pesach, which is independent of the Temple.<sup>73</sup> Only after this line about the invitation of the poor had entered the ritual of the Haggadah, the much

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Marcus erroneously claims, that *m. Pesah.* 10.5 (ms. Koifman, Ma’agarim: <http://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il>) connects unleavened bread with Deut 16:3 par. This association occurs only in Haggadot, not in the Mishnah. This observation supports, nevertheless, Marcus’ claim. For, the Armenian Philo contains biblical associations that occur in the Haggadah of Pesach (against the Mishnah, which connects “unleavened bread” with “liberation” on the basis of a pun; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 22). Nevertheless, Marcus needs to bridge several centuries until the emergence of the Haggadah bypassing the Mishnah on the way. “That which is said” in the Armenian Philo (MARCUS, “Passover”, 310 referring to *QE* 1.15) can *only* refer to the Bible which is expounded there. Commonplace associations of motives within the Bible do not require the conjecture of a shared ritual text.

<sup>70</sup> *If t. Pesah.* 2.24 (*Mek. of R. Shimon* 12.8, *b. Pesah.* 115a) is read as a precept, Hillel’s ritualized interpretation of the commandment to eat “the Pesach on bitter herbs and unleavened bread” (Exod 12:8, Num 9:11) by forming a sandwich could be imitated by the diners. Eventually, it entered the performance of the Seder and also some of its textual traditions. Cf. S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, no. 28 and p. 63–64, 169.

<sup>71</sup> Prov 9:1–4, cf. also Tobit 2:2 who has the poor, innocent (*endeēs*) invited to his welcome party.

<sup>72</sup> Note however that Moses ben Maimon (commentary to the Mishnah ad loc.) thinks that members can be added to a group of diners until the animal has been slaughtered, but that they can withdraw from the group until the blood has been poured out.

<sup>73</sup> *t. Ber.* 4.8–9 rules out that anybody should join a festive meal after the third course of hors d’oeuvres. At first glance this seems to rule out the appearance of the belated guest at the meal, although this cliché helps to create tension in literary symposia. Thus, Rav Huna invites the poor at the beginning of his meal. This role of the latecomer at a meal seems to be well accepted in actual – albeit literary – practice; cf. *b. Pesah.* 107a which tells two stories about Amemar who happened to appear unexpectedly (*iqqala’*) at a meal towards the end of the Sabbath. The situation requires him to say *havdalah* which he refuses at first, because he is offered some beer (or just rotgut, *šikra*) instead of wine (*hamra*).

later, Babylonian traditions added *ha laḥma anya* which eventually became the opening passage of the Haggadah.

In *m. Pesah.* 10.5, Rabban Gamaliel does not, furthermore, interpret unleavened bread as “bread of affliction” according to Deut 16:3. On the contrary, he implies an interpretation of the *maṣṣah* as “bread of liberation”: “... ‘unleavened bread’, because they were redeemed”.<sup>74</sup> This further corroborates the assumption that *ha laḥma anya* is the consequence of the medieval re-interpretation of the Seder on the basis Exod 12. Contrary to the Yerushalmi, that interprets the posture of reclining as a sign of the diners’ freedom and hence Pesach as a result of the Exodus, the middle ages evoke the sad situation of the present rather than the glory of past liberation at this point in the celebration. Aligning the rituals of Pesach with its mythical first celebration *before* the liberation is a concern of the middle ages rather than the first centuries C.E. (Only) the Babylonian Haggadah spells out this point: “This year here, the next year in the land of Israel. This year slaves, the next year free ones!” In the middle ages, Pesach loses its character as a celebration of the free ones becoming a celebration of those who hope for liberation.

Therefore, manuscript evidence of the Haggadah must be taken at face value. It reflects the development of the liturgies. The three sentences of the section *ha laḥma anya* of the Haggadah materialize at the turn of the millennium. *Ha laḥma anya* is most likely one of its latest accretions.

Israel Yuval has shown that this passage as well as its ritual acts is not only a latecomer in the development of the Haggadah, but that it also echoes the handling of the consecrated host in the high medieval Roman mass.<sup>75</sup> The presidents of the Seder lift up the pieces of unleavened bread in a gesture that mimics the elevation of the host after the recitation of the institution narrative. Thus, the Haggadah opens with a counter-ritual that reinterprets the narrative of its celebration as a counter-story against the Christian narrative of the salvation of Christianity through Jesus which is performed during the mass.

If the Haggadah is read through the lenses of *ha laḥma anya*, it presents itself as an anti-Eucharist. By coincidence, Pesach inverts the story of the Christian Easter that began as an anti-Pesach.<sup>76</sup> Modern interpreters who expound Jesus’ words of institution “this is my body” as a replacement of “this is the bread of affliction” of the Haggadah misrepresent the tradition in two ways. First, the two rituals are indeed related to each other, but the Jewish one was shaped after and against the Christian one. Second, these exchanges take place more than a millennium after the epoch of the New Testament.

Israel Yuval notes that the textual traditions of the Haggadah react to and even imitate in a way the debates about the Eucharist in Latin medieval Christianity. Some manuscripts add *k* before *ha laḥma anya* saying: “*like* this – bread of affliction”. Christians claim that the body of Christ is not said to be present as blood and flesh, but only *substantialiter* and hence by definition imperceptibly, i.e. dependent upon the ability of the eaters to understand the implications of the ritual. Thus the Aramaic phrase of the Haggadah can be read as making the diners at Pesach eat unleavened bread *like* the bread of afflic-

<sup>74</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 22.

<sup>75</sup> ISRAEL J. YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, ch. 5 (205–248); LEONHARD, “Die Pesachhaggada”, 162–163.

<sup>76</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*; 52–53, 120, 279–285 based on observations by Gerard Rouwhorst.

tion that their ancestors ate in Egypt. Celebrants of Pesach do not eat *the* Egyptian bread of affliction.<sup>77</sup>

#### 2.4. Another Piece of Bread – the Afikoman

The Mishnaic Afikoman makes the sages of the Babylonian Talmud speculate about the meaning of this term and the customs connected with it. Today, Afikoman is a piece of unleavened bread that is broken off one of the three large pieces at the beginning of the Seder. It is hidden away during the recitation of the Haggadah and the meal. After the meal, it is retrieved and shared among the celebrants. As a performance of the consumption of minimal portions of bread in a stylized way and not in order to assuage hunger after the meal, it may create a bridge of associations between the Latin mass of Easter (where the faithful are invited to receive the consecrated host) and the Seder.

As the second century author Melito of Sardes refers to Christ as “the coming one” – *aphikomenos* (*Peri Pascha* 66.68) – in his highly stylized prose homily “On Pascha”, it has been inferred from the phonetic similarity and the Paschal context that this passage might be an associative allusion to the tannaitic remark about the Afikoman.<sup>78</sup> If this should be true, Melito might be a witness to an old tradition that identified the last piece of unleavened bread which was eaten at the conclusion of the Jewish Pesach with the body of Christ. This was interpreted as revealing the primordial kinship of Pesach and the Eucharist.

These conclusions are inadmissible. The assessment of the meaning of Afikoman faces an opaque text of the Mishnah: *en maḥtirin aḥar happesah apiqoman* (or *apiqiman* and the like) “And one does not end after the Pesach *apiqoman*”. Several possibilities of understanding this line may be proposed.

If (1) *maḥtirin* should identify Afikoman as an activity performed (Greek *epikōmion*, *epikōmos* “after dinner revelry”<sup>79</sup>) or (2<sup>80</sup>) some food consumed “after the Pesach (meal, the celebration, or the meat of the animal)” and if (3) *apiqoman* belongs to the same sentence as the verb *maḥtirin*, the Mishnah prohibits *apiqoman*. If (4) *apiqoman* is read as an utterance unit by itself, the line can be translated: “Do not stop! (Perform/eat) after the Pesach (meal, the celebration, or the meat of the animal) *apiqoman*!” In that case, the Mishnah instructs its readers to perform/eat *apiqoman*. This reading (4) makes it

<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, Christians of the medieval West hardly ever eat the consecrated host in the high middle ages. They only look at it, although the performance of the mass at Easter should comprise the distribution and consumption of consecrated bread as a rare occasion within the liturgical year. This also supports Yuval’s reconstruction. The Haggadah starts with lifting and interpreting a piece of *bread* – a treatment that is not performed with any of the four cups of wine. Even though the consecrated wine is also lifted up and shown during the mass, the medieval Seder begins with an emphasis on the bread alone. This is not due to the fact that first century Jews apparently tended to perform a blessing over bread at the beginning and one over wine at the end of the meal (1 Cor 11:23–24; Mark 14:22; Matt 26:26, with a more sophisticated situation in Luke 22:16, 19–20 and Didache 9–10). It echoes the much wider dissemination of the manipulation, storage, etc. of the bread in comparison with the Eucharistic wine that was reserved for the priests and consumed within each mass in Medieval Christianity by the priest(s) alone.

<sup>78</sup> *m. Pesah.* 10.8; cf. STEMBERGER, “Pesachhaggada”, 155.

<sup>79</sup> *y. Pesah.* 37d par. *b. Pesah.* 86a, 119b: *apiqoman* = “that nobody should get up from this group of diners and enter another one”; S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 44.

<sup>80</sup> *y. Pesah.* 37d mentions also different kinds of music as meaning of *apiqoman* besides food; S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 44.

impossible to know how the Mishnaic tannaim understood the term *apiqoman* and what should be done with it or how it should be done. The indeterminacy of *apiqoman* makes it an almost empty variable that invites the search for differing meanings. Comparing the instruction with Greek and Roman meal customs will not improve the situation, because it is not obvious whether the Mishnah prohibits (3) or prescribes (4) the consumption (2) or the performance (1) of “X” (*apiqoman*). The tannaim could have accepted, forbidden, or modified the meal customs of their compatriots. None is more plausible than the other.

The Mishnah becomes much less ambiguous or opaque, as soon as one reads it as an abbreviation of the Tosefta.<sup>81</sup> In that case, it is evident that the Afikoman of the tannaim is a kind of desert and that it must not be eaten: “One does not end after the Pesach (with) *apiqoman*, like nuts, dates, and parched corn”. Several reasons can be adduced in order to explain the prohibition of deserts at Pesach. At any rate, it is absolutely beyond the rabbis’ horizon to regard Afikoman as a piece of unleavened bread that is hidden before the meal and eaten afterwards.<sup>82</sup> After the term has been clearly defined and rooted in rabbinic customs by the Tosefta, the Mishnah does not need to explain this rule, because it is evident. The tannaitic Afikoman does not, therefore, carry any anti-Christian overtones. No associative bridge links the mishnaic prohibition of *apiqoman* with the early history of the Eucharist.

However, Israel Yuval has shown that the Afikoman was a powerful link between the Eucharist and the celebration of the Seder in the high middle ages.<sup>83</sup> Based on testimonies of converts from Judaism to Christianity as well as on remarks by Jewish authorities, it is obvious that the breaking, hiding, recovering, distribution, and consumption of the second of the three<sup>84</sup> pieces of unleavened bread used from the middle ages on was regarded as a solemn moment in the celebration of the Seder. The rite is missing in the Palestinian Haggadot from the Genizah of Kairo.<sup>85</sup> The Afikoman was expounded allegorically and eaten with great care. This is corroborated by the textual development of the Haggadah. The ritualized consumption of the Afikoman is visible in the instructions, but only rarely accompanied by standardized liturgical text.<sup>86</sup> It is pure action. This points to its relative age within the tradition of the text – apparently just before the Babylonian Haggadah

<sup>81</sup> The Talmudim do not read the Tosefta as the source for the Mishnah. Hence they also adduce other possibilities to understand *apiqoman* besides the Tosefta. This does not vitiate the assumption that the Tosefta was available to the sages of the Mishnah. For the Talmudim, the Mishnah is the canonical point of departure in terms of literature and textual history.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 240. S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 170 refer to *b. Pesah*. 119b–120a where two opposed statements are attributed to the Shmuel: “One does not conclude/ concludes after the unleavened bread with Afikoman”. The discussion refers to *t. Pesah*. 2.19 which tries to draw a borderline between different kinds of fancy pastries that are or are not to be regarded as a viable means to fulfill one’s duty to eat unleavened bread at Pesach, even though some of those *may* be eaten (because they do not violate the prohibition of leaven). Note that even the discussion of Shmuel’s statements as well as that statements itself regard the Afikoman as something that may or may not be eaten, *after* the last piece of unleavened bread or after the meat of the Pesach animal. That “Afikoman” is not the last piece of unleavened bread.

<sup>83</sup> YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 239–246.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 240 n. 102, S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 78–83.

<sup>85</sup> S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 170.

<sup>86</sup> Apart from Kabbalistic Haggadot, Sefardic Haggadot add a piece of text for the recitation: “(in) memory of the Pesach sacrifice that is eaten upon satiety (i.e. not in order to satisfy hunger, but after one has already eaten enough”; S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 170–171. The utterance is apparently modeled on the (equally recent) text spoken to the consumption of bitter herbs and unleavened bread as a sandwich.



came to be regarded as a canonical text that would not be changed any more (except for additions at its end). It is younger than *ha lahma anya* where ritualized acts are still accompanied by liturgical text in the *textus receptus*.

As it is known today, the Afikoman is an Element of the medieval Seder. Its reinterpretation and the invention of ritualized acts for its handling during the Seder reflect the interreligious dialogue of the middle ages. The Afikoman cannot have played any role in a first century imagination of the celebration of the Last Supper.

### 2.5. *He Who Tells Many Stories About the Exodus from Egypt Shall be Praised*

The early rabbinic understanding of Pesach excludes Exodus 12 from its sphere of interest. After the destruction of the Second Temple, the rabbis do not want to recreate Pesach as a ritual that is devoted to the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. Israel Yuval suggests that this almost total avoidance of Exod 12 reflects the sages' reaction to the Christian appropriation of Exod 12 as the meaning of Easter.<sup>87</sup> The present approach disagrees with this assumption, because the marked rabbinic avoidance of Exodus 12 precedes the emergence of the Christian Easter. The second century author, Melito of Sardes, is the first one to expound a Christian form of Easter. He relies heavily on Exod 12. Moreover, Jesus' death had been linked to Exod 12 much earlier (John 19:36 and 1 Cor 5:7). This New Testament approach may have provided a point of departure for Melito. While he must have known some Jewish groups who celebrated Pesach, it is obvious that he was not acquainted with the rabbinic approach to shaping and interpreting this festival. Apart from the two hints in the New Testament, the early rabbis did not have a Christian counterpart against whom they could have developed a marked dislike for Exodus 12 as the root repertoire for metaphors and meanings of their new form of celebration. On the contrary, it must be asked, why the rabbis should have relied on Exod 12 in the first place. Their avoidance of Exod 12 shows that they understood Exod 12 in a similar way as it is expounded in this essay.

However, the Haggadah of Pesach mentions five sages who tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt all through the night.<sup>88</sup>

And even if all of us were scholars, all of us full of understanding, all of us elders, all of us learned in the Torah, it would still be a commandment for us to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. And he who tells many stories about the Exodus from Egypt shall be praised. [... Five sages] were reclining (at the Seder) together in Bne Brak and were telling stories about the Exodus that whole night long, until their disciples arrived and said to them: Masters, it is time to recite the morning Shma'.

It is obvious that the Haggadah wants to make the celebrants of Pesach talk abundantly about the Exodus from Egypt – like the Bavli praises “Everyone who searches (leaven) abundantly” (*m. Sanh.* 5.2). While this would not imply the sages' interest in the text of Exod 12, it makes at least the topic of the Exodus one of the important contents of the celebration. The rabbis mentioned in the passage, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Joshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria, Rabbi Aqiva, and Rabbi Tarfon, are all tannaim and the passage is worded as if it was just a quotation from the Mishnah.

<sup>87</sup> YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 77–87; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, ch. 2.1.6.

<sup>88</sup> KASHER/ASHKNAGE, *Haggadah Shelemah*, 68–75; S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, no. 6–8.

The passage is not, however, a rabbinic, let alone a tannaitic text. It is only attested in the Haggadah of Pesach and it only appears relatively late in the textual history of that tradition. Thus none of the Palestinian Haggadot contains that story and some of the witnesses for the Babylonian tradition still lack it, too.<sup>89</sup> Saadya Gaon does not yet know it. The rabbinic texts do not refer to it, not even indirectly. If its Hebrew wording should indicate that it was composed in tannaitic times, this passage would have bypassed the whole bulk of rabbinic literature and the first centuries of the creation of the Haggadah in order to surface only in the middle ages.

There is, however, an alternative to the assumption of tannaitic origins regarding this text. The narrative of the five sages reclining in Bne Brak and telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt was composed as an anti-narrative against a passage in the Tosefta, which states that one must discuss the laws of the Pesach sacrifice during the whole night:<sup>90</sup>

A man (i.e. everybody) is obliged to occupy himself with the laws of Pesach during the whole night – even he together with his son (if there is nobody else) – even he himself – even he together with his disciple. A precedent involving Rabban Gamaliel and the elder (sages) who were reclining in the house of Boëtos Ben Zonin in Lod. They occupied themselves with the laws of the Pesach (offering) during the whole night until cockcrow. (Then) they (the servants) lifted up (the tables) in front of them. They were stirred up [!] and went to the study house.

At least eight hundred years after the time of composition of this Tosefta and against its story, the Babylonian Haggadah is expanded by means of a passage emphasizing that one must tell the story of the Exodus. The brief narratives of the Tosefta as well as of the Haggadah are self-referential. In both of them, the meaning of the celebration as well as parts of its ritual performance is at stake. The younger traditions of the Haggadah emphasize that this evening is about telling the story of the Exodus and hence not about discussing Temple laws. This interpretation of the tendencies and interests of the Haggadah fits to the other observations given above. Except for a few lines of the Palestinian Haggadot, that can be interpreted in this way, the interest in the performance of the narration of the Exodus only begins with the expansion of the older and shorter texts of the Palestinian Haggadot in the high middle ages. The commemoration of the Exodus at Pesach was not on the agenda of the early rabbis. What did they do instead?

The tannaim construct the Seder as a liturgy that should be performed as soon as the Third Temple would have been rebuilt but which could also function as a replacement for the Temple-based ritual until that time. For the rabbis, the biblical pilgrim festivals remain pilgrim festivals. They cannot be celebrated outside of the Temple. Yet, it seems that already the earliest tannaim regarded the study of the laws pertaining to the festivals as a temporary means to fulfill the commandments to celebrate those festivals.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the celebrants at the Seder according to the Tosefta should study and discuss the law thereby

<sup>89</sup> S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 208 (no. 7–8).

<sup>90</sup> *t. Pesah.* 10.11–12. Cf. YUVAL, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 62–68; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, ch. 3.2.6.

<sup>91</sup> S. SAFRAI/Z. SAFRAI, *Haggadah of the Sages*, 45–46. Later rabbinic texts make it more explicit; cf. *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 6.3: "... the sages say (i.e. it is the opinion of the majority): that one (i.e. the first passage that commands the daily offering) is for study and this one is for actual performance. (According to) R. Acha in the name of R. Chanina bar Pappa: (the law pertaining to the daily offerings is prescribed twice in the Torah, i.e. Exod 29:38–42 and Num 28:1–8) in order that the Israelites should not be saying: in the past we were used to sacrifice sacrifices and we were used to occupy ourselves with them. But now, that we do not sacrifice sacrifices any more, why should we occupy ourselves with them? The Holy One, may he be blessed, said to them: when you occupy yourselves with them, it is as if you (actually) sacrificed them." The idea is further expanded.

fulfilling the commandments to celebrate them. Of course, they would also talk about Exod 12 insofar as Exod 12 contains text that may be regarded as a commandment for the celebration of Pesach. They were neither supposed to commemorate or tell the story of the Exodus, nor should they regard themselves as if they themselves had left Egypt. They were also not supposed to reenact Exod 12. They would fulfill some commandments by studying them only and some by fulfilling and studying them – in any case, laws pertaining to the celebration of Pesach at the Temple.

The precept to tell the story of the Exodus emerges even later in the history of the Haggadah than the expansion of the Mishnah that one should regard oneself as if one left Egypt.<sup>92</sup> Both parts of the Haggadah design the festival as a commemorative ritual of important events in the history of the people of Israel. This is an innovative idea that post-dates the formative epoch of rabbinic literature. In Jesus' and his disciples' time, Pesach was not, a fortiori, a festival of the commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt.

## 2.6. *Hymnēsantes* – Singing the Hallel?

Mark 14:26 and Matthew 26:30 remark that Jesus and his disciples left the upper room heading for the Mount of Olives *hymnēsantes* which some exegetes interpret as the performance of the Hallel (i.e. Psalms 113–118) being the last ritual act of the performance of the meal of Pesach.<sup>93</sup> If these two New Testament passages indeed refer to the singing of the Hallel towards the end of the Seder, that part of the rabbinic celebration would have to be dated back at least to the first century C.E.

Regarding the book of Psalms, no biblical source indicates that these Psalms were ever performed and hence understood as a unit or connected with Pesach. The Psalms that were later regarded as “the Hallel” were not yet fully standardized even in rabbinic times. Nevertheless, tannaitic texts quote lines of several Psalms in that context: Ps 113:9 and 114:8 (*t. Pesah.* 10.9/*m. Pesah.* 10.6); Ps 116:1 (*t. Pesah.* 4.11/*m. Pesah.* 5.6); Ps 118:16 (*t. Pesah.* 10.7). Thus, the customary texts that belong to the corpus of the Hallel today are hinted at in the early rabbinic texts.

According to the Mishnah, the rabbis say, that the “Hallel” was sung in the Temple during the slaughtering of the Pesach animals (*m. Pesah.* 5.7):

As soon as the first group (of Israelites slaughtering their Pesach animals in the Temple) went out, the second group entered (cf. *t. Pesah.* 4.10). As soon as the second group went out, the third group entered. The second and third groups performed the same actions as the first one. They recited the Hallel. If they completed (it), they repeated (it). If they (finished the) repetition, they (recited it) for a third time, although they actually never repeated (it) for a third time. Rabbi Yehuda says: In none of the days (when there was actually a) third group they reached (the passage): *I loved (it) that God heard*, because the people (belonging to that third group) were few.

Who recited the Hallel in the Temple? *m. Pesah.* 5.7 is again understood best as an abbreviation of the corresponding passage in the Tosefta (*t. Pesah.* 4.11):

<sup>92</sup> See ch. 2.2. In Every Generation One is Obligated to Regard Oneself as if One Went out of Egypt” on page 292.

<sup>93</sup> GOLDSCHMIDT, *Passover Haggadah*, 55 n. 17g connects the passages in the Gospels with *m. Pesah.* 9.3; see below. E.g. MARTIN HENGEL, “Christuslied”, 213 and against premature identifications STEMBERGER, “Pesachhaggada”, 154–155.

The priest who (is standing) closest to the altar pours the blood in one pouring towards the base. If he did not pour it towards the base, it is not valid. The Levites are standing on their platform and complete the Hallel in a row. If they completed (the first round), they repeated (it).

[... Text as in the Mishnah]

And (the third group) was called “group of lazy ones”.

Thus, the Mishnah accepts from the Tosefta the general procedure of the slaughtering of the Pesach animals. The Mishnah just skips the identification of the singers of the Hallel and the designation for the third group. Thus, the rabbinic traditions presuppose that Levites were used to recite “the Hallel”. This is, after all, quite plausible, because it may be assumed that it would have been a sophisticated case of multitasking for the normal Israelites to sing the Hallel and slaughter and flay their animals, to extract the entrails, and hand over their blood and special portions of fat to the priests, all at the same time.

If *t. Pesah.* 4 (and *m. Pesah.* 5 in its wake) are accepted as historically accurate descriptions of the actions that were performed at the Second Temple, “the Hallel” would be recited by the Levites in the Temple and not by the Israelites in the dining room or on the lawns around Jerusalem. In addition, it would be recited long before the meal, and not at its conclusion. From the observations about the purpose of the Seder according to the rabbis (*t./m. Pesah.* 10), the rules for the Seder govern the performance of the meals in the time *after* the destruction of the Temple. The discussion of the laws of the sacrifices *as replacement* of their actual performance does not make sense before that time. Whatever customs and laws regulated the consumption of the Pesach animals at the second Temple, those meals were only performed similar to the rabbinic Seder, insofar as the celebration of Pesach might have resembled Greco Roman meals.

At this point, it must be objected that another passage in Mishnah Pesachim (*m. Pesah.* 9:3<sup>94</sup>) remarks that the Hallel was also sung during the meal – i.e. during the consumption of the meat of the Pesach animal – at the first Pesach in Nisan (in contrast to the second Pesach a month later that was performed by those who could not celebrate the first one):

“What is the difference between the first Pesach and the second one? [...] The first one requires Hallel at its eating and the second one does [not<sup>95</sup>] require Hallel at its eating. This one and that one require Hallel at (the time) of its preparation. They are eaten roasted upon unleavened bread and bitter herbs and they supersede the Sabbath.”

This Mishnaic law does not have a direct parallel in the Tosefta. Shamma Friedman asks how the diners would sing while eating.<sup>96</sup> He assumes that the Hallel was already divided into two parts in Second Temple times – one before and one after the meal. If this reconstruction is accepted, it stands to reason that the term *hymnēsantes* reflects Mark’s knowledge that the celebration of Pesach would end with the recitation of the Hallel.

Yet, one may propound both another ritualistic and a literary solution for the problems involved in this Mishnah. First, unlike the well-established interpretation of *m. Pesah.* 5:7, the rule that the first Pesach “requires Hallel” is associated with a passage in

<sup>94</sup> GOLDSCHMIDT, *Passover Haggadah*, 55 n. 17g. LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 100 n. 65. *y. Pesah.* 9.3 36d, *b. Pesah.* 95b quote Isa 30:29 in order to provide a biblical proof-text for the difference between the two celebrations, not in order to explain the recitation of the Hallel during the meal in the first place.

<sup>95</sup> The negation is missing in ms. Koifman (Ma’agarim).

<sup>96</sup> FRIEDMAN, *Tosefta Atiqta*, 458.

the Tosefta (*t. Pesah.* 10.6–9). Thus the diners are indeed supposed to sing the Hallel. Yet, according to 2 Chr 35:15, the Levites were preparing the animals (for Josiah's Pesach) and serving the meat to the priests and the Israelites. It may be assumed that the remark that the singers – the sons of Asaf, not the Levites – were “on their position according to David's instruction” implies that they were performing the singing. *m. Pesah.* 9.3 is part of the discussion of the celebration of Pesach at the Temple, not among the rules to be kept by post-destruction congregations. Read as a historical note, *m. Pesah.* 9.3 just implies that the musical performance goes on while the Israelites are eating (some of them within the Temple) just as it went on before when the Israelites were busy slaughtering their animals. In that case, normal Israelites were not required to know how to perform “Hallel”.

Second, *m. Pesah.* 9.3 can be read as a literary response and as a bit of interpretation of *t. Pesah.* 8.22 rather than *t. Pesah.* 10.6–9: “The Pesach (observed) in Egypt requires a song (using the term *šir*, not *hallel*). The Pesach (observed in the coming) generations requires a song.” In *m. Pesah.* 9, the Mishnah adds a list of differences between the first and second Pesachs to the list of the Tosefta collecting differences between the Egyptian Pesach and the Pesach of all other generations of Israelites. *m. Pesah.* 9.3 relies on and expands *t. Pesah.* 8.22. In the context of *t. Pesah.* 4.10, the passage *t. Pesah.* 8.22 is quite simple. It remarks that – if not Hallel – then at least some singing links the Egyptian Pesach with all other instances. “Song” may mean the Levite's Hallel until 70 C.E. and the Hallel of a specialist in the synagogue in the epoch of the sages. *m. Pesah.* 9.3 just mixes *t. Pesah.* 8.22 and *t. Pesah.* 4.10 assigning the two different occasions to the singing: the preparation and the consumption of the Pesach animals. In that case, the Tosefta remains the sole source for the reconstruction of ritual realities: as long as the Temple was functioning, the Levites were singing there. For the present time, the Levites' singing is transformed into a frame for the banquet but still performed by specialists, because the celebrants would not know how to do it. The Tosefta transformed the performance of the Hallel at the Temple into a mealtime ritual. The Mishnah reconstructed Temple-time rituals out of the meal of the Tosefta.

As presupposed in the preceding paragraph, another quite salient feature of the laws of the Hallel in the Tosefta is the supposition that the diners are apparently not able to recite the Hallel. Thus, *t. Pesah.* 10.7 rules that “the people go to that one who recites the Hallel and recite it, but he does not go to them.” Someone who recites the Hallel for his sons and daughters is obliged to join them in their parts in an antiphonal performance of Ps 118 (*t. Pesah.* 10.8). The most striking rule (*t. Pesah.* 10.9) stipulates that:

the people of the city, who do not have someone to recite the Hallel for them, go to the synagogue and recite the first part. Then they go home, eat, drink, return, and finish it. If that should not be possible for them, they complete the whole ([apparently:] upon their first visit to the synagogue).

The rabbis assume that normal Israelites did not, actually, know two texts which the rabbis required them to recite in Post-Second-Temple times: the Hallel (*t. Pesah.* 10.9) and *Arami oved avi*<sup>97</sup>. Thus, neither the Hallel nor the Mikra bikkurim (Deut 26:5–[?]) could

<sup>97</sup> *m. Bik.* 3.7; *Sipre Deut* 301 and *m. Soṭah* 7.3; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 116 n. 116.

have been chosen for the recitation during the Seder, on the basis of the assumption that they were known by the people.<sup>98</sup>

Furthermore, it is true that *t. Pesah.* 10.8 as well as *m. Pesah.* 10.5–7 assume that the normal procedure of the recitation of the Hallel divides it into two parts – one before the meal and one after the meal. Yet, in case that the people cannot return to the synagogue after the meal they would take part in the recitation of the whole text *before* the meal (*t. Pesah.* 10.9) – not after it. Thus, the most typical place for the recitation of the Hallel was before the meal. This corroborates the conclusion that the rabbinic Hallel is the result of the transformation of a Temple rite (*viz.* the performance of the Hallel during the slaughtering of the animals and hence before the meal) into a domestic and/or synagogal rite.

Returning to the topic of this section, the term *hymnēsantes* of Mark 14:26 and Matt 26:30 does not refer to “the Hallel” as conclusion of the Last Supper as a Pesach meal. In other words, the Synoptic Gospels may imagine the Last Supper as a Pesach meal. Their remark about the Jesus’ and his disciples’ singing after the meal belongs to the narrative, may reflect any kind of banquet customs, and does not point the ritual of the rabbinic Seder.

### 2.7. Blessings and Cups

The question whether or not Jesus performed similar blessings over bread, over other food, and over cups of wine as the rabbis cannot be answered with regard to the specific case of Pesach. The rabbis made their followers recite the same texts during the Seder which were recited at other occasions (except for the blessing upon the Hallel). Whether the liturgical model for the literary Last Supper should have been the meal of the Pesach sacrifice or some other form of banquet, Jesus would have been supposed to recite the appropriate blessings for meals. The question of Jesus’ table prayers and rabbinic blessings must be discussed in the framework of blessings before meals and Birkat ha-Mazon in comparison with religious performances of other Greeks and Romans during meals in the first century. For the present context, it is important to remember that the text of Jesus’ blessings cannot be recovered because of the lack of data. Neither of the New Testament terms – *eulogēin* and *eucharistēin* – is a technical or typical term for any known pre-prandial blessing of that time.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>98</sup> In Second Temple times, the *miqra bikkurim* would not be recited by many people. Only farmers who happened to be able and willing to bring (fresh) first-fruits to the Temple would get the opportunity to recite *Mikra bikkurim*. Alternatively, *t. Pesah.* 10.6, 8 might be read as implying that everyone knew the Hallel, but that the ritual performance was tied to the synagogue and that its leadership was entrusted to a specialist (perhaps even a Levite, which is not said in the text) for other reasons than the peoples’ in capability of performing it. Yet, the Tosefta is not at all interested in the liturgical role or characteristics of the precentor but only in instructions for the president of the Seder.

<sup>99</sup> The most widespread rabbinic blessings do not follow the allegedly Jewish basic pattern of blessings. That pattern (which is found often in literary prayers like the Lord’s Prayer as well as some magical papyri; e.g. CAROLINE JOHNSON, “Ritual Epiclesis”) should comprise an introductory commemoration of the gods’ or God’s benevolent deeds towards the supplicant followed by intercessions and supplications. Yet, as widespread and banal as it may be, even that structure cannot be detected in the central relative clauses of the rabbinic standard blessings, like that over wine. “Blessed ... who creates the fruit of the vine” contains a short element of adulation at its beginning. The rest is neither thanksgiving, nor a narrative of God’s past benevolence towards his people, nor intercession, nor request.

But most importantly, neither the Gospels nor 1 Cor 11 explain the *function* of the blessings that Jesus should have performed. Irrespective of their wording, the rabbinic blessings are said to make the generally sacred food profane (*t. Ber.* 4.1) – a function that cannot be reconciled with the later Christian understanding of the quality of the food of the community meals. On the contrary, it can be shown that the rabbinic understanding of the ritual function of the blessings must have originated after the destruction of the Temple. For, the explanation of this function applies notions and procedures of the biblical processes of tithing and the sanctification of food for the consumption of the priests and Levites to short forms of blessings in a way that is just unthinkable as long as the system of tithing at the Temple could still have been perceived as normative.<sup>100</sup>

In the middle ages, some witnesses to the Palestinian tradition of the Haggadah quote blessings that were removed in the redactional process that led to the creation of the Babylonian Haggadot. After all, those are typically Palestinian blessings over food, taken over from the Yerushalmi.<sup>101</sup> The Palestinian Haggadot embellish Birkat ha-Mazon with different forms of Piyyutim. Yet, it is evident, that the Seder just requires the normal post-prandial blessings like all other meals.

Jesus and his disciples cannot have used rabbinic blessings with the same ritual function as the later rabbis and there is no reason to assume that the texts of the rabbinic blessings should have been in use in Jesus' time. Knowledge about the rituals of Pesach – past and present – does not add any bit of information that could elucidate the understanding of the function, wording, or meaning of *eulogēsas/eucharistēsas* in the institution narratives.

### 3. Meals Resembling the Last Supper

#### 3.1. A Formal Analogy Between the Eucharist, the Institution Narratives, Exodus 12, and Pesach

In a very formal and highly abstract way, the institution narratives of the Gospels and Paul's first letter to the Corinthians correspond to Exodus 12 and Wisdom 18 in their origins, function, and also in their use within the rituals three centuries later. Even if the Christian institution narratives should be based on the remembrance of an actual meal that Jesus held before his death,<sup>102</sup> that meal would not have been the only reason why Christians celebrated the Eucharist. In other words, Christians began to celebrate banquets, because groups that could afford it performed banquets in general.

<sup>100</sup> LEONHARD, „Blessings“.

<sup>101</sup> ms. CJS Halper 211 1v2f, 2v4–4r2 GOLDSCHMIDT, *Passover Haggadah*, 75–77; *y. Ber.* 6.1 10b; apart from the usual blessings, *m. Ber.* 6 and *t. Ber.* 4–5; LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 100–101.

<sup>102</sup> MARCUS, „Passover“, 313 remarks: “The important question for our purposes, then, is not whether or not Jesus' Last Supper actually was a Passover meal, but whether or not the Synoptic Gospels, which are rooted in pre-70 realities, portray it as such. And since the answer to that question is ‘yes’, the Synoptics provide valuable evidence for the shape of the Passover celebration before 70”. If this statement is taken seriously, i.e. if the Institution Narratives are read as first century descriptions of a celebration of Pesach in Jerusalem, the Synoptic Gospels prove that Pesach was neither imbued with ritual elements from Exod. 12 nor that any kind of predecessor of the Haggadah was recited. In an exercise of circular reasoning, Marcus reads all those elements of text and ritual into the Institution Narratives in order to arrive at the conclusion that they were there a priori.

Like Exodus 12 with regard to Pesach at the Temple in Jerusalem, the institution narratives of the Gospels tell a story that its tradents soon regarded as a narrative about the origins of – and the reason for – the Christian community meals. Like Exodus 12, the Last Supper is set *before* the event on which the later celebrations are said to be based had taken place (i.e. the actual liberation from Egypt and Jesus' death and resurrection). After all, the narrated facts – Jesus' death and resurrection, as well as the liberation from Egypt – do not provide mimetic ritual elements for the shaping of communal meals. The foundational narrative of the actual ritual performances is set before the event and imbued with the intensive anticipation of the event. Groups that perform this ritual in later centuries are claimed to continue a tradition that began before it. This tradition provides the reason for the celebration. Ritualized actualizations that put special emphasis on that preliminary status by means of mimetic enactments of the etiological story are either based on a misunderstanding of the text or constitute a conscious re-interpretation of the etiology. In other words, anyone who wants to celebrate a Eucharistic banquet as commemoration of Jesus' death and resurrection must deemphasize the mimetic elements that allude to the Last Supper. Conversely, everyone who increases these mimetic elements emphasizes the situation of anticipation and deemphasizes hence the celebration of Jesus' death and resurrection. Only in this *formal* sense, the relationship of celebrations of Pesach and Exod 12 is analogous to that of the celebration of the Eucharist and the Institution Narratives. The Institution Narratives were not formulated as an invitation to stage a celebration that resembles Exodus 12.

### 3.2. *Calendars*

The meals in which Jesus took part according to the Gospel narratives and the meal that entered the traditional consciousness as “the Last Supper” differ markedly.<sup>103</sup> The literary Jesus behaves differently as a guest and as the presider of a meal. The same is true for his fellow diners. The gap between these diverse narratives and later Eucharistic celebrations must be bridged by the study of Greek and Roman dining customs. The differences between the narratives of the Last Supper and those about Jesus' participation in meals as a guest cannot be explained with recourse to traditional ritual elements of the celebration of Pesach.

With regard to the description of the Last Supper, Günter Stemberger suggested that it could be interesting to study the traditions about the Last Supper as *source* of information about the celebration of Pesach.<sup>104</sup> This suggests that the Synoptic Gospels imagine a mid-first century celebration of Pesach in terms of a simple symposium. The only conspicuous element of this symposium would be its date. This raises the question of the chronology of Jesus' passion according to the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John asking whether or not the two traditions can be harmonized. Reading especially the book of Jubilees, some Qumran texts (esp. the Damascus Document and the Community Rule), and a few remarks that appeared in the secondary literature about a fragment of a calendar among the Dead Sea Scrolls, Annie Jaubert suggested that Jesus and his disciples celebrated Pe-

<sup>103</sup> ANDREW MCGOWAN, “Meals of Jesus”.

<sup>104</sup> STEMBERGER, “Pesachhaggada”, 373.



sach at a different date than mainstream Judaism according to the sectarian calendar.<sup>105</sup> Hence Jesus could have died before the non-sectarian festival of the Temple in Jerusalem had even begun. Meanwhile and after the full publication and analysis of the relevant texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, it is not plausible any more that a group of adherents to one of the attested calendrical systems would have actually celebrated a kind of alternative Pesach in Jerusalem in the first century C.E.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, there is no reason to assume that Jesus belonged to the movements that experimented with the schematic calendar and its adaptations to the astronomic and agricultural realities of ancient Palestine. Thus, Jaubert's solution of the calendrical contradiction between John and the synoptic Gospels was as ingenious at its time as it is obsolete today.

Sacha Stern has shown that the intercalation and determination of the dates of the festivals in the luni-solar calendar was based on observations of the moon in the first centuries.<sup>107</sup> The computation of the calendar that made it independent from agricultural developments and the (comparatively unreliable) observations of the new moon only became customary after the epoch of the origins of the New Testament texts. Modern retrospective calculations of the dates of Pesach do not, therefore, provide a reliable basis for the reconstruction of the dates of Pesach for the first century. Calendrical reconstructions of dates of Pesach in the first century combined with certain days of the week do not permit one to pass one's verdict on the preferability of John vs. the Synoptic Gospels regarding their Easter chronology.

The relative probability of the Synoptic account versus John's that Jesus may or may not have celebrated Pesach before being arrested has been widely discussed. On the one hand, it seems problematic that the political processes that led to his crucifixion should have been performed right on the first day of the festival. In this respect, John's dating of the events seems more plausible. A remark like John's quotation of the prohibition to break a bone of the Pesach animal (Exod 12:10, 46; John 19:36) may create meaning for the meaningless coincidence of Jesus' death just before Pesach. On the other hand, the remark may have been designed to legitimize John's narrative rearrangement of all events in order to identify Jesus as the eschatological Pesach. The question cannot be solved.

### 3.3. *Pesach in First Century Jerusalem*

Continuing to follow Günter Stemberger's suggestion (taking the narratives of the Last Supper as source of information about the celebration of Pesach) one may ask of traits of the celebration of Pesach in Jesus' time. If the rabbinic Pesach and the early Christian Eucharistic meals emerged from the customs and rules to hold formal banquets in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean, in which way would Pesach have been celebrated before the destruction of the Temple? Regarding Sukkot, Pilgrims who came to the Temple were supposed to spend a week in the Temple eating and drinking under makeshift shelters against the sun within the Temple or within the city of Jerusalem.<sup>108</sup> Thus, Sukkot resembles the Greek festivals that attracted many people to certain sanctuaries, required them to spend considerable time in the sanctuary and to hold festive meals there. Pilgrims

<sup>105</sup> JÓZEF T. MILIK, "Le travail d'édition", referred to by ANNIE JAUBERT, *La date de la Cène*, 15 n. 1.

<sup>106</sup> The data is analyzed in LEONHARD, *Pesach*, ch. 4.6.

<sup>107</sup> SACHA STERN, *Calendar and Community*.

<sup>108</sup> LEONHARD, "Laubhüttenfest".

wanted to eat in a comfortable way. Thus, the Sacred Law of Andania (L. Gawlinski, Sacred Law) tries to establish limits for the size of the makeshift shelters and the dimensions of luxury that could be displayed by means of dining implements.

Pesach was originally supposed to be celebrated within the Temple, although many of the Pilgrims seem to have been in the city before the core celebration. It may be inferred from a remark by Philo, that Pilgrims could eat the meat of the Pesach animals not only within the Temple precincts, but also in the houses of Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup> In this respect, the general setting of the Last Supper in the “upper room” is not implausible, although not many pilgrims would have been able to celebrate a lavish symposium. The rules for the rabbinic Seder are innovative with regard to their suggestion that Pesach was celebrated as a sympotic event. The Last Supper was in no way typical regarding the social status of the diners. It seems thus more of a late first century communal Eucharist read back a few decades than a reliable description of a celebration of Pesach as celebrated around 30 C.E. in Jerusalem by a group of pilgrims from the Galilee.

The rabbis conceptualize the Seder with customs and norms of festive celebrations in the Diaspora in mind. This fits to the outward appearance of Judaism among Ancient Greek and Roman writers. While these writers observe the Jewish celebrations of the Sabbath and several other practices, they never see Jews of the Diaspora celebrating Pesach or Sukkot – festivals that would have been difficult to conceal from one’s neighbors. The indexes of Menachem Stern’s collection of texts do not refer to any Greek or Roman text that betrays its author’s knowledge about Jews celebrating the pilgrim festivals in the Diaspora.<sup>110</sup> Even the mid second century Christian bishop Polycrates only observes Jews removing leaven. He does not see anyone celebrating Pesach.<sup>111</sup> It is not likely that Jews of the Diaspora celebrated the pilgrim festivals – including Pesach – outside of Jerusalem in the first century.

Thus, the early history of Pesach and the Eucharist are associated because of the date of Jesus’ death and the literary bridges created by the Institution Narratives. They are not connected because of ritual similarities or traditions of first century ritual performances. In other words, this bridge is built by the power of the theological imagination of New Testament authors, not because Christians continued to perform celebrations of the Eucharist as a Pesach or Pesach as their Eucharist after Jesus’ death.

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<sup>109</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 31–39 and cf. n. 32 above. MARCUS, “Passover”, 309 defends NILS MARTOLA’S (“Eating the Passover Lamb”) opinion that Philo speaks about the houses in the Diaspora. Thus, he emphasizes that the participants of those meals purify themselves (with *purificatory sprinkling vessels*: *Spec.* 2.145–146, 148 and *QE* 1.10) and observes that all Israelites are priests slaughtering their Pesach animals themselves in imitation of Exod 12 where no priests were available yet. In these passages, Philo expounds biblical text including some knowledge about Pesach in Jerusalem. It cannot be inferred from these texts that Alexandrian Jews acted as priests each one slaughtering/sacrificing his animal (*thyein hierieia*). *Spec.* 2.145 compares Pesach with the normal sacrifices at the Temple, not with normal Jewish sacrifices in Alexandria. Against the massive associational bridges that Philo builds between Exod 12 and the Temple cult, Marcus claims: “we seem to be dealing with at least the rudiments of a domestic celebration of Passover”, 309. It is not, however, admissible to speculate about distinctions between Philo’s description and some “rudiments” of a domestic celebration. Either Alexandria’s Israelites act as purified priests, sacrificing animals to be eaten in their houses which look like temples, or they do not. The findings presented here imply that these passages from Philo’s oeuvre do not even hint at celebrations of Pesach in Alexandria. They speak about the festival in Jerusalem.

<sup>110</sup> MENAHEM STERN, *Greek and Latin Authors*.

<sup>111</sup> LEONHARD, *Pesach*, 271f.

Several explanations may be envisioned why the Last Supper was connected with Pesach. The motto “Christ is our Passover” of 1 Cor 5:7 is Paul’s creative and innovative strategy to devise a polemical argument. He neither talks about the celebration of Pesach nor of the Eucharist here. He infers a commandment from his analysis of Jesus’ death as the turning point in history. Like John 19:36, it hints at best at an early theoretical struggle to devise an appropriate language for the purpose of talking about Jesus’ death and the fortuitousness of its occurrence with regard to Israel’s religious calendar. Pesach is important for the theory about – not for the ritual practice of – the Eucharist from some of the earliest texts of the Christian tradition onwards. It takes a century after Jesus’ and Pauls’ lifetime before Pesach enters the sphere of interest of Christian ritual practice.

#### 4. Summary

Pesach was celebrated at Israelite temples as a pilgrim festival after the Babylonian exile. While there is no reason to doubt that it was also celebrated before the Babylonian Exile, there is not much information available to describe the shape of that celebration. Deut 16:3 is the earliest attempt to legitimize aspects of the ritual by appeals to the foundational myth of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt. Pesach was probably never celebrated outside of a sanctuary before the destruction of the Second Temple of Jerusalem. The presumption that the history of Pesach originated in the dark ages of Israel’s prehistory as a (semi) nomadic, apotropaic rite, only to be transformed into a temple festival much later, is based upon modern exegesis Exod 12 only. In such bits of interpretation, the liturgical history of Pesach is explained on the basis of Exod 12 and the text of Exod 12 is explained on the basis of the liturgical history of Pesach.

Thus, the only text of the Hebrew Bible that seems to command Israel to celebrate Pesach in domestic settings must be dismissed as a source for the actual performance of such celebrations. Any attempt to correlate the emergence of the Christian Eucharist with the history of the festival of Pesach must hence be based on the assumption that Pesach was celebrated and understood as a Temple-based pilgrim festival. This implies that New Testament descriptions of the Last Supper as foundational event for the history of the Eucharist (cf. Jesus’ saying “do this in my remembrance” Luke 22:19) and as celebration of Pesach can only have been envisaged as part and parcel of Pesach as a pilgrim festival at the Temple in Jerusalem. The authors and compilers of the Synoptic Gospels could not have understood the Last Supper as a temple independent celebration of Pesach, because Pesach was not celebrated as such. Exod 12 was not a script for liturgical performances in Jesus’ time. The descriptions of the Last Supper cannot, therefore, be enriched with elements of Exod 12.

The rabbinic Seder does not, likewise, emerge in order to reenact elements of Exod 12 or to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt. It originates as a symposium with some specifications. The rabbis could not reconstruct or repriminate the Seder as a kind of domestic temple-independent Pesach. Before the reestablishment of the Temple, they suggest their followers to abide by the correct date within the calendar and to keep certain rules that do not require a temple, like the removal of leaven. When it comes to the celebration itself, they avoid the consumption of anything that resembles a sacrifice but prefer to perform the timeless laws by studying them. This specifically rabbinic substitution for

the lack of a Temple cannot have influenced any celebration before 70 C.E. – like meals of Jesus or the ancient Church.

The increased ritualization and standardization of the celebration of (the Jewish) Pesach contains traces of contentions with Christianity – especially with the celebration of the Eucharist. The reliable and conspicuous traces of the development emerge, however, in the high middle ages. Thus, the Haggadah, the ritual script for Pesach, increasingly expands the earlier texts and traditions with references to the commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt (“In every Generation, one is obliged to regard oneself as if one went out of Egypt” and “He who tells many stories about the Exodus from Egypt shall be praised” together with the story about the five sages celebrating Pesach in Bne Brak) and probably reacts to the celebration of the Christian Eucharist and the ritualized handling of consecrated hosts (“this is the bread of affliction” and the Afikoman).

Further typical and quite old elements of the rabbinic Seder like the Hallel and the blessings, but also the recitation of the *mikra bikkurim* (“An Aramean tried to destroy my father” or “my father was a wandering Aramean”) either appropriate elements of the Temple ritual of Pesach for the performance of a meal (the Hallel), transfer elements of Temple rituals that had no connection with Pesach whatsoever before the destruction of the Temple to the celebration of Pesach (the *mikra bikkurim*), or apply rules pertaining to any normal meal to the celebration of Pesach (the blessings). None of them are specifically connected with the Christian Eucharist. If the Last Supper is envisaged as an early first century celebration of Pesach, the Hallel was probably not recited at or after it.

The Haggadah as well as its ritual context did not yet exist in Luke’s let alone in Jesus’ time. No part of the Gospels or the Gospels as such could have played the role of the Haggadah in a pre-rabbinic form of the Seder. “Haggadah” is not, furthermore, a literary genre of texts that were recited at celebrations of Pesach, but a clearly delimitable text that is extant in two recensions and which originated centuries after Jesus’ life-time.

Christians did not celebrate banquets because Christ had commanded them to do so at a Pesach meal, *viz.* the Last Supper, but because groups of differing sizes and constitutions were used to do so. The dissemination of the celebration of highly similar forms of the Eucharist does not emerge or derive from a first century Jewish model to celebrate Pesach. Nonetheless, one may ask what first century authors imagined when they portrayed the Last Supper as a Pesach meal. Bits of interpretation of Pesach entered theological observations about Jesus’ death and resurrection (e.g. John 19:36). The early development of the Eucharist is, however, independent from the celebration of Pesach. Neither Exodus 12, nor the Rabbinic Seder, nor the Haggadah share any typical feature with that meal, except for all those ritual elements that all of them have in common with other bits of Greco-Roman table etiquette as reflected in the *deipnon*-literature.

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