

Introduction

Early Jewish Mysticism

Although this investigation will focus mainly on the roots of the Metatron lore, this Jewish tradition cannot be fully understood without addressing its broader theological and historical context, which includes a religious movement known as early Jewish mysticism. Research must therefore begin with clarifying some notions and positions pertaining to the investigation of this broader religious phenomenon.

The roots of the current scholarly discussion on the origin, aim, and content of early Jewish mysticism can be traced to the writings of Gershom Scholem. His studies marked in many ways a profound breach with the previous paradigm of 19th and early 20th century scholarship solidified in the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement which viewed Jewish mystical developments as based on ideas late and external to Judaism.¹ In his seminal research, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, as well as other publications,² Scholem saw his main task as clarifying the origins of early Jewish mysticism on the basis of new methodological premises, which, in contrast to the scholars of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, approached early Jewish mysticism as a genuine Jewish movement with roots in biblical and pseudepigraphic traditions. Scholem's project was not an easy one, and in

¹ One of the representatives of this movement, Heinrich Graetz, considered the Hekhalot writings as late compositions dated to the end of the Geonic period. He viewed the Hekhalot literature as "a compound of misunderstood Agadas, and of Jewish, Christian, and Mahometan fantastic notions, clothed in mystical obscurity, and pretended to be a revelation." H. Graetz, *History of the Jews* (6 vols.; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1894) 3.153.

² G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken, 1941); idem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, [1960] 1965); idem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969); idem, *Kabbalah* (New York: Dorset Press, 1987); idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). For the complete bibliography of Scholem's writings, see: F. Scholem and B. Yaron, "Bibliography of the Published Writings of Gershom G. Scholem," in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to Gershom Scholem on his Seventieth Birthday* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967) 199–235; M. Catane, *Bibliography of the Writings of Gershom G. Scholem presented to Gershom G. Scholem on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977).

many aspects it was a truly pioneering enterprise. In the speech delivered on the occasion of his acceptance of the Rothschild prize, Scholem shared the following lament about the predicament of his initial investigation: "All I found were scattered, shabby pages, and I transformed them into history."³

Scholem's writings exhibit an impressive attempt to connect the early Jewish mystical traditions attested in some apocalyptic texts of Second Temple Judaism, such as *1 Enoch*, *2 Enoch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, with the later mystical developments hinted at in mishnaic and talmudic sources about *מַעֲשֵׂה מֵרֻכְבָּה* and developed in the Hekhalot writings.⁴ It is significant that Scholem viewed all three stages of this evolution as integral parts of one larger movement designated by him as the Merkabah tradition. In his view, the mystical testimonies attested in Jewish apocalyptic writings represented the initial stage in the development of this larger religious phenomenon. He thought that it is

entirely correct and by itself sufficient to prove the essential continuity of thought concerning the Merkabah in all its three stages: the anonymous conventicles of the old apocalypics; the Merkabah speculation of the Mishnaic teachers who are known to us by name; and the Merkabah mysticism of late and post-Talmudic times, as reflected in the literature which has come down to us. We are dealing here with a religious movement of distinctive character whose existence conclusively disproves the old prejudice according to which all the productive religious energies of early apocalyptic were absorbed by and into Christianity after the latter's rise.⁵

Thus, Scholem considered rabbinic and Hekhalot developments as the consequent stages of the long-lasting history of the Merkabah tradition, the roots of which can be traced to pre-rabbinic apocalyptic circles. In sharp contrast to the scholars of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, he argued for the early date of the Hekhalot literature which in his opinion could have originated in Palestinian circles during the Talmudic or even Tannaitic periods.

Scholem contended that the Hekhalot writings are intimately connected with the early apocalypses by their distinctive common symbolism, namely the throne imagery, which in his view constituted one of the central themes of the conceptual world of the Merkabah tradition. In *Major Trends*, he wrote that

the earliest Jewish mysticism is throne-mysticism. Its essence is not absorbed contemplation of God's true nature, but perception of His appearance on the throne,

³ J. Dan, *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimension of Jewish History* (New York: New York University Press, 1987) 2–3.

⁴ For the texts and translations of the Hekhalot writings, see P. Schäfer, with M. Schlüter and H. G. von Mutius, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (TSAJ 2; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1981); P. Schäfer et al., *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur* (4 vols.; TSAJ 17, 22, 29, 46; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1987–95).

⁵ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 43.

as described by Ezekiel, and cognition of the mysteries of the celestial throne-world. The throne-world is to the Jewish mystic what the pleroma, the “fullness,” the bright sphere of divinity with its potencies, aeons, archons and dominions is to the Hellenistic and early Christian mystics of the period who appear in the history of religion under the names of Gnostics and Hermetics.⁶

Scholem believed that another link between the Hekhalot writings and the early apocalyptic traditions was that both of them represented reports of actual ecstatic experiences. He thought that the Hekhalot writings represented

not Midrashim, i.e., expositions of Biblical passages, but a literature *sui generis* with a purpose of its own. They are essentially descriptions of a genuine religious experience for which no sanction is sought in the Bible. In short, they belonged in one class with the apocrypha and the apocalyptic writings rather than with traditional Midrash.⁷

Scholem saw Hekhalot mysticism as a part of the visionary tradition of the heavenly ascent, the beginning of which he traced to the heavenly journeys of the exalted patriarchs and prophets attested in early Jewish apocalypses.

Despite the significant role which the early Jewish apocalypses and pseudepigrapha seem to have played in Scholem’s grand scheme of the history of early Jewish mysticism, his publications do not offer a thorough textual analysis of these Second Temple materials.⁸ The investigation of these important texts, which in Scholem’s judgment played a formative role in emerging early Jewish mysticism, was confined in his publications to a few unsystematic remarks. Scholem’s inability to demonstrate textually the persistent presence of the matrix of early Jewish mysticism in the pseudepigraphic literature would later lead his critics to concentrate their studies mainly either on the rabbinic *מעשה מרכבה* accounts or on the Hekhalot writings and to regard these literary evidences as the first systematic presentations of early Jewish mysticism.⁹ Scholem’s failure to give proper textual documentation for his argument for the roots of early Jewish mysticism in premishnaic literature is, in my judgment, one of the main reasons why his positions on the origin, aim, and content of early Jewish mysticism have undergone so much criticism in later scholarship.

⁶ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 43–44.

⁷ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 46.

⁸ Scholem’s avoidance of systematic textual exploration of Jewish pseudepigraphic writings, such as *1 Enoch*, *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and *4 Ezra*, which he often cites in his publications, is understandable since his main area of expertise laid not in the Second Temple Judaism but in later rabbinic developments.

⁹ This shift was not solely the invention of Scholem’s opponents but was rather the reaffirmation of Scholem’s own methodological position in which the early pseudepigraphic mystical evidence was perceived and evaluated not on its own but from the perspective of the later rabbinic and Hekhalot mystical developments.

Detailed criticisms of Scholem's positions were offered in the publications of Peter Schäfer,¹⁰ David J. Halperin,¹¹ and other scholars¹² whose critique stemmed from the earlier critical work of Johann Maier¹³ and Ephraim E. Urbach.¹⁴

Scholem's critics found unpersuasive his contention that the pre-Christian apocalyptic writings and the later rabbinic Merkabah accounts represented the same type of mystical mold. They suggested that the rabbinic testimonies about מעשה מרכבה may not in fact refer to actual ecstatic experiences similar to the ascent stories of pre-Christian apocalypticists; rather they were exegetical expositions of Ezekiel's account of the Merkabah. One of the critics, David Halperin, stressed that "the merkabah expositions of Tannaitic times did not, as far as we can tell, accompany an ecstatic mystical practice, nor did they consist of a secret doctrine. They were the public exegeses of Ezekiel's vision, which I presume, accompanied the recitation of Ezekiel 1 in the synagogue on Shabu'ot."¹⁵ Halperin viewed the rabbinic מעשה מרכבה accounts as being connected with the Shabu'ot exegetical traditions in which Ezekiel's

¹⁰ P. Schäfer, "Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Edition und Analyse der Merkava Rabba," *FJB* 5 (1977) 65–99; idem, "Die Beschwörung des sar ha-panim, Kritische Edition und Übersetzung," *FJB* 6 (1978) 107–45; idem, "Aufbau und redaktionelle Identität der Hekhalot Zutarti," *JJS* 33 (1982) 569–82; idem, "Tradition and Redaction in Hekhalot Literature," *JSJ* 14 (1983) 172–81; idem, "Engel und Menschen in der Hekhalot-Literatur," in: P. Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien* (TSAJ 19; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1988) 250–76, esp. 258, 264–65; idem, "The Aim and Purpose of Early Jewish Mysticism. Gershom Scholem Reconsidered," in: *Hekhalot-Studien*, 277–95; idem, *The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992) 150–55.

¹¹ D. J. Halperin, *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1980); idem, "A New Edition of the Hekhalot Literature," *JAOS* 104.3 (1984) 543–552; idem, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1988) 359–63.

¹² P. Alexander, "The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch," *JJS* 28 (1977) 173–80; M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 106–14; idem, "The Experience of the Visionary and the Genre in the Ascension of Isaiah 6–11 and the Apocalypse of Paul," *Semeia* 36 (1986) 97–111; idem, "The Practice of Ascent in the Ancient Mediterranean World," in: *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys* (ed. J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane; Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995) 123–37, esp. 126–28; M. D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 29; 153–57; 170–72; 210–12.

¹³ J. Maier, *Vom Kultus zur Gnosis* (Kairos 1; Salzburg: Müller, 1964) 128–146.

¹⁴ E. E. Urbach, "The Traditions about Merkavah Mysticism in the Tannaitic Period," in: *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to Gershom G. Scholem on His Seventieth Birthday by Pupils, Colleagues and Friends* (ed. E.E. Urbach et al; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967) 1–28 [in Hebrew].

¹⁵ Halperin, *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature*, 182.

account interconnected with the Sinai narratives and depicted Moses ascending to heaven in order to receive the Torah despite the objections of the heavenly hosts. Halperin argued that the traditions attested in the Shabu'ot circle were formative for the Sar Torah imagery which plays a central role in Hekhalot literature.

Thus, critics of Scholem's position proposed that, similar to the talmudic discussions of מעשה מרכבה, the Hekhalot literature might also represent exegetical expositions rather than the accounts of actual experiences of the heavenly journey. Peter Schäfer argued that "the Hekhalot literature does not provide us any indication as to how the heavenly journey actually is carried out, or even if it is practiced at all as a 'truly' ecstatic experience."¹⁶ Scholem's hypothesis that the throne and ascent imageries occupy a crucial place in the Merkabah and Hekhalot materials has also generated substantial critical response. Schäfer observed that anyone reading the Hekhalot texts in an unbiased way, "and without having the history of research inaugurated by Scholem in mind, will hardly conclude that it is precisely the ascent to the Merkavah which forms the center for the authors of this literature."¹⁷ He further pointed out that in the majority of Hekhalot writings the tradition of the heavenly ascent clearly gave way to accounts of adjurations. In Schäfer's opinion, "the entire literature is permeated by such adjurations, and the means by which these adjurations are carried out are the same as those needed for a successful completion of the heavenly journey ... the objects of these adjurations are always angelic beings who assist visionaries in the comprehensive knowledge of the Torah."¹⁸

Despite the significant advance that the investigations of Schäfer, Halperin, and other opponents of Scholem's position brought to a better understanding of the conceptual world of the rabbinic and Hekhalot mystical developments, their works, in my judgment, affected negatively the study of the premishnaic Jewish mystical testimonies. Their writings shifted the whole notion of early Jewish mysticism towards the rabbinic and Hekhalot documents and separated it from the early mystical evidence of Second Temple Judaism. The criticisms of Scholem's hypothesis have led to the refocusing of priorities in the study of early Jewish mysticism. The main focus of research has been transferred from pseudepigraphic evidence to the rabbinic מעשה מרכבה and the Hekhalot writings in an attempt to show their conceptual independence from the early apocalyptic materials. The view that the Hekhalot tradition possesses its own set(s) of concepts and imagery, different from the conceptualities of the early apocalyptic mystical testimonies, should not however lead one to ignore the association of these

¹⁶ Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, 155.

¹⁷ Schäfer, *Gershom Scholem Reconsidered*, 6.

¹⁸ Schäfer, *Gershom Scholem Reconsidered*, 6.

texts with early Jewish mysticism. It is apparent that, despite its importance, the body of Hekhalot literature cannot serve as the ultimate yardstick for measuring all early Jewish mystical traditions. After all, the Hekhalot literature in itself, as was demonstrated by several scholars who studied this tradition, does not represent a homogeneous theological continuum, but should rather be viewed as having several theological centers. In his criticism of Scholem's and Halperin's positions, Schäfer observed that "both approaches suffer from the desire to find one explanation for the entire Hekhalot literature, which then assigns all other parts to their places, thus ignoring the extremely complex relations of the texts and the various literary layers within the individual macroform. The Hekhalot literature is not a unity and, therefore, cannot be explained uniformly."¹⁹

One of the consequences that stemmed from the critique of Scholem's position was that a substantial gap emerged between the rabbinic and Hekhalot materials, on one hand, and the early apocalyptic traditions, on the other. Thus, the rabbinic testimonies to מעשה מרכבה and the Hekhalot writings were no longer considered directly connected with the visionary practices of the pre-Christian apocalypticists, but were viewed instead as a different phenomenon with its own peculiar conceptual world.

Slavonic Pseudepigrapha

As has been already mentioned, Scholem argued that the Jewish pseudepigrapha were one of the important sources of the development of Merkabah and Hekhalot mysticism. He drew special attention to the pseudepigraphic texts associated with the Enochic tradition. Scholem considered the early Enochic materials, particularly such Enochic compositions as *1 (Ethiopic) Enoch* and *2 (Slavonic) Enoch*, as the texts which contained the earliest formulations of Jewish mystical developments.²⁰ Scholem wrote that "one fact remains certain: the main subjects of the later Merkabah mysticism already occupy a central position in this oldest esoteric literature, best represented by the Book of Enoch."²¹

¹⁹ Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, 152.

²⁰ George Nickelsburg, supporting Scholem's idea, observes that "*1 Enoch* 14 stands at an important transitional point between prophetic and mystical tradition." He, however, cautiously observes that "although *1 Enoch* 14 reflects the reinterpretation of prophetic traditions in the direction of later mysticism, there are some marked differences between *1 Enoch* 14 and the later texts.... A definite historical link between our text and the later mystical texts must await careful exegesis of the latter and comparison with *1 Enoch*." G. W. E. Nickelsburg, "Enoch, Levi, and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee," *JBL* 100 (1981) 575–600, esp. 581–2.

²¹ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 43.

He also pointed to other pseudepigraphic materials, such as the *Fourth Book of Ezra* and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, which along with the Enochic writings contained concepts and imagery crucial for later Jewish mystical developments. He stressed that the influence of these pseudepigraphic writings “on the subsequent development of Jewish mysticism cannot be overlooked” since they “undoubtedly contain elements of Jewish mystical religion.”²²

The significant evidence that has never been systematically explored in the recent discussions about the origin of early Jewish mysticism is the testimony of several Jewish pseudepigraphic materials which have survived solely in their Slavonic translations. These texts include 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Ladder of Jacob* where the traces of early Jewish mystical developments can be detected.²³ This group of Jewish

²² Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 40.

²³ On Jewish mystical traditions in these texts, see P. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. J. H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1985 [1983]) 1.247–248; idem, “From Son of Adam to a Second God: Transformation of the Biblical Enoch,” *Biblical Figures Outside the Bible* (ed. M. E. Stone and T. A. Bergen; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998) esp. 102–111; C. Böttrich, *Weltweisheit, Menschheitsethik, Urkult: Studien zum slavischen Henochbuch* (WUNT 2/50; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1992) 109–114; idem, “Beobachtungen zum Midrash vom ‘Leben Henochs,’” *Mitteilungen und Beiträge der Forschungsstelle Judentum an der Theologischen Fakultät Leipzig* 10 (1996) 44–83; A. De Conick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (SVC 33; Leiden: Brill, 1996); M. Himmelfarb, “Revelation and Rapture: The Transformation of the Visionary in the Ascent Apocalypses,” *Mysteries and Revelations; Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquium* (eds. J. J. Collins and J. H. Charlesworth; JSPSup., 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 79–90; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955) esp. 5.161–64; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (AGJU 14; Leiden: Brill, 1980) 50–51; J. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (WUNT 36; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1985); idem, “Colossians 1,15–18a in the Light of Jewish Mysticism and Gnosticism,” *NTS* 35 (1989) 183–201; idem, *The Image of the Invisible God. Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology* (NTOA 30; Fribourg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995); M. Idel, “Enoch is Metatron,” *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990) 220–240; J. Kugel, “The Ladder of Jacob,” *HTR* 88 (1995) 209–27; H. Odeberg, *3 Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch* (New York: KTAV, 1973) esp. 52–63; W. O. E. Oesterley and G. H. Box, *A Short Survey of the Literature of Rabbinic and Mediaeval Judaism* (New York: Macmillan, 1920) esp. 236; A. A. Orlov, “Titles of Enoch-Metatron in 2 Enoch,” *JSP* 18 (1998) 71–86; idem, “Secrets of Creation in 2 (Slavonic) Enoch,” *Henoch* 22.1 (2000) 45–62; idem, “Ex 33 on God’s Face: A Lesson from the Enochic Tradition,” *SBLSP* 39 (2000) 130–47; idem, “Melchizedek Legend of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch,” *JSJ* 31 (2000) 23–38; idem, “The Origin of the Name ‘Metatron’ and the Text of 2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *JSP* 21 (2000) 19–26; idem, “The Face as the Heavenly Counterpart of the Visionary in the Slavonic Ladder of Jacob,” in: *Of Scribes and Sages* (2 vols; ed. C.A. Evans; London: T&T Clark, 2004) 2.59-76; A. Orlov and A.

pseudepigrapha with an enigmatic history of transmission, that does not leave any traces of these writings in Greek or other languages, except in Slavonic, seems to share a highly developed mystical imagery that make them stand out in the corpus of the early pseudepigraphic texts.²⁴ These writings have never been studied as a group for their possible connections with early Jewish mysticism. Although Hugo Odeberg, Gershom Scholem, and Ithamar Gruenwald referred occasionally to these texts in their research, pointing to certain provocative allusions that seem to connect these pseudepigrapha with the imagery and conceptual world of the later Merkabah and Hekhalot materials, critics of Scholem's approach often ignored this important evidence.²⁵ Even in the previous research of Odeberg, Scholem, and Gruenwald, despite their formal recognition of the importance of these pseudepigraphic texts for the history of early Jewish mysticism, the presence of Jewish mystical traditions in the Slavonic pseudepigrapha was never systematically explored. This situation has most likely arisen, in my judgment, because those scholars who have been seriously engaged in the study of early Jewish mysticism have historically lacked motivation to work with the Slavonic translations of the early Jewish texts. A primary obstacle was, of course, the Slavonic language, which itself was categorized by most scholars as "esoteric."

It appears that one of the important tasks in clarifying the origins of early Jewish mysticism lies in the systematic investigation of such writings as *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Ladder of Jacob* and in understanding their role in shaping the imagery and the concepts of the subsequent Jewish mystical developments.

It should be noted that *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Ladder of Jacob* represent a unique group of texts that share the theophanic and mediatorial language which, in my view, is as different from mainstream of early apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic writings as from later Hekhalot materials. One can see in this group of materials a witness to the lost *practical* and *literary* development which could well represent an important transitional stage in early Jewish mystical testimonies, serving as

Golitzin, "Many Lamps Are Lightened from the One': Paradigms of the Transformational Vision in the Macarian Homilies," *VC* 55 (2001) 281–298; M. Philonenko, "La cosmogonie du 'Livre des secrets d'Hénoch,'" *Religions en Egypte: Hellénistique et romaine* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969) 109–16; Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*; idem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition*; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah* (New York: Schocken, 1991).

²⁴ On the similarities between the theophanic language of *2 Enoch* and the *Ladder of Jacob*, see Orlov, "The Face as the Heavenly Counterpart of the Visionary in the Slavonic Ladder of Jacob," 2.59–76.

²⁵ For example, in Halperin's investigation of the pseudepigraphic materials in *The Faces of the Chariot*, references to *2 Enoch* are limited to half a page.

a kind of bridge from the matrix of early Jewish apocalypticism, as it was manifested in the early Enochic circle, to the matrix of early Jewish mysticism as it became manifest in rabbinic Merkabah and Hekhalot materials. In my study I will illustrate this transitional character of the Slavonic pseudepigraphic evidence by using the example of the Metatron tradition found in *2 (Slavonic) Enoch*. The concepts and imagery of this tradition in the Slavonic apocalypse show that *2 Enoch* occupies an intermediary stage between Second Temple apocalypticism and Hekhalot mysticism, thus manifesting its own, one might say, “proto-Hekhalot” mystical mold. Similar to some of the Hekhalot writings, the Slavonic Enoch already operates with the concept of Metatron and his later titles, such as the Youth, which are absent from early Enochic writings but prominent in such Hekhalot macroforms as *Sefer Hekhalot*, *Hekhalot Rabbati*, and other materials.²⁶ In contrast to the Hekhalot writings, however, *2 Enoch* is not preoccupied with adjuration, has no magical content, and places the ascent imagery in the center of its narrative.

2 Enoch and Early Jewish Mysticism

The investigation has already noted that Scholem located the formative core of the earliest Jewish mystical developments in the body of literature associated with Enochic traditions.²⁷ He also repeatedly drew his readers’ attention to one of the Enochic texts, an enigmatic writing preserved exclusively in its Slavonic translation and therefore known to us as *2 (Slavonic) Enoch*.

2 Enoch is a Jewish pseudepigraphon traditionally dated to the first century C.E. The central theme of the text is the celestial ascent of the seventh antediluvian patriarch Enoch through the seven heavens and his luminous metamorphosis near the Throne of Glory.

The figure of Enoch portrayed in the various sections of *2 Enoch* appears to be more elaborate than in the early Second Temple Enochic tractates of *1 Enoch*. For the first time, the Enochic tradition seeks to depict Enoch, not simply as a human taken to heaven and transformed into an angel, but as a

²⁶ The Metatron tradition can be seen as one of the several “conceptual centers” of Hekhalot literature.

²⁷ He did not, however, confine the roots of early Jewish mystical developments solely to the social setting associated with the Enochic tradition. He believed that “in the period of the Second Temple an esoteric doctrine was already taught in Pharisaic circles. The first chapter of Genesis, the story of Creation, and the first chapter of Ezekiel, the vision of God’s throne-chariot, were the favorite subjects of discussion and interpretation which it was apparently considered inadvisable to make public.” Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 42.

celestial being exalted above the angelic world.²⁸ In this attempt, one may find the origins of another image of Enoch (very different from the early Enochic literature) that was developed much later in rabbinic Merkabah and Hekhalot mysticism – the image of the supreme angel Metatron, “the Prince of the Presence.” The image of the exalted Enoch found in *2 Enoch* makes it reasonable to suggest an earlier date for the development of the Metatron tradition and to place the beginning of this tradition, not in the rabbinic era, but in the Second Temple period. This study will focus on establishing such early roots for the Metatron tradition in *2 Enoch*.

Despite extensive important textual evidence pointing to possible connections between *2 Enoch* and the Metatron tradition, most scholars have avoided further study in this direction. They seem to have been doing so primarily because they are more interested in the traditional perspective on *2 Enoch* as the pseudepigraphic text of early premishnaic Enoch literature, similar to *1 Enoch* and the Enochic Qumran materials. They have been slow to discuss the apparent Merkabah features of *2 Enoch*, including the Metatron imagery. In the twentieth century, very few studies have sought to establish connections between *2 Enoch* and the Metatron tradition. Research has usually been conducted as part of broader investigations into possible parallels between *2 Enoch* and later Jewish mysticism. Although the traditional view held the Metatron tradition to be quite late and belonging to the Merkabah mysticism associated with the rabbinic era, certain features of Enoch’s image found in *2 Enoch* have led several

²⁸ One can argue that the beginning of this process can be seen already in the *Book of the Similitudes*, where Enoch seems to be identified with the Son of Man. It is possible that the *Similitudes*, written close to the time of *2 Enoch*, also reflect this process of transition to the new image of Enoch. The *Similitudes*, however, do not elaborate this process to the same degree as the Slavonic apocalypse does. Enoch’s transformation into the Son of Man in *Similitudes* 71 is rather instantaneous and ambiguous. In contrast, in *2 Enoch* this process of Enoch’s transition to a new super-angelic identity is described in detail through the expositions of Enoch’s celestial titles which unfold the patriarch’s new roles in numerous celestial offices. Another important detail is that the titles of Enoch attested in the *Similitudes* (such as the Son of Man and others) do not play any significant role in the later Jewish mystical developments and in the Metatron tradition. On Enoch’s transformation in the *Similitudes*, see J. R. Davila, “Of Methodology, Monotheism and Metatron,” *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism. Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (eds. C. C. Newman, J. R. Davila, G. S. Lewis; JSJSup 63; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 9–15; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (WUNT 2/94; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1997) 151; M. Knibb, “Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha in the Light of the Scrolls,” *DSD* 2 (1995) 177–80; D. W. Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (SBLDS 47; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979) 14–23; J. VanderKam, “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37–71,” *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity. The First Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins* (eds. J. H. Charlesworth et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 182–3.

scholars to ponder connections between *2 Enoch* and the Merkabah tradition. A detailed review of these studies will follow later. At present, let us offer only a brief review of them.

In his study of Jewish lore which was pioneering in many ways, Louis Ginzberg drew attention to some similarities between the traditions found in *2 Enoch* and other Jewish mystical testimonies. Ginzberg's *ad hoc* commentary engendered several important insights into the Merkabah features of *2 Enoch*.

Ginzberg observed that the words "God set him before His face," found in *2 Enoch* 67:2, might be related to "the usual designation found in Geonic mysticism of Metatron-Enoch as the 'prince of the face.'"²⁹ However, being a circumspect scholar, Ginzberg later noted that this parallel may be arguable. Ginzberg's research also pointed to the important similarities between Enoch's transformation into an angel in *2 Enoch* and the similar description in the Hekhalot literature.³⁰ The salient feature of Ginzberg's study is his observation of the Merkabah character of Enoch's functions and his luminous transformation in the heavenly realm.

Unfortunately, after these penetrating findings, Ginzberg's research did not proceed to explore further parallels between *2 Enoch* and the Merkabah tradition. His remarks revealed that he, in fact, was quite pessimistic about the possible connection between *2 Enoch* and later Jewish mystical developments. He stressed that "there can be no doubt that there exists no literary relationship between the so-called rabbinic books of Enoch and with pseudepigrapha bearing the same name. This is quite obvious to any one familiar with both literatures."³¹

Hugo Odeberg may well be the first scholar to have pointed out that the descriptions of the celestial titles for Enoch in *2 Enoch* represent the most important evidence for the connection between this apocalypse and the Merkabah tradition. While Odeberg's edition of *3 Enoch* has some glaring deficiencies, his scholarship offers important insights into the nature of the relationship between *2 Enoch* and Merkabah mysticism. Odeberg's analysis of Enoch's image in *2 Enoch* and in one of the Merkabah texts known as *Sefer Hekhalot*, or *3 Enoch*, reveals that *2 Enoch* occupies an intermediate position between earlier Enochic literature (*1 Enoch*), on the one hand, and the Merkabah literature (*3 Enoch*), on the other. Odeberg observes that *2 Enoch* stands, "speaking metaphorically, on the straight line connecting *1 Enoch* with *3 Enoch*."³² He argues that the center of the Enoch conception in *1 Enoch* is the visions of Enoch. In contrast, in *2 Enoch*, the conceptual center is situated in "the idea of Enoch's transformation into a high

²⁹ Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 5.161.

³⁰ Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 5.163.

³¹ Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 5.163.

³² Odeberg, *3 Enoch*, 1.61.

Celestial Being.”³³ Odeberg stresses that this idea is not yet as advanced in *2 Enoch* as it is in *3 Enoch*. In his opinion, in *2 Enoch*, Enoch, despite his archangelic status, is still ranked below Michael and placed at the left hand of the Lord.³⁴ In spite of the intriguing hypothesis about the connection between *2 Enoch* and the Merkabah tradition, Odeberg concludes that this apocalypse does not contain any traces of the identification of Enoch with Metatron.

Gershom Scholem also investigated the relationship between *2 Enoch* and later Jewish mystical developments, including the Hekhalot tradition. In *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, Scholem considered *2 Enoch* as one of the major witnesses to the development of Merkabah concepts and imagery in the pseudepigrapha, in the same line as such writings as *1 Enoch* and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.³⁵ In *Jewish Gnosticism* he pointed out a number of parallels between *2 Enoch* and Merkabah writings, for example, several features of Enoch’s heavenly ascent and angelic singing.³⁶ In his book *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, he highlighted interesting conceptual similarities between *2 Enoch* and the *Shi’ur Qomah* tradition, which has been frequently associated with the Metatron imagery. In Vaillant’s French edition of *2 Enoch*, Scholem discovered the expression “l’étendue de mon corps” (“the extent of my body”), which, in his opinion, shows remarkable similarities with the terminology of the *Shi’ur Qomah* tradition.³⁷

Ithamar Gruenwald’s research on apocalypticism and Merkabah mysticism contains an important discussion of the Merkabah features of *2 Enoch*. For his conclusions, Gruenwald uses Vaillant’s edition and the English translation of *2 Enoch* which appeared in the second volume of Charles’ *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*. Gruenwald stresses that the description of Enoch’s ascent to the celestial realm, as well as the descriptions of the contents of the seven heavens have a number of parallels to such Hekhalot writings as the *Visions of Ezekiel*, *Sefer Hekhalot*, and *Sefer Ha-Razim*. He points to some similarities in the picturing of Paradise, which in *2 Enoch* is located in the third heaven. Gruenwald draws particular attention to the description of the Tree of Life in Chapter 8 of *2 Enoch*, which the text designates as the place “whereon the Lord rests, when he goes up into Paradise.”³⁸ Gruenwald stresses that this tradition could “refer to the original abode of *Shekhinah* before the *Shekhinah* ascended to heaven

³³ Odeberg, *3 Enoch*, 1.61.

³⁴ Odeberg, *3 Enoch*, 1.61.

³⁵ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 67.

³⁶ Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 17, 30.

³⁷ Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 29.

³⁸ Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 50.

on account of the sins of mankind.”³⁹ He notes that Chapter 5 of *Sefer Hekhalot* (*Synopse* §§7-8) might express a similar idea. Gruenwald also underlines the Merkabah vision of Adam in Chapter 31, where the Lord created for Adam an open heaven, so that he might look upon the angels, singing the triumphal song. In Gruenwald’s view, Enoch’s final vision of the most fearful angel in Chapter 37 is another example of the close connection with the Merkabah lore.

It should be noted that Gruenwald’s research can be seen as an extension of Scholem’s approach. Gruenwald develops one of Scholem’s insights, namely his hypothesis about the close terminological correspondence between *2 Enoch* and the *Shi’ur Qomah* tradition.

Gruenwald also argues that the description of what happened to Enoch in the seventh heaven could be considered as a distinctive Merkabah contribution of the book. In this respect, he draws particular attention to the account of Enoch’s extraction from “his earthly garments” and his transfiguration into the glorious one.⁴⁰

In his introduction to the English translation of *Sefer Hekhalot* in the first volume of *OTP*, Philip Alexander offers several important insights about a possible connection between *2 Enoch* and Metatron mysticism. He supports the view, earlier expressed by Scholem and Odeberg, that “*2 Enoch* is in some ways even closer to *3 Enoch* than *1 Enoch*.”⁴¹ To prove this point, Alexander argues that the cosmology of the seven heavens found in *2 Enoch* is fundamental to the Merkabah writings and could be found in such texts as the *Visions of Ezekiel* and *Sefer Ha-Razim*. Alexander also highlights *2 Enoch*’s close parallels to *Sefer Hekhalot*. In his interpretation, Enoch’s journey through the seven heavens to the Lord’s throne has a number of striking parallels to Ishmael’s ascent in *3 Enoch*. Alexander was particularly insightful in suggesting that the transformation of Enoch in *2 Enoch* 22 provides the closest approximation, outside of Merkabah literature, to Enoch’s transformation in *3 Enoch* 3-15 (*Synopse* §§4-19).⁴² These observations on the similarities between *2 Enoch* and the Merkabah tradition flow logically from Alexander’s earlier important methodological conclusion expressed in an essay “The Historical Settings of the Hebrew Book of Enoch.” There he argues that Enoch’s angelic transformation in *2 Enoch* was a necessary evolutionary step to the profile of Enoch-Metatron in Hekhalot literature. He further suggests that “if such a development had not taken place, Enoch could never have been identified with the archangel

³⁹ Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 50.

⁴⁰ Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 51.

⁴¹ Alexander, “3 Enoch,” 247.

⁴² Alexander, “3 Enoch,” 248.

Metatron.”⁴³ Alexander also points out some apparent differences between *2 Enoch* and later Metatron developments, stressing that the vagueness of the imagery of Enoch’s angelic transformation in *2 Enoch* stands in sharp contrast to the detailed description in *3 Enoch*. He concludes, however, that “if the Hekhalot mystics received Enoch traditions like those in *2 Enoch* 22, they could easily have interpreted them to mean that Enoch was changed into an archangel.”⁴⁴

Michael Mach, in his article published in the *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, observes that “in comparison with various units included in *1 Enoch*, *2 Enoch* demonstrates a series of significant changes in regard to our understanding of early mysticism and its possible apocalyptic backgrounds.”⁴⁵ Similarly to Philip Alexander, Mach draws attention to the sevenfold ouranology found in *2 Enoch*, which is fundamental to some Hekhalot writings as well. He argues that Enoch’s journey is clearly structured according to the system of seven heavens, noting that “what in *1 Enoch* was recorded as traveling in different directions during the same heavenly journey is now systematized into a model of seven heavens.”⁴⁶ Mach also points to *2 Enoch*’s descriptions of Enoch’s elevation above the angelic realm and his installation at the side of God. He notes that “the exaltation to a rank higher than that of the angels as well as the seating at God’s side have their parallels and considerable development in Enoch’s/Metatron’s transformation and enthronement as depicted in *3 Enoch*.”⁴⁷

While these inquiries have proven to be important for Merkabah studies, they have not yielded any definitive evidence for the existence of the Metatron tradition in *2 Enoch*. They appear to have not done so chiefly because the vast majority of these studies proceeded on the presupposition that the Metatron tradition is a relatively late phenomenon usually associated with post-mishnaic Jewish developments. Although some of these scholars acknowledged the possibility that the Merkabah tradition has very early biblical and pseudepigraphic roots, they were reluctant to recognize that the Metatron tradition might have its origins in the Second Temple period.

⁴³ P. Alexander, “The Historical Settings of the Hebrew Book of Enoch,” *JJS* 28 (1977) 160.

⁴⁴ Alexander, “The Historical Settings of the Hebrew Book of Enoch,” 161.

⁴⁵ M. Mach, “From Apocalypticism to Early Jewish Mysticism?” in: *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* (3 vols.; ed. J. J. Collins; New York: Continuum, 1998) 1.229–264, esp. 251.

⁴⁶ Mach, “From Apocalypticism to Early Jewish Mysticism,” 251.

⁴⁷ Mach, “From Apocalypticism to Early Jewish Mysticism,” 251.

What Threads to Consider?

The question, however, remains: what kind of features in pseudepigraphic texts such as 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch* might point unambiguously to similarities with later Jewish mystical developments, including the traditions attested in the Hekhalot writings?

Scholars have tried for a long time to investigate the possible threads that connect these two bodies of literature. As has been previously noted, Gershom Scholem, for example, considered the throne symbolism as a crucial thread that links the early Enochic materials with the later Hekhalot materials. David Halperin points to another important thread that connects the early pseudepigraphic materials with the later mystical testimonies. This is the idea that the Sinai event and the Merkabah vision are two aspects of the same reality and must be interpreted together.⁴⁸

One of the difficulties in connecting the early apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic texts with the later Hekhalot materials is the fluidity of the imagery in both bodies of literature. The research of David Halperin and Peter Schäfer⁴⁹ correctly points, in my judgment, to the difficulties in locating the center in the Hekhalot writings, since they often represent a strange mixture of hymns, incantations, and short narratives which seem to be assembled without a discernible pattern and purpose.⁵⁰ In these narratives readers must often discover on their own “whatever unifying principle there may be.”⁵¹ The same can be detected in the early apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic materials, which also attest to a fluidity of concepts and imagery seen in various stages of the development of early Jewish mystical traditions.

It was mentioned earlier that in recent decades the discussion about the aim and the nature of early Jewish mysticism has mainly revolved around

⁴⁸ Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot*, 114.

⁴⁹ See also Joseph Dan who observes that “Hekhalot and Merkavah mystical literature should not be viewed as a product of one school of mystics moved by a common theology and literary activity. The texts we have today are but remnants of the activity of several Jewish mystical schools in Late Antiquity, which differed from each other in both their basic theological views and their mystical sources. The literature that reached us includes works that are anthological in character, and used several layers of sources combined or loosely harmonized.” J. Dan, *Jewish Mysticism: Late Antiquity* (2 vols; Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1998) 1.233.

⁵⁰ However, pointing to the fluid nature of the Hekhalot writings, Peter Schäfer warns that “the obvious and unusually great fluidity in this literature should also not induce us into seeing only chaos and ‘nonsense’ everywhere, which has evaded any redactional structuring.” P. Schäfer, “Research on Hekhalot Literature: Where Do We Stand Now?” in: *Rashi 1040–1990: Hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach* (ed. G. Sed-Rajna; Paris: Cerf, 1993) 231.

⁵¹ Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot*, 367.

such important dichotomies as ascent/adjuration and visionary/exegetical. However, it is apparent that the search for new comparative characteristics between the early pseudepigraphic texts containing mystical testimonies and the later Hekhalot materials must be continued.

In my 1998 article, “Titles of Enoch-Metatron in 2 *Enoch*,”⁵² I attempted to investigate one such possible set of characteristics. The article focuses on examining the celestial roles and titles of Enoch-Metatron, which play an equally important role in early Enochic accounts and the Hekhalot materials.⁵³ The peculiar characteristic of these roles and titles, that make them good indicators of the transition from the Enoch tradition to the Metatron tradition, is that each of these traditions operates with a different set of roles and titles. Thus, the early Enochic tradition put emphasis on such roles or titles of the seventh antediluvian patriarch as diviner, scribe, sage, visionary, witness of the divine judgment in the generation of the Flood, and envoy to the Watchers/Giants. Later Jewish mysticism reveals Enoch-Metatron in a different set of roles and titles depicting him as the Prince of the Torah, the Prince of the Divine Presence, the Measurer of the Lord, the Prince of the World, and the Youth. Only a few titles are common to both traditions. But even in the roles that seem to be shared by both traditions, such as Enoch-Metatron’s priestly role or his role as an expert in the divine secrets, one can see a significant evolution of the offices and their different functions in the Enochic and in the Merkabah traditions.

It is intriguing that Enoch’s titles found in 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*, despite the Second Temple date of this pseudepigraphon, appear to demonstrate a close proximity to the titles of Metatron found in the Hekhalot and other rabbinic materials. These titles help distinguish 2 *Enoch* from other early Enochic pseudepigrapha since the majority of these titles were not in use in 1 *Enoch*, *Jubilees*, and the *Book of Giants*.

Unfortunately the question about the origin and development of the celestial roles and titles of the divine and angelic agents appearing in early Jewish mysticism has been consistently ignored in recent scholarship. All attention in this area has been concentrated on only one title, often assigned to Metatron in the Hekhalot writings, i.e., Sar Torah.⁵⁴ The focus on the concept of Sar Torah in recent scholarly debates on the aim and origin of early Jewish mysticism might implicitly point to the importance of the imagery of the celestial titles for the theological framework of Hekhalot literature. Yet, in spite of heated debates on the Sar Torah concept, other celestial titles of Metatron found in rabbinic and Hekhalot materials, such as

⁵² Orlov, “Titles of Enoch-Metatron in 2 *Enoch*,” 71–86.

⁵³ Odeberg was the first to draw close attention to the similarities between the celestial titles of Enoch in the Slavonic apocalypse and the titles of Metatron in *Sefer Hekhalot*.

⁵⁴ M. D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 53ff.

the Youth, the Prince of the World, and the Prince of the Countenance, have not received equal scholarly attention. We still do not have a systematic investigation of the origin and possible roots of these titles, although it is apparent that the title *Sar Torah* does not stand alone in the Hekhalot tracts but is interwoven with other titles, such as the Youth, among others.

The widespread existence of the symbolism of the heavenly roles and titles of angelic agents in various Hekhalot writings demonstrates the significance of this imagery in the theological frameworks of Hekhalot literature. One can say that the celestial titles of Metatron represent one of the major conceptual areas for this body of literature.⁵⁵ *Sefer Hekhalot* gives a systematic presentation of Enoch-Metatron's celestial roles and titles. This macroform contains testimonies to such important titles as the Youth, the Prince of the World, the Prince of the Torah, and the Prince of the Countenance, among many others. These traditions are not confined solely to the materials associated with *3 Enoch*, but are widely disseminated in other macroforms, including *Hekhalot Rabbati* (where such titles as the Youth and Sar Torah are applied to Metatron), *Hekhalot Zutarti*, *Merkavah Rabbah*, and other Hekhalot writings. Some of these titles are also applied in these materials to other angelic figures.

As noted earlier, the titles of the patriarch found in the Slavonic apocalypse appear to be different from those attested in early Enochic writings and demonstrate a close resemblance to the titles of Metatron as they appear in some of the Hekhalot sources. The traditions found in the Slavonic pseudepigraphon, however, are not as highly developed as in the Hekhalot tracts and apparently represent an intermediate stage of the evolution from the Enochic to the Merkabah tradition. In my study of the celestial titles of the seventh antediluvian patriarch, I will investigate this evolution from Enoch to Metatron in the hope of understanding to what specific stage of this transition the titles found in the Slavonic apocalypse might belong.

This study must therefore analyze the celestial titles of Enoch and Metatron in the early Enochic tradition(s), *2 Enoch*, and the rabbinic and Hekhalot accounts. This analysis will show that the later rabbinic and Hekhalot imagery of the celestial titles of Metatron stemmed from the early conceptual definitions already attested in *2 Enoch*. Further, it will be argued that the evolution of the imagery of the celestial roles and titles demonstrates that *2 Enoch* represents a bridge between the early apocalyptic Enochic accounts and the later mystical rabbinic and Hekhalot traditions. On this journey, *2 Enoch* represents the formative stage during which the

⁵⁵ It is possible that Metatron's imagery fulfills the same function for the Merkabah tradition that Enoch's imagery fulfills for the Second Temple pseudepigrapha, namely, being a sort of archetypal imagery shaping other mediatorial traditions.

early apocalyptic imagery has acquired its new, distinctive proto-Hekhalot mold. The important transition from the early roles of Enoch to the later roles of Metatron already occurred, therefore, in the text of *2 Enoch*. The study will also demonstrate that the mediatorial polemics with traditions of the exalted patriarchs and prophets played an important role in facilitating this transition from Enoch to Metatron in *2 Enoch*.⁵⁶

The first part of the study is devoted to an analysis of the Enochic roles and titles from their Mesopotamian prototypes to Metatron's offices and designations in the Hekhalot materials.

In Chapter 1 I offer an analysis of the roles and titles of the seventh antediluvian hero found in the Mesopotamian sources about the king Enmeduranki.

In Chapter 2 I discuss the evolution of the roles and titles of the seventh patriarch in early Enochic materials, including the *Astronomical Book*, the *Book of the Watchers*, the *Book of Dreams*, the *Epistle of Enoch*, the *Book of the Similitudes*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and the *Book of Giants*. *2 Enoch* is excluded from this analysis and is investigated separately in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 3 I analyze Enoch-Metatron's roles and titles in *Sefer Hekhalot* and other Hekhalot and rabbinic sources. I argue that the Merkabah materials operate with two sets of Metatron's celestial roles and titles: the "old" cluster, which is similar to Enochic and Mesopotamian counterparts, and the "new" cluster which is not attested in Mesopotamian and early Enochic materials. This section demonstrates that understanding the celestial roles and titles is pivotal for construing the whole evolution of the Metatron tradition, since in the rabbinic and Hekhalot materials the information about the exalted angel is given mainly through the expositions of his titles, roles, and the situations corresponding to them.

In Chapter 4 I investigate roles and titles of Enoch-Metatron found in *2 Enoch*. Here I suggest that the analysis indicates that the majority of Metatron's titles and roles attested in the rabbinic and Hekhalot sources were developed from the descriptions of the celestial roles and titles of the seventh antediluvian patriarch found in *2 Enoch*.

The second part of the study explores the significance of the polemical interactions between the pseudepigraphic traditions of the exalted patriarchs and prophets in shaping the celestial roles and titles of Enoch-Metatron in the Slavonic apocalypse.

To advance the claim about the importance of the mediatorial polemics for the exalted profile of Enoch-Metatron in *2 Enoch*, I begin Chapter 5 by

⁵⁶ I initially approached the problem of the mediatorial polemics in *2 Enoch* in A. Orlov, "'Noah's Younger Brother': Anti-Noachic Polemics in *2 Enoch*," *Hekhalot* 22 (2000) 259–73; idem, "Melchizedek Legend of *2* (Slavonic) *Enoch*," *JSJ* 31 (2000) 23–38.

investigating the role of Adamic polemics in the conceptual development of such titles of Enoch-Metatron as the Youth, the Prince of the World, the Redeemer of the World, and the Measurer of the Lord.

In Chapter 6 I discuss Mosaic polemics in *2 Enoch* and their formative role in molding Enoch-Metatron's role as a *sar happanim*, the Prince of the Divine Presence. Here I demonstrate that the imagery of the divine Face plays a crucial role in shaping the protagonist's role as the servant of the divine Presence.

In Chapter 7 I clarify the issues pertaining to the date of *2 Enoch*. The students of early Jewish mysticism have often ignored the pseudepigraphon on the grounds of its uncertain date. I demonstrate that, given the Noachic polemics which take place in the Slavonic apocalypse, this text can be safely placed in the chronological framework of Second Temple Judaism.