

# THE LITURGICAL CYCLE IN 3 *MACCABEES* AND THE 2 *ENOCH* CALENDAR<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

*3 Maccabees* provides a hagiographical legend related to a 50-day liturgical cycle. This cycle implies a modification of the already known calendar shared by *2 Enoch* and the *Joseph and Aseneth* and covers the third pentecostad after the Passover within the 364-day year having its first day (1.I) falling on Sunday (not Wednesday). *3 Maccabees*'s innovation consists in shifting the former New Wine pentecostad from the second to the third position while transforming the original day of the New Wine festival into a day of mourning. This kind of liturgical transformation of some feasts is not unique, however, in the Second Temple Judaism.

## RÉSUMÉ

La légende hagiographique de *3 Maccabées* appartient à un cycle liturgique de 50 jours. Le cycle en question implique une modification d'un calendrier déjà connu, celui de *2 Hénoch* et de *Joseph et Aséneth*. Le cycle se situe dans la troisième pentécotade après la Pâque à l'intérieur de l'année de 364 jours qui commence au dimanche et non au mercredi. La nouveauté est que la fête ancienne du Vin Nouveau est déplacée de la deuxième à la troisième position dans la chaîne des pentécotades postpascales, tandis que le jour auparavant occupé par la fête du Vin Nouveau est devenu un jour de deuil. Cependant, une pareille transformation d'une fête en deuil n'est pas complètement étrangère au judaïsme du second Temple.

<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this study was presented in 2014 as a paper at the seminar of the Center of Classical and Ancient Studies of the Institute of the Oriental and Classical Studies of the Russian State University for the Humanities (Moscow) headed by Nina V. Braginskaya. I am very grateful to the members of the seminar for the fruitful discussion. Moreover, I am grateful to Dmitry Biriukov, Evgeny Tkachev, and Michael Schneider for their help.

*To the memory of Chris Bennett (1953–2014),  
the Ptolemaic scholar.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Third Book of Maccabees is shaped as an etiological hagiographical legend referring to some liturgical cycle. If, as it was noticed in a discussion of possible historicity of the book, “[t]he stages of the persecution at Alexandria are precisely dated, to the month and day if not to the year”<sup>2</sup>, this is not a mark of historicity at all – contrary to the impression coming from the “naïve” reading. This is a phenomenon coined by Hippolyte Delehayé as “hagiographical coordinate” (of time; there is also a hagiographical coordinate of place, Alexandria), which is a vital information for the cult but normally having very little to do with the history (and, therefore, completely indifferent to the absolute dating by the year)<sup>3</sup>.

This cycle is described in the framework of a calendar where the months have Greek-Egyptian names. Neither these names nor the name of the greatest festival of the cycle – “(Feast of) Deliverance” (σωτήρια) or “The Cup/Banquet of Deliverance” (κώθων<sup>4</sup> σωτήριος, πότος σωτήριος) (3 Macc 6:30-31; 7:18<sup>5</sup>) – add much clarity to our understanding which liturgical cycle is meant. Flavius Josephus in his parallel account (*Contra Apionem* 2:53-55) is even more stingy in liturgical details.

<sup>2</sup> Sara Raup JOHNSON, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity: Third Maccabees in Its Cultural Context* (Hellenistic Culture and Society, 43), Berkeley, CA – Los Angeles, CA – London, Univ. of California Press, 2004, 191.

<sup>3</sup> Hippolyte DELEHAYE, *Cinq leçons sur la méthode hagiographique* (SHG, 21), Bruxelles, Société des Bollandistes, 1934, esp. Leçon 1.

<sup>4</sup> This word originally meant a Laconian drinking vessel but has had a metonymical meaning “drinking party”; it is rare in the Septuagint, however. Its unique occurrence outside 3 Maccabees is Esth 8:17, where it corresponds to *mišteh* (a very frequent word in the Hebrew *Esther*, which is rendered in the Greek *Esther* differently, often as πότος: 1:5, 1:9, 2:18); cf. πότος in 3 Macc 7:18.

<sup>5</sup> Here and below the Greek text quoted is that of Robert HANHART, *Maccabaeorum liber III* (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum, IX.3), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980. The translation quoted is that of Cameron BOYD-TAYLOR, “3 Maccabees”, in: Albert PIETERSMA, Benjamin G. WRIGHT (ed.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*, New York, NY – Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, 521-529, which is a literal translation of Hanhart’s text.

There is a consensus, in the modern scholarship, that *3 Maccabees* describes a local Jewish festival unknown outside Egypt<sup>6</sup>. However, even in Egypt, as recent commentators have frankly summarised the common opinion, “there is no information, which festival is meant”<sup>7</sup>.

The idea of a liturgical cycle containing a great festivity proper to Jewish communities of Egypt but unknown to Jewish traditions elsewhere looks highly problematic from a liturgical point of view. The Jewish liturgical calendar, in any of its known modifications, is a dense and balanced construction. It would be hardly possible to implant into its living body a heavy and rigid fifty-day construction described in *3 Maccabees*. This would be a spectacular violation of the most fundamental law of development of the liturgy, the first law of Baumstark (the Law of Organic Development<sup>8</sup>).

Unless we suppose a miraculous violation of the first law of Baumstark, the liturgical novelty described in *3 Maccabees* must be understood as an “organic” modification of a previously existing Jewish calendar. Therefore, our present task could be formulated as a search of a Jewish liturgical calendar where the modification described in *3 Maccabees* would look “organic” in the sense of Baumstark. This means that it would have been introduced with such “tender” means as shifts of some elements under the pressure of traditionally shaped additions, without inserting completely new liturgical forms or brutal suppression of previously existing ones.

## 2. THE AVAILABLE LITURGICAL DATA

### 2.1 *3 Maccabees*

The liturgical cycle of *3 Macc* is described carefully, as it ought to be in a hagiographical legend called for establishing and explaining, first of all, a series of liturgical commemorations.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. S. R. JOHNSON, *Historical Fictions*, 180: “a particular Egyptian Jewish festival”.

<sup>7</sup> Nina V. BRAGINSKAYA and Anna I. SHMAINA-VELIKANOVA in: Nina V. BRAGINSKAYA (ed.), *Книги Маккавеев (Четыре книги Маккавеев). Перевод с древнегреческого, введение и комментарии*, Moscow, Мосты культуры – Гешарим, 2014, 333: « О каком празднике идет речь, никаких сведений нет ».

<sup>8</sup> Anton BAUMSTARK, *Liturgie comparée. Principes et méthodes pour l'étude historique des liturgies chrétiennes*. 3<sup>e</sup> éd. revue par Bernard BOTTE (Clérén), Chevetogne, Éditions de Chevetogne, 1953, 17-30. For applicability of the laws of Baumstark to the Second Temple period liturgies, s. Basil LOURIÉ, “The Jewish Matrix of Christianity seen through the early Christian Liturgical Institutions” (forthcoming).

1 Thus, we have the following structure:

- 2 • 40 days of some kind of preparation (Pachon 25 to Epiphi 4;  
 3 3 Macc 6:38),  
 4 • three days of prayer and mourning, presumably, also of fasting  
 5 (Epiphi 5 to Epiphi 7; 3 Macc 6:38), and  
 6 • seven days of festivity (Epiphi 8 to Epiphi 14; 3 Macc 6:40).

7 The whole cycle lasts 50 days, one full pentecontad.

8 The key dates of the cycle are provided according to some calendar  
 9 where the month names are Greek-Egyptian. There are still scholars  
 10 who commit an error interpreting these dates according to the Alex-  
 11 andrian modification of the Julian calendar – forgetting that the Julian  
 12 calendar is incompatible with the pre-Roman dating of the book,  
 13 which is accepted by the modern consensus including the very same  
 14 authors<sup>9</sup>.

15 Nevertheless, the Julian calendar is not to be ruled out *a priori*,  
 16 given that the textual history of *3 Maccabees* is possibly complicated.  
 17 This problem was often discussed in relation to the beginning of the  
 18 book<sup>10</sup>, but there could be a very little probability that the exact dates  
 19 are a later insertion. Nevertheless, here we can say in advance that  
 20 there will be no need of resorting to such an assumption.

## 21 2.2. Flavius Josephus

22 An alternative aetiology of the same festivity is provided by Fla-  
 23 vius Josephus in his apologetic work *Contra Apionem* 2:53-55. Jose-  
 24 phus himself does not write a hagiographic document but he relies on  
 25 some hagiographical traditions. Thus, unlike *3 Maccabees*, we have,

26 <sup>9</sup> N. Clayton CROY, *3 Maccabees* (Septuagint Commentary Series, 2), Leiden –  
 27 Boston, MA, Brill, 2006, 109; cf. *ibid.*, pp. xi-xiii, where the author opts for the dating  
 28 to the late Persian period against the dating to the Roman one. The error is “inaugu-  
 29 rated” already by Elias Bickermann, despite his own dating to a pre-Roman time. See  
 30 Elias J. BICKERMANN, “Makkabäerbücher. Buch III”, in: *PRE* 27, 1928, cols. 797-800,  
 31 here 800: “...die alexandrinischen (und ägyptischen) Juden feierten von 8–14 Epiphi  
 32 (Anf. Juli) eine fröhliche Feier...” These dates fall on “the beginning of July” in the  
 33 Julian calendar only. Nina V. Braginskaya and Anna I. Shmaina-Velikanova in their  
 34 commentary are careful but somewhat too sceptical: « если имеется в виду Птоле-  
 35 меево время, понять, о каких датах идет речь, не представляется возмож-  
 36 ным » (“if it is the Ptolemaic epoch that is meant, there is no possibility to know what  
 37 dates are referred to”): N. V. BRAGINSKAYA (ed.), *Книги Маккавеев*, 392.

38 <sup>10</sup> S., however, the discussion in S. R. JOHNSON, *Historical Fictions*, 193-194,  
 39 who argues for the integrity of the present text.

in Flavius Josephus, a “second-hand hagiography”: a document unrelated to the cult needs but prepared with a recourse to some liturgical traditions explained in some hagiographical legends.

In his account, there are important intersections with *3 Maccabees*’s plot and wording. There are also several differences, some of them revealing that already Josephus knew the legend in, at least, two different recensions<sup>11</sup>.

The most striking difference is another identification of Ptolemy: this time, it is not Ptolemy IV Philopator (222–204 BC) but Ptolemy VIII Euergetes nicknamed “Physcon” (145–117 BC). As John M. G. Barclay points out, “...the story seems sufficiently self-contained to be attached to almost any Alexandrian king, though the name of the concubine Eirene (2.55)... matches another legend independently linked to Physcon. Physcon had a reputation for utter ruthlessness..., so this tale easily attached itself to his name.”<sup>12</sup> In another note Barclay states that Josephus’ hesitation between two different names of the concubine (“whom some call Ithaca, others Eirene”) means that he “...seems to know more than one version of the story.”<sup>13</sup>

The story told by Josephus is no less fiction than that of *3 Maccabees*<sup>14</sup> and, moreover, a hagiographical legend, too. It reports some events of suspect historicity in connection to their alleged liturgical commemoration. Josephus’ mention, despite its brevity, provides in *C. Ap. 2:55* two important liturgical facts:

unde recte hanc diem Iudaei Alexandria constituti eo quod aperte a deo salutem promeruerunt celebrare noscuntur<sup>15</sup>.

“Hence, the Judeans who are settled in Alexandria are known to celebrate this day as a festival, rightly, since they were visibly granted deliverance by God.” (Barclay’s translation).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. a detailed analysis in the large notes to the translation in John M. G. BARCLAY, *Against Apion. Translation and Commentary* (Flavius Josephus. Translation and Commentary, 10), Leiden – Boston, MA, Brill, 2007, 199, notes 183–189.

<sup>12</sup> J. M. G. BARCLAY, *Against Apion*, 199, note 183.

<sup>13</sup> J. M. G. BARCLAY, *Against Apion*, 199, note 187.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. S. R. JOHNSON, *Historical Fictions*, 189: “Although we cannot rule out the possibility that the elephant legend arose from some forgotten persecution of the Egyptian Jews, now wholly lost to us, neither *3 Maccabees* nor Josephus’s account can furnish positive evidence for any persecution of the Alexandrian Jews during the Hellenistic period. It is entirely possible that there never was one.”

<sup>15</sup> Carolus BOYSEN, *Flavii Iosephi Opera ex versione latina*. Pars VI. *De Ioudaeorum vetustate sive Contra Apionem libri II* (CSEL, 37), Vindobonae – Praegae – Lipsiae, Tempsky, 1898 [reprint New York, NY – London, 1964], 85.1–3. I omit here editor’s conjecture “<in> Alexandria” that does not affect the meaning.

1 Thus, (1) the Jews celebrate *haec dies* (“this day”), not a 7-day  
 2 period, and (2) the meaning of this festival is formulated with a rather  
 3 technical term *salus*, which Greek retroversion is, obviously, σωτηρία,  
 4 that could be translated in a more literalistic way as “salvation”.

5 The fact (1) is in an apparent disagreement with “days” (plural) in  
 6 *3 Maccabees*. Compare, especially, the wording of *3 Maccabees* where  
 7 the text mentions directly the institution of a new feast:

8 6:36 “...and they resolved to celebrate the aforementioned days (τὰς  
 9 προειρημένους ἡμέρας) in merriment, not for the sake of drink and glut-  
 10 tony, but for the salvation<sup>16</sup> that had come them though God (οὐ πότου<sup>17</sup>  
 11 χάριν καὶ λιχνείας, σωτηρίας δὲ τῆς διὰ θεὸν γενομένης αὐτοῖς).”

12 7:19 “...they likewise resolved to celebrate also these days (ταύτας ἄγειν  
 13 τὰς ἡμέρας) in merriment for the duration of their residence as aliens”.

14 However, there is no doubt that the seven-day cycle meant in *3 Mac-*  
 15 *cabees* had the one most solemn day, as it is normally the first day of  
 16 the multi-day festivities. Thus, in this point, the two accounts are easily  
 17 compatible, given that Josephus was not interested in liturgical details.

18 The fact (2) corroborates *3 Maccabees*’s data that the new feast  
 19 was called with a phrase where the key-word was “salvation”.

20 We have to conclude that Josephus’ story, even though referring to  
 21 similar but different hagiographical legends, is in agreement with the  
 22 liturgical data provided by *3 Maccabees*.

### 23 3. THE CALENDAR: EGYPTIAN OR JEWISH?

24 Which calendrical entities are labelled with Greek-Egyptian month  
 25 names? Theoretically, there are two types of possibilities here: the  
 26 months called with Greek-Egyptian names are belonging to either  
 27 some Egyptian calendar or some Jewish calendar (where they are  
 28 substituting normal Jewish month names).

29 There are four Egyptian calendars to choose from: the cultic Lunar  
 30 calendar, the civil calendar with the movable 365-day Sothic year, the  
 31 Canopic calendar (mathematically equivalent to the Julian but having  
 32 1 Toth somewhere between 21 and 23 of October instead of August  
 33 29<sup>18</sup>), and, of course, the Alexandrian version of the Julian calendar.

34 <sup>16</sup> I changed, in Boyd-Taylor’s translation, “deliverance” to “salvation”.

35 <sup>17</sup> Variant reading τύφου “(for) the delusion”, *sc.*, the drunkenness.

36 <sup>18</sup> As Chris Bennett has shown, this calendar established with the 238 BC Canopic  
 37 decree by Ptolemy III Euergetes continues to be in use throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. BC  
 38 and was not abolished almost immediately as it was commonly thought previously:

The Lunar Egyptian calendar is to be excluded as specific to a non-Jewish cult.

The Sothic calendar is also to be excluded. Its movable year (which movement's speed is 1 day per 4 Julian years) would make it unsuitable for any harmonisation with the remaining Jewish feasts according to any known Jewish calendar.

The Julian calendar is to be excluded on the chronological ground.

Therefore, the only reasonable alternative to the "Jewish" interpretation of Greek-Egyptian month names is the Canopic calendar. According to this calendar, the dates mentioned in 3 *Maccabees* can be converted into the Julian ones based on the relation 25 Pachon = 11/13 July (the date remains slightly imprecise because we do not know the intercalation year within the four-year cycle).

Indeed, if any "Egyptian" hypothesis were true, it would imply some procedure of harmonisation of our liturgical cycle with the remaining Jewish liturgical year that would hardly follow the Canopic calendar. Therefore, even the "Canopic" hypothesis would be difficult enough.

It would be easier to explore the "Jewish"-type hypotheses at first and, then, return to the "Canopic" one if there will be a need. If not, the "Egyptian" interpretation will be cut off with the Ockham razor.

#### 4. THE CYCLE OF THE SECOND PENTECONTAD?

The 3 *Maccabees* describes one-pentecontad liturgical cycle having the internal structure (40 + 3 + 7) days.

Such a structure is typical for the second pentecontad of several Jewish calendars of the Second Temple period. The first 40-day period of the second pentecontad goes back to the 40 days passed by Moses on the top of Sinai (Ex 24:18). The second pentecontad ends with the festival known from the Qumranic *Temple Scroll* as that of New Wine.

The subdivision of the New Wine pentecontad into 40 + 10 days is normally important in those Jewish calendars where the Summer Solstice has a prominent role: it falls on some day within three days following the 40-day period, thus leaving the room for seven or eight

Chris BENNETT, *Alexandria and the Moon: An Investigation into the Lunar Macedonian Calendar of Ptolemaic Egypt* (StHell, 52), Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA, Peeters, 2011. Cf. Sacha STERN, *Calendars in Antiquities: Empires, States, and Societies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, 141-142, fn. 46.

1 days of preparation to the New Wine. This calendrical scheme is  
 2 witnessed with the *Joseph and Aseneth* (where the general calendrical  
 3 scheme is that known from another work of Egyptian Judaism,  
 4 *2 Enoch*)<sup>19</sup>, *3 Baruch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*<sup>20</sup>. Moreover,  
 5 in *2 Baruch* 76:4 and *4 Ezra* 14, the 40-day period after the revelation  
 6 that culminates and ends at the Shavuot is dedicated to writing down  
 7 some scripture(s) as its fruit<sup>21</sup>.

8 It would be tempting to identify the festival we are looking for  
 9 with the New Wine. Such a hypothesis would be corroborated with  
 10 the plot of the narrative, where motives related to the wine and the  
 11 resistance to the pagan Dionysus cult are obvious (even though we  
 12 have no calendrical information on the Ptolemaic Dionysian festivals  
 13 in Egypt<sup>22</sup>).

14 Nevertheless, such a possibility must be definitively ruled out. The  
 15 Greek-Egyptian month names prevent us from localising our liturgi-  
 16 cal cycle within the timespan compatible with the second pentecontad  
 17 after the Jewish Passover.

18 According to the “Jewish”-type hypotheses, the Greek-Egyptian  
 19 month names are those of the months of a Jewish calendar. If our  
 20 pentecontad is the second one, the name Pachon has to signify the  
 21 third Jewish month. Thus, the third Jewish month – the month of the

22 <sup>19</sup> Basil LOURIÉ, “The Liturgical Calendar in the *Joseph and Aseneth*”, in: Wendy  
 23 MAYER and Ian J. ELMER (ed.), *Men and Women in the Early Christian Centuries*  
 24 (Early Christian Studies, 18), Strathfield, Australia, St Pauls Publications, 2014, 111-  
 25 134; cf. Basil LOURIÉ, “Calendrical Elements in *2 Enoch*”, in: Andrei ORLOV, Gabriele  
 26 BOCCACCINI (ed.), Jason M. ZURAWSKI (assoc. ed.), *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch. No*  
 27 *Longer Slavonic Only* (SJSI, 4), Leiden – Boston, MA, Brill, 2012, 191-219.

28 <sup>20</sup> Basil LOURIÉ, “Cosmology and Liturgical Calendar in *3 Baruch* and Their Meso-  
 29 potamian Background. In Appendix: Calendrical Structure of the *Apocalypse of*  
 30 *Abraham*,” in: Alexander KULIK, Andrei ORLOV (ed.), *Harry E. Gaylor Memorial*  
 31 *Volume* (SJSI), Leiden, Brill (forthcoming).

32 <sup>21</sup> Basil LOURIÉ, “The Calendar Implied in *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*: Two Modifica-  
 33 tions of the One Scheme”, in: Gabriele BOCCACCINI, Jason M. ZURAWSKI (ed.), *Inter-*  
 34 *preting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch. International Studies* (Library of Second Temple Studies,  
 35 87), London etc., Bloomsbury, 2014, 124-137.

36 <sup>22</sup> The internal links between the plot of *3 Maccabees* and the Ptolemaic Dionysus  
 37 cult have been recently intensively explored by N. Clayton CROY, “Disrespecting  
 38 Dionysus: *3 Maccabees* as Narrative Satire of the God of Wine”, in: Patrick GRAY,  
 39 Gail R. O'DAY (ed.), *Scripture and Traditions: Essays on Early Judaism and Chris-*  
 40 *tianity in Honor of Carl R. Holladay* (NT.S, 129), Leiden – Boston, MA, Brill, 2008,  
 41 3-19, and Noah HACHAM, “*3 Maccabees*: An Anti-Dionysian Polemic”, in: Jo-  
 42 Ann A. BRANT, Charles W. HEDRICK, Chris SHEA (ed.), *Ancient Fiction: The Matrix*  
 43 *of Early Christian and Jewish Narrative* (SBLSymS, 32), Atlanta, GA, SBL, 2005,  
 44 167-183; cf. Noah HACHAM, “*3 Maccabees* and Esther: Parallels, Intertextuality, and  
 45 Diaspora Identity”, *JBL* 126 (2007) 765-785.

Shavuot – has to correspond roughly to Pachon according to either Canopic or Sothic movable calendar. However, both Canopic and, for the second century BC, Sothic<sup>23</sup> calendars would require Pachon to be roughly corresponding to the Julian June or July. This is too far from the Spring Equinox and the Passover for allowing localising our pentecontad immediately after the Shavuot.

The weight of this reason could be undermined if we accept an unlikely or even unrealistically late dating of *3 Maccabees*, ca 50 BC onwards. If so, Pachon would correspond to the Julian May, which is compatible with the third month of some Jewish calendar.

The resulting hypothesis, already extremely weak due to the unlikely dating, must be definitively ruled out on the following ground. The ordinal numbers of the days within the months are important liturgical constants themselves (and, moreover, they are the “hagiographical coordinates of time” in the sense of Delehayé). This is (we shall not forget) the reason why they are specified in *3 Maccabees*. Thus, the Passover falls always on 14.I, regardless of the calendar used. The date of the Shavuot is not specified in the Pentateuch with an ordinal number of the day, but nearly all known Jewish calendars of the Second Temple period, even though very different from each other, are distributed between three variants: 4.III, 6.III, and 15.III<sup>24</sup>. The traditions allowing the movable date of Shavuot but insisting on the invariable weekday (Sunday), such as the Sadducean/Karaite and Samaritan ones, and even the unique Beta Israel (Falasha) date 12.III do not go beyond the timespan between 4.III and 15.III.

Our pentecontad, however, to be the second one after the Passover, would require the feast of Shavuot falling on 24 or 25.III (assuming that Pachon is the name of the third Jewish month), which is extremely unlikely.

<sup>23</sup> For instance, 25 Pachon = 21 June for the year 150 BC and 9 June for the year 100 BC. Both dates are too late for allowing roughly equating Pachon with the third month (the month having the Shavuot in its first half) of any Jewish calendar, given that the Passover must be near to the Spring Equinox. For the year of the battle of Raphia, 217 BC, 25 Pachon = 8 July. However, for 50 BC, 25 Pachon = 26 May. The dates according to the Sothic calendar are verified with the table provided by Chris Bennett at his website “Ptolemaic Dynasty”, section “Egyptian Dates”: <http://www.tyndalehouse.com/egypt/>.

<sup>24</sup> Thus, the date 6.III is shared by both rabbinic lunar and 364-day solar *2 Enoch*’s calendars; the corresponding “third months” are, of course, not coinciding astronomically. S., for the details, B. LOURIÉ, “The Calendar Implied in *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*”.

## 5. THE CYCLE OF THE THIRD PENTECONTAD

If the pentecontad in *3 Maccabees* is the third after the Passover, the difficulties mentioned in the previous section disappear.

The third pentecontad after the Passover that ends with the New Oil festival (according to the *Temple Scroll*) is attested to in a lesser number of documents than the second one. Our knowledge of the development of its internal structure is severely limited<sup>25</sup>. However, it is *a priori* likely to see, within this pentecontad, another 40-day period as a reference to the second 40-day Moses's staying at Sinai (Ex 34:28).

The hypothesis that our pentecontad is the third one can be verified with an analysis of the ordinal numbers of the days of the months. This argument is the most "mathematical" and, therefore, decisive, but it must and will be corroborated with the data of the narrative.

According to our present hypothesis, Pachon is to be identified with the fourth month of a Jewish calendar, Tammuz. Thus, the calendar implied is to be recovered as following (backward from the third pentecontad):

- 26.IV–14.VI: the 49 days of the third pentecontad described in *3 Maccabees*,
- 25.IV: the former New Wine festival, the last and the culminating day of the second pentecontad;
- 6.III: Shavuot.

These calculations imply that all the months from III to V contain 30 days. For the months IV and V, this is true for all known solar Jewish calendars. For the Jewish calendars that use lunar months, such a pentecontad structure would be unlikely *a priori*, and, therefore, there is no need to consider them.

Nevertheless, in the most known modifications of the 364-day Jewish calendar (in the *Temple Scroll*, *Jubilees*, *1 Enoch* etc.), the

<sup>25</sup> See, for a dossier of the New Oil festival with its later avatars, Basil LOURIÉ, "The 'Synoptic Apocalypse' (Mt 24–25 Par.) and Its Jewish Source", *Scrinium* 11 (2015) 87–108, 97, where, however, I have had to confess that I do not know any Christian replica of the feast. Now, for the commemorations of Abraham or Abraham and Isaac in the Jerusalem Christian calendars on 21 or 22 August as ultimately going back to the concluding festival of the third pentecontad, s. Basil LOURIÉ, "John II of Jerusalem's Homily on the Encaenia of St. Sion and Its Calendrical Background", in: Cornelia B. HORN, Basil LOURIÉ, Alexey OSTROVSKY, Bernard OUTTIER (ed.), *Armenia between Byzantium and the Orient: Celebrating the Memory of Karen Yuzbashyan (1927–2009)*, Leiden, Brill (forthcoming).

month III has 31 days, that would result, in our case, into 7.III as the date of Shavuot (instead of 15.III which is the normal date in these calendars). However, the date of Shavuot 6.III is that of the 364-day calendar of 2 *Enoch*, where the third month has 30 days<sup>26</sup>.

The structure of the second pentecontad of the 2 *Enoch* calendar is recoverable from the *Joseph and Aseneth*. As I tried to demonstrate elsewhere, both 2 *Enoch* and the *Joseph and Aseneth* share the same 364-day liturgical calendar<sup>27</sup>. This calendar implies 30 days in the month III but 35 days in the month II. Its most striking feature is the weekday of its beginning (1.I), which is not Wednesday (as in the *Temple Scroll*, *Jubilees*, 1 *Enoch* etc.) but Sunday. Putting the first day of the 364-day calendar on Sunday is the only way that allows fulfilling literally all the requirements of *Leviticus* concerning the counting of the weeks for finding the date of Shavuot (all other calendrical schemes would inevitably decline from the literal meaning of some of the relevant commandments).

In the *Joseph and Aseneth*, the date of the festival of New Wine is, indeed, 25.IV – that turned out to be 25 Pachon in 3 *Maccabees*.

We have a chance to grasp the liturgical (and theological) meaning of 3 *Maccabees* if we answer the question, what happened there to the New Wine festival on 25.IV.

Before this, a hypothesis that, in 3 *Maccabees*, “Pachon” means “Tam-muz” (month IV) and, therefore, “Epiphi” means “Elul” (month VI) according to the 364-day calendar described in 2 *Enoch* is not completely proven. Nevertheless, it became already plausible enough for cutting off the “Egyptian”-type hypotheses with the Ockham razor.

## 6. THE NARRATIVE AND PTOLEMAIC RITUALS IN PAYNI AND EPIPHI

The proposed July–August calendrical setting is additionally corroborated with so far unexplained details of the narrative.

<sup>26</sup> B. LOURIÉ, “Calendrical Elements in 2 *Enoch*”. Here and below I call “the calendar of 2 *Enoch*” the 364-day calendar described there as the principal but not the only calendrical scheme. This scheme, however, is unique, in 2 *Enoch*, as that of liturgical calendar, and this is why such terminology is justified for liturgical analysis. Moreover, 2 *Enoch* describes another purely solar 364-day calendrical scheme, but only with astronomical and cosmological and not liturgical purposes. Finally, it mentions some lunar calendar and the 28-year cycle that I understood as implying the Julian calendar. Now I have to correct myself: the mention of the 28-year cycle could be equally justified as a reference to the Canopic calendar.

<sup>27</sup> B. LOURIÉ, “The Liturgical Calendar in the *Joseph and Aseneth*”.

1 The synchronism between the 40-day period of the forcible gather-  
 2 ing of the Jews and the Egyptian Payni (= 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the period of  
 3 *šmw*, that is, of low water after the harvest and before the next inun-  
 4 dation) festivities for Bastet and Hathor sheds light on other details of  
 5 the narrative.

6 The emphasis on the interruption of the marital rituals of the  
 7 Jews (4:6-8<sup>28</sup>; cf. 1:19<sup>29</sup>), gathering of the male, female, and children  
 8 together, journey on the boats (ch. 4) recalls, by the contrast, the fer-  
 9 tility rites of the main festival of Bastet such as those described by  
 10 Herodotus (2:60)<sup>30</sup>. According to the modern commentators, Herodo-  
 11 tus wrote on the rites of Bastet in Payni, “which was even attended  
 12 by the cult image of the goddess Hathor of Dendera”<sup>31</sup>. Bastet herself  
 13 has been often identified with Isis.

14 <sup>28</sup> “Young women who had just now entered the bridal chamber for the partner-  
 15 ship of married life soon exchanged their joy for mourning and mingled ashes into  
 16 hair still wet with unguent, and as they were lead away unveiled, it was a dirge rather  
 17 than a wedding-song they started up one and all, savaged by the barbarous cruelties  
 18 of a foreign nation; bound in full public view, they were dragged forcibly as far as  
 19 the boat for embarkation. Their spouses wrapped nooses instead of garlands around  
 20 their necks, although in their youth and prime of life, and spent the remaining days  
 21 of their marriage feast not in banqueting and youthful amusement but rather in  
 22 mourning, seeing the grave already lying before them”.

23 <sup>29</sup> “Others who had just now dressed for their weddings abandoned the chambers  
 24 appointed for the occasion, as well as the appropriate modesty, and made a mad dash  
 25 through the city”.

26 <sup>30</sup> The relevant fragment of Herodotus (*Histories* 2:60): “When the people are  
 27 on their way to Bubastis, they go by river, a great number in every boat, men and  
 28 women together. Some of the women make a noise with rattles, others play flutes all  
 29 the way, while the rest of the women, and the men, sing and clap their hands. As they  
 30 travel by river to Bubastis, whenever they come near any other town they bring their  
 31 boat near the bank; then some of the women do as I have said, while some shout  
 32 mockery of the women of the town; others dance, and others stand up and lift their  
 33 skirts. They do this whenever they come alongside any riverside town. But when  
 34 they have reached Bubastis, they make a festival with great sacrifices, and more wine  
 35 is drunk at this feast than in the whole year besides. It is customary for men and  
 36 women (but not children) to assemble there to the number of seven hundred thou-  
 37 sand, as the people of the place say” [Alfred D. GODLEY, *Herodotus*, vol. I, *Books I*  
 38 *and II* (LCL, 117), London, W. Heinemann; New York, NY, G. P. Putnam’s Sons,  
 39 1920, 346/347 (txt/tr.)].

40 <sup>31</sup> Alan Lloyd, suggesting the dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the *šmw* season,  
 41 in: David ASHERI, Alan LLOYD, Aldo CORCELLA, *A Commentary on Herodotus. Books I–*  
 42 *IV*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, 277, with a reference to Maurice ALLIOT,  
 43 *Le culte d’Horus à Edfou au temps des Ptolémées*, vol. I (Bibliothèque d’étude, t. XX,  
 44 f. 1), Cairo, Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1949, 232. Cf. Diana DELIA, “Isis,  
 45 or the Moon”, in: Willy CLARYSSE, Antoon SCHOORS, Harco WILLEMS (ed.), *Egyptian*  
 46 *Religion: The Last Thousand Years. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaege-*  
 47 *beur* (OLA, 84), Leuven, Peeters, 1998, part I, 539-550, 545-546.

As Laurent Bricault established, Ptolemy IV reinforced the cult of Isis after the battle of Raphia<sup>32</sup>. Therefore, the parallels in *3 Maccabees*'s plot with the rituals of Bastet/Isis are not coincidental and are fitting with pagan legends and cult practices commemorating the battle of Raphia.

The Hathor festivals could be also of special interest as a possible background of *3 Maccabees*, even though presently the most of calendrically organised information is available from the temples in Edfu and Dendera, that is, relatively far from Alexandria. Among the four main yearly festivals of Hathor in the Ptolemaic period, three were called "festivals of drunkenness" but only the fourth was falling within the timespan we are interested in (Epiphi), that of the Beautiful Reunion (*sc.*, between Hathor and Horus)<sup>33</sup>. The latter feast was covering the first 14 days of Epiphi, in an exact correspondence with the dates established in *3 Maccabees*. Even though, in two cases, there were astronomically different periods called "Epiphi", two "Epiphi" festivals, the pagan and the Jewish one, could be hardly unconnected to each other. Both are related to the procreativity and marriages, and the Jewish one was certainly in opposition to some heathen cult.

We have no data concerning the possible involvement of drinking and drunkenness in rituals related to the Beautiful Reunion. Nevertheless, at least, one of the known epithets of Hathor was "Mistress of Drunkenness"<sup>34</sup>. This overtone of the cult of Hathor would have contributed, together with the Ptolemaic syncretistic cult of Dionysus, to pagan drinking rituals trapped in sight by *3 Maccabees*.

## 7. "TURNING FEASTS INTO MOURNING"

Disappearance of the traditional topic of the New Oil festival at the end of the third pentecontad without disappearance of the third pentecontad itself has no parallels in other sources known to me. Nevertheless, it does not look especially strange. On one hand, the synchronous Hathor rituals would have provided to the Jews some liturgical reasons to drink

<sup>32</sup> Laurent BRICAULT, "Sarapis et Isis, sauveurs de Ptolémé IV à Raphia", *ChrEg* 74 (1999) 334-343.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Sylvie CAUVILLE, *Dendara. Les fêtes d'Hathor* (OLA, 105), Leuven – Paris – Sterling, VA, Peeters, 2002, and especially Hartwig ALTENMÜLLER, "Die Fahrt der Hathor nach Edfu und die 'Heilige Hochzeit'", in: W. CLARYSSE, A. SCHOORS, H. WILLEMS (ed.), *Egyptian Religion*, part II, 753-764.

<sup>34</sup> Mu-Chou POO, *Wine and Wine Offering in the Religion of Ancient Egypt*, London – New York, NY, Routledge, 2009 [reprint of the 1995 ed.], 23.

at the day of the former New Oil festival. On another hand, among the three pentecontads after the Passover, the third one was the weakest as a specific liturgical unit due to the vicinity of the Day of Atonement with its preparatory cycle and extremely strong “gravitation field”<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, replacement of the New Oil festival with the topic of the New Wine festival looks “organic” enough in the sense of Baumstark.

The main problem here is the shift of the New Wine festival from its natural place, where it was replaced not with another feast but with a mourning day (25 Pachon: the first day of Jewish people’s sufferings). This change would not look “organic” at all, unless we were not aware of a particular way of liturgical development attested to in the Second Temple Judaism. I would name it “Turning feasts into mourning” – thus referring to Amos 8:10 “And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation” (KJV).

For the Jerusalem/Palestinian *3 Baruch* and *4 Baruch* (*Paraleipomena Jeremiou*), this feast “turned into mourning” became Passover<sup>36</sup>. For the – either Palestinian as well or originated in the eastern diaspora<sup>37</sup> – *Tobit*, it is Shavuot. It is *Tobit* (2:6) where Amos 8:10 is quoted explicitly as an explanation.

*3 Maccabees* is not the only witness of “Turning feasts into mourning” procedure applied to the feast of New Wine. The *Apocalypse of Abraham*, which geographical origin is obscure but which date is later than that of *3 Maccabees*, represents a similar liturgical phenomenon. It describes rituals clearly belonging to the Day of Atonement<sup>38</sup>, but its calendrical and cosmological setting is the second pentecontad and mostly its final period, the eight-day timespan between the Summer Solstice and the former day of New Wine inclusively. The implied calendar and cosmology (celebrating the Summer Solstice at the highest point of the heavens, from which the lower heavens and the earth are observable from the top down) are very close to those of *3 Baruch*. Already in the latter, the New Wine festival has some expiation overtones, too<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. B. LOURIÉ, “The ‘Synoptic Apocalypse’”, 97.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. analysis in B. LOURIÉ, “Cosmology and Liturgical Calendar in *3 Baruch*”, sect. 4.3 “Passover: *3 Baruch* and *4 Baruch*”.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Joseph A. FITZMYER, *Tobit* (CEJL), Berlin – New York, NY, W. de Gruyter, 2003, 52-54.

<sup>38</sup> As it is proven by Andrei ORLOV, *The Atoning Dyad: The Two Goats of Yom Kippur in the Apocalypse of Abraham* (SJSI, 8), Leiden – Boston, MA, Brill, 2016, and in a series of his earlier papers.

<sup>39</sup> See, for the details, B. LOURIÉ, “Cosmology and Liturgical Calendar in *3 Baruch*”.

The rituals of Yom Kippur, in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, imply penitence and fasting (the fast is not mentioned explicitly but Abraham eats nothing during his heavenly journey). In this way, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* shares with *3 Maccabees* the liturgical tradition of turning the feast of New Wine into mourning. However, unlike *3 Maccabees* where 25 Pachon (25.IV) has no specific rites, the later apocalypse provided an elaborated replica of the rites of Yom Kippur.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Our analysis is limited to the history of liturgy and, therefore, does not reach the social history. Thus, within the present study, we are unable to discuss the events that would have provoked the liturgical novelties.

The hagiographical legend of *3 Maccabees* provides a modification of the calendar shared by *2 Enoch* and the *Joseph and Aseneth*. Unlike the latter, where the original structure of the second pentecontad after the Passover remains intact, *3 Maccabees*'s liturgical calendar contains an innovation. Such a comparative chronology of the liturgical calendars features the liturgies but not the texts where these liturgies are described. It is quite possible that an earlier liturgical calendar is described in a later literary work<sup>40</sup>. We still have no idea which religious faction of the Egyptian Jews was following the liturgical calendar implied in a given text.

The liturgical innovation of *3 Maccabees* is, however, typical for the Second Temple Judaism: it consists in turning a solemn festival into a day of mourning. Applied to the New Wine festival, this trend culminated later in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*.

<sup>40</sup> For instance, the calendar described in *2 Enoch* is certainly much earlier than this work (approximately dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> cent. AD) and could be comparable by the age to that of *1 Enoch*. Cf. B. LOURIÉ, "Calendrical Elements in *2 Enoch*".