

THE OCEAN IN THE LITERATURE OF THE WESTERN SEMITES

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Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam

AFDEELING LETTERKUNDE

NIEUWE REEKS

DEEL XIX. N^o. 2

AMSTERDAM
JOHANNES MÜLLER
1918

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PREFACE

It may seem rather arbitrary to write a monograph on the ideas of the Western Semites concerning the Ocean. For it is well known that the ideas of the Israelites for example on this point are closely akin to those of the Babylonians and that the theories found in Muslim authors show a great deal of affinity to those of the Greeks.

I have two arguments which may justify the geographical boundaries of the present study. In the first place it seemed superfluous to add to the materials united in the following pages those data from Greek and Babylonian literature that are known to be within the reach of every scholarly reader. Further these additions might give the impression that Greek and Babylonian cosmography were treated too. This would indeed be beyond my powers.

In the second place I must remark that a treatise on the ideas of the Greeks, the Western Semites and the Babylonians would not form an any less arbitrary selection from the cosmographic ideas of ancient peoples. For such a definition of the subject would have brought us face to face with several questions that are not yet sufficiently elucidated to be solved. I will mention only the following: what is the relation between the Babylonian and the Sumerian ideas on this and on other points? Is there any relation between Babylonia and Egypt concerning cosmographic views? Where did the Greeks get their cosmographic ideas?

My conclusion is that enlarging the subject Westward and Eastward would not meet the objections mentioned. So I am conscious of dealing arbitrarily, but at the same time convinced that this arbitrariness could scarcely be avoided.

The best method of research in subjects like the present seems to me that different groups of literature should be taken separately by different inquirers; a comparison of their results may procure us a wide view of the subject which might enable us to trace the course such ideas have followed in antiquity and the Middle Ages.

A further point is to be observed. When a *résumé* of the present study was delivered as a lecture to a private circle, Professor SNOUCK HURGRONJE warned me, that the ideas here called the ideas of the Western Semites cannot be appropriated to these peoples with certainty; they possibly belong to others and may have found a fortuitous unity in nearer Asia only. I willingly acknowledge the justness of this remark. So the collection of materials given in the present study is only to be taken as such; it does not bear a conclusive character. I only hope, that it may be of use to others, Semitic and non-Semitic scholars, who make investigations in cognate fields.

It is my agreeable duty to express my warmest thanks to Mrs. KUENEN-WICKSTEED for her careful revision of the English text of this monograph.

Leiden, 1918.

A. J. WENSINCK

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CHAPTER I

THE OCEAN IN THE COSMOGONY

It is not only remote Semitic antiquity that has produced cosmogonic stories; even in so late a time as the Christian aera we observe how popular phantasy, though checked by sacred books and their official interpreters and guardians, worked upon a subject which of old fascinated human imagination. This phantasy, however, takes a different direction; monotheism put an end to the strife between different gods and nature became an instrument at the service of the one God. Of course this change did not take place at one period; the Mandaeans for example were at liberty to work out or to gather products of a polytheistic scheme, at a time when Jews and Christians remembered their polytheistic Past only very dimly, if they did at all. It is even true that the biblical story of the creation, as it is written in the book of Genesis, contains only very few features recalling its mythologic pattern. Later biblical literature on the other hand contains allusions of a much more definite kind. It is Gunkel's merit to have carefully collected and explained in his *Schöpfung und Chaos* these scattered sayings and to have shown that they are fragments from cosmological tales differing from those which have come down to us.

Comparing the nature of the ocean as it is described in mythological and semi-mythological passages, with its character in those literary products which might be styled monotheistic, a point of difference is to be noted at once: in the former class of passages the ocean bears the character of a being hostile to the creating god; in the latter class it has become the one god's instrument, or his resting-place.

The literature of the Western Semites furnishes us with a great many examples illustrating this statement. We can only give a few out of many. We will begin with the former class.

We have in the first place to call attention to the description given in Psalm 104.

Vs. 5 sqq. : He founded the earth upon its pillars, that it should not totter for ever. The ocean covered it as a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away (mountains rise and valleys sink) to the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth¹).

This is a sort of story of the creation, dealing with a subject different from that in Genesis 1. The earth, in the beginning, is covered by the waters; the creation of the earth into a cosmos consists really in God's rebuking away the water, the chaotic element. The hostile character of the water, its fiendish nature, is accentuated by the addition: Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over.

Of course this story is not an individual creation of the poet: it need not surprise us to find it, in a more or less full form, in other books too. The author of Proverbs 8, vs. 29 is also acquainted with the old enmity between Jahwe and Tehom: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment (litt. mouth): when he appointed the foundations of the earth²).

Here again Jahwe's commandment was necessary in order to check the conquering power of the ocean; the foundations of the earth, i. e. the mountains, are possibly meant as the means by which the waters are restrained.

Later tradition has not passed these stories in silence; they come to expression chiefly in the Midrashim. The Midrash Bereshit Rabba knows that the mountains are the fortresses which hold back Tehom³). And according to Midrash Tanḥuma God has sealed up the ocean with the tora: With the tora he sealed the ocean that it should not inundate the world with it he sealed Tehom that it should not submerge the world⁴).

1) (so in stead of כסיתו) כסיתו כפתה ועד תהום כלבוש עולם ועד תהום עולם על מכוניו כל תמוט עולם ועד תהום עולם על הרים יעמדו מים מן גערתך ינוסון מן קול רעמך יחפזון יעלו הרים ידרו בקעות אל מקום זה יסדת להם גבול שמת כל יעברון כל ישבון לכסות הארץ

2) בשומו לים חקו ומים לא יעברו פיו בחוקו מוסדי ארץ

3) מה הרים הללו נכבשים לתהום שלא יעלה ויצף את העולם כך וגו' par. XXXIII.

4) ובה חתם ים אוקיינוס שלא יצא וישמף את העולם . . . ובה חתם את התהום: 12: p. שלא יצף את העולם

Also Syriac literature proves to be acquainted with a picture like that given in Psalm 104. According to Ephraim and Jacob of Edessa in the beginning the earth was covered by the waters like the embryo by the membranes. God rent this mass of water and by providing the earth with mountains and basins, he made places for it, which restrained it¹⁾. Another frequent comparison is that between the earth surrounded by the waters with the yolk of the egg as being surrounded by the glair; this comparison is found in Syriac as well as in Arabic literature.

The enmity between Jahwe and Tehom in Hebrew literature is expressed strikingly in the several representations of Tehom, viz. as Leviathan and as Rahab. Psalm 74, 13 sq.: Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength, thou brokest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brokest the heads of Leviathan in pieces and gavest them to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness²⁾. And Psalm 89, 10: Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them. Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm³⁾.

Here Leviathan is called a dragon; Jesaja 27, 1 it is called a serpent (נָחָשׁ). As Gunkel has treated all these features elaborately in their connection with Babylonian cosmogony and with biblical eschatology, we may refer for further details to his book mentioned above. We have only to remember that all these attributes are representative of Tehom as a power opposed to Jahwe.

Muslim cosmogony, which of course is wholly monotheistic, has yet retained some remarkable characteristics of Leviathan as a representation of the ocean. According to Tha'labī God created a fish (and this is the great sea-fish) named Leviathan, with the kunya Balahūt and with the surname Bahamūt⁴⁾. Leviathan and Behemoth are identified here and in other traditions where the latter also denotes the fish on which the bull, which supports the earth, is placed⁵⁾. Remarkably enough,

1) See the text in the Navel of the Earth, p. 3, notes 2 and 3.

2) אַחַה פּוֹרֶרֶת בַּעוֹךְ יָם שִׁבְרַת רֵאשֵׁי תַנִּינִים עַל הַמַּיִם אַחַה רִצְצַת רֵאשֵׁי לִוְיָתָן תַּחֲנַנּוּ
מֵאֵכֶל לַעַם לְצִיִּים

3) אַחַה מוֹשֵׁל בְּנִגְאוֹת הַיָּם בְּשׂוֹא נְלוֹי אַחַה תִּשְׁבַּחֶם אַחַה דְּכֹאֵת כְּחֹלֶל רֵהֵב בּוֹרֵעַ עוֹךְ
פּוֹרֶת אֵיבִיךְ

4) فَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ نَوْثًا وَهُوَ لَلْوَتِ الْعَظِيمِ اسْمُهُ لَوْتِيَا وَكُنْيَتُهُ بِلَهْوَتٍ وَلَقَبُهُ بِيَهْمُوتٍ: p. 4.

In stead of לוֹתְיָא and יְהֵמוֹת we read of course לוֹבְיָא and יְהֵמוֹת.

5) Uns Djalil I, 12; Abū Zaid II, 48; Ibn al-Wardī I a, 36; Kisā'i, fol. 7 r°.

for the bull is evidently an offspring of the biblical Behemoth. According to other traditions the fish and the bull drink the water streaming down from the earth¹⁾.

Other recollections of the biblical תנינים as representatives of the ocean also survive in Muslim tradition. They generally are now connected with the expeditions of Alexander the Great concerning which we shall have to speak later on. But it may here already be remarked, that, though history only knows Alexander's conquests in the East, Oriental mythical legend describes Alexander's marches towards the far East, the far West and the far North. Muslim tradition has chiefly worked out the dates connected with the West.

Now in the romance by Pseudo-Callisthenes there is a description of how Alexander, marching to the East, reaches a river which is visited by a monster, which he cunningly kills²⁾. As the reader is aware, a complete Arabic translation of the Romance of Alexander is not known. Still, like pearls loosened from the string, we find several of the most important episodes scattered through Arabic literature. Alexander's slaying of the monster is not simply adopted by Arabic tradition, but is moulded into a different form. In the first place it is ascribed here to Alexander's march to the farthest West. Moreover it has assumed elements foreign to Pseudo-Callisthenes. The monster is called in Arabic, like in Syriac, تنين which is not a genuine Arabic word, but a transcription (perhaps by Aramaic intermediary) of the Hebrew תנין. Further the dragon is localised on one of the islands of the Western part of the ocean. Now these islands have, to a large extent, a mythological meaning; and the Western ocean is, according to the Arabic conception, the ocean *par excellence*. So the sense of the tradition seems to be here the same as in the case of the Hebrew Leviathan: the Tinnin is a representative of Tehom. When this representative is killed by Alexander, who in Semitic tradition is a faithful king, it is clear that we have here a myth depicting how Alexander slays Tehom, which he has gone out to meet expressly³⁾.

Mas'ūdi⁴⁾ gives a description of the monster which clearly

1) Abū Zaid II, 49; Ibn al-Wardī I a, 37.

2) Syriac text, p. 190 sqq.

3) The story is to be found in Idrīsī, p. 53 sq. and in Ibn al-Wardī, I b, p. 14.

4) I, 267.

shows its affinity with Leviathan: it is taken from the sea by angels; with its tail it destroys houses, trees and mountains; then it is cast down in the country of *Yād̲jūd̲j* and *Mād̲jūd̲j* and killed by hail; its flesh serves as food for these peoples. Here several features of Leviathan are united with reminiscences of the Apocalypse, chapter 12.

So we find literary remains of the old strife between the creating god and the rebellious ocean. The latter has been tamed in the beginning, but it has not been annihilated. It is only in the end of days that this will happen; when the ocean is annihilated, the world will have rest; therefore it is said in the Apocalypse: And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea¹⁾.

We have now to turn towards the second class of ideas, that which scarcely contains mythological elements, is purely monotheistic and consequently gives an impression differing widely from that made by the above traditions. We may say that this second series of stories of the creation is introduced in Semitic literature by that of Genesis 1, where God has only to speak and the elements, which no longer bear a rebellious or a personal character, submit to his orders. This range of ideas scarcely leaves any room for the Spirit of God brooding over the waters; it has been replaced by the divine throne.

It is the *Ḳor'ān* which puts this feature in the front of the story of the creation, thereby revolutionizing the old traditions. *Sūra* 11, 9: 'It is he who created the heavens and earth in six days; and, before, his throne was upon the water'²⁾. It is an image of a wonderful, imposing nature Mohammed gives here, though not so loaded with mysterious gloom as that of Genesis 1, 2. The brooding Spirit of God, which really is not at home in the monotheistic story, has been replaced by the divine throne, the seat of cosmic order, the personification of God's majesty.

It seems probable that Mohammed was not the first to speak of God's throne resting upon the waters before the creation. Geiger³⁾, in discussing *Sūra* 11, 9, has already quoted *Rashi*:

1) 21, 1.

2) وهو الذى خلق السموات والارض في ستة ايام وكان عرشه على الماء.

3) Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthum aufgenommen?, p. 64.

fixed its length, breadth and height. Then he regarded it with a majestic look; then it became a small quantity of water which was in constant motion. This apparent undulation and motion was only a trembling caused by fear of God¹⁾.

This is all that I have been able to find concerning the creation of the water.

It is interesting to observe that in the class of ideas we are dealing with, the monotheistic character appears in further details; water is here not the enemy which has to be vanquished before the creation and to be checked afterwards, it is the element which willingly serves God's creative powers. This thought is condensed in the sentence that God has created the universe in or from water. The idea occurs in the Midrash Bereshit Rabba: The works of the creation were watery on the first day; on the second they coagulated²⁾. These words seem to mean that on the first day the creation still retained the character of the watery substance out of which it coagulated on the second day into its present form. The same idea is expressed in the Ḳor'ān in a more general form. In Sūra 21, 31, in a survey of the works of the creation, Allāh says: We made every living thing of water³⁾. It is to be remarked that the commentators do not tell much concerning a creation of the universe out of water. But still the words seem to point to a conception like that of the Bereshit Rabba. Moreover, the Muslim story of the creation as we find it in folklore and theology, is founded upon this idea. We will, therefore, inspect the Muslim cosmogony more closely.

Of the old-Semitic conception of the mountains being the foundations of the earth and the part which has come into

1) Nuwairi, p. 61: يخلف أن يخلق الماء خلق ياقوتة خضراء ووصف من طولها وعرضها وسمكها ثم نظر اليها بعين الهيبة فصارت ماء يترقف لا يثبت في كحضاح فما يرى من التموج والاضطراب الهيبة فصار الماء من خشية الله تعالى. Cf. the tradition in 'Adjā'ib al-Malakūt, fol. 3 v°: روى عن ابن عباس أن أول ما خلق الله هو اللوح المحفوظ ثم القلم ثم الدرّة التي خلق الله منها الماء ثم العرش ثم الكرسي ثم الروح and Ṭabari I, 49; Mas'ūdī I, 47.

2) par. IV: לחיים היו מעשיהם ביום הראשון ובשני קרשו

3) وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي

existence before the rest, we have found very few remains among the Muslims¹). The view that mountains are the coagulated billows of the ocean is frequently met with: God created the mountains from the billows of the water²). But the description of the creation of the earth and its pre-existent nucleus is given in a more elaborate form: In the beginning the Universe consisted of the primaeval water upon which the throne of God rested. Then God sent a soft wind that drifted the water away from a spot that in this way was made dry and where a cupola arose; this was the place of the future sanctuary³).

The soft wind is probably a reminiscence of the Spirit in Genesis 1, 2 that was *מרחפת* i. e., according to the Jewish interpretation, hovering over the water; but for the rest this is a story of the creation that does not depend upon a biblical source; perhaps it may be compared with the Babylonian poem relating that the first places created were Eridu and Babylon.

According to a different version of the Muslim story the wind beat the billows so that they began to foam⁴). Ṭabarī relates that red or white foam (زبدة) was on the spot of the future sanctuary and formed the origin of the earth⁵). The sanctuary floating on the ocean long before the creation of the earth, is called *غشاء على الماء*⁶). The foam sends a vapour upwards and from this vapour heaven is created. It is also told that Allāh created a jewel (جوهرة) and looked upon it majestically till it melted; from the vapour rising from it, heaven was created, from the rest of the jewel the earth⁷).

In Semitic literature this pre-existent spot in the midst of the primaeval waters, the origin of the later sanctuary and the centre of the future earth, is called the navel of the earth. It goes without saying, that this spot in the centre of the ocean could be called the navel of the ocean just as well, for navel in expressions of this sort usually means centre; and so the navel of the earth and the navel of the ocean appear to be

1) The Navel of the Earth, p. 4.

2) 'Adjā'ib al-Malakūt, fol. 16^a: *اعلم ان الله خلق الجبال من امواج الماء*

3) Azraqī, p. 4; Nuwairī, p. 59, 80; Ḥalabī I, 195.

4) Khamīs I, 31; Abrégé des merveilles, p. 7.

5) Tafīr I, 409.

6) Azraqī, p. 1; Kūṭb al-Dīn, p. 25 sq.

7) Kazwīnī I, 9.

identical. As far as I know, Semitic literature does not contain the latter expression; but it occurs among the Greeks. In the *Odyssea* I, 52 Ogygia, the island where Odysseus is retained by Calypso, is called:

νήσω ἐν ἀμφιρύτῃ, ὅθι τ' ὀμφαλὸς ἐστὶ θαλάσσης.

According to the Toradja's in the centre of the sea there is a rock, where nine streams come together, in the rock is a cave, the dwelling place of the crab which causes the change of the tides¹⁾.

In view of these facts it is to be remarked, that in such conceptions the simple observation of primitive man is to be traced. Every dry spot in the ocean is the centre or the navel of the ocean for the eye of the inhabitants; just as every high mountain is the centre of the earth. With such expressions cosmogonic conceptions are easily to be connected. What we have to observe here is a different thing.

The universe, in the Semitic conception, consists of several parts analogous one to the other. Thus the *primaeval* domination of the water and the creation of the earth out of it, is also connected with heaven. Tradition, on this point, may have arisen from a poetic utterance in the Old Testament. In Psalm 104, 3 Jahwe is called he 'who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters'²⁾. Jahwe's 'upper rooms' are in heaven; so heaven is called the plate of water. This was the common idea of the old Semitic world; it is familiar from the Babylonian poem of the creation and it is to be traced in the biblical story of the creation. We shall have to discuss it later on. Here we will only point to some cosmogonic traditions parallel to those communicated above.

In like manner as the earth was created from a centre in the ocean, so were the heavens. The *Bereshit Rabba* contains the cosmogony of heaven or the firmament in this form: At the moment when the Holy one said: let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, the drop that was in the centre coagulated and so were made the nether heavens and the upper ones³⁾. In the *Midrash Shoḥer Ṭob* it is said that the heavens were made of water: Rabbi Pinehas said in the name of Rabbi

1) *Adriani and Kruyt, De Toradja's III, 441, note 2.*

2) המקרה במים עליוהיו

3) par. IV: בשעה שאמר הקב"ה יהי רקיע בתוך המים גלדה טיפה האמצעית ונעשו השמים התחתונים ושמי שמים העליונים

Levi: Are these heavens of soda or alkaline salt? Do not you know of what they are? The word: who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, proves that they are of water¹⁾.

We find this conception also in Christian and Muslim literature. According to the Cave of Treasures the firmament was called Raḳīf because its nature is that of coagulated water²⁾. In the Christian translation and commentation of the Pentateuch the thought is expressed more clearly: When it was the second day, God created a roof of stiffened, coagulated water, in the centre of the ocean³⁾.

This centre of heaven around which the firmament was created, is called the navel of heaven⁴⁾.

In the Muslim cosmogonic traditions the nether heaven is usually described as made of billows⁵⁾. It is also said that it is composed of water and vapour⁶⁾; or it is called a sustained roof and a restrained billow⁷⁾. So it is either described as a watery substance or as coagulated water. We shall have to return to these conceptions in our second chapter. Here another point is to be elucidated. This ocean in heaven bears in its centre the throne of God; for the theory of seven heavens is of later date; originally the universe consisted of three stages: nether world, earth and heaven. In the centre of heaven is the throne of God; in later times it was placed above the seven heavens in the top of the universe. We have already seen that before the creation of the earth, the throne of God rested upon the primaeval water. Then it left this place and was raised to heaven. This must have taken place when God began to create the earth. Tradition, however, is not elaborate on this point. Commenting upon the words of the Ḳor'ān: And his throne was on the water, it asserts that this was the state before the creation; and it assumes that after the creation the throne is in the centre of heaven or in the top of the universe.

1) p. 151: אִדּוּ פִּינָחַם בְּשֵׁם ר' לְוִי הַשְּׁמַיִם הַלְלוּ שֶׁל נָחַר הֵן אִוּ שֶׁל כּוֹרִית וְאִין אַחַהּ יוֹדַע מִמָּה הֵן וּמִמָּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר הַמִּקְרָה בְּמַיִם עֲלִיוֹתָיו הָיוּ אֹמֵר שֶׁל מַיִם הֵן

2) p. 4: **سَقْفًا رَاقِيَةً مِمَّا رَاقَىٰ رَبُّكَ يَوْمَ تَوَاتَا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ أَسْفَارًا**
 3) ed. de Lagarde II, 8: فلما كان اليوم الثاني خلق الله سقفا من مياه مجمدة

4) The Navel of the Earth, p. 45 sqq.

5) Tha'labi, p. 1; Khamis I, 31.

6) Tha'labi, p. 11: خلق الله السماء الدنيا وزينها وفي ماء ودخان

7) Nuwairi, p. 9: الرقيع سقف محفوظ وموج مكفوف

مجملدة في وسط لجة الماء

I know only one tradition that describes God's ascending from his first throne on the water to his place in heaven: Ka'b al-Aḥbār said: In the tora it is said, that God says to the holy rock in Jerusalem: Thou art my lower throne, from thee I have ascended towards heaven; towards thee will be the gathering of mankind and from thee their spread¹⁾.

It has to be remembered that the holy rock in Jerusalem is on the place of Jahwe's first throne on the water and that the royal throne in Jerusalem is still called the throne of Jahwe. But there is another idea which appears in the traditions concerning the two thrones; that of the similarity between the different parts of the universe; what later are heaven and earth, are before the creation two oceans, each with a navel in the centre, a navel which is also the place of the divine throne. From that centre outwards heaven as well as earth have been made.

The throne in heaven, according to the Muslim conception, has always remained a centre and a gathering-place of water. There is a popular tradition concerning the origin of rain saying that the wind and the clouds meet at the end of heaven. Then God drops water from beneath his throne upon the clouds which spread the rain²⁾. —

We have seen that the biblical story of the creation omitted to mention several things which the curiosity of later ages inquired about and which were either added or placed before the creation. No mention is made of the elements. Another thing which was omitted, is the clouds. From ancient times the clouds and their creation have been treated together with the ocean. It is therefore suitable to say a few words concerning this point.

Job 38, 8—11 speaks of the birth of the sea in poetic expressions; vs 9 runs: when I made the cloud the garment thereof, and dark clouds a swaddlingband for it³⁾. Here again is a fragment of a cosmogonic description, which in the Old Testament remains a fragment, but which in other Semitic cosmogonic systems may have had its place. Yet it is to be observed

1) Nuwairi, p. 90, 15: عن كعب قال ان في التوراة انه يقول لصخرة بيت المقدس: انت عرشى الادنى ومنك ارتفعت الى السماء . . . واليك الخشر ومنك المنشر

2) Ṭabari, Tafsir VIII, 138 sq. Cf. XXVIII, 89.

3) בשומי ענן לבשו וערפל החלחו

lites in the Red Sea and the desert, shows himself or covers himself in a cloud; when Jahwe descends on Sinai the mountain is covered by a cloud; when Jahwe comes to meet Moses in the tabernacle, the tent is seen under a cloud: the cloud is the representative of the godhead. Jahwe in heaven sits on his throne, but in the old poetry of the Old Testament, like Ps. 18, Jahwe in heaven is also conceived as riding on the clouds. So — as pointed out by Gunkel — Jahwe's throne in heaven goes back to the idea of the clouds considered as the dwelling place of the deity.

If we bear this in mind, the different interpretations of Genesis 1, 2 will no longer seem incoherent utterances: the throne of God on the waters and the cloud in which the Spirit of God dwells, will appear to be only different expressions for the idea that in the beginning the deity itself or the *rūḥ*, i. e. divine vital power, was brooding over the waters. Even Muslim tradition seems to have kept a vague reminiscence of this idea. When Mohammed was asked where God dwelt before the creation of heaven and earth, he answered: in a cloud, above which was the air and beneath which was the air¹).

At the close of our inquiry into the place of the ocean in the West-Semitic cosmogonic traditions, it is necessary to turn our attention to a cognate subject: the deluge. The relation between the cosmogony and the deluge is of so close a nature that one can almost be considered as a repetition of the other. This is not only true for the Semitic world. Professor Chan-
tepie de la Saussaye has pointed out the same feature in several American religions²) and every one knows that Deucalion and Pyrrha are the Greek Adam and Eve. This parallelism is especially to be applied to the function of water before the creation of the world and during the flood; in other words: the water of the deluge is the return of the *primaeval ocean*³). This is said expressly in the Old Testament: In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great ocean broken up and the windows of heaven

1) Ṭabarī, Tafsīr XII, 4: في عشاء ما فوقه هواء وما تحته هواء

2) Studien, V, 52.

3) Cf. W. B. Kristensen, De plaats van het zondvloedverhaal in het Gilgameš-epos (Versl. en Meded. Kon. Akad. van Wetensch., 5e Reeks, Deel II), p. 7.

CHAPTER II

THE OCEAN IN COSMOGRAPHY

In the cosmogonic stories we have observed the ocean being changed from an ungodly power into an instrument in the hand of God. In this chapter we shall have to consider it chiefly in relation to actual life.

We have to ask the question: Where is this ocean localized and what is the place it occupies in the cosmographic ideas of the Western Semites? The answer falls into several statements; we will begin with relating what is known concerning the ocean

A. UNDER THE EARTH.

The idea already occurs in the Old Testament. In the old poem in Gen. 49 to the tribe of Joseph are promised the blessings of heaven above and those of Tehom lying beneath¹). It should be remarked that 'lying' is a rendering of the verb רָבַץ, which is said of animals lying down; perhaps there is here a reminiscence of Tehom represented as an animal. This subterranean Tehom is also mentioned in Psalm 136, 6 where it is said that Jahwe has extended the earth above the waters²).

Further, in the story of the deluge, this subterranean ocean is a powerful element. In the biblical story of the flood this is clear, though it is not said plainly. The flood is caused by the opening of the windows in heaven and of the fountains of the great Tehom³). It might be doubtful what the fountains of the Tehom are, if it were not that tradition had preserved

1) Gen. 49, 25: ברכות שמים מעל ברכת תהום רבצת תחת

2) לרוקע הארץ על המים

3) Gen. 7, 11.

of Tehom which are promised to the tribe of Joseph in Genesis 49, 25, says: The blessing of the sky is that of rain and dew; the blessing of Tehom is that of rivers and springs which provide the earth with water in Joseph's inheritance¹). So the earth has a constant connection with subterranean Tehom through springs and rivers; up to the present day the inhabitants of Palestine believe that these waters come from the nether world and are the dwelling places of supernatural beings²).

We now turn to Arabic literature, where subterranean Tehom does not occupy a large place. Still we find utterances which are connected with those mentioned above. Some of them take the form of learned theories, but others clearly show their dependency upon popular tradition.

Thus we find in Mas'ūdī the conception of sources and rivers as springing from the subterranean Tehom: People differ concerning the origin of rivers and sources. Some of them think that the extraction of all of them is one, viz. the great sea, that this sea has sweet water and so is different from the ocean³).

In quasi-learned tradition subterranean Tehom is considered in connection with the form of the earth. The earth conceived as a mountain by old popular tradition has been replaced by the earth as a sphere. This sphere is floating on the ocean, so that only its superior half is above the water. The earth immersed in the ocean is also compared with a cauldron of which the convex side is turned upwards⁴). While the old comparison with an egg is still found also⁵).

Thus it appears that the idea of there being a sea of sweet water under our earth, the ancient Tehom, which is the source of springs and rivers, is common to the Western Semites. Perhaps people have asked where these waters came from. Job

1) Opp. I, 111 E: **כַּחֲסֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הַבְּרִיָּא וְכַחֲסֵי הַיָּם הַיְּבֵרִים**
וְכַחֲסֵי הַיָּם הַיְּבֵרִים הַבְּרִיָּא

2) Canaan, Volksmedizin im Lande der Bibel, p. 9.

3) I, 203: **اختلف الناس في الانهار والاعين من اين بدوها فذهب طائفة الى**
ان مجراها كلها واحد وهو البحر الاعظم وان ذلك بحر عذب ليس هو بحر اوقيانوس

4) **كأزولين I, 143: زعموا ان شكل الارض قريب من الكرة والقدر الخارج من**

5) **كأزولين I, 144.**

الماء محذب

38, 16 mentions the fountains of the sea¹⁾ in parallelism with the bottom of Tehom and also Proverbs 8, 28 speaks of the fountains of Tehom²⁾ as being fixed by God. But, as far as I know, this point is not treated elaborately.

Later tradition, moreover, has not been silent on the subject. According to Midrash Tanḥuma the world rests on the wind³⁾. We find this conception also in Muslim tradition, but in a rather complicated form. Nuwairī has it in the lengthieth form: It is said that the earth rests on water, the water on a rock, the rock on the back of a bull, the bull on a ككم, the ككم on the back of a fish, the fish on water, the water on the wind, the wind on the veil of darkness, the darkness on humid earth, and with the humid earth the knowledge of the creatures reaches its end⁴⁾.

Such enumerations are found in many Arabic works, not always in the same sequence⁵⁾. What interests us is that in all these enumerations the fish and the bull are mentioned.

Usually for the fish the Arabic term حوت is used, but Ṭabarī I, 48 has instead of this word نون; the foreign origin of the tradition is being still recognizable in its Arabic form, as نون is not the usual word for a fish in Arabic, but in Aramaic. Thus we find here again reminiscences of the usual representation of Tehom: Leviathan. I have already quoted Tha'labī's tradition according to which God created the nūn, whose name is Leviathan, whose kunya is Balahut, whose laḳab Behemoth⁶⁾. We know Behemoth in the Old Testament only from the last chapters of the Book of Job, where it is thought to represent the hippopotamos. Gunkel in his Schöpfung und Chaos has conjectured that it is a mythic animal. His surmise, as it seems to me, is proved to be true by the traditions quoted above. Behemoth, a word of which the formation is not obvious (if it is rightly punctuated in the Masoretic Bible) points in the first

1) נבכי ים

2) עינות תהום

3) שואל אדריאנוס לאקילום על מה העולם עומד א"ל על הרוח: p. 17.

4) ويقال انها كانت على ماء والماء على صخرة والصخرة على سنام ثور: p. 54.
والثور على ككم والككم على ظهر حوت وللحوت على الماء والماء على الريح والريح على حجاب ظلمة والظلمة على الثرى والى الثرى انقطع علم المخلوقات

5) Ṭabarī, Annales I, 48 sq.; Tafstr I, 149; XXIX, 8 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, I, 15; Tha'labī, p. 4; Uns djalil I, 11, 212.

6) p. 4.

place to **בהמה** which means cattle and of which, in Palestine, the bull is the chief representant. We find the bull in a series of traditions as one of the bearers of the earth or of the world. In Tha'labi it is said that its horns appear above the horizon¹⁾. In other traditions the earth is placed upon the Leviathan: Leviathan and the bull Behemoth are so closely connected that Tha'labi can maintain that ebb and flood are caused by the bull's respiration²⁾. Probably these Muslim traditions go back to Jewish lore, showing that the latter probably knew of Behemoth as the bull which bears the earth. We saw that Leviathan is the representation of Tehom; in the same way Behemoth seems to be the representation of the earth. The earth is also in other religions represented as a bull³⁾.

In the second place, in Semitic cosmography the Ocean is placed

B. ABOVE THE EARTH.

This idea is already familiar to us after our research concerning the cosmogony of the heavens, especially in connection with the divine throne in heaven which, like that existing before the creation, is placed upon the waters in heaven.

There is, however, still something to be said on this subject. In Jewish tradition the waters in heaven are expressly called upper Tehom⁴⁾. And from this Tehom the earth gets its sustenance: The ocean is above the whole earth and the whole earth drinks its waters⁵⁾. This tradition is in a more complete form in the Midrash Ḳohelet: 'The brooks go towards the sea'. Wherefrom does the earth drink? it drinks from the waters of the ocean, as Scripture says: And there went up a mist from the earth and watered. Rabbi Josua says: It drinks from the upper waters, as Scripture says: and drinketh water from the rain of heaven; and the clouds grow strong from the earth unto heaven and receive the water as it were from the mouth of a waterskin, as scripture says: they pour down rain

1) p. 4: **وقرون ذلك الثور خارجة من افطار الارض**

2) p. 4.

3) Cf. W. B. Kristensen in *Verslagen en Meded. Kon. Akad. v. Wetensch.* (IV^e reeks, deel XII, p. 83).

4) Midrash Tanḥuma, p. 229 speaks of **תהום העליון** and **תהום התחתון**

5) Ber. Rabba, par. V: **דרש רבי אבהו אוקיננס נבזה מכל העולם כולו וכל העולם כולו מימיו הם שוהים**

relates that God made a separation between the waters above the firmament and those beneath it.

We have already noted the close similarity between Semitic (and other) cosmogonies and the story of the deluge. The deluge really is the vanquished, but not destroyed, Tehom which reappears. In the biblical story the waters are poured out by the fountains of the great Tehom and by the windows of heaven. Now we have seen that Tehom is thought to be under the earth as well as in heaven, so it becomes probable that, when in the story of the deluge these two sorts of water are mentioned, they are simply meant as the outbursts of lower and upper Tehom.

In the third place we have to consider the ocean as lying

C. ROUND THE EARTH.

We do not find this idea everywhere in Semitic literatures with the same clearness. It is probable, however, that nearly all Semitic peoples were acquainted with it. The primitive eye starts from what it observes: the seashore presents the unlimited sight of the ocean; this means that the ends of the earth are surrounded by the ocean.

In Hebrew there is a term which probably indicates this idea: the term **אֶפְסוֹ אֶרֶץ** 'the ends of the earth'. It has already been observed by others that the Hebrew **אֶפְסוֹ** is to be compared with the Babylonian **apsu**, ocean. This comparison which considers **אֶפְסוֹ** as a loanword from the Babylonian, is made more convincing by the fact that the Semitic languages do not know a root **אֶפְסוֹ**; all occurring forms seen to be derived from the noun **אֶפְסוֹ**.

If this derivation of **אֶפְסוֹ** is right, its original meaning ocean would have been replaced by that of end (of the earth) because these ideas were nearly identical for the Hebrew mind. A trace of the original meaning of the word is still to be detected in Hebrew poetry, which, by its parallelism, is often valuable for the study of the exact significance of words. In Zecharjah, 9, 10 the reign of the eschatological king is described thus: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth¹). The dominion of

¹) ומשלו מים עד ים ומנהר עד אפסו ארץ

the Messiah will be over the whole of the earth; this Israelitic idea is expressed here in the words: from sea to sea, which means that the earth is compassed by seas. This expression is not peculiar to Zecharjah; it also occurs in Psalm 72 : 8 : He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. So we observe that in a common Hebrew expression the words from the river to the ends of the earth are used in parallelism with 'from sea to sea'; the ends of the earth and the ocean are synonyms; this may serve as an explanation of how apsu-ocean has become **סֶדֶן**, end.

We are also able to trace this idea of the earth as being encompassed at least by two seas, in the eschatological parts of the Old Testament further on. In Joel 2, 20 Jahwe is said to banish the one from the North, in the last days, into a thirsty and barren land, his face towards the East sea, his hinder part towards the Western sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up¹). This refers to the archfiend who is destroyed; sometimes he is called Leviathan, as in popular traditions, here he bears the epithet of the one from the North, in later times he is the pseudo-Messiah. Now this archfiend is the counterpart of the eschatological king, who is also represented by different types: sometimes he is Jahwe himself, sometimes the Messiah ben David, sometimes the Messiah ben Joseph. As the Messiah will rule from sea to sea, so his counterpart will be slain and stretched down from sea to sea. This passage in Joel defines these seas as the Eastern one and the Western one. These seas must represent the ends of the earth, viz. the ocean. So Gressmann was right when he denied the identity of the Eastern sea with the Dead sea²); it is the great Ocean concerning the East of which the Israelites must have possessed vague ideas, but which formed a part of their cosmography.

In order to test this statement we have further to inquire into Hebrew cosmography. Till now we have found that 'from sea to sea', or 'from the stream unto the ends of the earth' means that the ends of the earth are the place where the

1) ואת הצפוני ארחיק מעליכם והרחתיו אל ארץ ציה ושכמה את פניו אל הים הקדמני וספו אל הים האחרון ועלה באשו ותעל צחנתו

2) Eschatologie, p. 187; cf. p. 93 where the apocalyptic character of Joel is maintained.

ocean begins. Now, what was the form of the earth according to the Israelites? It is only some references in the Old Testament which can be used as evidence. Jesajah 40, 22 mentions the circle of the earth¹⁾; Job 22, 14 the circle of heaven²⁾, Proverbs 8, 27 and Job 26, 10 the circle on the surface of Tehom³⁾. The congruity of the parts of the universe is again proved by these expressions. It is however not clear whether heaven and earth are considered as layers, or as mountains, hemispheres or the like. At any rate: the earth is round; its 'ends' are enclosed by the sea; in other words: the earth is encircled by the ocean, Tehom.

This result is not surprising; it is a well known type of Semitic cosmography. We find it also in later literature: the ocean surrounds the whole world as the abacus surrounds a large pillar. And the world is placed in its circular form on the fins of Leviathan⁴⁾.

Syriac cosmography has shared the opinion that the earth is surrounded by the ocean. There are, however, some remarkable details in the different descriptions.

It is well known that the romance of Alexander has been translated at a rather early date into Syriac and that Syriac literature possesses two other descriptions of Alexander's life and exploits, viz. the poem by Jacob of Sarug, and the 'Legend of Alexander'. These two descriptions contain a great many features which do not go back to pseudo-Callisthenes, but are the remains of mythical and legendary tales that were current in the Semitic East. According to the poem ascribed to Jacob of Sarug Alexander aims at reaching the ends of the earth and the oceans and above all, the land of darkness⁵⁾ in which the fountain of life is found⁶⁾; but this country is behind terrible seas that surround the world⁷⁾; the utmost of these seas

1) חוג הארץ

2) חוג שמים

3) חוג על פני תהום

4) Jellinek, Bet ha-Midrash I, 63: ויום הגדול סבב את כל העולם כמין כפה של עמוד גדול וכל העולם מוקף על סנפירי לויתן

5) vs. 39 sq.: ארצם ארצה לטובא משמעה סבב פתחה סגורה
סבב כל הארצות ארצה לבד שמעיה

6) vs. 166: אבטחה דארע כס חנה דעיה

7) vs. 51 sq.: אבטחה דעיה דארעם לטובא

immoveable one; behind it is an other sea, called the weeping one; this is the last of the seven seas.

Traditions like this have not much to do with mythologic folklore or Arabic science: they are the product of second-hand imagination. It is only Pontos and the dark ocean that regularly appear in Arabic cosmography.

As has been said the Arabs generally speak of one ocean only. And like other Semitic and non-Semitic peoples they represent it as going round the earth: The whole of the earth is round and the ocean surrounds it like a collar¹⁾. Other authors compare the circle of the ocean around the earth with a wreath²⁾, a ring³⁾, or with the halo around the moon⁴⁾. The commonest image of the ocean however, is that of a serpent⁵⁾. Arabic tradition here continues Jewish mythology, which has lost its vigour and survives chiefly in comparisons. Still, we have found also Arabic traditions concerning Leviathan. Now Leviathan, like the ocean, has finally become a humble servant of the Semitic god. According to Kisā'i around the earth there is a serpent surrounding the whole of this [viz. the earth with all what is round about it] and praising God till the day of resurrection⁶⁾. — The image is already in Pseudo-Callisthenes. Alexander flying through the air on the back of the eagles, sees a field surrounded by a serpent; this is explained as the world surrounded by the ocean⁷⁾.

According to Arabic geographers this ocean is the only real sea on the earth; it is the basin that provides all other seas with water, their عنصر as they say⁸⁾. They know, however, that the Caspian sea has no connection with the ocean; and concerning the Pontos the same view is sometimes expressed⁹⁾.

1) BG I, 8: والارض كلها مستديرة والبحر المحيط محتف بها كالطوق

2) الكلب, Abū Zaid IV, 54.

3) Muḥaddasī, p. 16: لانه كما يقال مستدير بالعار كالحلقة لا يعرف له غاية ولا نهاية:

4) Yāqūt I, 504: وهو محيط بالدنيا جميعها كحاطة الهالة بالقمر

5) Cf. The Navel of the Earth, p. 64.

6) 'Adjā'ib, fol. 15^b: وخلفه حية مهيطة بجميع ذلك تسبح الله تعالى الى يوم القيامة:

7) Pseudo-Callisthenes, Chapter 41: ὁ δὲ ὕφης ἡ θάλασσα ἡ κυκλοῦσα τὴν γῆν. See also Reitzenstein, Poimandres, p. 31.

8) B. G. VIII, 68.

9) Nuwairī, p. 61 maintains that there are three seas: the ocean, the Caspian sea (بحر الخزر) and the بحر ماينطس, which scarcely can be other than بنطس.

The idea of the ocean as the mother of all other seas is of importance for the cosmography of the Arabs, for, as they say themselves, all seas are really only gulfs of the ocean¹⁾, and the maps of the world as they are found in Ḳazwīnī²⁾, Ibn al-Wardī³⁾, and Abu 'l-Fidā'⁴⁾, give a good impression of this conception. No doubt the idea is not especially Arabic but like many other notions concerning the ocean, it is the common property of the Western Semites. It may be imagined, that it has been of the highest importance for those Semitic peoples who had a sea-cost and a frequent intercourse with the sea. For the Israelites the Mediterranean must have represented Tehom with all its beneficial and pernicious properties. — The Arabs, as having a geographical literature, have left very full dates concerning their conception of the ocean. They generally call it by the Greek term *αὐκίανος*, or *البحر المحيط* 'the surrounding ocean', which latter name is already a description. They further make a distinction between the Western and the Eastern sea, viz. the Mediterranean and the 'Chinese sea', but they know that both are only vast gulfs of the ocean⁵⁾. The Eastern sea is sometimes called the pitch sea⁶⁾.

Some authors apply the term ocean *αὐκίανος* especially to the Western sea⁷⁾; this is possibly due to the Greek origin of the term.

The fact, that the Mediterranean is considered as the ocean or a gulf of it, appears also from their common name: the Green sea⁸⁾.

Finally we have to point to a cosmographic peculiarity in connection with the oceans that, as in many other cases, will prove to be mingled with ancient religion. I refer to a series of traditions all of which speak of an image, a town, a tower, a castle or a mountain in the far West or the far East. The similarity here with the columns of Hercules denoting the

1) B. G. I, 6; 68; II, 11.

2) I, 105.

3) I a, p. 6.

4) Reinaud, traduction I, p. LXXII.

5) Marāṣid I, 129: *بحر محيط بالارض من كل جوانبها يتصل به البكران الشرق والغرب فهما به كالخليجان*

6) *البحر الرفتى*, Dimashki, p. 17; Abu 'l-fidā', p. 21.

7) Dimashki, p. 127; Abu 'l-fidā', p. 12.

8) *البحر الاخضر*, B. G. VI, 92, note a; p. 230, 264; VII, 85; VIII, 68; Jākūt I, 504.

entrance to the ocean and also to the Mediterranean will strike every reader. Arabic literature is acquainted indeed with this name and the traditions connected with it. It is however to be remarked that, as far as I know, the columns of Hercules never denote the mountains of Abyla and Calpe, which, according to Greek tradition, were rent asunder by the demi-god.

What Arabic tradition tells concerning Hercules, may follow here. According to Mas'ūdī on the territory which separates the Mediterranean from the Ocean there is a tower (منار) of brass and stones, built by the giant and king Heracles. In this tower is an inscription and images which beckon with their hands [as if they would say]: there is no way behind me, nor a trodden path for any one who will enter this sea from the Mediterranean for this is the sea of darkness, the Green sea, the surrounding one. Others say, however, that the tower is not on the isthmus but on some of the islands in the surrounding ocean¹).

A tradition to this effect is indeed to be found in Arabic literature in this form, that Hercules had built brazen images on some of the islands in the ocean²).

With reference to Mas'ūdī's tradition, it should be remarked, that here the distinct reminiscence of Greek mythology has been augmented with the feature, that the tower or the images have been erected to indicate the utmost limit of the human and animal territory: here is the entrance to the ocean and the ocean is shut off for man. Further the name of Heracles does not occur in the traditions on this subject we shall have to review.

According to Idrīsī³) in the Western ocean, on the isles of Masfahān and لغوس, there is a red image, denoting that there is no way behind. Sometimes the sea in the neighbourhood of these islands is called the sea of the brazen images⁴).

وعلى الحد المشترك بين هذين البحريين اعنى بحر الروم وبحر اقيانس المنار الاحاس وللحجارة التى بناها هرقل الملك لجبار عليها الكتابة والتمثيل مشيرة بايديهما الا طريق وراى ولا مسلك لجميع الداخلين الى ذلك البكر من بحر الروم وهو بحر الظلمات والاخضر والمحيط وقيل ان المنار على غير هذا الرقاق بل فى جزائر من جزائر اقيانس المحيط

1) Mas'ūdī I, 257:

2) B. G. VIII, 69:

3) p. 28.

4) Mas'ūdī I, 184.

In other traditions the name of Heracles has been replaced by that of persons more familiar to the Arabs. Ibn al-Wardī mentions three statues, a green, a red and a white one, which warn the sailors not to proceed farther; they have been erected by the Yemenite king Abraha 'of the tower' (ذو المنار)¹⁾. According to Ṭabarī the Tubba' Yāsir An'am undertakes an expedition to the far West. He reaches the sand-river, and sends a troop farther Westward; they do not return however. Then he erects a brazen statue at the side of the wādī, with the inscription: This statue is that of An'am the Ḥimyarite; there is no way beyond it; let nobody undertake it, for he would perish²⁾.

These traditions, which connect South-Arabian princes with the entrance to the ocean, are also brought into relation with Alexander; Alexander in Muslim tradition has taken the place of Herakles, he has separated Europe from Africa by digging the strait of Gibraltar³⁾. He is the hero who has visited the far West and he is entitled to mark the entrance to the ocean by a distinctive sign. Thus, according to the Ethiopian edition of the Romance of Alexander, he has built a tower in the ocean and placed upon it his own statue with a key in its hand and with an inscription saying that he has shut off the sea⁴⁾.

It should further be remarked that in the last two traditions brazen images are spoken of. There is a series of reports which refer to brazen images. According to Idrīsī on each of the two Islands of the Happy there is an image of stones, a hundred cubits in height, upon each image is a brazen statue⁵⁾.

There is a different series of traditions which do not speak of a brazen statue in the far West, but of a brazen town. Mas'ūdī has a remarkable report on it: Between the nearer Sūs and the farther Sūs lies a distance of twenty days travel filled with cultivated places which reach to the sand river and the black castle. Then there follow deserts of sand in which is found the town known as the brazen town and the lead cupola's; it was reached by Mūsā b. Nuṣair in the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān⁶⁾.

1) I, b, 2, 13.

2) Ṭabarī, Annales I, 684.

3) Idrīsī, p. 166; Dimashqī, p. 136.

4) p. 128.

5) p. 2.

6) I 369: وبين السوس الأدنى وبين السوس الأقصى من المسافة نحو من عشرين

This brazen town occurs also in the Romance of Alexander and the king is called its founder¹⁾. This is again a sign of the connection between the traditions concerning the brazen image and those concerning the brazen town.

The brazen town and Mūsā b. Nuṣair's report are treated at length in Arabic literature. Ibn al-Faḫīh²⁾ reproduces Mūsā's letter to the caliph. He describes how he reached with his troops a town in Spain, of which the shining pinnacles had appeared to them already at a five days' distance. When they saw the town before them, it inspired them with a mighty horror. When inspected closely it appeared to be a town without gates. So with the aid of ladders a man climbed the wall but when he was at the top he burst out laughing, descended into the town and, when called by Mūsā, no sound of him was heard; he never appeared again. So three men disappeared; then Mūsā inspected the walls again and found an inscription in verses asserting that man never will reach immortality. If any one, it would have been Solomon who has built this city with the aid of the *djinn*'s. Then Mūsā met with a man of the *djinn*'s who told him that a man used to visit the place and to perform the *ṣalāt* on the edge of the pond there; and that he took this man for al-Khaḍīr. Then Mūsā ordered divers to dive into the pond; they found in it apart from many brazen objects, brazen men who at once flew away saying: I never return. These are, according to Zuhri, the *djinn*'s which Solomon has imprisoned there.

In the Arabian-Nights we have a story of the brazen town that also tells Mūsā's adventure, partly in accordance with Ibn al-Faḫīh, but to a long extent independently from him.

Here the brazen town is entered by Mūsā and his companions who find it to be the city of the dead: the men are in the markets, the merchants in their shops, but all are dead, among their innumerable treasures. When Ṭālib ibn Sahl tries to take with him some of the treasures he is killed in a myste-

يوما عما تر متصلة الى ان يتصل ذلك بوادي الرمل والقصر الاسود ثم يتصل ذلك
بمغاور الرمل التي فيها المدينة المعروفة بمدينة الحساس وقباب الرصاص التي صار
اليها موسى بن نصير في ايام عبد الملك بن مروان

1) Jāḫūṭ IV, 455. But Solomon is also called the founder; cf. Friedländer, Die Chadhir-
legende und der Alexanderroman, p. 185.

2) B. G. V, 88 sqq.

rious way. Then Mūsā and his troops travel along the coast till they reach a high mountain where a people dwells which claims to be the posterity of Cham the son of Noah. They tell Mūsā a story concerning al-Khaḍīr who preached to them the Muḥammedan confession, of which they have accepted the belief in God. — Then follows the story of the divers¹⁾.

These traditions, which are connected with legends about Alexander²⁾, speak of a brazen image and a brazen town as the signs of the limit of the West. The town is provided with cupola's and shining pinnacles; it is a place full of all sorts of precious things, but it is a place of death. We have here a mythic town as the sign of the end of the world and of the entrance to the ocean. We possess different traditions on the same subject. In some reports this town is identified with Cadix; e. g. in a tradition communicated by Dimashkī: The island of Cadix is a town provided with walls, surrounded by the ocean. Cadix is the name of an image which is said to be a talisman which stops or prevents the ships from passing out of the Britannic sea into the Mediterranean. It was of gilded copper in order to prevent its becoming rusted by the salt water of the sea; it is placed upon circular rocks. . . The hand of this image points in the direction of the ocean³⁾. — Here image and town have been united, a proof of the fact that both have the same meaning.

It is to be observed, that both town and statue are already combined in the Syriac version of the Romance of Alexander; where all this is in the utmost East. Alexander reaches a mountain of sapphire near a river Barsāṭīs. Here a divine voice warns him not to proceed. He builds a town near the mountain and upon the mountain he places a brazen statue⁴⁾. — Here we have three signs of the end of the earth: a mountain,

1) 572nd Night.

2) The story with the people near the mountain is in the Arabic Romance of Alexander, cf. Friedländer, Chadhir-legende, p. 140 sq.

3) p. 243: وجزيرة قانس مدينة مسورة يحيط بها البكر المحيط وقانس اسم صنم يقال انه طلسم يمنع المراكب ان تدخل من بحر بريطانيا الى بحر الروم وكان من نحاس مموء بالذهب حتى لا يصدى من ملوحة البحر وهو منصوب على صخور مدورة ويد هذا الصنم مشيرة الى جهة البكر المحيط Idrisi, p. 2 also says that one of the images is at Cadix.

4) p. 193 sq.

an image and a town; we shall discuss the mountain later on. But we have first to arrange a series of traditions which speak of a town, or, as is usually the case, of two towns, one in the utmost West, the other in the utmost East.

In the Arabic stories of Alexander it is said that the king reaches in the utmost East a town *Djābalkā*; there he takes provisions for his journey into the land of darkness. So the town is the sign of the end of the earth¹⁾. That the parallelism between this town and the brazen town, which I have indicated, is not arbitrary, may be seen from the fact that in the Arabian Nights the episode with the wild people near the mountain is told in connection with the brazen town, here in connection with *Djābalkā*.

It is further to be observed that according to a different Arabic version of the story of Alexander, the king reaches in the utmost West 'in the place where the sun sets' the town of *Djābarsā*²⁾. — It is easily seen that of these names one is only a differentiation of the other; their character is so uniform that the Oriental sources confuse the names: sometimes one is in the West, sometimes it is in the East. They are considered as the dwelling places of the remains of vanished peoples; sometimes it is the 'children of Moses' who have taken refuge there in the time of Saul or Nebukadnezar. They are innumerable and no Jew can safely visit them; for if a Jew comes to them they presume him to do so on account of his deviating from the Jewish tradition; then they kill him³⁾.

It is however also said that in one town the remnants of 'Ad, in the others the descendants of *Thamūd* dwell⁴⁾.

Ṭabarī describes the towns as follows: Either of them has ten thousand gates, between every two gates is the distance of a parasang, every gate is attended by ten thousand angels which are replaced every day by ten thousand others without ever returning. Mohammed said: If the inhabitants of these towns were not so numerous and clamorous, mankind would hear the falling of the sun when it sets; four peoples dwell behind these towns: *Nāsik* and *Munsik*, *Hāwīl* and *Ḳāwīl*; before them are the dwelling places of Gog and Magog. In the night of ascen-

1) Friedländer, *Chadhirlegende*, p. 140.

2) Friedländer, o. c., p. 138.

3) *Yāqūt*, *Mu'djam* II, 2.

4) *Ṭabarī* I, 67; *Yāqūt* II, 2.

sion Gabriel conducted me towards these peoples. When I invited Gog and Magog to [serve] Allāh they declined; so they are in Hell with the rebellious sons of Adam and Iblis. Then Gabriel took me towards the two towns; they responded to my exhortation to [serve] Allāh. So they are our brothers; whosoever of them does well, will be with those of you who do well; and whosoever of them does evil, will be with those of you who do evil. Then Gabriel took me towards the four peoples; when I invited them to [serve] Allāh, they declined, and declared me to be a liar and were incredulous. So they are with Gog and Magog in Hell¹⁾.

It is clear that Gog and Magog are not in their right place here; Oriental tradition, from Ezechiel down to the Romance of Alexander, speaks of them as the people inhabiting the utmost North. We have here to do with traditions which know of other peoples, indicating the place of the utmost West and the utmost East. Not only the North, but also the East and the West are characterised by barbarous peoples. In our tradition Gog and Magog are not adduced as an analogy, as it could be expected, but they are even removed from their fixed place.

That the towns indicate the utmost West and the utmost East is said expressly²⁾; in our tradition the Western town indicates the place where the sun sets. Dimashkī places *Djābarḳā* on the Island of the Happy and calls it the golden castle³⁾; which recalls the black castle near the sand-river.

Lastly I have to mention a tradition relating that Adam received a mirror in order to be able to observe the things on the earth: then Satan went and built upon the mirror in the East the town of *Djābart*⁴⁾.

The names of the towns are handed down in many forms: According to Bekri⁵⁾ the right pronunciation of the one is *Djābalāḳ*. But *Djābalku*, *Djābalkā* and *Djābarḳā* occur also. The name of the other town is pronounced *Djābarsā*, *Djābarsu*, *Djābart*, *Djābalaḣ*.

Now Arabic tradition itself indicates the foreign origin of the

1) Ṭabari I, 67; Kisā'i, 'Adja'ib, fol. 15^b sq.

2) e. g. Yāqūt II, 2: جابرس مدينة بالقصى المشرق

3) p. 132: جزيرة المساعدة وبها جابرتا وهو قصر الذهب

4) Ṭabari, Annales III, 165.

5) I, 231.

reports concerning these towns; for several authors add the Syriac and the Hebrew forms of the names. According to Tha'labī the Hebrew forms are: جابلق and جابر سانيوت¹⁾; the Syriac forms are also found in Ṭabarī; they are: برقيشا, مريقيسا, برحيسا, برحيسيا, برجيسا and مريقيسا.

Traditions concerning the towns in Hebrew literature are not known to me; in Syriac literature one of the towns occurs. Cod. Sachau of the Syriac Manuscripts in the Royal Library, Berlin, n° 221 fol. 141^a sqq. contains a Christian amulet which is ascribed to Cyprian, the magician from Antioch, whose conversion and adventures with Justa are spread through Eastern and Western literature. In this magical prayer the power of the seventy six angels is implored, who descended upon Agrifō[s]. This may be compared with the numbers of angels which daily descend towards one of the towns according to Ṭabarī and Kisā'i's tradition.

But this is all I have been able to find in Aramaic literature. According to the Arabic version of the prayer of Cyprian sixty six angels have descended towards the town of اغرابلس²⁾.

Before discussing the origin of the traditions we have found in Semitic literature, it is necessary to summarize their principal contents and their characteristic features. They are these: In the utmost West as well as in the utmost East there are natural or artificial signs which denote the impossibility of proceeding farther; they mark the utmost limit of the earth and the beginning of the ocean, the place where the sun sets. They consist of a mountain, town, castle, tower or image. In them are gathered innumerable riches and jewels; they are of copper, lead or gold. They are the dwelling-place of populations of which the great mass no longer exists on the earth; so they do not know of God's revelation unto Muhammed, but they are willing to acknowledge God's unity. They are places of death and desolation. They are inhabited by angels.

Many of these features are also found in a work which was widely spread through Oriental literature, the Book of Henoeh. In chapters 17 sqq. is described how Henoeh is brought to the fire of the West, which receives every setting of the sun. Here he sees the great river and the great darkness, the mountains, the mouth of the ocean, the place where no flesh walks. Here

1) p. 18.

2) Bibliothèque Nationale, Cod. Arabe 309, fol. 104 sqq.

Verhand. Kon. Akad. v. Wetensch. Nieuwe Reeks Dl. XIX N°. 2.

is the end of the earth. When he inquires regarding this region, the angel answers: This place is the end of heaven and earth; this has become a prison for the stars and the host of heaven.

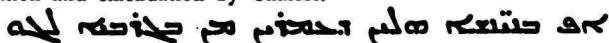
In chapter 22 Sheol is described: And thence I went to another place and he showed me in the West [another] great and high mountain. There Henoch sees hollow places and Raphael says to him: These hollow places have been created for this very purpose, that the spirits of the souls of the dead should assemble therein, yes that all the souls of the children of men should assemble there¹⁾.

Here we find: the end of the earth, where there is no region beyond, the place where the sun sets, the high mountains, the abode of the angels and of the souls of men who await here the day of Judgment.

It is hardly necessary to say that Arabic literature in its descriptions goes back to the book of Henoch. It is also certain that Henoch's vision is a vision of Sheol; this means, that the entrance of the ocean, the utmost West, is really no longer a part of the earth, but of the nether world. That the peoples of the old world are gathered here is a thought akin to the Catholic idea, that in the entrance to hell the heroes of the Old Testament are awaiting the resurrection. According to a well known tradition Christ descends into Sheol and preaches the Gospel to its inhabitants. It may easily be seen that Mohammed's preaching Islām to the people of the two towns in the night of his ascension, is only a Muslim variant of the Christian theme.

But we may go further. The oldest idea is that of a mountain or mountains marking the West. This idea is not limited to the West and the East. It holds also true for the North and the South. Ephraim Syrus in his commentary on the book of Genesis quotes Jacob of Edessa: The people which inhabits the North, before the mountains which are called the Breasts of the North, descend in cold winter days unto the bank of that river which they call the river of fire. As to the two mountains which are called the Breasts of the North, their stones are of crystal. Beyond them is no dwelling-place for men; for beyond the river is nothing but the ocean, the great sea that surrounds the whole earth . . .²⁾.

1) According to the translation and emendation by Charles.

2) Ephraim, Opp. I, 121: 

We find here several of the characteristics inherent to the signs of the West: the mountains, the river of fire, the end of the inhabitable world, the ocean. The population is not called by any name in the report of Jacob of Edessa. But in other traditions¹⁾ they are always called Gog and Magog. And in the Romance of Alexander the two mountains are the extremities of the gate built by Alexander against Gog and Magog. If we further consider the fact that the South is characterized also by a mountain, called the Mountain of the Moon²⁾, we may state that in Semitic cosmography each of the four winds is characterized by one or more mountains which are found on the utmost border of the earth, in or near the ocean. These mountains are further described as strewn with jewels. We cannot but think here of an other mountain, which is described as lying at the utmost end of the earth, in one of its quarters and which is also strewn with jewels: the mountain of paradise.

But ancient Semitic cosmography mentions the other characteristic mountains also: I may refer to Jeremias, *Handbuch der altorientalischen Geisteskultur*³⁾ and recall the fact, that the columns found in some Semitic temples had a function parallel to that of the mountains characterizing the quarters of the world.

Finally, all this having been settled, we have to ask whether the names of the towns are purely fantastic or not. We have found that the consonants of the Syriac form of one of them, according to Arabic authors, are b-r-g-s, and that in a Syriac manuscript [ܒܪܓܫ] occurs. The only difference, apart from the sequence, is that between the b and the ܒ. This points to an original Greek form that had a π. So we get πύργος, a tower or a castle. Now it is clear why some traditions speak of a tower or a castle. Further it is to be remembered that

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1) Tha'labi, p. 320; Aethiopic Romance of Alexander, p. 281.

2) Cf. e. g. Dimashki, Index s. v. جبل القمر and the map in Ibn al-Wardi.

3) p. 56.

πύργος in the *Ḳor'ān* (كور) often has an astronomical meaning (15, 16; 25, 62; 85, 1); it is usually explained as zodiacal signs, but the context only suggests the meaning of constellation. In this connection I may draw attention to a note in Friedländer's book on *Ḳhaḍīr* and Alexander where, from 'Omāra's history of Alexander, a report is mentioned, according to which Alexander and his men, while in the far West near *Djābaršā*, fasten their horses in the mountain of the earth and hang their weapons in the Plejads; then the weapons turn round and after a year they are at the same place again. So there seems to have been a connection between the town in the West and one or other of the constellations; this connection is probably also denoted by the name of which the consonants b-r-g-s form the constant part.

Summarizing the results of this chapter, we find that according to Semitic cosmography, the three parts of the universe: heaven, earth and nether world, each have their ocean.

Still, it would be wrong, I think, to say that the Semitic peoples, or some of them, have known three oceans. The word *Tehom*, which the Northern Semites use, is not a nomen appellativum but a proper noun. This in itself points to the unity of the ocean. They speak of the nether *Tehom* and of the upper *Tehom*; but it is apparently one, with three divisions. *Ecclesiastes* seems to express the unity in what he says on the circular motion of the water: All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again¹⁾. The unity of *Tehom* is probably still to be traced in their representations of the form of the universe. The firmament is the layer or the cover above which upper *Tehom* is placed. It has been a question interesting the old world, to know in which way this firmament is connected with the ends of the earth. For here, apparently, earthly and heavenly *Tehom*, nay even also nether *Tehom* flow together²⁾. We may even surmise that here the fountains of *Tehom* are to be sought. I may quote 'Omāra's report from Friedländer³⁾: Alexander verlässt *Gābaršā* und gelangt an die Stelle, wo die Sonne untergeht. Dort erblickt er einen ungeheuren Berg von blendendem Grün, der sich als vollkommen

1) *Ecclesiastes* 1, 7. Professor Eerdmans reminded me of this passage.

2) Cf. Jensen, *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, plate III.

3) p. 139.

unzugänglich erweist und an dessen Fusse das Meer hineinströmt und verschwindet. Dahinter befinden sich 360 Quellen von ungeheurem Umfang, deren Wasser von schwarzer Farbe ist und wie in einem Topfe brodelt. Die Sonne fällt tagtäglich in eine dieser Quellen hinein und verursacht hierbei ein ungeheures Geräusch, das Tier, Mensch und Genius in Schrecken versetzt.

This is clear: the sun, according to the common conception, sets in the ocean; these fountains are consequently the fountains of the ocean itself and here seems to be the place where the three parts of it meet. That 'Omāra's representation is not purely fantastic, but in concordance with Oriental conception, may again be proved by a quotation from the book of Henoch. The patriarch is brought to the West: I saw the mountains of the darkness of winter and the place whence all the waters of the deep flow. I saw the mouths of all the rivers of the earth and the mouth of the deep¹⁾.

Now if the ocean is one in the Semitic conception, how then is it explained that its water is partly sweet, partly brackish? This question has been asked by the Semites themselves. We have seen that they consider nether Tehom to be sweet: for it is the basin from which the water of rivers and springs flows²⁾; the ocean is brackish, whereas the water of upper Tehom is again sweet. Before reproducing their explanation of this phenomenon, we may state, that the K̄or'ān̄ is not convinced of the unity of the oceans: 'It is He who has let loose the two seas; this fresh and sweet, and that salt and bitter: and has placed between them a bar and a boundary which cannot be passed'³⁾. The commentators say: By the fresh and sweet he denotes the waters of rivers and of rain, by the salt and bitter the waters of the sea⁴⁾.

But the bar between them points to a cosmographic conception which is no longer known to us; perhaps the isthmus in the Syriac Legend of Alexander and the Babylonian *shupuk shamē* may be compared.

1) Chapter 17, in Charles' translation.

2) above, p. 17.

3) Sūra 25, 55: وهو الذي مرج البحرين هذا عذب فرات وهذا ملح اجلج . Cf. 27, 62; 35, 13; 55, 19.

4) Ṭabari, Tafsir XXV, 55: يعنى بالعذب الفرات مياه الانهار والامطار وبالملح الاجلج مياه البحر

Ephraim therefore holds the opinion that the water of Tehom is sweet; that the water of the creation and the water of the deluge were sweet; and that only a small part of the water of Tehom, viz. that of the seas, has become brackish; how, he does not say. And Ḥalabī says that the water the throne of God rested upon before the creation was sweet¹⁾; this means that the water of the creation is considered by him as being sweet water.

Muslim tradition has tried to explain the brackish nature of the ocean; according to Ibn al-Wardī some say its water becomes bitter and salt by its long stagnation and the burning of the sun; but others think that in the ocean itself there are 'veins' which change the sweet nature of the water²⁾. But in the Ethiopic romance of Alexander it is said that the brackish and the sweet water of the ocean are one, because both come forth from the mountain that surrounds the earth³⁾.

Popular science has, however, also possessed opposite views. It has also started from the fact that Tehom, as it manifests itself in the seas, contains brackish water. So upper Tehom is also brackish (here the unity of Tehom is again proved); how can rain be sweet? This is the subject of a discussion between Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua. Rabbi Eliezer states that the earth drinks from the water of the ocean. Rabbi Joshua asks: From the water of the ocean? Is not this water brackish? The other replies: It is made sweet by the clouds⁴⁾.

וַיִּשְׂרַף אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַיָּם בְּאֵשׁ וְהָיָה מַיִם לְשֵׁנִי
 וְהָיָה הַיָּם לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי
 לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי [read לְשֵׁנִי לְשֵׁנִי]

1) I, 195.

2) Ia, p. 32: واختلفوا ايضا في ملوحة ماء البحر فزعم قوم انه لما طال مكثه والبحت الشمس عليهم بالاحراق صار مرًا ملحا واجتذب [واجتذب] الهواء ما لطف من اجزائه فهو بقيّة ما صغته الارض من الرطوبة فغلظ لذلك وزعم اخرون ان في البحر عروقًا تغير ماء البحر ولذلك صار مرًا زعًا

3) p. 144: ከመ፡ ዘነ፡ ፡ ማይ፡ መፈር፡ ማይ፡ ጥፍ፡ ዘይወ፡ ፡ ለምድር፡ ማይ፡ ፡ አላ፡ ደለ፡ ፡ ለእመ፡ ል፡ ፡ ለምድር፡ ፡ ደብር፡ ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ፡ . . . ፡ ረብ፡ ፡ በውስ፡ ፡ አስረ፡ ፡ ጥፍ፡ ፡ መፈር፡

4) Midrašh Kōhelet, fol. 7 r°: ומדוכין הארץ שותה ר' אליעזר ור' יהושוע ר' אליעזר אומר: ממי אוקיננס שותה . . . אמר לו ר' יהושוע ממי אוקיננס לא מים מלודין הן אמר לו מחמתקין הן בעבים

CHAPTER III

THE CHARACTER OF THE OCEAN

In the chapter on Semitic cosmogonic systems we have touched upon the character of Tehom as having two aspects. On the one hand it appears as the chief enemy of the god of the creation; on the other, as an instrument in the hands of almighty God. We shall be able to trace this distinction throughout the entire conception of the ocean in the literature of the Western Semites: on the one hand it is an ungodly, negative, chaotic power; here it is considered as the realm of death and here it is really the nether world. On the other hand it is a productive, positive, cosmic power; and here it is considered as the place of paradise where the fountain of life springs. I shall try to prove this in the present chapter.

A. THE OCEAN AS A NEGATIVE POWER

The ocean is often described as the place of darkness. This is not an unimportant feature, it is a characteristic one. Darkness, the land of darkness, the realm of darkness are in Semitic literature designations of the nether world, or in later times, of hell. The Old Testament contains many examples. The poet of Psalm 88 says in his plaints: Thou hast placed me in the pit of the nether world, in the darkness, in the abysses¹). Here we have three synonyms: the nether world, the darkness and the מצלת, the abysses, a designation of Tehom. — The author of Psalm 49 says that the soul of the rich man after his death is joined with the generation of his fathers, who in eternity will not see light²). So Job speaks of his going, without return, to the land of darkness and shadow of death³).

1) vs. 7: שתני בבור תחתיות במחשכים במצלת

2) vs. 20: תבא עד דור אבותיו עד נצח לא יראו אור

3) 10, 21: בטרים אלך ולא אשוב אל ארץ חשך וצלמות

It will not be necessary to give more examples from the Old Testament. In the New Testament the place of darkness and grinding of teeth is a well known designation of hell.

The place of darkness is not only under the earth, but it already begins at the ends of the earth. We have seen that according to the Western Semites the earth is encircled by the ocean, which begins at the ends of the earth. Sometimes the earth is represented as being surrounded by a wall of mountains, the *Djebel Kāf* in Arabic literature; the ocean then surrounds these mountains. Even this place is the beginning of darkness. In the Talmud is said: Tohu is the green cord that surrounds the whole earth and from which darkness springs¹⁾. The green cord can scarcely be anything else than the ocean. And in Tamid is said: Rabbi Elijah taught: Gehenna is above the firmament; but some say it is behind the mountains of darkness²⁾. This means: Gehenna is sought at any rate in Tehom; for Tehom is above the firmament and round the circle of mountains that surround the earth and here are called the mountains of darkness. Of a similar nature is a talmudic tradition to this effect: Rabbi Jeremija, the son of R. El'azar, said: Gehenna has three gates: one in the desert, one in the sea, one in Jerusalem³⁾. In mediaeval literature saint Brandan is represented as reaching a mountain of flames situated in the ocean: this mountain is hell⁴⁾.

In this connection we have to consider anew some versions of the Romance of Alexander. In the Syriac version, which does not contain the journey towards the fountain of life, Alexander's aim is, apart from conquering the world, to reconnoitre the earth and what is in it. This aim is only a slight modification of the aim of the historical Alexander. But popular imagination has not stopped here. Alexander will not only reconnoitre the earth, he will also enter Paradise; in the Syriac legend of Alexander he reaches a place in the North of the earth from where he observes paradise, enveloped by the ocean and dark clouds. And the mediaeval Latin version of the Romance of Alexander bears the title of *Iter ad Paradisum*.

1) Hagiga 12^a: תהו קן ירוק שמקיף את כל העולם כלו שממנו יצא חשך

2) 32^b: תנא ר' אליהו ניהנם למעלה מן הרקיע ויש אומרים לאחרי הרי חשך

3) Erubin 19^a: ואמר ר' ירמיה ברבי אלעזר שלשה פתחים יש לניהנם אחד במדבר ואחד בים ואחד בירושלם

4) d'Avezac, p. 7.

ocean, while he no longer did see anything, neither birds nor animals, except heaven and earth; but they no longer saw the sun, only the black air¹).

Arabic literature has many data concerning the identification of the ocean with the place of darkness. Many traditions speak of a 'dark ocean'. We have already seen that the Talmúd speaks of the green circle from which darkness springs. This points to a cosmographic representation identical with that of some Arabic reports. Ibn al-Wardī has this passage on the dark ocean: As regards the seas, the largest of them on the surface of the earth is the surrounding one, which encircles it on all sides; it has no terminus nor strand, except on the side of the earth; its shore on the open side is the dark ocean, which encircles the surrounding one as the latter surrounds the earth. Its darkness is caused by its great distance from the place of sunrise and sunset²).

This dark sea, therefore, which surrounds the ocean really does not belong to the earth; for the sun does not reach it: it is a part of the nether world. Idrisi's description is also worth mentioning: As to the dark ocean, nobody knows what is behind it and no human being possesses any trustworthy report of it, because of the difficulty of sailing over it, the darkness of its light, the towering of its waves, its multitude of riches, the tyranny of its animals, and the vehemence of its winds³).

Other Arabic traditions identify the surrounding ocean and the dark one⁴); also special parts of the surrounding ocean are identified with the dark ocean⁵).

In the dark ocean are situated islands that are bereft of light⁶).

1) II, Ch. 38: ἐκείθεν οὖν ἀναλάβων ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἕρημον ἴδουσαν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν μηκέτι μὴδὲν ὄραν μῆτε πετεινὸν μῆτε θηρίον εἰ μὴ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, τὸν δὲ ἥλιον οὐκεὶ ἴδεύουσαν ἀλλὰ μαῦρον αἴρα.

2) Ia, 8: وأما ذكر البحار فاعظم بحر على وجه الارض المحيط المطوق بها من سائر جهاتها وليس له قرار ولا ساحل الا من جهة الارض وساحله من جهة الخلو البحر المظلم وهو محيط بالمحيط كاحاطة بالارض وظلمته من بعده من مطلع الشمس ومغربها

3) p. 165: ... في البحر المظلم ولا يعلم احد ما خلف هذا البحر المظلم ولا وقف بشر منه على خير صبح لصعوبة عبوره وظلام انواره وتعظيم امواجه وكثرة امواله وتسلسط دوابه وهيجان رياحه

4) B. G. VIII, 26.

5) Dimashqī, p. 127; Ibn al-Wardī Ib, II.

6) Idrisi, p. 55.

Considering this it is only natural to find that Tehom in Semitic literature is described as the realm of death. This is so in the literature of the Old Testament, where Sheol and Tehom are used as parallel terms. A good example of this parallelism is furnished by the story of Jona. The prophet on his flight reaches Joppe and here starts his journey on the Mediterranean. Now we have seen that the Mediterranean is considered as a bay of Tehom. Those who find in Jona the features of a solar hero, may adduce in support of their theory that Jona, like the sun daily, descends into Tehom. Further his being swallowed by the fish is a real 'descensus ad inferos'. This appears from the poem that is put into his mouth. 'Out of the belly of Sheol cried I and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas. The waters compassed me about I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the bars of the earth were about me for ever: yet thou hast brought up my life from the pit'¹⁾. Sheol, Tehom and the pit are nearly synonymous here.

The poet of Psalm 40 rejoices at his being saved by God from death and destruction: I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of roaring water, out of miry clay and set my feet upon a rock²⁾. Here apparently the images of the grave and the flood as designations of death have been united. In a more distinct way the term Tehom is used as a designation of death and the grave in Ps. 71, 20: Thou shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth³⁾. 'Depths' is a translation of תְּהוֹמוֹת.

So Tehom has become a type of spiritual distress and destruction. I will only recall Ps. 42, the psalm of mental distress and longing. The poet exclaims, expressing his miserable state: Tehom calleth unto Tehom at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me⁴⁾.

1) Jona 2, 3 sqq.: . . . מצולה בלכב ימים . . . אפסוני מים עד נפש תהום יסבבני . . . לקצבי הרים ירדתי הארץ בריחיה בערי לעולם ותעל משחת חיי

2) vs 2: קוה קירתי יהוה ויט אלי וישמע שועתי ויעלני מבור שאון מטיט היון ויקם עלי
סלע רגלי

3) תשוב החייני ומתהומות הארץ תשוב תעלני

4) תהום אל תהום קורא לקול צנוריד כל משבריד וגליך עלי עברו vs 8:

bourhood. The water of this sea resembles pus, and it is very foetid, because this is the water in which God has destroyed the people that perished in the deluge. And their flesh and the flesh of the animals, the birds and the beasts is in its deep. And on the shores of that sea are innumerable trees without leaves because of its very foetid odour; and know that all men die who approach it and perish on account of its foetid odour¹).

So the ocean is the sea of death. This feature calls to mind the name of the Dead sea, a recollection perhaps also evoked by the foregoing description. It has been observed by Budge, that the ocean is described in the passages from the Romance of Alexander exactly like the Dead sea. The classical authors already describe it as an element where life is impossible. Raumer²) cites this extract from Hieronymus ad Ezechiel 47: Mare mortuum, in quo nihil poterat esse vitale. — Re vera, juxta literam huc usque nihil quod spiret et possit incedere prae amaritudine nimia in hoc mari reperiri potest, nec cochleolae quidem parvique vermiculi et anguillae et caetera animantium sive serpentium genera. Denique si Jordanes auctus imbribus pisces illuc influens rapuerit, statim moriuntur et pinguibus aquis supernatant.

Similar descriptions occur in Arabic literature. According to Māsūdī the Dead sea does not receive that which is thrown into it, nor is it inhabited by living beings, be it fish or other creatures³). Abu 'l-Fidā' adds that there are no birds⁴).

There is another point of resemblance between the ocean and the Dead sea that I have not yet mentioned. In Arabic the Dead sea often bears the name of the stinking one⁵). This

1) p. 124: ወእም ድጎረ : ወእተመኒ : ባሕር : ገቢይ : ዘኢይከሉ : አሕማር : ደሶፋ : በውስጥ : እምብዝነ : ማእበል :: እስመ : ገፋሳት : ደወጽኦ : እመዛገብተሆመ : ወየሐውፋ : ደገገ : ወየገርገ : ማዕበላ : እስከ : ሰማየ : ወደወርድ : እስከ : ሰኦል :: ወኢይከል : ሆፍ : ከመ : ደስርር : ገገግ :: ማያ : ሰይኦት : ባሕር : ደመሰል : መገል : ወጽዮል : ወእቶ : ጥቆ :: እስመ : ወእቶ : ማይ : ዘአማሰ : እገዚአብሔር : ሶፐ : ሰብአ : ዘማሰኦ : ውስተ : አይኦ :: ወሥጋሆመኒ : ወሥጋ : እገሰሳ : ወአለፍፍ : ወአራዊት : ውስተ : ማዕምቃ :: ወውስተ : ድጎገገ : ደእት : ባሕር : አለፍም : ዘአልቦ : ጉልቀ : ወአልቦመ : ቁጽሰ : እምብዝነ : ደኦታ :: ወአእምር : ወከመ : ደመውት : ከሉ : ሰብአ : ዘየሐውር : ጥቃገ : ወደማስገ : እምደኦት ::

2) Palästina³, p. 55, note 128.

3) I, 96: البكيرة المنتنة التي لا تقبل الغرقى ولا تكون فيها ذو روح من سمك ولا غيرة

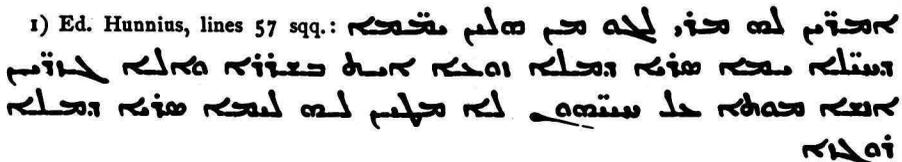
4) ed. Reinaud and de Slane, p. 39: ولا تكون بها حيوان لا من الطير ولا من السمك

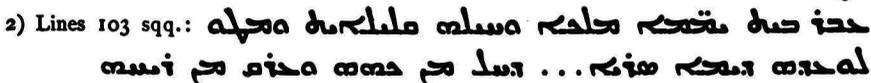
5) البكيرة المنتنة

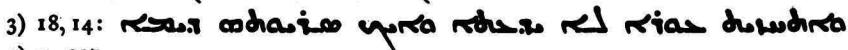
is also a common epithet of the ocean. We have already found in the Aethiopic Romance of Alexander the opinion that all men who approach the ocean must die because of its foetid odour. This feature occurs also in the Syriac redaction. When Alexander discusses his plan to penetrate into the land of darkness with his officers, they call it impossible, saying that the earth is surrounded by dreadful seas and that behind them lies the stinking sea, that indeed is full of terror. And when men do not decide to give up their life, they do not approach the stinking sea that is frightful¹⁾. — Then, when Alexander reaches the ends of the earth, he and his troops cross the seas at once and reach the stinking one; (but then) he is frightened by its vapour and flees from its odour²⁾. In other passages of Syriac literature the 'stinking' sea is mentioned. In the eighteenth Ode of Solomon a description of error and ignorance, the opposite of gnosis, is given: And ignorance appeared like chaff and like the foetid odour of the sea³⁾. And Isaac of Ninive uses the term the stinking ocean as a common epithet of Tehom⁴⁾.

It is clear that the foetid odour of the ocean is closely connected with its negative nature. This is only natural, especially for the Semites who attach a value to odours which can hardly be overrated. A foetid odour means for them in the first place a reminiscence of death, that is characterised by its rendering foetid all it touches. Further the root **שׁוּא** that in Hebrew still means to stink, has become in Aramaic and Arabic the usual expression for evil; whereas its opposite, **טוּב**, that means to be good, in Arabic has the derivation **طيب**, meaning perfume.

The fact that the ocean is considered as the stinking element by the Semites or a part of them, is possibly to be connected with the real or popular etymology of the word Tehom.

1) Ed. Hunnius, lines 57 sqq.: 

2) Lines 103 sqq.: 

3) 18, 14: 

4) p. 317.

The relation between the forms *ti'amat*, תְּהוֹם and תְּהַמָּה cannot easily be given. The Arabic use of تِهَامَة seems to prove, that here the word is not borrowed from the North or the North-East. For here it does not possess the slightest meaning which could connect it with the mythic value it has in the North. It simply means a certain part of the Arabic coast along the Red sea, apparently the old popular geographical name.

The forms of the word may be either derived from a root תְּהוֹם, meaning to be in motion, or from a root תְּהַמָּה. A derivation from תְּהוֹם would give a reasonable sense; but Semitic literature that has so much to say concerning the ocean, never lays stress upon its continual being in movement. In Arabic a root تَهَمَّ 'to stink' occurs. Hoffmann¹⁾ and Jensen²⁾ are more or less convinced of the denominative character of this verb. So the real etymology of תְּהוֹם is obscure; but a connection, be it of a primary or of a secondary nature, with the root تَهَمَّ exists at any rate. —

After so much evidence concerning the close connection between the idea of death and the character of the ocean, it will be clear why the town in the utmost West, characterizing the entrance of Tehom, is a town of death: it partakes of the character of the ocean itself. And like the nether world it is also a place of treasures.

Tehom as a negative power is in the third place to be considered as a typical representation of chaos. The subject has already been mentioned in our first chapter. But we have to inquire into it more thoroughly. What we found in regard of the place of Tehom in the cosmogonic systems of the Semites may be summarized in the sentence, that originally the ocean represents the wild, ungodly element that has to be tamed before the creation can take place; while later views represent Tehom as the element that serves the creator only as an instrument. We shall have to develop these diverging views in this chapter.

In the biblical story of the creation a special term is used that may be considered as an expression for chaos: תְּהוֹם וְכָהוּן. When earth and heaven have been created but not yet made

1) *Zeitschr. f. d. alttestamentl. Wissenschaft* III, 118.

2) *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* VI, 1, 559 sq.

Verhand. Kon. Akad. v. Wetensch. Nieuwe Reeks Dl. XIX N^o. 2.

into a cosmos, it is said: the earth was **תהו ובהו** and the spirit of God hovered over the surface of the waters. And in several features of Semitic cosmogonic systems it appears that the characteristic of chaos is the reign of the water. I will only recall the conception, discussed above, that represents the earth, before the cosmos, as being enveloped by the waters, while God's creative action in the first place consists in His removing the waters and preparing thereby the way for cosmos. Etymologically speaking neither of the terms **תהו ובהו** has any connection with the primeval waters. **בהו** occurs only a few times in the Old Testament, but it was also known to the Phoenicians (we have it only in the transcription *βααυ*); and in later times, in the literature of gnosticism, the **ילדאבהות** is mentioned, apparently a person belonging to a cosmogonic system; the name means offspring of chaos; but no connection with the ocean appears. Neither has **תהו** in the Old Testament further anything to do with the ocean. But we have cited lines from the Talmud running thus: **תהו** is the green cord that surrounds the whole earth and from which darkness springs¹). Here chaos and ocean are synonyms.

This reign of chaos which in the cosmogonic stories is identical with the reign of the ocean, has not only its place in the cosmogony, but, according to the Old Testament, it occurs several times in history in a series of events always following the same order. A period of chaos is succeeded by the creative act of God; then a covenant is made with man and a new time begins, a time of new relations between man and nature, a golden age in a land of paradise.

It is evident that this series of events as it is described in the story of the creation and of paradise, has its counterpart in the story of the deluge. The cosmos is destroyed by the ocean; the reign of chaos is the reign of Tehom. When the waters have disappeared God makes a new covenant with Noah, the new representative of mankind; man, till now only the master of the vegetable world, becomes lord of the animals too; the new order of things, the regular succession of the different seasons, will not be disturbed; the new mankind plants a new tree, the vine.

Apart from the cosmogony and the story of the deluge this

1) p. 41.

scheme is well known from those descriptions that are to be considered as analogous to cosmogonic stories: the descriptions of the coming chaos, that will be a destruction of this world¹⁾, then the reign of the Messiah or of God, the gathering of the remainder of mankind in Jerusalem or in the kingdom of heaven etc. This eschatological scheme is found throughout the Old and New Testaments.

It should be observed, however, that the creation, the deluge and the last day are not the only epochs in history that are described according to this scheme. It is especially the author, commonly known as Deuterocesaja, who sees history and also his own time in this way. This means: according to Deuterocesaja the exile is the time of chaos. This thought is only to be understood, if we think of the Israelitic idea, that the history of the world is really only a history of Israel, as the nucleus of mankind; this nucleus of mankind, according to the ancient conception, has its fixed place in the centre of the earth and this place has been cleansed for it by its God, who Himself has His dwelling-place amidst His people. All this may be called the rational idea underlying the history of the world in the Israelitic conception. And now the exile has destroyed this harmonious order of things: there is scarcely a people of Israel any more; it no longer dwells in the centre of the earth, on the place destined for it by its god; and this god himself has been driven away from his dwelling-place, the temple of Jerusalem. This is really chaos. Now the Oriental theory says that chaos is to be followed by cosmos and a golden age. Deuterocesaja's central idea is this: chaos is passing away, for the Messiah Cyrus is coming, he will reestablish order. The people of Israel has to leave Babel and to return to Juda, where the golden age shall reign: For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody²⁾). The evils of mankind will be taken away: And I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known:

1) See e. g. Jesaja 24 sqq.

2) Jes. 51, 3: כי נלם יהוה ציון נחם כל חרבתיה ושם מדברה כעדן וערבתה כגן יהוה ששון ושמחה ימצא בה תודה וקול זמרה

I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These are the things I will do unto them and not forsake them. . . . Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see¹⁾. — The dwelling in their own country is described as the gathering to a feast in Jerusalem, and then the new covenant is made: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David²⁾. I will not multiply quotations, as these are sufficient to demonstrate the eschatological idea and the ordered scheme underlying the prophecy of Deuterjesaja. But the further question arises of how the idea of chaos is expressed in this scheme? The answer is simple enough: chaos generally is described with the characteristics of the desert; and cosmos begins when Yahwe removes these characteristics. So Yahwe's reign is a reign over the desert: A voice cries: Prepare ye the way of the Lord in the wilderness, make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the lord has spoken it³⁾.

And further: Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the ostriches: because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen⁴⁾.

1) Jes. 42, 16, 18: והולכתיו עורים בדרך לא ידעו בנתיבות לא ידעו אדריכם אשים מחשך לפניהם לאור ומעקשים למישור אלה הדברים עשיתים ולא עובתים החרשים שמעו והעורים הביטו לראות

2) Jes. 55, 1, 3: הוי כל צמא לבא למים ואשר אין לו כסף לכו שברו ואכלו ולכו שברו בלא כסף ובלא מחיר יין וחלב המו אזנכם ולכו אלי שמעו ותחי נפשכם ואכרתה לכם ברית עולם חסדי דוד הנאמנים

3) Jes. 40, 3 sqq.: קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך יהוה ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהנו כל גיא ינשא וכל הר ונבעה ישפלו והיה העקב למישור והרכסים לבקעה ונגלה כבוד יהוה וראו כל בשר יחדו כי פי יהוה דבר

4) Jes. 43, 19sq.: הנני עשה חדשה עתה תצמח הלא תדעו אף אשים במדבר דרך בישומון נהרות תכבדני חיה השדה תנים ובנות יענה כי נתתי במדבר מים נהרות בישומון להשקות עמי בחירי

Still more clear is, if possible: I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine tree and the box tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy one of Israel hath created it¹).

So it appears that the desert in the poetic language of Deuterocesaja has the same place as chaos in the historical Oriental scheme. This is not a fortuitous coincidence. We saw above, that תהו is the technical term for chaos and the ocean as chaos. תהו is also a designation of the desert and of the desert as chaos. Ps. 107, 40: He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way²). And Job 6, 18: The paths of their way are turned aside, they go into the desert and perish³).

Here there proves to be a connection between the ocean and the desert, both being considered as the domain of chaos. Another token of a connection between the ocean and the desert in a tradition has already been mentioned: Gehenna has three gates: one in the desert, one in the sea, one in Jerusalem⁴).

But we must return to Deuterocesaja who has more to say concerning the historical scheme which he, and probably others also, applies to the Israelitic Past. He is conscious of the analogy between the exile and three other epochs: the cosmogony, the deluge and the exodus.

Like the deluge in the days of Noah so the exile has been an act of wrath on the part of Jahwe; and just as after the deluge He swore that the waters should not return over the earth, so He swears now that He will not be wrath with Israel: For a little space I have forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In wrath I hid my face from thee

1) Jes. 41, 18 sqq. אפתח על שפיים נהרות ובחוך בקעות מעינות אשים מדבר לאגם מים וארץ ציה למוצאי מים אתן כמדבר ארז שמה והדם ועץ שמן אשים בערבה ברוש תדהר והאשור יחרו

2) שפך בוז על נדיבים ויתעם בתהו לא דרך

3) ילפתו ארצות דרכם יעלו בתהו ויאבדו

4) p. 41.

for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Yahwe the Redeemer. For this is as the days of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee¹⁾.

A double comparison of the exile with the cosmogony and Israel's passing through the Red sea occurs in the following passage: Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Yahwe; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great Tehom; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Sion etc.²⁾.

A comparison with the crossing of the Red sea occurs a second time: Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow. Remember ye not the former things; neither consider the things of old etc.³⁾.

The point in question is clear: In olden times Yahwe has broken the power of chaos represented by the ocean: before the creation he has crushed the head of Rahab, the serpent of the ocean; he has pushed back the waters of chaos after the deluge; he has prohibited Tehom, represented by the Red sea, to swallow his redeemed; now the power of the exile, represented as the desert, will be broken and as the cosmogony and the deluge were followed by a golden age, and the crossing of the Red sea by the entrance into the promised land flowing with milk and honey, so the exiled will return unto Sion.

We must leave Denterojesaja and his historical views here,

1) Jes. 54, 7—9: ברנע קמן עובתיך וברחמים גדלים אקבצך בשצף קצף הסתרתני פני רגע ממך ובחסד עולם רחמתוך אמר נאלך יהוה כימי נח זאת לי אשר נשבעתי מעבר מי נח עוד על הארץ כן נשבעתי מקצף עליך ומגער כך

2) Jes. 51, 9—12: עורי עורי לבשי עז זרוע יהוה עורי כימי קדם דורות עולמים הלא את היא המחצבת רהב מחוללת תנין הלא את היא המחרבת ים מי תהום רבה השמח מעמקי ים דרך לעבר גאולים ופדויי יהוה ישובו יבאו ציון ברנה

3) Jes. 43, 16—18: כה אמר יהוה חנותן בים דרך ובמים עוים נתיבה המוציא רכב וסוס חיל ועוזו יחרו ישכבו כל יקומו דעכו כפשתהו כבו אל הזכרו ראשנות וקדמניות אל התבננו

stating anew that the crossing of the Red sea is considered as the crossing of Tehom. The crossing of the Red sea is also considered by early Christian writers in a peculiar light. We have seen that Tehom is nearly synonymous with the nether world; Afrahaṭ draws a parallel between the Red sea and Sheol: For them (the Israelites) Moses clove asunder the sea and caused them to cross it, and our Saviour clove asunder Sheol¹⁾.

The crossing of the Red sea is also a symbol of baptism: Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea²⁾.

So baptism may be styled as a passing through the Red sea or a passing through Tehom. In the 22^d Ode of Solomon there is a glorification of 'Him that overthrew by my hands the dragon with seven heads'³⁾, a comparison therefore of the poet with God's slaying the Leviathan in the creation. Rendel Harris gives the following note to the passage: 'Bernard thinks the dragon is to be explained by Patristic gnosis of the defeat of the devil in the waters of Baptism, as in Cyril *Cat.* III, 11 and the Baptismal rituals. I add to Dr. Bernard's references one from a MS. of Moses Bar Kepha on Baptism, in my own collection: 'our Lord was baptized that he might trample on the head of the spiritual dragon that lurked in the water etc.' — It is clear that the baptismal water was a symbol of Tehom and conceived as being inhabited by monsters that were considered as its representatives. The ungodly character of Tehom appears thus once more in a striking way.

Now it is not astonishing to find that, like the passing through Tehom in the Red sea, so Noah's passing through Tehom is considered as a symbol of baptism. This is so in the New Testament: . . . which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto

1) I, 524: 


2) I Corinthians 10, 1 sq.

3) 

even baptism doth also now save us etc. ¹⁾). And in the pictures of the catacombs Noah in his ark is a common symbol of baptism.

Finally, as Tehom is synonymous with death, so baptism is compared with death: know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life ²⁾).

B. THE OCEAN AS A POSITIVE POWER

Finally we have to consider the positive side of the ocean and here again we may start from the cosmogonic stories. Here then the ocean is no longer the element that has to be tamed, but the substance out of which all things were created. I need only recall here the evidence we have discussed above ³⁾, culminating in the sentence from the *Ḳor'ān*: we made every living thing of water. Further I would recall the story, how the preexistent sanctuary is created, beginning from a spot of in the primaeval water. We have seen that the biblical story of the creation gives a twofold image of the ocean before the creation: darkness lies over the surface of Tehom; and: the spirit of God is brooding over it. This is all; indeed a torso if compared with other cosmogonic stories, for the aim or the result of the spirit's brooding is not explained. Later literature, however, has filled in this gap. Jacob of Edessa, in his commentary on this verse, compares the brooding of the spirit over the waters with the brooding of a hen ⁴⁾. And the Cave of Treasures has this explanation: On that Sunday the Holy Ghost, one of the persons of the Trinity, brooded on the waters. And by this brooding on the surface of the waters they were blessed so as to become able to bring forth. And all the natural germs in the waters became hot and fervent, and all the leaven of creation became united with them ⁵⁾.

1) 1 Peter 3, 20.

2) Romans 6, 3 sq. I am indebted for these New Testament references to the kindness of Professor Windisch.

3) p. 7.

4) In Ephraim's Opera I, 117 sq.

5) Cave of Treasures, p. 3: **כמה כנהו צבא זוטא וזוטא פגולא פגולא**

quently, like them, belongs to Tehom, and so does the fountain of life.

But this conclusion must be tested by the evidence of the texts themselves; so we will examine what they say concerning the fountain of life.

In the first place we have a series of traditions connecting the fountain of life with Tehom itself. The oldest is perhaps a description in the Book of Henoch, that I quote in its entirety¹⁾ in order to show the meaning as clearly as possible; it occurs in the 17th chapter. Henoch is travelling through the earth and the nether world. 'And they took and brought me to a place in which those who were there were like flaming fire, and, when they wished, they appeared as men. And they brought me to the place of darkness, and to a mountain the point of whose summit reached to heaven. And I saw the places of the luminaries and the treasures of the stars and of the thunder, and in the uttermost depths, where were a fiery bow and arrows and their quiver, and a fiery sword and all the lighthings. And they took me to the living waters, and to the fire of the West, which receives every setting of the sun. And I came to a river of fire in which the fire flows like water and discharges itself into the great sea towards the West. I saw the great rivers and came to the great river and to the great darkness, and went to the place where no flesh walks. I saw the mountains of the darkness of winter and the place whence all the waters of the deep flow. I saw the mouths of all the rivers of the earth and the mouth of the deep'.

The utmost West, in this description, is the place
1° where the rivers of the earth flow into the ocean.

2° of the ocean itself.

3° of darkness, i. e. the nether world.

4° where the waters of life spring.

In other words: the waters of life originate in Tehom, in the land of darkness, in the nether world, in the far West.

The Romance of Alexander in its various versions contains many details concerning the fountain of life. According to version C of the Greek text, it is found in the land of darkness: *καὶ οὕτως εἰσερχόμενοι ὁδὸν σκοτεινὴν ἐπὶ σχοίνοισι δεκαπέντε εἶδον τινα τόπον καὶ ἦν αὐτῷ πηγὴ διαυγῆς ἧς τὸ ὕδωρ ἤστραπτεν ὡς ἀστραπή·*

1) cf. above p. 33'sqq.

the rivers of paradise or the sanctuary, as an image of paradise, are the origin of all sweet water on the earth. So all the water of the rivers partakes of the character of the fountain of life, though in a minor degree. This may be seen from the term living water, so common in Semitic literature¹⁾. From Genesis 26, 19 it appears that living water is the water springing from a fountain. But the later practice shows that rain is also considered as living water²⁾. This means that living water is either the water springing from nether Tehom or that from upper Tehom. So Tehom again appears to be considered as the element of life. And water from Tehom is used for ab-lutions.

Now it may be considered as certain that the aim of ab-lutions is to drive away demons³⁾, or in other terms diseases, and sins. Both disease and sin are forms of death. If they are driven away by water from Tehom, this is because Tehom is here considered as the element of life.

This is also true for Babylonia. Exorcisms in Babylonia are practised by means of water from Eridu⁴⁾, and Eridu is the residence of Ea, the god of Tehom. It is in accordance with this, and a new proof of the parallelism between Tehom and the nether world, that *Ishtar*, in order to acquire the water of life, has to descend into the nether world, for there is the fountain of life.

It is further to be observed, that water, of course 'living' water, is often mentioned as the element by which the dead will be quickened. In Muslim tradition it is told, that under the throne of God, i. e. in upper Tehom, there is a sea of green water, with which Allāh will quicken the dead⁴⁾. And in Jewish literature the connection between water and the resurrection of the dead is often mentioned⁵⁾.

Tehom as the element of life appears also in some features of the tree of life which in Babylonia sometimes was represented as a palm growing in Eridu⁶⁾; here the connection between Tehom and the tree of life is evident; in the poem

1) Cf. e. g. Johannesbuch der Mandäer II, 5, 6, 178; Leviticus 14, 5 sq., 50—52; Jeremia 2, 13; Zacharjah 14, 8 and cf. Ezech. 47, 1—12; Odes of Solomon 28, 13.

2) cf. *Der Islam* IV, p. 219 sqq.

3) Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung*, p. 21; *Wünsche, Lebensbaum und Lebenswasser* p. 72.

4) Abū Zaid, II, 10.

5) *Bereshit Rabba*, par. 13. Cf. Goldziher in *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft* XIII, p. 40.

6) *Wünsche*, p. 2.

cited by Wünsche the tree is said to overshadow Tehom and Eridu is expressly called the residence of Ea. Now the tree of life and the world-tree cannot always be distinguished in Semitic literature; the famous sidrat al-muntahā is the tree of paradise and often it is described as the tree that encompasses the world. This impression may also be gathered from Wünsche's descriptions. This statement will be of value for the understanding of a passage in Ezechiel describing the tree of the world. The description is found in chapter 31, where the king of Assyria is depicted in the image of this tree: 'Behold, Assur was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. The waters made it great, Tehom set it up on high with her rivers running about its plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore its height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and its boughs were multiplied, and its branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when it shot forth. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in its boughs, and under its branches did all the beasts of the field bring fourth their young, and under its shadow dwelt all great nations. Thus was it fair in its greatness, in the length of its branches: for its root was by the great waters. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide it: the fir trees were not like its boughs, and the chestnut trees were not like its branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto it in its beauty. I have made it fair by the multitude of its branches; so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God envied it Thus saith the Lord Yahwe: In the day when it went down to Sheol I caused a mourning: I covered Tehom for it, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were staged' etc. — This is clear: the tree of the world which at the same time is the tree of life is planted in Tehom and when it is destroyed, Tehom mourns for it. Tehom is the element of life.

Tehom is also the element of fertility, as all sweet water springs from it and water is synonymous with fertility among the Semites¹⁾. Sometimes the fertilising power of Tehom is represented in a remarkable way: the water of upper Tehom

1) Cf. the Navel of the Earth, p. 7.

is represented as the masculine, that of nether Tehom as the feminine element; fertility springs from the meeting of the two. This idea is expressed in a passage in the Bereshit rabba: rabbi Levi said: the upper waters are masculine, the nether waters are feminine. The former say to the latter: receive us; you are the creatures of the Holy One (blessed may He be), we are His messengers. Then they receive them immediately. This is what scripture says: The earth shall open¹⁾, viz. like a woman that opens herself for a man²⁾).

Here the upper and the nether waters are mentioned expressly; very common, also among other peoples; is the idea of a marriage between heaven and earth, rain being the fertilising element. In the Talmud e. g. rain is called the husband of the earth³⁾. But this is not the place to give more examples of this latter idea, as a connection with Tehom is not evident. I will only point to the fact that the former conception, that of fertility being caused by the meeting of the upper and the nether waters, was also known to the Arabs; this appears from the expression التقي الثريان 'the two fertile elements have met' i. e. the upper and the nether water, whose meeting causes fertility⁴⁾).

Finally we have to consider Tehom in its connection with paradise and the islands of the Blessed. Again the Romance of Alexander has many examples of this idea. It may be observed here that the terms islands of the Blessed and country of the Blessed are used promiscuously, just like land of darkness, nether world and Tehom. In the version C of the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes it is said: και δια τριων ημερων ηλθεν εις τοπους επου ο ηλιος ονκ ελαμπεν· εκει ουν εστιν η καλουμένη μακάρων χώρα⁵⁾. Here the land of the Blessed is situated in the land of darkness; in the Syriac legend of Alexander, translated by Budge, it is expressly said that paradise is surrounded by the stinking ocean and enveloped by dark clouds⁶⁾. Here, in Christian

1) Jesaja 45, 8.

2) Par. 13: אמר ר' לוי המים העליונים זכרים והתחתונים נקבות והן אומרים אלו לאלו: קבלו אותנו אתם בריותיו של הקב"ה ואנו שלוחיו מידהם מקבלין אותן הה"ד הפחת ארץ כנקבה זו שהיא פותחת לזכר

3) Ta'anit 6b: דאמר ר' יהודה מיטרא בעלה דארעא הוא

4) I have borrowed this example from Rhodokanakis in Wörter und Sachen V, 199.

5) Pseudo-Callisthenes, Chap. 39.

6) Budge, p. 152.

surrounding ocean ¹⁾, or over against Abessynia ²⁾, which means nearly the same, for the Western coast of Africa is also called Abessynia. They are called الجزائر الخالدات, جزائر الخالدات, the islands of eternal abode, and are sometimes distinguished from another group جزائر السعادة or جزائر السعادات or جزائر السعيدة, the islands of happiness, that are situated between them and the coast ³⁾. Their number is usually given as six ⁴⁾, but it is not always the same. I may quote a description of these islands from Nuwairi ⁵⁾; parallel texts are in Kazwini ⁶⁾ and Dimashki ⁷⁾:

Abū 'Obaid al-Bakrī, in his book entitled the book of the ways and the kingdoms, says: over against Tandja are situated the islands called by the Greeks Fortunatas i. e. the happy ones. They are called thus because their trees and shrubs produce all sorts of delicious fruits without having been planted or cultivated, and their ground bears corn instead of grass and different sorts of aromatic plants ⁸⁾ instead of thorns. They are separated one from the other, though at short distances. It is said that once it happened that the wind drove a ship ashore on one of these islands. When the sailors went ashore they found different sorts of fruit-trees and spice-trees and various precious stones. They took of them what they could and returned to Spain. When the king asked them where they had got this, they told their story. Then he provided ships and let them sail, but they did not reach an island for they perished because of the high billows and the vehement wind so that none of them returned ⁹⁾.

1) B. G. VIII, 68.

2) B. G. VI, 231.

3) Abu 'l-fidā', p. 187.

5) p. 62.

4) Mas'ūdi I, 179.

7) p. 135.

6) II, 19.

8) According to Dimashki who reads الرياحيين instead of Nuwairi's رياض 'gardens.

9) قال ابو عبيد البكري في كتابه المترجم بالمسالك والممالك وجزائر طنجة للجزائر المسماة باليونانية فرطياناس الى السعيدة وسميت بذلك لان في شجراتها (شعراتها: Cod. 273) وغيابها كلها اصناف الفواكه الطيبة من غير غراسة ولا فلاحه وان ارضها تحمل الزرع مكان العشب واصناف الرياض بدل الشوك وهي متفرقة متقاربة ويقال ان بعض المراكب عصفت عليها الريح فالتقتها الى جزيرة من هذه الجزائر فنزل من فيها من لركاب اليها فوجدوا فيها من انواع اشجار الفواكه واشجار الافاويه وانواع البواقيت كل مستحسن فحملوا منه ما اطاقوا ودخلوا به بلاد الاندلس فسالم ملكهم من اين لهم هذا فاخبروه بامرهم فجهز مراكب وسيرها فلم يقفوا على جزيرة وعدمت المراكب لعظم البحر وشدة عصف الريح فلم يرجع منها شيء

The islands of the Blessed, like Paradise, appear to be situated in the terrible ocean and no man can reach them. They are exempt from the curse that has been laid upon the earth after Adam's sin; they produce, without being cultivated, corn and fruits instead of thorns and thistles. Again Tehom proves to be an element terrible and deadly, but at the same time bestowing life and the highest happiness.

These islands, like paradise, were the goal of Alexander's journey¹⁾ and these islands too bear the statues indicating that there is no passage beyond them²⁾. We have seen that these statues are interchanged with the mountain, the tower, the town, the castle, all of them partaking of the character of Tehom, and sometimes being described with the features of the nether world. Here it is not the nether world, but the islands of the Blessed that indicate Tehom, again a token of its double character.

This double character of the ocean may be considered indubitable. Tehom is the element of death as well as of life, it is the seat of hell and of paradise.

We have stated the intimate connection existing in the Semitic mind between the ocean and the nether world. This nether world bears also a double character. It is a designation of death, the grave and hell; it is the place abhorred by the ancient Israelites more than any other place; the Psalms are still full of the terrors with which the nether world threatens man before he has conceived the idea of resurrection and life after death. But at the same time this earth is the place he comes from and the substance out of which he was made. He is made of עפר like the earth; he has been formed in the nether parts of it³⁾. He knows that the beginning of his life is due to it, for at his death he 'returns'⁴⁾ to it: earth and the nether world are his mother and his grave. Man comes from the earth and returns unto it; the way of mankind is a circular movement, a perpetually revolving chain ever turning round.

So the ocean and the earth or the nether world prove to possess the same double character. Still, it remains possible,

1) Idrisi, p. 28.

2) Kazwini II, 19.

3) Psalm 139, 15.

4) Ps. 9, 18; 146, 4.

that these opposite features are due to a different origin. In the Preface I have spoken of the impossibility of tracing the ways along which many characteristic features of the ocean have reached the Western Semites. So we have to reckon with a solution of this question in such a way, that the union of these opposite features would be of a secondary nature only. Still, this must remain a question beforehand.

If, on the other hand, the Semites themselves have conceived such opposite views, we may ask whether a people, that conceived such ideas, was not acquainted with the Egyptian concatenation of life and death¹⁾; here death is not only a negative thing, but at the same time the origin of life. But it must be acknowledged, that such a conception, if known to the Semites, does not seem to have been clearly conscious to them; for, apart from the idea of resurrection, which really belongs to a different series of ideas, it is not mentioned in their literature.

1) Cf. W. B. Kristensen in *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Kon. Akademie V, 2*, p. 68 sqq.
