

Isac Leo Seeligmann – Text Criticism in Context

Alexander Rofé

My attempt at describing the contribution of Isac Leo Seeligmann to Biblical studies in Israel, in order to introduce him to a wider audience of English readers, will perhaps be inadequate. I do not read Dutch, the language in which he published his works until 1948,¹ and I came to know him only in 1951, one year after his *'aliyah* to Israel. Thus, a whole chapter relating to his upbringing and scholarly growth is known to me only in headlines. Seeligmann was born into a world of Torah and scholarship—his father was the historian Sigmund Seeligmann, widely known for his essays on the history of the Jews in the Netherlands and founder of the Society for Jewish Studies in Amsterdam. His library was renowned for its rich collection of Judaica and his house was a place of encounter for Jewish scholars from Holland and abroad. Into this cultural wealth, Isac Leo Seeligmann was born and raised.

Seeligmann's acquaintances from Holland testified to his activity in the Zionist youth movement between the two world wars. So too, they told about his teaching in the Jewish high-school and in the Amsterdam Rabbinic Seminary where he began to work in 1935. At times, Seeligmann himself mentioned in his classes that he had had a former generation of students, a whole generation that had been murdered in the years 1941-1945. The shock at the thought of how our people had been driven to massacre would give way to wonder: how this survivor, a remnant from a great Jewish community that had been annihilated, finds the spiritual might to study and teach. This is the power of the intellectual life, which expresses

¹ Bibliographies of Seeligmann's works have been published in: *Isac Leo Seeligmann Volume: Essays on the Bible and the Ancient World* (eds. A. Rofé and Y. Zakovitch; 3 vols; Jerusalem, 1983), 1:11-18; I.L. Seeligmann, *Gesammelte Studien zur Hebräischen Bibel* (ed. E. Blum; Tübingen, 2004), 493-499. Seeligmann's works will be cited below in their English or German cast.

itself also in scientific investigation: it does not obliterate the atrocities caused by the wicked, but it overcomes the psychological agony by vigorous creativity.

From the Ghetto of Theresienstadt Seeligmann returned to Amsterdam; his library had been ransacked and his house—occupied by strangers. In the cold and hungry city of the post-war years he went back to his research and wrote his dissertation on the Septuagint Version of Isaiah. Defended in 1947, it was published in 1948.² At the beginning of the next year, 1949, the Hebrew University resolved to invite him as Lecturer in Bible. The appointment came to fruition by June 1949 and early in 1950, at the age of 43 Seeligmann settled with his family in Jerusalem. He would teach at the Hebrew University for twenty-five years, until his retirement in 1975. He continued his research as Emeritus for a further seven years, until his death, at the age of 75 in 1982.

When he came to the Hebrew University, Seeligmann was already an accomplished scholar who relied on a clear, articulate method. His scholarly approach was formed by his studies in classical philology at the University of Leiden. By his own admission, he became acquainted with the discipline of Biblical studies through his independent work, especially through his teaching. However, this transfer of learning was certainly fostered by the Jewish education that he had first absorbed in his father's house, a legacy that was expanded and enhanced at the Amsterdam Rabbinic Seminary from which he graduated in 1931. These two fields, Classics and Rabbinics, assimilated by a student who dedicated himself to Biblical criticism, yielded their fruits in his works: first—his studies on the Septuagint and Jewish Hellenism,³ then—the enquiry into the presuppositions of midrashic

² *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of its Problems* (MEOL 9; Leiden, 1948); reprinted in *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (FAT 40; eds. R. Hanhart and H. Spieckermann; Tübingen, 2004), 119–294.

³ Cf. the preceding note and additionally: “Problems and Perspectives in Modern Septuagint Research,” *Textus* 15 (1990): 169–232; “Jerusalem im Denken des hellenistischen Judentums,” in *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 381–399.

exegesis,⁴ and finally—the essays on Biblical historiography.⁵ The latter can serve as a model for the work of a historian who is at home in two distinct cultures: he does not wrest items that bear resemblance to each other in order to interpret them out of their social or literary context and to demonstrate in this way a presumed affinity and contact between those cultures. Rather he compares similar elements, once he has explained them in context, in order to sharpen his definitions and his scholarly terminology, to identify phenomena and to expound them assisted by analogies, and finally to point out essential divergences between the said cultures.

This course—learning and understanding a culture in its entirety, heading toward an integral historical investigation—is also evident in other works of Seeligmann. Dealing with the Septuagint, he insisted upon the value of this version as a historical document per se which sheds light on Jewish Hellenism. Not by chance Seeligmann chose to write his Ph.D. dissertation on the Septuagint of Isaiah,⁶ one of the freest versions in the Greek Bible. Such a translation is a treasure-trove of information about the political, social and intellectual world of the translators, information that is always precious for the historian.⁷ But it is not only the ‘free’ translation which may enrich our knowledge of the cultural world of Jewish Hellenists. In his teaching of the Septuagint, Seeligmann insisted that the student should detect and fully realize the semantic shift that occurred when Hebrew expressions were rendered in Greek.⁸

⁴ “Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese,” *Congress Volume Copenhagen, 1953* (VTSup. 1), 150-181, reprinted in *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 1-30.

⁵ To be mentioned below.

⁶ Supra, n. 2.

⁷ See the recent: J. Joosten, “Language as Symptom: Linguistic Clues to the Social Background of the Seventy,” *Textus* 23 (2007): 69-80; A. Passoni Dell’Acqua, “Von der Kanzlei der Lagiden zur Synagoge: das ptolemäische Vokabular und die Septuaginta,” in *Die Septuaginta - Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten* (eds. M. Karrer and W. Kraus; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 236-247.

⁸ Constant interlocutors in this task were the articles published in the *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum NT*, incidentally one of the very few dictionaries that Seeligmann ever quoted in his articles; apparently he considered the other ones as

Philology, however, is a discipline open to the most diverse options. The Septuagint must be studied, indeed, as a document of Hellenistic Jewry, and yet, we should not forget that its creators were in the first place translators who earnestly wanted to faithfully render their *Vorlage*.⁹ Seeligmann, in his Septuagint-classes, would ask time and again: What, after all, did they (“the Seventy”) read here?¹⁰ At the root lay his recognition of the value of the Septuagint as the oldest complete textual witness of the Jewish Bible and of the need to find the legitimate means for collecting its testimony.

On the basis of these premises one can assess his other works on textual criticism.¹¹ Seeligmann did not confine himself to the mapping of genealogies of manuscripts and to the identification of mechanical errors; his method was more ambitious, more comprehensive. In the first place, text criticism should be considered as an integral part of the realm of exegesis. This means that the interpreter should try to understand the text he studies as part of its context and according to the established rules of biblical grammar, prosody and diction.¹² At this point, the correction of the text is considered by the critic as one of the tools at the disposal of the interpreter, certainly not the first among them, but not the last either! Next, the textual critic tries to expose the copyists’ habits, such as the substitution of a word with its alleged synonym, habits that caused textual alterations. Finally, the critic describes how the text, primary or secondary, has been

a matter of course; translated and edited by G.W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Michigan, 1964-1976).

⁹ Cf. H.M. Orlinsky, “The Septuagint as Holy Writ and the Philosophy of the Translators,” *HUCA* 46 (1975): 89-114, at p. 110.

¹⁰ It seems to me that this tenet has not been always upheld by scholars in the field cf. e.g. D.W. Gooding, “On the Use of the LXX for Dating Midrashic Elements in the Targums,” *JTS* 25 (1974): 1-11. On p. 4 he deals with Exod 12:40 LXX without taking into account the Hebrew text of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

¹¹ “Studies in the History of the Biblical Text,” *Textus* 20 (2000): 1-30; “Indications of Editorial Alteration and Adaptation in the Massoretic Text and the Septuagint,” *VT* 11 (1961): 201-221; cf. also the next note.

¹² “δειξαι αὐτῶ φῶς,” *Textus* 21 (2002): 107-128.

reworked by late scribes in order to adapt it to their taste and creed. Needless to say, the order of these stages is not a fixed one. With this procedure, textual criticism is no longer a technical duty, but an intellectual experience, because thus the student becomes acquainted with the mind of biblical authors and their epigones, biblical copyists as well.¹³ According to this method, the significance of secondary readings in the Massoretic Text, the Septuagint and the Qumran manuscripts is recognized because they add to our scanty notions about the history of the Jewish Second Commonwealth.¹⁴

It is regrettable that the text-critical method developed by Seeligmann did not attract more adherents, even in Israel, all the more so abroad. Various trends, even schools, appeared in the field during the course of the twentieth century. This is not the place to individually evaluate their achievements and to criticize their limitations, one by one. However, I will try to define Seeligmann's attitude toward those approaches. In doing so I mainly rely on my personal recollections from a number of his seminars and Septuagint courses.

In the first place, a scholar should curb his own ingenuity: uncontrolled flights of fantasy while attempting to improve the Biblical text will end in discredit of the whole discipline.¹⁵ A good conjecture takes its cue from the

¹³ Cf. G. Pasquali, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo* (Firenze, 1952), 109 ff.

¹⁴ Cf. A. Rofé, "The Historical Significance of Secondary Readings," *The Quest for Context & Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of J.A. Sanders* (eds. C.A. Evans & Sh. Talmon; Leiden, 1997), 393–402. In that article I drew upon findings of A. Geiger, M. Goshen-Gottstein, C. Rabin, I.L. Seeligmann and myself. See also: D. Flusser, "Pharisees, Sadduceans and Essenes in the Peshet of Nahum," in his *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Qumran and Apocalypticism* (ed. S. Ruzer; Jerusalem, 2002), 184–219 at p. 191 [Heb.].

¹⁵ Many of the corrections offered in the *Biblia Hebraica* in its various editions fall into this category. Not a few students in the field in Israel would brand Tur-Sinai's corrections as fantastic. Yet, Seeligmann recognized the value of some of his proposals. He quoted in his classes an instance in Qoh 2:1 and 3; cf. H. Torczyner "Dunkle Bibelstellen," in *Vom Alten Testament: A. Marti... gewidmet* (BZAW 41; ed. K. Budde; Giessen, 1925), 274–280, at pp. 279–280. Indeed, Tur-Sinai's writings should be scrutinized in order to extract from them the best conjectures. See e.g.

perception of phenomena that had occurred in the text. Then, as a projection from those attested phenomena, the critic assumes that a similar incident could have reoccurred in a suspicious passage, even in the absence of textual witnesses to warrant his conjecture.¹⁶

At the same time, students should beware of hypercritical skepticism that invalidates all conjectures, branding them as subjective, in the name of an alleged ideal of objective research.¹⁷ Historical research cannot be objective.¹⁸ But a scholar must try to overcome his own and his denomination's tenets. His resources should not be applied to the defense of the MT, even when he is tempted to peruse the wealth of possibilities supplied by Medieval Jewish or by Modern Semitic linguists.¹⁹ The evidence gathered so far by generations of Biblical philologists submits that the MT, albeit the best textual witness to most Biblical books, underwent not a few

נ"ה טור-סיני, "שיכולי אותיות בנוסח המקרא", בספרו: **הלשון והספר: כך הספר (מהדר' שנייה; ירושלים, תש"ך)**, 149 – 106. A complete list of his writings was published in: *Tur-Sinai Memorium Volume* (ed. Y. Yannai; Jerusalem, 1991), 177–202.

¹⁶ This practice was followed even by a rather conservative scholar such as Shadal (Samuele David Luzzatto, 1800-1865). I pointed out his method in my essay: "Luzzatto as Commentator and Textual Critic: His Commentary to Jeremiah," in *Samuel David Luzzatto: The Bi-Centennial of His Birth* (ed. R. Bonfil et al.; Jerusalem, 2004), קפח-קעז [Heb.].

¹⁷ This direction characterizes the work of M.H. Goshen-Gottstein; cf. his "Hebrew Syntax and the History of the Bible Text," *Textus* 8 (1973): 100–106 (an otherwise brilliant article) at p. 100; idem, "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Rise, Decline, Rebirth," *JBL* 102 (1983): 365–399, esp. pp. 397–398 and n. 117.

¹⁸ B. Albrektson, "Masoretic or Mixed: On Choosing a Textual Basis for a Translation of the Hebrew Bible," *Textus* 23 (2007): 33–49. The article is a response to Emanuel Tov; cf. E. Tov, "The Textual Basis of Modern Translations of the Hebrew Bible: The Argument against Eclecticism," *Textus* 20 (2000): 193–211.

¹⁹ The first direction is represented by D. Barthelemy in the massive work he headed: *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament* (OBO 50; 4 vols.; Fribourg, Suisse-Goettingen, 1982-2005). The second course is usually connected with the name of M. Dahood; cf. e.g. his vast commentary *The Psalms: Introduction and Notes* (AB 16-17A; Garden City, NY, 1965-1970).

corrections and corruptions. No dogmatic position, overt or occult in the name of a pristine revelation or of a modern “community of faith”, can deny this reality.²⁰ Let us recall that in some cases textual conjectures advanced by Biblical scholars were later confirmed by readings in the Qumran manuscripts.²¹

Finally, the critic must not be allured by fashionable novelties. The Biblical manuscripts from Qumran are such an instance. They are certainly worth the labor and toil invested in their decipherment and publication. But once made available, they should be judged for what they are: they submit a wealth of evidence about the scribal practices and the transmission of Biblical books during the Second Commonwealth; as for their single readings, however, one should consider and evaluate them with the usual yardstick of text-criticism—sometimes superior to those contained in the other textual witnesses, sometimes, more often than not, inferior.²²

This orientation towards integrated research is also evident in Seeligmann’s essay on the history of Biblical law.²³ Seeligmann did not deal with comparative study of Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern law. Instead,

²⁰ Criticism of Barthelemy and his school has come from various quarters; cf. B. Albrektson, “Difficilior lectio probabilior: A Rule of Textual Criticism and its Use in Old Testament Studies,” *OTS* 21 (1981): 5–18; P.G. Borbone, “La critica del testo e l’Antico Testamento ebraico: A proposito di un libro recente,” *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 30 (1984): 251–274; B. Chiesa, “Il testo dell’Antico Testamento,” *Henoch* 6 (1984), 313–346, esp. 315–321; J. Barr, (Review of) “Critique textuelle...I,” *JTS* 37 (1983): 445–450.

²¹ For instance, even 1QIsa^a acceptedly a vulgar text, sustained the following proposals: לַפְּנֵי קָדִים : in Isa 11:6 (F. Perles), הַרְאָה in Isa 21:8 (Sh. Krauss), קוֹמֶךָ וּשְׁבַתְךָ in Isa 37:27–28 (J. Wellhausen), יָם (מִי) in Isa 40:12 (B.Duhm).

²² In my view, this principle has not sufficiently been observed by F.M. Cross and his students: Janzen on Jeremiah, McCarter and Ulrich on Samuel, R. Fuller on the Twelve Prophets.

²³ “Zur Terminologie für das Gerichtsverfahren im Wortschatz des biblischen Hebräisch,” in *Hebraische Wortforschung: Fs. W. Baumgartner* (VTSup. 16; ed. B. Hartmann; Leiden, 1967), 251–278; “Lending, Pledge and Interest in Biblical Law and Biblical Thought,” in *Studies in Bible and Ancient Near East Presented to S. E. Loewenstamm* (Jerusalem, 1978), 183–205 [Heb.]. Both studies were republished in German in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 293–317, 319–348.

he emphasized aspects that had been neglected in his times. He assembled evidence from Biblical narrative, prophecy, wisdom, psalmody and Biblical diction in general, in order to reconstruct the practice of law in Ancient Israel and its social context, as against the Torah legislation.²⁴ These incidental, peripheral witnesses could sometimes preserve authentic features, that had disappeared from the Torah, since the latter, being a living law, underwent repeated alterations and restatements. However, in Rabbinic rulings too, Seeligmann found evidence of authentic ancient legal interpretation, and even of very early customs that did not enter the Torah. Furthermore, an original contribution to the understanding of Biblical law were his enquiries into the semantics of terms connected to legal procedures, such as *שופט, העיד, הגיד, ערך משפט, עד, מוכיח*. In the case of *הגיד*, Seeligmann sustained Budde's conjecture, based on the LXX, that Deut 13:10 read *כי הגד תגידנו*.²⁵ These investigations demonstrate the need for philology for the study of Biblical law and its development.

However, most of Seeligmann's attention in the last 25 years of his life was dedicated to Biblical historiography. In order to better assess his contribution, one must recall the dominant trend in Israel by the middle of the last century. An archeological-historical school, mainly inspired by Albright and his students, was prominent in the Israeli academy. Its members, banking on Ancient Near Eastern parallels, usually upheld the reliability of the historical books of the Hebrew Bible and even relied on data supplied by the Book of Chronicles.²⁶ As against them, Seeligmann

²⁴ Cf. R. Yaron, "On Divorce in Old Testament Times," *RIDA*³ 4 (1957): 117-127.

²⁵ Cf. K. Budde, "Dtn 13:10 und was daran hängt," *ZAW* 36 (1916): 187-197. Levinson's valiant defense of the MT is not compelling in my view; see: B.M. Levinson, "'But You Shall Surely Kill Him': The Text-Critical and Neo-Assyrian Evidence for MT Deuteronomy 13:10," *Bundesdokument und Gesetz – Studien zum Deuteronomium* (ed. G. Braulik; Freiburg, 1995), 37-63.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. W.F. Albright, "The Judicial Reform of Jehoshaphat," in *A. Marx Jubilee Volume* (English Section; New York, 1950), 61-82; B. Mazar, "The Cities of the Priests and Levites," *Congress Volume, Oxford 1959* (VTSup 7; Leiden, 1960), 193-205, esp. pp. 196-199; Sh. Yeivin, "Administration," *The World History of the Jewish People, I/5: The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society* (eds. A. Malamat and I.

insisted on the achievements of the European schools: a strict distinction between the various literary types (e.g. story-telling versus history) in the Biblical historical books, a rigorous dating of the sources, especially of the Book of Chronicles, and its implication—the detection of midrashic elements in late Biblical works.²⁷ For years Seeligmann cherished the plan of writing a monograph on historiography.²⁸ This remained unrealized, mainly because

Eph'al; Jerusalem, 1979), 147–171, esp. 164–171. Cf. a rejoinder by I. Kalimi, “The Capture of Jerusalem in the Chronistic History,” *VT* 52 (2002): 66–79.

²⁷ Cf. I.L. Seeligmann, “Anfänge der Midraschexegese in der Chronik,” (1980), German Transl. in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 31–54. Here the author consciously reverted to the positions of L. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt* (Berlin, 1832), 12–36. So too, he duly recognized the contribution of Willi to the subject; cf. Th. Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung* (FRLANT 106; Göttingen, 1972).

²⁸A detailed project, dated 27th January 1975, is extant in Seeligmann’s file in the archive of the Hebrew University. I hereby translate it from the Hebrew:

Phases in the Development of the Historical Thought in the Bible

Introduction: literary criticism, history of traditions, processes of redaction.

I 1. Mythical and historical thought in external sources and their implications for biblical research.

2. The onset of historical thought in popular sayings of tribes and nations.

3. Heroes’ sagas and double causality.

II 4. The rise of the kingdom: its impact on the formation of a national and historical consciousness.

5. Narrative and historiography. Phases of transition from non-reflective to reflective and theological history-writing; (ancient impacts of cult and wisdom; etiology and parenetic elements in ancient historiography).

6. The traditions concerning the Exodus, the conquest of Canaan and the Patriarchs.

7. Cult and historical traditions.

8. Classical prophecy and history (traditions and their assessment).

III 9. Functional historiography.

10. The formation of a Priestly concept of history.

11. Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic historiography (inclusive of the editing of the book of Jeremiah).

12. The Chronistic historiography (imprints of pre-midrashic thought).

13. The character of the historical psalms.

IV 14. Apocalypics and history – the return of a mythical element.

of a sight problem that afflicted him in the last thirteen years of his life. Nevertheless, he succeeded in creating six outstanding articles which partly correspond to some of the sections of the planned monograph. In an article dedicated to Hebrew narrative and Biblical historiography he described the accepted modes of shaping a story in ancient Hebrew story telling and the ways in which the stories were joined and organized in larger historiographic sequences.²⁹ Thus he forged additional criteria to delimit distinct literary units, one from another, and to distinguish between primary and secondary literary elements, either etiological or reflective. Here one can perceive how Seeligmann's text-criticism joined his historico-literary scrutiny: the short pericope in 1 Sam 10:10-13, an etiology of the saying: "Is Saul too among the prophets?", is declared secondary to the sequence, mainly because of its incongruity with the context. At this point, the Septuagint offered a translation of the word *הגבעה* not only in v. 10, but also in v. 13, where MT reads *הבמה*. Thus one faces here the familiar signs of 'repetitive resumption' (*Wiederaufnahme*) which more often than not marks the beginning and end of an interpolation. The story of Saul's anointing is thus restored to its primary proportions: 1 Sam 9:1-10:10a, 14-16; and the etiology is recognized as an intrusive appendix, a fact that has far-reaching consequences for Biblical criticism.

Indeed, in those years, the early sixties, Seeligmann completed his study "The Etiological Elements in Biblical Historiography".³⁰ Starting with a clarification of the term, he discussed it in the framework of the history of traditions and of literature. In addition to the case of 1 Sam 10:10-13, he summoned further cases where etiologies are a secondary accretion to an existing narrative. Moreover, he distinguished between two phases in the use of etiology in Biblical historiography: in the primitive stage, it explains the existence of one object or custom or institution; in a more advanced stage etiological reflection comprehends the whole national existence,

²⁹ "Hebräische Erzählung und biblische Geschichtsschreibung," *ThZ* (Basel) 18 (1962): 305-325; repr. *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 119-136.

³⁰ First published in Hebrew in *Zion* 26 (1960/1): 141-169; German Transl. in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 77-118.

demonstrating how the promises to the patriarchs or the prophetic oracles were fulfilled in the history of Israel.

Another article written in those years deals with “Human Valor and Divine Help – The Double Causality in Biblical Historical Thought”.³¹ This article was prompted by Seeligmann's confrontation with Yehezkel Kaufmann who considered the ‘double causality’ to be concurrently present in all stages of history writing, in the Ancient Near East, Israel and Greece.³² In contrast, Seeligmann pointed out therein how these two concepts concerning deliverance grew, separately at first, each in its own *Sitz im Leben*, how they competed with one another, and how they were combined in the various phases of composition or redaction. In this context too Seeligmann demonstrated his philological ability. He noted that not a few instances in the Hebrew Bible stand to prove that תְּשׁוּעָה, the redemptive intervention, is the attribute of a גִּבּוֹר a hero, a valiant man. Indeed, the גִּבּוֹר occurs twice in prophetic speeches (Jer 14:9; Zeph 3:17) in conjunction with the verb הוֹשִׁיעַ. And the intervention to rescue molested girls at the well (Exod 2:17) or a betrothed maiden about to be raped (Deut 22:27) is again described with the same verb. Thus Seeligmann inferred that in two episodes attributed to David's warriors (גִּבּוֹרִים, 2 Sam 23:3-10,11-12) when one of them intervened in a brawl against the Philistines, the text at first related how the warrior was the one who made a deliverance (תְּשׁוּעָה). Here Seeligmann insisted that the entire “inner dynamic” is channeled to extol the valor of this single warrior; no room was left for divine intervention. Only a late scribe introduced into these verses (vs. 10,12) the name of the Lord.

Seeligmann presented this interpretation as a free conjecture with no support from any textual evidence. Later findings have sustained his hypothesis. In 1 Sam 11:9 Saul promises the messengers of Jabesh a deliverance (תְּשׁוּעָה) on the morrow. A scroll from Qumran, 4Q51, usually

³¹ “Menschliches Heldentum und göttliche Hilfe” – Die doppelte Kausalität im alttestamentliche Geschichtsdenken,” *ThZ* (Basel) 19 (1963): 385–411; repr. in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 137–159.

³² Y. Kaufmann, *The Book of Judges, Commented* (Jerusalem, 1962), 27–30 [Heb.].

designated as 4QSam^a, reads at this point “deliverance from the Lord” (מִיְהוָה הַתְּשׁוּעָה).³³ A late scribe, not satisfied with Saul’s declaration: “For this day the Lord has done a deliverance to Israel (v. 13, below); piously felt the need to emphasize God’s presence and intervention at every step.³⁴ Thus, the reworked text of 1 Sam 11:9 confirms the audacious textual conjecture on 2 Sam 23:10,12.

An additional article endeavors to establish the contributions of the various social and professional circles—folk-bards, court-scribes, priests, prophets and psalmists—to the creation of Israelite historiography.³⁵ The article also characterizes the late reflective stage of Biblical historiography by describing the dominant schools: the Deuteronomistic, the Chronistic and the recent historical psalms. The hallmark of these schools is their tendency to impress on the events one dominant conception. Later on, in a comprehensive methodical study, Seeligmann describes how sporadic data about the settlement in Canaan, the growth of the Davidic dynasty, the building of the Temple and the secession of the Northern tribes, transmitted at first in ancient sources, were later re-elaborated by the Biblical historiography that transformed them into comprehensive conceptions.³⁶ Examples are summoned from the course of events of other nations in order to sustain his arguments.

In one of his last essays in this field, Seeligmann discussed the historical consciousness in ancient Israel from three points of view: the semantics of the root יָדַע, a central term in this realm; epistemology in Biblical religious thought; and the shift from an early concept of seeing (the face of) the Lord to the sight i.e. the experience of his deeds—which stands at the basis of the

³³ F.M. Cross (ed.), *DJD XVII, Qumran Cave 4. XII: 1-2 Samuel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 67.

³⁴ Not surprisingly, the editors of this scroll attribute the addition of the Lord’s name to a kind of inadvertence: “an anticipation of יהוה תְּשׁוּעָה in v 13 below.” (ibidem, p. 68).

³⁵ “Kultradition und Geschichtsschreibung in der hebräischen Bibel,” *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 161–184.

³⁶ “Von historischer Wirklichkeit zu historiosophischer Konzeption in der hebräischen Bibel,” *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 185–232.

historical orientation of the Biblical religion.³⁷ Here one encounters the possibility of a fertile comparison between Biblical thought and modern philosophical methods, and, in addition, a window to a phenomenological description of Israel's religious thought. In sum, it appears that Seeligmann's works in the realm of historiography, more than characterizing the various schools extant in Ancient Israel, tend to describe Biblical historical thought in a dynamic way—from the pre-reflective beginnings to the development of the historical thought present in the major compositions.

It is possible to proceed and enumerate Seeligmann's contributions in additional fields, such as the study of prophecy, of psalmody and of wisdom literature.³⁸ But I believe that what has been outlined above gives a clear idea of the significance of this teacher to the establishment of Biblical criticism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Without detracting from the merits of his predecessors and contemporaries, one can state with confidence that what made Seeligmann so outstanding was his philology. Philology—not in the sense that has become common in English speaking countries, that of historical and comparative linguistics; rather philology in its original meaning, still extant in the European continental countries: the discipline that deals with the editing of ancient texts and their interpretation, as much as possible according to their first meaning.

³⁷ "Erkenntnis Gottes und historisches Bewusstsein im alten Israel," *Beitraege zur alttestamentlichen Theologie – Fs W. Zimmerli* (ed. H. Donner; Goettingen, 1977), 414–445; Repr. in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 233–263.

³⁸ "Zur Geschichte und zum Charakter der Prophetie in Israel," *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 55–75; "Die Auffassung der Prophetie in der deuteronomistischen und chronistischen Geschichtsschreibung (mit einem Exkurs über das Buch Jeremia)," *Congress Volume Goettingen 1977* (VTSup 29; ed. J.A. Emerton et al.; Leiden, 1978), 254–284; repr. in: *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 265–292; "A Psalm from Pre-Regal Times," *VT* 14 (1964): 75–92; repr. in *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 349–364; "Psalm 47," *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n.1), 365–379. Significant notes on Biblical Wisdom can be found in "Midraschexegese" (supra, n. 4).

Seeligmann, in his work, teaching and writing, struggled to realize this program.³⁹

³⁹ Suggestions by Dr. Ronnie Goldstein helped to improve the present essay. Ms. Danielle Marx, Esq. and Dr. Michael Segal have gently corrected the style. Responsibility for the remaining faults and those later introduced rests with the author. Previous appraisals of Seeligmann and his work are the following: A. Rofé, "Isac Leo Seeligmann - Teacher and Scholar," in *Isac Leo Seeligmann Volume* (supra, n. 1), 1:1-9 [Heb.]; R. Hanhart, "Introduction" to: I.L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (ed. R. Hanhart and H. Spieckermann; Tübingen, 2004), 3-15; R. Smend, "Begegnung mit Isac Leo Seeligmann," in *Gesammelte Studien* (supra, n. 1), 469-492.