

The root נאף in the Hebrew Bible in relation to זנה

Rdzeń נאף w Biblii hebrajskiej w relacji do זנה

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Summary

This article analyses all passages in the Hebrew Bible where the root נאף is used in order to establish its exact meaning, in particular its relationship to the root זנה. In a literal sense, their meanings are indiscriminately distinct. The root נאף refers to marital infidelity, to adultery, which is nowhere described with the root זנה. Although figuratively the two roots are used side by side (including within parallelisms), there is no indication of their source domains overlapping. In the oldest passages where they appear next to each other in a figurative sense, i.e. in Hos, a clear distinction is made between their source domains. In the literature, therefore, it is erroneously assumed that the meaning of זנה encompasses that of adultery, believed to be an appropriate metaphor for the people's religious or cultic infidelity to YHWH.

Streszczenie

W artykule poddano analizie wszystkie miejsca w Biblii Hebrajskiej, w których posłużono się rdzeniem נאף, by ustalić jego ściśle znaczenie, w szczególności relacji do rdzenia זנה. W sensie dosłownym ich znaczenia

¹ Dr hab. Jakub Ślawik, Faculty of Theology, Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw. This article is based on research conducted as part of research projects funded by the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw from 2021 to 2022.

są bez wyjątku odrębne. זנה odnosi się do łamania wierności małżeńskiej, cudzołóstwa, które nigdzie nie zostało opisane rdzeniem זנה. Choć oba rdzenie zostały użyte w sensie przeniśnym obok siebie (także w ramach paralelizmów), to nic nie wskazuje na to, by ich domeny źródłowe się ze sobą pokrywały. W najstarszych miejscach, gdzie pojawiają się one koło siebie w znaczeniu metaforycznym, tj. w Oz, wyraźnie rozróżnia się ich domeny źródłowe. W literaturze przedmiotu zatem błędnie przyjmuje się, że זנה obejmuje swoim znaczeniem cudzołóstwo, mające być właściwą metaforą religijnej czy kultowej niewierności ludu wobec JHWH.

1. Introduction

In the Hebrew Bible the both roots appear surprisingly often: זנה 34 times (Freedman, Willoughby 1986, 124) and זנה as many as 134 times (Kühlewein 1984a, 518). In spite of this, apart from their dedicated entries in dictionaries for the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (and New Testament) they have very rarely been given any particular attention. One exception is the book by Irene E. Riegner (Rieger 2009): *Vanishing Hebrew Harlot: The Adventures of the Hebrew Stem ZNH*. Their meanings and contexts are briefly discussed in the elaborations on individual texts of the Hebrew Bible and, in the case of זנה, in the discussion around the practice of sacred prostitution in ancient Israel (and the ancient Near East).² The dispute over the existence of sacred prostitution is not the subject of this paper, there is no doubt however that the sacred prostitution theory can no longer serve as the premise in any analyses of Hebrew Bible texts.³

² Cf. e.g. Slawik 2011, including the literature cited there as well as Day 2000; Eynde 2001; Adams 2008; Cook 2015; Bird 2019. Obviously, the literature relating to this dispute is much more extensive but only occasionally does it include deliberations on the meaning of the words that form the subject of this article.

³ Cf. Slawik 2011, 64. This is also confirmed by Lipinski 2013, 9 and fn. 2, and this despite the fact that, in his view, sacred prostitution did exist in some parts of the Middle East and the Phoenician colonies on the western shores of the Mediterranean.

Biblical Hebrew dictionaries include similar definitions of the meanings of both roots, differing primarily in the assessments of how far they are used figuratively. *HAHAT* strongly emphasises both literal and figurative meanings. The root *זנה* in its literal sense is always associated with prostitution, and in a figurative sense it refers to turning away from God, idolatry and relations with foreign peoples. The meaning of *תְּזַנֶּה* used only in *Ezk* is exclusively figurative. Similarly, while in the Hebrew Bible the verb *נָאָף* occurs in both a literal and figurative sense, but its two, very rare noun derivatives (*נְאֻפִים/נְאֻפִים* and *נְאֻפִים*) were used only in a figurative sense.

In *HAL*, a figurative meaning *נָאָף* (“to participate in idolatry”) is attributed only to *Jer* 3:9. In contrast, the literal meaning of *זנה* is defined somewhat more broadly: firstly, “to have dealings with an other man” or “to have amorous relations”, “to have intercourse as a prostitute” (including “to engage in sacred prostitution” – *Hos* 4:13-14). In addition, in relation to God, it means “to be unfaithful” and also “for fornication to turn aside from”, which amounts to a figurative use. A separate entry is devoted to the noun (*ptp.*) *זָנָה/זָנָה*, where literal and figurative meanings are also distinguished, similarly in the case of *זָנָה* meaning “fornication” and “unfaithfulness” to God. Again, *זָנָה* means “fornication” as the state or action of a prostitute, with no figurative meaning (similarly *תְּזַנֶּה*).⁴

For statistical reasons, theological dictionaries to the Old Testament pay much more attention to *זנה*. According to J. Kühlewein (Kühlewein 1984a, 518-520), the verb originally referred to any legally unregulated sexual intercourse between a woman and a man (one time the subject is a man – *Nu* 25:1). There is no synonym for it. In a theological context, it means turning away from YHWH and towards other gods.

S. Erlandsson (Erlandsson 1977, 612-619) believes that *זנה* is a word for the activity of a prostitute, and that the term originally meant a sexual relationship that did not take place within a (marriage) covenant.

⁴ Similar information, but briefly summarised, can be found in *HAW*.

It can also mean adultery, in which case it is synonymous with נאף. In most places in the Hebrew Bible, זנה has a figurative meaning, referring to Israel's infidelity to YHWH and worship of other gods. Sometimes the two meanings converge when departure from YHWH is combined with Canaanite sacred prostitution. The subject was always a woman (Nu 25:1 is no exception, as the subject are the people being in relationship to YHWH). In the narrative texts, prostituted women are treated neutrally. The issue was strictly regulated in law. In the case of intercourse between single people, it was obligatory to marry the woman combined with the prohibition of divorce (Dt 22:28-29), and intercourse with a married woman could be punished by death (Dt 22:22-27). A child born as a result of adultery could not belong to the congregation of YHWH (Dt 23:3).⁵ A priest was not allowed to marry a prostitute (Lv 21:7-14). The prophets condemn any kind of prostitution (e.g. Am 2:7;⁶ Jer 5:7). Any sign of religious syncretism is nothing less than harlotry. In addition, the root זנה was also applied to commercial dealings that led to relations with worshippers of foreign gods (Mi 1:7; Is 23:16-17).

R. Jost (Jost 2017) is particularly interested in the distinction between male and female roles. In the law, זונה is the subject of only a few regulations (Lv 19:29; 21:14). Prostitution may have had economic reasons (Gn 38:17; Pr 6:26). The root זנה is used for the negative judgment of turning away from YHWH, and the accusation of harlotry includes turning to other deities (e.g. Hos 3:1), statues of stone and wood (Jer 3:8-9; 13:27), unacceptable cultic practices (Hos 2:15), but also political murder (Hos 1:4) or lawlessness in society (Is 1:21; Jer 9:1-2). The verses cited in this study not only use the root זנה, but also נאף (Hos 3:1; 2:15; Jer 9:1-2). At times, the author seems to equate their meanings.

⁵ The dictionary clearly references Bible verses where the term in question is not used. Although extramarital intercourse remains the subject, it is not described as זנה in Dt 22:22-29. And in Dt 23:3 reference is made to זנוה, bastard (cf. *HAHAT*), which in G is rendered as: ἐκ πόρνης, i.e. "from/of a prostitute".

⁶ The word used here is not זנה but זנוה.

TWAT includes a separate article on זָנָה (Freedman, Willoughby 1986, 123-129). This term was shaped by the priestly traditions, as, apart from the Decalogue, it appears four times in legal texts in Lv 20:10. While in the Decalogue the commandment is formulated in very general terms, it is clear from Lv that a man commits adultery when he has intercourse with another man's wife, whereby it does not matter whether he himself is married or not. A wife who cheats on her husband commits adultery. The punishment for both was to be death. An adulterous man is not considered to be acting against his own wife, which means that the prohibition was about the social status and property of a husband rather than morals. Hence, it is a different situation than the one in which a man has intercourse with an unmarried woman. The Decalogue and Lv 20 depict adultery as a grave offence. Adultery (זָנָה) is distinct from prostitution or harlotry (זִנָּה; cf. Ezk 16:31b-34 or Pr 6:20-35), which are paid sexual favours. However, the two terms are not mutually exclusive (cf. Jer 5:7-8; Hos 4:13-14). Prophecy involves a free adaptation of the commandment from the Decalogue, which is most clearly seen in Hos 4:2 and Jer 7:9-10⁷. Perhaps זָנָה was linked to covenant theology (Jer 9:1-2; 29:23; Hos 7:1b [?].4; Mal 3:5; Ps 50:18; Jb 24:14-15), so that the consequence of adultery is a breach of covenant. Since in prophecy the people's relationship with YHWH is described as a marriage, adultery can also mean infidelity to God (Jer 5:7-8; 13:27; 23:9-14). On three occasions Israel's adultery towards YHWH is linked to child sacrifice (Is 57:1-6, especially vv.3-5; Ezk 16:35-43 and 23:43-49, it is possible however that these were children conceived as part of sacred prostitution). In descriptions of adulterous infidelity to God זָנָה blends semantically with זִנָּה. In G זָנָה is generally translated as μοιχεύω, so it retains the semantic distinction from זִנָּה (πορνεύω).

⁷ Despite some differences, they show far-reaching similarities – for details cf. Freedman-Willoughby 1986, 126.

Although in the case of the verb *נאף* no distinction was noted between the meaning of *q.* and *pi.*, it was noticed by A. Meinhold in his commentary on Mal 3:5 (Meinhold 2006, 277-278⁸): *q.* refers to a specific case of adultery (either in a literal or figurative sense, e.g. Hos 4:2), while *pi.* describes a custom, a general attitude (e.g. Hos 3:1).

The question of adultery is also addressed by O. Dyma (2010). It is a social offence. Adultery also includes having intercourse with an engaged woman (Dt 22:23; cf. Hammurabi Code § 130). According to Lv 20:10; Dt 22:22-24, the punishment for adultery is death, although there are doubts as to whether it was actually enforced as in the case of the death penalty it was necessary to present the testimony of two witnesses (cf. Lv 35:30; Dt 17:6). Pr 6:35 suggests that paying compensation was quite common. The laws of the ancient Middle East are somewhat more lenient – adultery may have been punishable by death, but the spouse could apply the law of clemency to both the adulterer and the adulteress (Code of Hammurabi § 129; Middle Assyrian Laws § 12-16; Hittite Laws § 197-198).

The monograph by I. Riegner (2009), as the title of the book indicates, looks at the root *ננה*. She draws a sharp distinction between prostitution and adultery. The latter was a grave crime severely punishable and disruptive to the social fabric, while the former was a well-known practice that was not seen as problematic and was not punishable in any of the Middle Eastern legal codes. It could not serve as a metaphor for the religious defection of the Israelites, hence, in most Old Testament texts, *ננה* must literally mean “participate in non-Yahwist religious practices” or, less frequently, “prostitute yourself / be promiscuous” (e.g. Gn 34:31; 38:15.24; Jgs 16:1; Dt 22:21). *ננה* is the innkeeper (like Rahab in Jgs 2 and 6). Inns were also brothels where women selling alcohol would pick up customers and provide sexual services. In fact, this root referred to the social category of free women outside the control and care of

⁸ Citing Jenni 2000.

a *patriarchally organised* society, i.e. not “daughters” or “wives” of men (1Ki 3:16; Am 7:17⁹), and thus open to unregulated sexual relations. The literal meaning “participate in non-Yahwist religious practices” was to be linked by the prophets to adultery (נאף) as a metaphor, although previously זנה had nothing to do with adultery.

It is important to also mention the article by K. Adams (Adams 2008) on the question of metaphor in the context of sacred prostitution. A metaphor is not based on similarity, but is a juxtaposition of two fundamentally dissimilar things, which uses an association generally known by the intended (implicit) audience. Prostitution and adultery are two completely different phenomena. Prostitution is the selling of sexual services, while adultery is a serious crime ruining the authority of a husband. Because marriage is a metaphor for covenant, adultery is a fitting metaphor for apostasy. However, Hosea primarily used the root זנה as a metaphor for adultery, and the rhetorical purpose was to show the shame and humiliation of the male side. נאף is the vehicle/figure (source domain) of the metaphor on the first level, and זנה on the second. While K. Adams is certainly right that the prostitution metaphor was intended to strongly brand the apostasy emotionally – quite apart from the fact that the meaning of זנה is not limited to paid prostitution – one can have doubts about the two levels of metaphor, as prostitution as a metaphor has been used incomparably more often, and sometimes with no connection נאף.

The semantic difference between זנה and נאף is frequently overlooked. Not just in dictionaries but also in exegetic literature, the meanings of the two roots tend to be “confused”.¹⁰ Freedman, Willoughby 1986 is an exception but simultaneously assumes that in the case of a figurative meaning the two words become synonymous. On the other hand, some

⁹ In the latter case, they were forced to support themselves through prostitution – cf. Riegner 2009, 194.

¹⁰ E.g. Chrostowski 1991, 74-85, who, with regard to the metaphors in Ezk, speaks almost exclusively of adultery; Jasiński 2018, 14-15; Jeremias 2019, 161.174-176.

more recent studies argue, not unreasonably, for an unambiguous distinction between prostitution and adultery, without, however, addressing the meaning of the two roots in more detail.¹¹ This raises the question of whether, and to what extent, the difference in meaning between זָנָה and זָנָה is actually blurred and can be overlooked. Whether or to what extent did they retain a distinct meaning (in a figurative sense) in relation to Israel's infidelity to YHWH? The question becomes all the more interesting as in G it is exclusively the root זָנָה that is always translated as $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\omega$, $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\acute{\alpha}\omega$, $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\acute{\epsilon}\iota\alpha$, $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\omicron\varsigma$, $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\varsigma$.¹²

For the purpose of this study, I am interested in the זָנָה root, in particular the biblical texts in which the two roots זָנָה and זָנָה are directly adjacent to each other.

2. זָנָה in the literal sense

Most of the Old Testament verses where זָנָה occurs in the literal sense are prohibitions that had been incorporated into the laws. Little follows from the Decalogue prohibition: "Don't commit adultery" (Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18), since such a short phrase does not allow us to determine its meaning.¹³ A more precise sense of the prohibition can be derived from **Lv 20:10**:

¹¹ Riegner 2009 is to some extent an exception, but in my view it is not possible to claim that the literal meaning of זָנָה was "to participate in non-Yahwist religious practices" (there is no room for a critique of her concept here though, but see below).

¹² $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\acute{\alpha}\omega$ is only absent in Jer 23:10, but this is because the first part of the verse, where the verb זָנָה appears, is missing in G altogether. In G the word still occurs in writings that are not present in the Hebrew Bible: Sir 23:23; 25:2 (the Hebrew text of these Sir verses is unknown – cf. Beentjes 2006 [especially 13-19 – overview]); Wisd of Sol 3:16; 14:26; PsSol 8:10 and Pr 18:22 (an addition in G which has no equivalent in the Hebrew text; cf. also *BHQ* [commentary] or Plöger 1984, 209).

¹³ Such a short form is presumably the result of the development of this and similar commandments, their generalisation, and not the most original form of the commandments (cf. Boecker 1989, 218; Otto 2012, 690-692.746). They cannot serve judicial proceedings, as they do not contain sanctions or specify the circumstances of an offence. They are thus not so much a law as an ethos, an ethical appeal aimed at general prevention (cf. Otto 2012, 689-692 and 745-746).

If a man commits adultery with another man's wife [if a man commits adultery with the wife of his fellow man],¹⁴ must be put to death: both the adulterer and the adulteress.¹⁵

נָאֵן refers here to a man having intercourse with the wife of another, but the punishment also applies to the woman committing adultery.¹⁶ The punishment is referred to in sg., differently than in the following verses, which gives reason to suspect that the punishment for the adulterous woman is a secondary expansion, which may be supported by the lack of interest in her consent to intercourse and her husband's right to pardon her.¹⁷ The root נָאֵן does not appear again in the priestly accounts, so it is reasonable to assume that the prohibition comes from the Decalogue (according to Gerstenberger 1993, 269), especially as it is placed immediately after the prohibition of maligning one's parents in v.9 (cf. the commandments in Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16; cf. furthermore Lv 20:9). A similar prohibition, but worded differently, is found in Lv 18:20, where, however, there is no criminal sanction. Whether the death penalty was actually enforced (in the post-exilic community; cf. Gerstenberger 1993, 269), remains a matter of dispute. The passive wording of the sentence in Lv 20, its standard character, the lack of information about the judicial instance that was to decide on the punishment, not to

¹⁴ The repetition of a similar phrase in TM appears to be *dtg* (*homoioteleuton*), as indicated by the minuscule manuscripts of G. However, many testimonies know a longer reading, "adding" a conjunct (Cf. *BHS*; Hieke 2014, 771-772), which may indicate that the extended variant arose early in the transmission. In Gerstenberger 1993, 261,264, the words are placed in brackets, recognising them as an addition made by the editor. This may be an emphatic repetition or an editorial clarification – the editor wishes to indicate that the other man is the fellow man of the adulterer (Hieke 2014, 793).

¹⁵ In G*, S, V is translated *pl.* as in vv. 11-13 (cf. *BHS*), in which, however, נָאֵן is given explicitly. In the Hebrew text the verb sg. can, as it were, separately refer to male and female. Gerstenberger 1993, 264, supposes that the *pl.* comes from the editor.

¹⁶ According to Gerstenberger 1993, 269, the punishment of the woman suggests her voluntary participation.

¹⁷ As pointed out by Hieke 2014, 794, when comparing to the Code of Hammurabi § 129, which included the right of the husband of an adulteress to decide whether or not she should be left alive (*TUATI*, 58).

mention the possible problematic nature of the need for two witnesses of guilt in the case of the death penalty (if one considers Dt 17:6), and a comparison with analogous codes of the ancient Middle East, which provide for different punishments for different sexual offences, make one see the threat of death as a sharply emphasised *parenthesis* rather than a legal provision (cf. Hieke 2014, 773.777-779). It also makes clear that adultery was not a private matter, but a threat to social cohesion (cf. Hieke 2014, 793).

A similar provision (without האיש) is found in Dt 22:22, according to which the death penalty also extends to an adulterous woman, but only if caught *in flagranti* (*ptp.*). Hos 2:4(-5) and Jer 3:8 suggest that the consequence of adultery may have been divorce.¹⁸ Once again, we are faced with a law that only seems to be casuistic. In fact, it is a prohibition linked to Dt 5:18 (cf. Otto 2016, 1715-1718). Do the subsequent verses of Dt 22:23-27 refer to a different type of marriage, i.e. an inchoate marriage, or are they an interpretation of the general rule in v.22a? In the first case, we would not be sure whether the concept of adultery would also include intercourse with an inchoately married woman. Formally, the initial ו (in v.23, as in v.22) would indicate a new regulation in which a special case is to be taken into account, i.e. the ו introducing vv.25-27.¹⁹ However, a sharp distinction between an inchoate marriage and a full, consummated marriage is questionable. Vv.23-27 may be an interpretation of v.22a, distinguishing adultery from rape, with the criterion being the place where the intercourse took place. In the city both are guilty, while outside the city (בשדה) the woman is not guilty, since it is assumed that she was unable to defend herself.²⁰

¹⁸ Cf. also above. Although the death penalty could of course be applied and is also present in certain cases in Middle Assyrian Law § 12-16 (cf. Otto 2016, 1721-1722; Lipiński 2009, 177-179), it was not the only possible punishment.

¹⁹ Observed already in the Book of the Covenant – cf. Crüsemann 1997, 171; Noth 1978, 143; Childs. 1974, 468.

²⁰ Vv. 23-27 may indicate a tendency to make adultery subject to legal judgment,

The traditions behind the current form of the Decalogue(s) in Ex 20 and Dt 5²¹ are referred to in Hos 4:2; Jer 7:9; Ps 50:(18); Pr 6:32(-35); Jb 24,(14-)15; Mal 3:5 and perhaps Pr 30:20. In **Hos 4:1-3**, three of the five transgressions (v.2), i.e. murder, stealing (kidnapping)²² and adultery, overlap terminologically with the Decalogue. One could add to these also perjury (אָלֵה),²³ which can be associated with Ex 20:7, as it is sometimes tied with the misuse of the name YHWH (cf. 1 Ki 8:31-32; cf. Wolff 1961, 84; Rudolph 1966, 100; Jeremias 1983, 61-62). Related to it is deception (כֹּחֵשׁ). All these transgressions stem from a lack of “knowledge of God in the land” (v.1b). In Jeremiah’s so-called temple speech in **Jer 7:1-15**, the criticism of the Judeans covers the same three crimes, i.e. theft, murder and adultery (v.9, inf. abs. is used, the same as in Hos 4:2), but in a different order. In addition, swearing falsely (cf. Jer 4:2; 5:2) is reminiscent of the two initial accusations of perjury and deceit in Hos 4:2, differing from the Decalogue: “do not speak against your fellow man as a false witness.”²⁴ Further offences are of a religious

but in fact we are dealing with *parenesis* rather than law. Cf. Otto 2016, 1718-1723 (it also includes a detailed analysis of the elaborate concentric structure of these verses and the Middle Eastern parallels).

²¹ Cf. above and Lemański 2009, 417-418. Ex 20 is usually regarded as a literarily younger account of the Decalogue than Dt 5, from where it is literarily supposed to have originated (e.g. see Dohmen 2012, 91.101). Such a consensus is challenged by Otto 2012, 674-678,689-704, who attempts to reconstruct the origin of the Decalogue as composed of smaller sets and supplemented by further elements. Ultimately, Dt 5 is a post-exilic interpretation of the Sinai Decalogue from Ex 20:1-17. At the very least, the wording of Hos 4 and Jer 7 precedes the familiar shape of the Decalogue in Ex 20 and Dt 5.

²² For the purposes of this paper, I do not analyse if in the referenced texts נָבַע was used in the narrower sense of abducting people or in the broader sense of stealing in general.

²³ Cf. 10:4, where the verb is further specified by אָוָה; Ps 10:7; Ezk 17:16.18-19. For its significance, cf. Keller 1984, 149-152.

²⁴ Ex 20:16 [עֵד שֶׁקֶר]; Dt 5:20 [עֵד שֶׁוֹאֵר] indicate more precisely that this refers to bearing false witness before the court (cf. Boecker 1989, 219; Otto 2012, 750). The expressions used in both versions of the Decalogue are isolated in the Hebrew Bible and summarise Ex 23:1(-3.6-8) (to read more extensively on this, cf. Otto 2012). According

or cultic nature (incense offerings to Baal and following “other gods”), the wording of the latter part of the verse suggests a Jeremianic-Deuteronomistic expansion.²⁵ The first part of v.9 is based on the tradition attested in the Decalogue (cf. Schmidt 2008, 178 and fn. 26). Thus it is this tradition that underlies the prophetic criticism, but not in the literary form known from the Decalogue, if only because they were arranged in a different order (cf. above and Jeremias 1983, 62 fn. 4).

In the late, certainly post-exilic **Ps 50**,²⁶ God (in 1st person) accuses the wicked (vv.16-21; cf. Hossfel (Zenger) 1993, 308-309; Böhler 2021, 909-911) of disregarding God’s laws, i.e. fraternising with people²⁷ who commit theft and adultery (v.18). The next two verses criticize slanderous speech, which may allude to the prohibition of false witness before the court in Ex 20:16; Dt 5:20, especially since v.20 seems to presume participation in a judicial assembly (“you sit”; cf. Ps. 119:23).²⁸ Even if the significance of vv.19-20 is broader than the Decalogue prohibition, referring to publicly accusing, deceiving and slandering one’s fellow man, especially members of one’s own family, it does not change the fact that

to Lundbom 1999, 322.465, “lie” in Jer 7:9 is a term for Baal (3:32; 5:2; 8:8; 13:25; 20:6), which is supposed to be indicated by the determination (article). However, 5:2 makes it clear that such an interpretation is impossible.

²⁵ Cf. burning incense offerings to Baal in Jer 11:13.17; 33:29 (cf. also 2Ki 23:5); following foreign gods in Dt 6:14; 8:19; 11:28; 13:3 etc. (cf. also Otto 2012, 815-816); the subordinate phrase: “which you have not known” in Dt 11:28; 13:3.4; cf. also Jer 19:4; 44:3).

²⁶ For the dating and possible cultic framework cf. Hossfel (Zenger) 1993, 309-310; and also Böhler 2021, 911.

²⁷ In TM *impf. cons.* q. of the verb רצה (“you like”) was read in G, S, T as רץ, “you run with him” (cf. BHS; HAHAT). Since an analogous use of the verb רצה with the preposition אִתּוֹ is attested in Jb 34:9, the TM seems to be the correct and completely convincing reading (cf. Hossfel [Zenger] 1993, 312). According to Böhler 2021, 908, these may be two old competing versions, of which TM appears to be the later.

²⁸ Cf. Hossfel (Zenger) 1993, 315; Böhler 2021, 917-918. The suggestion in BHS or the emendation in Gunkel 1926, 220; Kraus 1960, 371; Łach 1990, 269, to read “disgrace”, i.e., “that which is disgraceful” (in Łach: “disgusting”), has no basis in the text (which also applies to the emendation proposed in Weiser 1987, 265).

the accusation of the addressee is based on the tradition known from the three prohibitions of the Decalogue.²⁹ The psalm takes up the prophetic criticism of Hos 4:2; Jer 7:9 (cf. Kraus 1960, 380).

A similar list of iniquities can also be found in the very late text of **Jb 24:14-16**.³⁰ In this passage, the adulterer is mentioned alongside the murderer and the thief, who are active by day (the murderer) and by night (the thief and the adulterer are united by covert activity). The juxtaposition of the three iniquities: רצח, גנב and נאף, is again linked to the Decalogue tradition.³¹

The disputation in **Mal 2:17-3:5**³² has a bracket-like structure: 2:17(b) along with 3:5 enclose a middle section³³. The prophet is arguing with his addressees about harassing God (2:17a) by accusing God of not caring about righteousness in the world, completely ignoring evil (along with an ironic question about “the God of law [הֵי־אֱלֹהֵי־צֶדֶק]”; cf. Reventlow 1993, 151³⁴). In response, God announces his swift arrival before the court

²⁹ The connection to the Decalogue is widely recognized: Kraus 1960, 379-380; Craigie 1983; Hossfel (Zenger) 1993, 308.315; Böhler 2021, 917.

³⁰ Jb 23-24 is an extended and non-uniform literary speech of Job from the so-called third cycle (chapters 22-31). The discussion is based on Slawik 2010a, 366-367.391-396.654-666. It is irrelevant to the issue at hand that 24:18-24 are most likely a secondary expansion. Cf. also the literature cited therein.

³¹ Among recent studies cf. Witte 2021, 382.

³² Mal consists of six disputations (1:2-5; 1:6-2:9; 2:10-16; 2:17-3:5; 3:6-12; 3:13-21), plus the heading 1:1 and two endings 3:22 and 3:24-25 – Cf. Rudolph 1976, 250; Reventlow 1993, 151; Meinhold 2006, XI-XVI.

³³ 2:17 and 3:5 form a thematic whole, and 3:1b-4 are probably a secondary expansion. The original text would then include also 3:1a, i.e. the prediction of the arrival of a messenger to prepare the upcoming judgment of God (cf. Is 40:3) – see especially Meinhold 2006, 242-246; the cautious Reventlow 1993, 151.

³⁴ It shows how much the issues of social injustice and the lack of any effective response from God had exacerbated – cf. Meinhold 2006, 252-253.

(הַמְשַׁפֵּט)³⁵ to be a witness and judge³⁶ against evildoers (3:5): sorcerers,³⁷ adulterers (פְּנִיּוֹת *ptp. pi.*; the issue of marital fidelity is central in Mal 2:14-16) and those who swear falsely (as in Jer 7:9), as well as oppressors of hired workers or day labourers,³⁸ widows, half-orphans (i.e., the fatherless) and sojourners (in the locality). Such wicked people do not consider God's will and God's law at all ("they do not fear"; cf., among others, Meinhold 2006, 285). Again, criticism of the people's conduct is based on the Decalogue tradition and criticism from the earlier prophets (cf. above and Reventlow 1993, 153, or Meinhold 2006, 279).

In Pr the root פָּנִי appears twice. The admonition in **Pr 6:20-35** warns against the evil,³⁹ strange woman (v.24-35),⁴⁰ especially another man's wife (v.26b.29a.32a) and the dire consequences of adultery (v.32), incomparable to the cost of an intimate encounter with a prostitute (זוֹנָה; antithetical parallelism in v.26).

³⁵ For the meaning of this expression cf. Meinhold 2006, 275.

³⁶ In ancient Israel, the judiciary knew no distinction between roles; the same person could perform different functions. God, who testifies before the court against evildoers, could also be a judge at the same time (cf. e.g. Mi 1:2+6-7; cf. Meinhold 2006, 275-276; also Reventlow 1993, 153; Boecker 1970, 13; Leeuwen 1984, 214 and 216).

³⁷ In G it was translated in *fem.*, thinking of women (cf. Rudolph 1976, 277). פְּנִיּוֹת *ptp. pi.* is a term for various practices of magic or divination (cf. Dt 18:10-11; according to Ex 22:17 punishable by death) – cf. Meinhold 2006, 277.

³⁸ In TM "oppressors of worker's wages". According to *BHS*, "wages" should be deleted. Since in the other cases persons are mentioned, it appears that we are dealing with *dtg* (cf. also Peter 1968, 492), even if the expression is known from Dt 18:15 (cf. Meinhold 2006, 242). Since the non-personal complement is well attested, this would have to be a very early distortion of the text. TM was translated in Rudolph 1976, 276; Reventlow 1993, 150. "Payment" or "remuneration" suggests frequent misuse (cf. Dt 24:15; Jer 22:13; Jb 7:2b) – cf. Meinhold 2006, 279-280.

³⁹ Even though the phrase "evil woman" is unique in Pr (cf. Sæbø 2012, 106), TM should not be emended (cf. *BHS*, *BHQ* and Schipper 2018, 403).

⁴⁰ The pericope is highly elaborate – cf. Sæbø 2012, 109; Schipper 2018, 408.

For the woman,⁴¹ a prostitute is only a round bread,
but a married woman hunts down a precious⁴² life.

The adulterer puts his own life on the line (vv.26b.32b), no compensation may be accepted (vv.33-35). Adultery is thus a testimony to the lack of sense, of reason (v.32a; נאִי), the most spectacular proof of the rejection of the wisdom flowing from the commandments and the Torah (vv.20-23). This pericope demonstrates the difference in meaning of the stems זנה and נאִי. Here, זונה denotes a woman prostituting herself in exchange for a small payment, and its modesty may be a rhetorical device intended to highlight the foolishness of a man having intercourse with another man's wife in opposition to a precious life.⁴³

Pr 30:20 is attached to an enumerative sentence in vv.18-19.⁴⁴ It contrasts a young wife (עַלְמָה in v.19; cf. Gn 24:43; Is 7:14; Sg 1:3)⁴⁵ with an adulteress who “eats and wipes her mouth and says, ‘I have done no wrong.’” Eating is most likely a metaphor for sexual intercourse and illustrates the lack of any scruples (cf. Sæbø 2012, 372-373, also Plöger 1984, 363-364).

Even though **Pr 7:6-23**, an exemplary story warning against seduction directed to an inexperienced young man (cf. Sæbø 2012, 112), does

⁴¹ Even though in G (V) the word is rendered as “price” (cf. BHS), this is presumably a translation of the Hebrew text (cf. Jb 2:4 - Cf. Schipper 2018, 416; Plöger 1984, 58; TM is translated without even commenting on this by Sæbø 2012, 101; Potocki 2008, 90)

⁴² The deletion of this word *m.cs.* (proposed in BHS, accepted in Plöger 1984, 58) has no support in the textual testimonies. Perhaps its length led to a surprising Masoretic emphasis (cf. Sæbø 2012, 101 fn. 193).

⁴³ Which is also emphasized by the ironically used עַד, “until”, or “even” in the above translation.

⁴⁴ On this, and the collection of enumerative sentences 30:10-33, cf. Sæbø 2012, 369-371 and Plöger 1984, 356-357.364; also Potocki 2008, 225.227. On this genre of wisdom sentences, cf. also Schmidt 1997, 270-271.

⁴⁵ However, the interpretation of the sentence is extremely disputed, and is mostly associated with the mystery of conception, reproduction (cf. Jb 10:8-12; Ec 11:5; Ps 139:13-16) – cf. Sæbø 2012, 372. Or differently in Ringgren, Zimmerli 1980, 116 (sexual intercourse).

not include the term נָאֵף, v.19 suggests that it refers to an intercourse with a married woman. She dresses as a prostitute, זֹנֶה (v.10),⁴⁶ even though the seductress is apparently a married woman whose husband, a merchant, is on a journey (vv.19-20). The attire of a prostitute was not meant to conceal the woman's actual identity, but to be a temptation.⁴⁷ The consequences are tragic (vv.21-22), and the young man is not blameless (vv.6-9), for he himself pursued intercourse.⁴⁸ The prostitute's garment is thus merely a prop, and in no way suggests that the adulterous wife may have been referred to as זֹנֶה.

Summary

A review of the Old Testament verses in which נָאֵף occurs in the literal sense shows that, with the exception of Pr, it always appears in a form associated with Decalogue traditions. The oldest attestation of such a tradition is Hos. Moreover, it is very often associated with contempt for God's will. Nowhere does the meaning of this root overlap with זָנָה, and Pr 6:24-35 indicate their fundamental difference.

3. נָאֵף in a figurative sense next to the root זָנָה

Particular, but not exclusive, attention should be paid to texts in which the two roots נָאֵף and זָנָה stand adjacent to each other: Hos 2:4-25; 3; 4:9-19; Jer 3:6-11; 5:7-9; 13:15-27; Ezk 16 (נָאֵף in v.32.38); 23 (נָאֵף in v.37.43); Is 57:3-13.

⁴⁶ The text does not specify what such a garment would be (cf. Plöger 1984, 78). Cf. Gn 38:14.

⁴⁷ A similar role is played by cultic elements (v.14), the purpose or occasion of which is not specified. Plöger 1984, 78-79, does not exclude the framing of *pf* in the present tense and the young man's participation in a cultic ceremony in honor of the goddess of love.

⁴⁸ Interestingly, the woman's identity was described as a foreign woman (נְכַרִּיָּה and אִשְׁתּוֹ זָרָה).

3.1. Hosea

3.1.1. זנה next to נאף

Chronologically the oldest is the passage is **Hos 4:13-14** that belongs to the complex pericope of Hos 4:4-19.⁴⁹

13. They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains
and burn offerings on the hills,
under oak, storax-tree and terebinth,
because their shade is good.⁵⁰
Therefore your daughters prostitute themselves,
and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.
14. I will not punish your daughters for prostitution,
nor your daughters-in-law for adultery;
for they (men) go aside with prostitutes
and sacrifice with consecrated women,
and a people without understanding come to ruin.

In these verses, the prophet speaks against sacrificial ceremonies on hills by large trees (cf. e.g. Gn 35:4; Jgs 6:11.19; Ezk 6:13; 1Ch 10:12), where feast offerings (זבח pi.) and burn offerings (קטר pi.) are made. This results (על כן in v.13b) in premarital intercourse (זנה) between daughters and adultery (נאף) of daughters-in-law. The change from 3rd person to 2nd person (in vv.13b-14a) shows that the prophet holds the heads of families primarily responsible.⁵¹ It is not the daughters and daughters-in-law who bear the responsibility (v.14a), because entire families, the entire people willingly participate in these sacrificial practices (v.14b), most likely under the leadership of the sacrificing priests (v.13a). The

⁴⁹ I have already written about this passage in Slawik 2013, 53-57 (further literature there). The pericope consists of originally independent prophetic statements (vv.4-10/11-14/16-19) and is heterogeneous in literary terms. The original lines of the pericope seem to belong to the oldest transmissions of the prophet's words – cf. especially Jeremias 1983, 18-19.64-65 (also Jeremias 2013, 109-110).

⁵⁰ Regarding the translation, cf. Slawik 2013, 54 fn. 50 (*suf. fem.* refers to each of the three trees separately) – cf. Rudolph 1966, 107 and *Gesenius' Grammatik*, §135p).

⁵¹ Commentators recognize the rhetorical function of this change of persons – cf. Wolff 1961, 90.106; Rudolph 1966, 111; Jeremias 1983, 70.

misguided people fall (cf. also v.6), but the priests who betrayed their task are primarily to blame. Throughout the pericope, harlotry (זנה and זְנוּנִים) is equated with departing from YHWH (v.12: אֶל־יְהוָה) by participating in illicit, non-Yahwist cultic practices, which include sacrificial ceremonies on the hills.⁵² Premarital sexual intercourse and adultery, figuratively speaking, show that successive generations are drawn into such wickedness. In the source domain of the metaphor used here, נאָרָה refers exclusively to married women, and this despite the fact that otherwise only the root זנה is used throughout the pericope, which here refers to premarital sexual relations.

Hos 2:4 marks the beginning of the literarily complex pericope of Hos 2:4-17(-25), which forms a thematic whole (cf. Jeremias 1983, 19.38⁵³).

Accuse your mother, accuse her

that she is not my wife,

neither am I her husband!

Let her therefore put away her whoredoms (*pl.*) from her face⁵⁴

and her adulteries (*pl.*) from between her breasts.

The accusation of the faithless mother is addressed to her children (2nd pers. *pl.*). They are to speak before an imaginary court and accuse their mother (רִיב). The content of the accusation (פִּי) is her conduct that led to the breakup of the marriage (cf. Rudolph 1966, 64; Liedke 1984, 774-775⁵⁵): prostitution (זְנוּנִים) and adultery (נְאֻפוֹתַי – *hapaxl.* from

⁵² More details in Slawik 2013, 54-57.

⁵³ The origins probably go back to Hosea himself. Vv. 4-5.7.10-15 appear to be the oldest, while vv. 8-9 and vv. 16-17 (along with vv. 18-25 attached to them – on these final verses cf. also Wolff 1961, 57-59; Rudolph 1966, 75; Jeremias 1983, 38.48-49) are expansions (not necessarily non-Hoseanic).

⁵⁴ L lacks (?) vocalization. Even though 4QXII^d does not seem to know *suf.* (cf. BHQ), the reading attested by most Mss is better.

⁵⁵ The words: “she is not my wife, and I am not hers”.

^{are} probably not a divorce formula (as Wolff 1961, 39 would have it; for this, see the critique at Rudolph 1966, 65; Jeremias 1983, 41), but a reversal of the marriage formula (attested in the Elephantine papyri – cf. Jeremias 1983, 41 fn. 5 and ANET, 222.548).

the verb *n)z*), the signs of which the woman wife bears on her face and breasts. One can only try to guess what they might have been: amulets or other cult ornaments worn on the forehead and around the neck.⁵⁶ Various ornaments associated with the worship of Baal are mentioned in v.15.⁵⁷ Adultery and prostitution are used here in a figurative meaning, and cultic adornments are signs of infidelity to the God of Israel. In addition to the frequent use of harlotry (whoredom) as a metaphor in Hos (*znh* – a total of 17 times: 1:2; 2:6-7; 4:10-14.18; 5:3-4; 6:10; 9:1), metaphorical adultery appears as well (cf. 4:13-14). This is certainly because of the reference to the addressees' mother and God's former wife. Its context is the metaphor of God's marriage to the people.⁵⁸ Not only did she cheat on her husband (*n)z*), but she also chased after other men (vv.7.9; *znh*). Thus we are dealing with two complementary metaphors. Adultery and prostitution correspond to two types of ornaments. The parallelism of the two terms does not obliterate the difference in meaning between them.

Hos 3 describes a symbolic act performed by the prophet.⁵⁹ God commands Hosea (v.1) to again fall in love with a woman who loves another⁶⁰ and commits adultery, which is supposed to correspond to

⁵⁶ It is unlikely to be the face veil that Tamar wore in Gn 38:15 to pass herself off as a prostitute. Tamar's covering of her face serves only a compositional function; she could not be recognized by Judah (cf. also Slawik, 2013, 247 and fn.125). According to Middle Assyrian Law § 40 (*ANET*, 183), a prostitute was not allowed to cover her face.

⁵⁷ Cf. also Gn 35:4. cf. Wolff 1961, 40; Jeremias 1983, 41.

⁵⁸ Although the people are certainly children as well – cf. Wolff 1961, 41; Rudolph 1966, 64; Jeremias 1983, 41-42.

⁵⁹ Cf. Jeremias 1983, 52. Because of the alleged “interferences” in the structure (the command already contains the first interpretation) Wolff 1961, 72-73, erroneously doubts whether one can speak of a symbolic act.

⁶⁰ G, a, s, S, V attest to the presumably oldest reading of the consonantal text as *ptp. act.*, which must be the preferred variant, even if we have a different complement in G and S (*zn* – cf. *BHQ*; *zn* would be an inferior reading because of the immediately following verb *n)z*) – according to *BHS*; Wolff 1961, 70; Drozd 1968, 72; Jeremias 1983, 52 n. 2; differently in Rudolph 1966, 71; *BHQ*.

YHWH's love for Israel, who loves raisin cakes instead of their God. פִּי נָא pi. indicates that it is about the prophet's wife, who is (regularly) unfaithful to him.⁶¹ The Pentateuch does not mention raisin cakes as sacrificial offerings, while in 2 Sm 6:19; 1Ch 16:3 and Is 16:7 they are festive food (and symbol of love in Sg 2:5).⁶² It is not impossible that they were associated with a cult (of Ishtar/Anath, goddess of war and love).⁶³ Since the phrase "other gods" does not appear again not only in Hos, but also in Am, Is and Mi,⁶⁴ the phrase "they turn to other gods" is therefore most likely a later interpretation (according to Jeremias 1983, 54-55). The prophet's adulterous wife is thus a representation of a people unfaithful to YHWH, who participate in illicit/foreign worship. The prophet obeys God's command (v.2), redeems her⁶⁵, and then orders her (v.3) to dwell with him (יָשָׁב) for many days and: "do not engage in illicit sexual intercourse (זָנָה) and do not belong to any man, nor do I [belong] to you either" (v.3b). The last phrase presumably means that also the prophet will not have intercourse with her.⁶⁶ She will therefore

⁶¹ It is therefore in no way contradictory to Dt 24:1-4 – cf. among others Jeremias 1983, 54.

⁶² Apart from these places, אֶשְׂתֵּי־רִצִּים does not occur in the Hebrew Bible. Cf. *HAHAT* (also for Is 16:7); Jeremias 1983, 54.

⁶³ Cf. *HAL*. Mostly associated with פִּי־נָא, a word borrowed from Akkadian in Jer 7:18; 44:19, a sacrificial gift to the "queen of heaven", i.e., the Assyrian-Babylonian Ishtar – cf. Wolff 1961, 76; Jeremias 1983, 54. On Ishtar (Ashtar) and Anath cf. Schmitt 2007 and Cornelius 2008.

⁶⁴ Cf. Wolff 1961, 75-76. Hosea knew the so-called first commandment, but in a different linguistic form (13:4).

⁶⁵ The equivalent of 30 pieces of silver, which corresponds to the price of a slave (Ex 21:32) or the redemption of a woman (Lv 27:4) – cf. commentaries, e.g. Wolff 1961, 76; Jeremias 1983, 55 fn. 8. Is it about the re-payment of the mohar, payment for the bride or redemption from slavery (cf. also Wolff 1961, 76-77; Jeremias 1983, 55), or perhaps redeeming her from some (cultic) wedding?

⁶⁶ Its meaning is unclear: 1) וְאֵלַי can be understood either conjunctively ("and I all the more so") or contrastively ("but I"; cf. *HAHAT*). 2) It is not clear whether the negation אֵלַי also covers the latter phrase (it was not necessarily dropped out by mistake at all, as Jeremias 1983, 52 fn. 2 suggests; cf. Rudolph 1966, 85). 3) The phrase אֵלַי־וְאֵלַי is enigmatic (elliptical?). Is it supposed to be a shorthand way of talking about sexual

be separated from men in general (cf. Jeremias 1983, 55), remaining in the house of the prophet. Her isolation gains a symbolic explanation (v.4): for many days the Israelites will “dwell” (identical expression with *ישב*) deprived of all state (the king and officials represent administration and authority; cf. especially 7:3-7; 8:4)⁶⁷ and religious institutions (feast offerings – cf. 4:13-14, *matzevot* – cf. 10:1-2,⁶⁸ *ephod* and *teraphim* used to obtain oracles – cf. 4:12).⁶⁹ Even though none of the aforementioned cult activities were viewed only negatively, in Hos they represent an illegal or foreign cult.⁷⁰ Against appearances, the *נאף* and *זנה* roots do not have to mean the same thing at all, i.e. adultery. Even if the restrictions imposed on the wife in v.3b correspond to her description in v.1b, the verb *נאף* corresponds to not belonging to another man (*וְלֹא תִהְיֶינָה לְאִישׁ*), not *לֹא תִהְיֶינָה*. Preventing adultery was expanded to include not engaging in harlotry, either as a derogatory name for a woman’s conduct (referring to 2:4[.7.9]?), or a figurative term for participating in illicit cults tantamount to betraying YHWH. The three restrictions on the prophet’s wife are not to be understood synonymously, but synthetically, especially if the last were to refer to relations with one’s own husband.

intercourse (cf. e.g. Gn 16:2; 30:3)? At the same time, there is no textual basis for a possible reconstruction of this verse (cf. *BHQ*; contrary to *BHS* or Wolff 1961, 70). One can only guess that the sense of the sentence must be negative (so rightly Rudolph 1966, 85) and most likely refers to Hosea’s attitude towards his wife, corresponding to the earlier sentences (cf. Jeremias 1983, 52).

⁶⁷ Cf. Hos 10:1-8 from the period of the Syro-Ephraimite War (cf. Jeremias 1983, 31-32 and 56; also Wolff 1961, 224-225).

⁶⁸ Cf. also Gn 28:18.22 (stone monuments representing the presence of a deity) and Gamberoni 1984, 1064-1074, and especially Schmitt 2008.

⁶⁹ Cf. 1 Sm 23:9-12; 30:7-8; Ezk 21:26; Zec 10:2; together mentioned in Jgs 17:5; 18:14-20 – cf. Jeremias 1983, 56 fn. 10.

⁷⁰ While “many days” (v.4) does not imply final annihilation yet, v.5 speaks of hope for the future in a different way, i.e. the certainty of final return to YHWH. V.5 is thus an editorial addition – cf. Rudolph 1966, 93-94; Jeremias 1983, 57-58.

3.1.2. זָנָה not appearing next to נָבִיא

We only read about adultery again in **Hos 7:4** (from where the phrase that appears in Jer 9:1 had most likely been borrowed). From the text-critical and interpretive perspective, the Hos 7:3-7⁷¹ pericope is complex. It is widely believed that it speaks of the turmoil in the royal court and *coups d'état* in the last (v.7: fall, death of many kings) years of the Northern Kingdom (cf. 2 Ki 15:8-31).⁷² The hot baker's oven, which smoulders at night and blazes in the morning when fuel is added (vv.4-6.7a), illustrates the angry intentions of the enemies of the king and the royal court, which will be realised on the day of some royal celebration. The deaths of the earlier courtiers and kings (v.7b) are met with rejoicing by those currently in power (the king and his court; v.3). It was them, the earlier assassins who were called adulterers (v.4). At the same time, no one (courtiers, conspirators or the people as a whole?) calls upon God (v.7bb). Marital infidelity was used to illustrate the elite's unfaithfulness to the king(s).⁷³ Adultery as a metaphor served a different purpose here than the metaphorical prostitution in Hos, namely not to condemn cultic unfaithfulness to YHWH,⁷⁴ but political betrayal against the king and the royal elite by a fraction of the court elite.

Summary

Although the two roots stand next to each other in Hos, their meanings never fully overlap, which is true even of Hos 2:4 (and 3:1.4). Hos

⁷¹ It is one of the prophetic words in 5:8-7:16 – cf. Jeremias 1983, 92; Wolff 1961, 136-139.

⁷² Even if the interpretations differ in some details. Cf. Weiser 1949, 47-49, who, however, due to emendation, removes זָנָה (similarly in Drozd 1968, 85-86, not even marking the emendation); Wolff 1961, 131-142.157-160; Rudolph 1966, 115-122; Jeremias 1983, 89-92.95-97.

⁷³ Cf. Wolff 1961, 158: fits the charge of fraud.

⁷⁴ As Wolff 1961, 158; Jeremias 1983, 96, would have it, according to whom the term is an addition of tradents based on 4:13-14; 5:3-4, who did not want the prophetic criticism in this passage to cover only political issues. Whatever one's assessment of the literary integrity of this passage, the context, including v.7bb, does not suggest any connection between adultery as a metaphor and cultic misconduct or religious infidelity.

4:12-13 demonstrates that the source domains of their metaphorical usage refer to different sexual offences. In Hos 7:3-7, on the other hand, adultery became a metaphor for political infidelity (of the elite towards the king).

3.2. Jeremiah

3.2.1. זנה next to נאף

Jer 3:6-11 is the only passage⁷⁵ in chapters 2-20 containing chronological information (the reign of Josiah), presumably because it is a critical evaluation of Josiah's reform efforts (v.11; cf. Schmidt 2008, 107-108 and fn. 39; Lundbom 1999, 308. Differently in Rudolph 1968, 28-29). The authenticity of this pericope is extremely controversial (cf. Schmidt 2008, 105-106; Lundbom 1999, 305⁷⁶). Its heroines are two sisters: Israel, called "the faithless one"⁷⁷ (v.6-7a.8a.11), and Judah, called "the treacherous one" (v.7b.8b-11).⁷⁸ The description of Israel's guilt in v.6 is based on Hos 4:12-14, and identical wording had already appeared in Jer 2:20b (cf. Lundbom 1999, 307; Schmidt 2008, 85). The hills together with the green trees were places of sacrifice. Prostitution (זנה)⁷⁹ is thus worship on the hills by the green trees, synonymous with turning away from YHWH, which justifies Samaria's pseudonym. Nevertheless, God counted on her return (v.7a) "after she has done all this", i.e. cultic acts of infidelity to YHWH. An eyewitness to the sin and punishment was her sister, Judah (vv.7b-8a). "The faithless one" was sent away with a decree of divorce (cf. Dt 24:1.3, where שֵׁלַח pi. is used

⁷⁵ For its separation and context, cf. Schmidt 2008, 108; Fischer 2005a, 183.

⁷⁶ He draws on a number of passages from Jer 2-3 (2:20.27; 3:1.2.12.20). Since Judah proved inferior, it also deserved a "worse" fate than that which befell Israel, that is, not only a condemnation of Josiah's actions, but also, presumably, the fall of Jerusalem.

⁷⁷ Abstract noun, pseudonym of Israel (apposition) – cf. *HAHAT*; Rudolph 1968, 24.

⁷⁸ Pseudonym of Judah derived from בָּגַד – cf. *HAHAT*; Rudolph 1968, 24.

⁷⁹ The 2nd person in TM does not fit the context and is presumably a misspelling (according to *HAHAT*; Rudolph 1968, 24); cf. G. Whereas, according to Fischer 2005a, 189, an Aramaic form of 3rd pers. *fem. sg.* in TM.

next to *שָׁלַח* *פָּרִיִתָהּ* pi. appears in relation to divorce in Jer 3:1 and Dt 21:14; 22:19; 1Ch 8:8). Divorce is most likely a metaphor for the fall of the Northern Kingdom (cf. Lundbom 1999, 307). The punishment is justified by “all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel” (v.8aβ), surely because a decree of divorce could not be a punishment for prostitution. Nevertheless, the treacherous⁸⁰ Judah was not deterred by that and went to engage in prostitution (*זָנָה*; v.8b). This “going” may have involved going to *זִנְיָה* (cf. Jos 2:1 or Jdg 16:1; also Hos 1:2) and/or to a cultic hill (cf. 1 Ki 3:4; Hos 11:2). Her conduct has also been described as perversion or defilement the land (*חָנְתָהּ*; cf. Knierim 1984a, 597-599 and somewhat differently Seybold 1982, 42-44)⁸¹ and committing adultery (*הָאָדָם*; v.9)⁸² with stone and tree/wood, which are here most likely objects of worship, of cultic veneration (cf. Ezk 20:32; cf. Schmidt 2008, 89 (cult symbols) and 92), as already mentioned in Jer 2:27.⁸³ They must probably be identified with *matzevot* and *asherim* (cult pillars; cf. Dt 16:21-22; also Jdg 6:26; cf. Schmidt 2008, 92 and fn. 140)⁸⁴. They are representations of foreign gods rather than YHWH,⁸⁵ intended to make them present

⁸⁰ In the context of sexual infidelity, *בָּנָה* appears in Jer 3:20; Hos 5:7; cf. also Jer 5:11; Hos 6:7, and is used in a specifically theological sense (with *בִּיהוּהוּ*) – cf. Klopfenstein 1984a, 263-264. The theme may be derived from Hosea, especially since it occurs in connection with marriage as a metaphor (divorcing Israel).

⁸¹ With the complement “land” it also occurs in Nu 35:33 and Ps 106:38 (cf. also Is 24:5). It is necessary to relocalise on hi. (cf. *BHS*; *HAHAT*; Rudolph 1968, 24; Schmidt 2008, 104 fn. 19; Fischer 2005a, 182).

⁸² In *BHS* and Rudolph 1968, 26, it is assumed that the verb should be replaced by *נָאָץ* (q., “to reject”), linking this phrase to v.10 (return), which, however, finds no attestation in the textual evidence.

⁸³ For the stones, cf. also Gen 28:18.22; 35:14; Jos 4 et al. and for the sacred trees, cf. Gn 12:6; 13:18 or Hos 4:12 etc.

⁸⁴ Stachowiak 1967, 119: sacred trunks and pillars.

⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Jer 2,27 does not provide an answer to this question either. God YHWH is also called father in Jer 3:5.19; 31:9; Dt 32:8; Ps 89:27; Is 63:16; 64:7; Mal 2.10, etc.; cf. also Ps 22:10-11; Is 45:10; Dt 32:18, and it is similar with “You gave me birth/you begot me” (cf. Dt 32:18; Is 45:10; cf. Schmidt 2008, 93 and fn. 144; also Fischer 2005a, 171). The Baals in 2:23 (cf. also Hos 2:15) and the prostitution “with many companions”

(cf. Dt 28:36.64; 29:16; Is 37:19; Ezk 20:32; Hab 2:19). Adultery is a metaphor for illicit worship that constitutes spousal infidelity to YHWH. Metaphorical harlotry is therefore *de facto* the same as metaphorical adultery. The motif of adultery was most likely introduced because of the divorce decree motif.

In **Jer 5:7-9**⁸⁶ God (in the 1st person) leaves Jerusalem in no doubt that punishment has become inevitable (questions rhetorically framing these verses – v.7א.9).⁸⁷ The reason is the conduct of the “children” of Jerusalem, i.e. its inhabitants,⁸⁸ who had abandoned YHWH (cf. 1:16 etc.), and this despite the fact that God had satiated, nourished them with his goods (v.7אβ-b). Rejection of God consisted in swearing by those who are no gods, i.e. recognising foreign gods (cf. 2,11), adultery and making incisions⁸⁹ in the house of a prostitute/independent woman (זונה). Cutting was a mourning custom (cf. Jer 16:6), which was only banned in late post-exilic times (Dt 14:1; cf. Otto 2016, 1297-1298)⁹⁰ as being associated with foreign cults (1 Ki 18:28). Thus, we are dealing with

in Jer 3:1 would speak in favour of foreign deities. The gods in Canaan (El and the goddess Ashiratu/Asherat – cf. Lundbom 1999, 284-285, who, however, writes about Asherah) were titled in the same way. The fundamental question would be whether these texts are invocations of gods or worshippers (cf. e.g. KTU 1.12 I 9; translation in *TUAT* III, 1203).

⁸⁶ For context and connections with 4.5-31 cf. Fischer 2005a, 235; Schmidt 2008, 140.143-144.

⁸⁷ Cf. Schmidt 2008, 144: a threat referring to the dispute (e.g. 18.6).

⁸⁸ Differently in Fischer 2005a, 242, who thinks of the younger generation. The distinction between the woman and her children seems to come from Hos (2:4-5.6; 4:12-15) - according to Schmidt 2008, 144.

⁸⁹ In 2 Mss we find the reading “to host” (cf. 1 Kgs 17:20), which is the basis of the common emendation – cf. *BHS*; Stachowiak 1967, 141, citing G; Rudolph 1968, 38; Schmidt 2008, 140 fn. 7. Lundbom 1999, 381 and Fischer 2005a, 235, postulate that נָרַר in hitpol. can also mean “to gather” (“to make way for oneself”), deriving from the meaning of q. in Ps 94:21. However, the meaning of hitpol. is well attested in Jer (and in 1Ki 18:28; Mi 4:17). Craigie et al. 1991, on the other hand, derives the meaning of the verb from נָרַר “troop”, in the sense of “patronize”, which is not attested anywhere.

⁹⁰ This custom is also known, among others, from the Ugaritic Cycle on Baal (Mourning for Baal: KTU 1.5 VI 17-23; translation in *TUAT* III, 1183).

a late expansion of Jer or a punctual change reinterpreting Jer 16:6; 41:5; 47:5.⁹¹ The house of *הֵיכָל* should probably be associated with forbidden mourning customs (worship of foreign gods?), whereby “house” could be a term for a temple, here of foreign gods, where illegal worship took place. In this context also adultery could be interpreted figuratively (cf. Jer 3:8.9),⁹² especially as going to a prostitute’s house (inn?; cf. Riegner 2009, 197-201) could hardly be linked to adultery (the only way to get out of this difficulty could be to assume that wives went there to engage in prostitution). However, v.8 seems to stand in the way of such an interpretation: the attitude towards another man’s wife is illustrated by a lusty stallion, which would fit a literal understanding of adultery (cf. Lundbom 1999, 381). Nevertheless, it is better to interpret the image of the stallion also in relation to idolatrous worship as in 13:27 (see below), especially in the context of the unwillingness to repent. They are so lusty that no amount of tragic experiences (cf. vv.3.6) or appeals (cf. 3,14.22; also 5,5a) can change anything. The interpretation of vv.7-8 is therefore very uncertain. The meanings of the *נָאָר* and *זָנָה* roots could only converge if used figuratively, but even then the juxtaposition of adultery and the house of *הֵיכָל* would not demonstrate that the two roots have identical meanings.

The two roots concerned appear together again in **Jer 13:25-27**, in the final part of the complex composition of 13:15-27 (cf. Schmidt 2008, 254; also Rudolph 1968, 95-96; Stachowiak 1967, 210). They convey an announcement of punishment (v.[25a]26) corresponding to the crimes of Jerusalem (v.[25b]27).⁹³ The prophet accuses Jerusalem, i.e. its inhabitants, of turning away from God. Instead of taking God and His

⁹¹ The second possibility is probably assumed by Schmidt 2008, 140 fn. 7.

⁹² Schmidt 2008, 144, is inclined towards this interpretation (allegations of adultery and prostitution are linked and seem to belong to some cultic ritual that cannot be described in more detail); cf. also Fischer 2005a, 242.

⁹³ Which seem to be themes and motifs (e.g. a woman as a metaphor for Jerusalem) related to vv.20-22 – cf. Rudolph 1968, 96; Schmidt 2008, 256; also Fischer 2005a, 464.

will into account in their behaviour⁹⁴ they rely on lies and deception (v.25b). V. 27 specifies this accusation as participation in illegal cults on the hills.⁹⁵ In this context, שָׁקַר could refer to foreign deities (cf. Jer 10:14; 16:19-20),⁹⁶ but in Jer the word is used in a much broader sense (e.g. 3:10; 7:4.8).⁹⁷ The text is so brief in characterising Jerusalem's guilt here that one must rely on other texts in Jer. Adultery (נִאֲוָפִים) and prostitution (זְנוּת) are metaphors for illicit worship on the hills (cf. 2:20; 3:6+9.23; 17:2), which was further condemned as an abominable conduct, a grave crime (זָמָה; cf. Steingrimsson 1977, 602-603). Jerusalem's recklessness or impetuousness in indulging in these practices is conveyed by the noun "neighing" (an image of a stallion), which alludes to 5:8. Such detestable things (שִׁקְרֵיךָ pl.; cf. 4:1; 7:30), which may be a term for foreign deities (cf. Lundbom 1999, 690; Fischer 2005a, 465; Schmidt 2008, 117), could not escape God's attention, and Jerusalem, because of its impurity, cannot count on cultic communion with YHWH. V.27 is the second verse in Jer. where the metaphors of adultery and prostitution are used to describe one and the same kind of guilt (but does that obliterate the difference in their source domain?).

3.2.2. נָאָה **not appearing next to** זָנוּת

There are still several texts in Jer where the נָאָה root is used. Jer 9:1 opens with a new passage in vv.1-10 (cf. Schmidt 2008, 201-202; Fischer 2005a, 349)⁹⁸, centred on a rebuke of treacherous, mutual deception, lying to one another (vv.2-5.7). These are so widespread that even the closest people, i.e. family and fellow man, need to beware.

⁹⁴ Regarding שָׁכַח cf. Schottroff 1984, 898-904.

⁹⁵ The phrase "in the field" probably indicates places of worship outside Jerusalem, in the open space.

⁹⁶ According to Craigie et al. 1991; Lundbom 1999, 690, it is a term for Baal.

⁹⁷ Especially since Jer 10:14; 16:19-20 are probably much later – cf. Rudolph 1968, 71.113; Schmidt 2008, 216.

⁹⁸ Differently in Rudolph 1968, 65; Lundbom 1999, 537.

Oh that I had⁹⁹ in the desert travellers' lodging place,
 that I might leave¹⁰⁰ my people
 and go away from them!
 For they are all adulterers, a community¹⁰¹ of treacherous defectors.

In vv.1-2, God (in 1st person – cf. “my people” and “they did not know me”) expresses a wish to find a peaceful resting place in the desert (caravanserai; cf. Lundbom 1999, 537), because he wants to rest from dealing with his people (cf. Jer 14:8), whose behaviour burdens him terribly. God's distaste finds justification in the adultery (identical wording to Hos 7:4)¹⁰² and treacherous unfaithfulness (cf. 3:11 and 3:20; 5:11; cf. above [discussion of 3:6-11]) of the entire people (“they all” and עֲצֻרָה, which is the cultic assembly, cf. e.g. Lv 23:36, a bitter irony; cf. Schmidt 2008, 206; also Fischer 2005a, 350). The immediate context (vv.2-5.7) suggests that the concept of adultery should be understood rather figuratively in relation to any treacherous behaviour and, above all, lying to one another (and thus not to religious infidelity).

Jer 23:9-32.33-40 are directed against false prophets.¹⁰³ **Jer 23:10-15** consists of two thematically related passages: vv.10-12 and 13-15.¹⁰⁴ The first is a critique of a prophet and a priest (in sg., collectively) and

⁹⁹ Sometimes translated literally as a rhetorical question: “Who could give me” (according to Lundbom 1999, 535; Fischer 2005a, 342), which is an ossified form of a wish (cf. *HAHAT*; Schmidt 2008, 202 fn. 1).

¹⁰⁰ In this and the following sentence *coh*. The verse may have a 2+2 rhythm.

¹⁰¹ Or “a (festive) gathering” (cf. *HAHAT*). In Lundbom 1999, 535, translated as “a bunch”.

¹⁰² That is where it probably comes from – according to Lundbom 1999, 538; Fischer 2005a, 350.

¹⁰³ Commentators agree that the literary whole of vv. 9-32 together with (the addition of) vv. 33-40 should be separated – cf. Rudolph 1968, 149; Stachowiak 1967, 274; Lundbom 2004, 178-180; Fischer 2005a, 687-689; Schmidt 2013, 37-38.

¹⁰⁴ Despite the common motifs, there is a wide agreement about the existence of a caesura between v.15 and v.16, as about fact that vv. 9/10-12 and 13-15 should be viewed as two closely related passages - Cf. the comments in the fn. above and Craigie et al. 1991. For the distinctiveness of v. 9, cf. Schmidt 2013, 39-40; further also the observations in Lundbom 2004, 179-180; Fischer 2005a, 688.

the second of two groups of prophets (in *pl.*): from Samaria and Jerusalem.¹⁰⁵ The two parts are further linked by key words, the נאך and נהך roots in vv.10-11.15 (cf. Schmidt 2013, 41). The former probably forms a secondary framing (cf. Schmidt 2013, 40 fn. 17), since the sentence at the beginning of v.10, “For the land is full of adulterers”, cannot be found in G* (cf. *BHS*),¹⁰⁶ and is separated from the list of sins in v.10b by the description of a drought.

In vv.13-15, God accuses the prophets of Samaria¹⁰⁷ of what was unseemly, inappropriate, scandalous, moreover, directed against God (cf. also Job 1:22).¹⁰⁸ It was prophesying by Baal, i.e. the prophets either invoked the message of Baal or were simply prophets of Baal (cf. 2:8).¹⁰⁹ Baal could be a code name for foreign gods in general or for illicit religious practices.¹¹⁰ The prophets were misleading God’s people, Israel (cf. Hos 4:12),¹¹¹ certainly contributing to the people’s turning away from God. The reference to the prophets of Samaria serves to show that the prophets operating in Jerusalem are no better (v.14).¹¹² Their horrible

¹⁰⁵ This is the only place in Jer where both groups of prophets are mentioned – cf. Fischer 2005a, 692.

¹⁰⁶ A different text-critical assessment in Lundbom 2004, 182, or Rudolph 1968, 148.

¹⁰⁷ Samaria is certainly referred to as a distant past (preceding the fall of Samaria) – cf. Fischer 2005a, 692.

¹⁰⁸ From נהב, “to speak absurdly” (?) – cf. *HAL* and Slawik 2010a, 31; also Lundbom 2004, 186.

¹⁰⁹ The prophets of Baal are mentioned again in the story of their defeat at Mount Carmel in 1Ki 18:18-40 (Cf. Schmidt 2008, 75, who speculates that Jeremiah may be referring to it). Apart from this, they are only mentioned again in 2Ki 10:19, perhaps referring to Hosea’s critique (cf. Hos 13:1 or 2:10-18).

¹¹⁰ Cf. Schmidt 2008, 75, according to whom the talk of Baal is stereotypical; and above all Jeremias 1996, 103; Pietsch 2013, 246.

¹¹¹ For הנה cf. Sawyer 1984, 1055-1057, esp. 1056. In Hos 4:12, false religious practices that mislead God’s people into sinful error are called “the spirit of whoredom”. For the formulation, cf. Is 29:10. See Wolff 1961, 105.

¹¹² Most commentators actually find the comparison to be to the disadvantage of the prophets of Jerusalem – cf. Craigie et al. 1991; Lundbom 2004, 187; Fischer 2005a, 693; Schmidt 2013, 42.

or repulsive acts (cf. 5:31 and Hos 6:10; Jer 18:13) consisted of adultery, walking (i.e. acting) in falsehood (cf. Mi 2:11) and reinforcing evil doers. We often read about the lies of the prophets, and those uttered in the name of YHWH, in Jer (5:31; 14:14; 20:6; 23:25-26:32; 27:10.14-16; 29:9.21.23). They supported the wicked, who consequently were unable to see the need to repent.¹¹³ Unlike Jeremiah himself, they did not warn them of the impending punishment. In this context, the mention of adultery is surprising, which must then be a metaphor for prophetic unfaithfulness to God, by preaching a pernicious lie about the success of those who do evil.

In vv.10-12, the initial secondary observation “the land is full of adulterers” is reminiscent of 9:1-2. Adultery is reduced (v.10b) to strenuous, evil pursuits (cf. 9:2)¹¹⁴ and perverse, unrighteous efforts (cf. Pr 15:7).¹¹⁵ This accusation applies in particular to the prophets and priests (v.11; identical wording in 14:18),¹¹⁶ the two groups who were primarily responsible for upholding God’s laws, and who betrayed their mission by acting in an unholy or ungodly manner (תִּנְיָה in Jer refers only to religious or cultic offences, cf. Jer 3:1b-2.9).¹¹⁷ God finds evil even in His temple. Is it a matter of offering sacrifices in a way that is improper, inappropriate for Yahwism (as in Jer 3:9), or perhaps to foreign gods (cf. Craigie et al. 1991)?¹¹⁸ The prophets were associated with the temple, they were to act in it (cf. 7:2). The evil, therefore, could lie in the iniquity of the priests

¹¹³ Cf. the later Ezk 13:22 and Jer 44:5 and 18:8 (Jeremianic-Deuteronomistic redaction) – cf. Schmidt 2008, 38.315-316 and Schmidt 2013, 44.

¹¹⁴ For תִּנְיָה cf. Jer 8:6; 22:17; 2Sm 18:27 (except that it does not occur again in the Hebrew Bible). Cf. Fischer 2005a, 691.

¹¹⁵ *Suf.* of the 3rd pers. *pl.* presumably refers to adulterers – cf. Craigie et al. 1991; Lundbom 2004, 183; Fischer 2005a, 691, according to whom it may also refer to prophets.

¹¹⁶ Triple emphasis תִּנְיָה – cf. Fischer 2005a, 691.

¹¹⁷ The phrase “Would not that land be greatly polluted” in TM does not pursue the example of the divorced woman (unlike in G and V) – cf. BHS; Schmidt 2008, 100 fn. 3.

¹¹⁸ Lundbom 2004, 183, who assumes that this refers to pagan worship or sacred prostitution.

and prophets, who had no reluctance to offer inappropriate sacrifices / to offer sacrifices inappropriately and to give fraudulent prophecies (announcing success rather than conveying the word of YHWH – cf. v.14.17-18 and 7:9-11) in the temple of YHWH. If the accusation of adultery belongs to the secondary expansion and framing of vv.10-15, it is directed primarily against the prophets, referring to the deceitful preaching of the prophets (cf. Schmidt 2013, 42; considered in Lundbom 2004, 182). It can also include priests, extending the metaphorical meaning of adultery to religious and cultic infidelity (cf. again Schmidt 2013, 42; Craigie et al. 1991).¹¹⁹

Jer 29:21-23 is a prophecy against two unnamed false prophets (cf. Lundbom 2004, 357 and Fischer 2005b, 104).¹²⁰ They are accused “because they have done a scandalous thing in Israel, they have committed adultery with their fellows’ wives, and they have spoken in my name lying words,¹²¹ that I did not command them.”¹²² Again, adultery is directly adjacent to false prophecy, more precisely the conveying as God’s message of words that are not it. The formula: “to do a scandalous thing in Israel”, which appears eight times in the Hebrew Bible, sometimes

¹¹⁹ Especially since Jer 3:9 נָאֵן connects to נָאֵן, so that this verse may have been the inspiration for the expansion of 23:10aα. It is much less likely that adultery in a figurative sense was used as an assessment of the unrighteous aspirations of an entire people (hyperbole?). Rudolph 1968, 150 proposes the literal interpretation as adultery, also Lundbom 2004, 182, is inclined to this interpretation; partly also Fischer 2005a, 691 (double meaning of the transgression – literal and figurative – as transgression against interpersonal relationships and the exclusive relationship with God).

¹²⁰ For the context of the so-called Letter of Jeremiah and the structure of this literarily complex chapter 29, cf. Schmidt 2013, 97-98 and Lundbom 2004, 344-348; Fischer 2005b, 88-89.

¹²¹ נְאֻמֵי is absent in G*, so it may be a gloss – cf. *BHS* and Rudolph 1968, 187 (differently in Keown et al. 1995: typical wording in Jer). Schmidt 2013, 97, translates: “they speak words in my name – a lie I did not command them”. Above according to the Masoretic accents (adverbial *acc.*; also translated this way by Keown et al.).

¹²² The phrase “I didn’t command” with God as the subject appears primarily in Jer and Dt for sacrifices and prophecies that are incompatible with God’s will (Dt 17.3; 18:20; Jer 7:22.31; 14:14; 19:5; 23:32; 32:35).

refers to sexual transgressions (cf. Gn 34:7; Dt 22:21; 2Sm 13:12; cf. Sæbø 1984, 28; Keown et al. 1995; Lundbom 2004, 358; Fischer 2005b, 105 [with the exception of Jsh 7:15]),¹²³ but not to adultery. Adultery could be a metaphor for false prophesying (as in 23:14[.10]), but these two prophets commit adultery with their fellows' wives, suggesting a literal understanding of the charge (punished by the Babylonian authorities? - v.22).¹²⁴ This juxtaposition of false prophesying and adultery is so surprising that the question arises as to whether the addition "with their fellows' wives" is not simply meant to be a standard expression (emphasis?). In any case, a figurative understanding of adultery cannot be ruled out.¹²⁵

Summary

It is for the first time in Jer, where the motifs of prostitution and adultery had most likely been taken from Hosea, that these two source domains are explicitly linked to the same iniquity, i.e. cultic infidelity to YHWH (most clearly in Jer 3:6-11 and 13:27; to which 5:7-9 can also be included, mainly because adultery is a metaphor for religious infidelity). Interestingly, as in Hos (7:3-7), adultery is given a new metaphorical dimension. In Jer 23:10-15 and perhaps 29:23, it depicts false prophecy as an act of unfaithfulness to YHWH because the prophets did not

¹²³ In fact, however, the interpretation of some verses with this expression, not just Jsh 7:15, is not so unambiguous (cf. Jsh 19:23-24; 20:6.10, where the wrongdoing is rather a violation of the guest's right to hospitality or gender identity – cf. Slawik, Slawik 2010b, 29-31).

¹²⁴ For subversive prophesying? Cf. Lundbom 2004, 358; Fischer 2005b, 105-106, who cites the view that it may also have referred to adultery, specifically violating the social order. However, the justification in v.23 points to guilt in Israel that is condemned (Cf. above to Ml 3:5) by YHWH.

¹²⁵ Mostly interpreted literally – cf. Sæbø 1984, 28; Keown et al. 1995; Lundbom 2004, 358; Fischer 2005b, 105: contempt for marriage among relatives; Schmidt 2013, 98, although some commentators speak of their two offences (cf. Lundbom 2004, 360; Fischer 2005b, 106). And according to Rudolph 1968, 185, a moral offence was juxtaposed with their religious claim (in a similar vein, Stachowiak 1967, 325).

preach His word. Furthermore, in 9:1(-10) it is perhaps a metaphor for treacherously deceiving one's fellow man.

3.3. Ezekiel

While the root נח appears in Ezk as many as 47 times, including 42 times in chapters 16 and 23 (according to Kühlewein 1984a, 518), נח is only found 6 times, i.e. in 16:32.38 and 23:37.45. The two chapters are literarily inconsistent and at the same time partially dependent on each other.

Ezk 16 consists of at least three lexically and factually related parts. The second (vv.43bγ/44-58)¹²⁶ and the third part (vv.59-63) are easily identifiable as editorial expansions.¹²⁷ The motif of harlotry (זנה) and adultery (נח) appears in neither. The first part (vv.2-43bβ) is also not uniform literarily,¹²⁸ and the נח root occurs only in editorial additions.

Vv.2-43bβ form an extended graphic indictment of Jerusalem. God took pity on the girl of illegitimate origin who had been abandoned at birth, rescuing her (vv.3aβ-7) and later taking her as his wife and bestowing on her many goods (vv.8-13). Jerusalem as God's spouse became beautiful and enjoyed royal success and fame among the nations (vv.13b-14; cf. Pohlmann 1996, 226). However, she proved unfaithful, committing appalling iniquities (vv.15-34). Her renown pushed her towards unbridled sexual intercourse (v.15; נח twice), and that with every passer-by.¹²⁹ Jerusalem made perverse use of God's gifts (the fourfold "you took" in vv.16-21), even going so far as to offer child sacrifice

¹²⁶ It is uncertain whether the question in v.43bγ placed after the formula "oracle of [the Lord] YHWH" is to be associated with the following verses, or whether it is rather the conclusion of vv.2-43.

¹²⁷ This is a prevalent perception – cf. Fohrer 1955, 92-93; Zimmerli 1969, 341-342; Pohlmann 1996, 221.

¹²⁸ Neither this section nor the expansions in vv.43bg/44-58 and 59-63 can be regarded as literarily uniform, even if it would be difficult to reach a consensus on the details (cf. Pohlmann 1996, 227). Cf. various proposals in Fohrer 1955, 83-92(93); Zimmerli 1969, 341-343.351-363; Chrostowski 1991, 164-177; Pohlmann 1996, 216-222.

¹²⁹ In contrast to God, who was a pitying passer-by (vv.6.8).

(vv.20-21) to be devoured by idols.¹³⁰ Therefore, *גִּזְרֵי* here must mean an illicit cult in the highlands associated with the worship of effigies, statues (deities), in particular offerings of agricultural products and one's own children (cf. Pohlmann 1996, 231; Greenberg 2001, 338):

In vv.23-29 Jerusalem is accused of prostitution, which is extended to harlotry with the Egyptians and with the Assyrians and the Chaldeans (vv.26-29), a secondary motif taken from ch.23 (cf. Fohrer 1955, 90; Zimmerli 1969, 353-354.358; Pohlmann 1996, 227). The new motif in vv.30-34 is payment for prostitution, but these verses are linked to the preceding verses thematically and linguistically (cf. vv.24-25a with v.31; cf. Fohrer 1955, 90.92 and Zimmerli 1969, 354; Pohlmann 1996, 227¹³¹). Jerusalem was not simply a prostitute accepting payment from clients (v.31b; cf. Hos 9:1; Mi 1:7; Dt 23:19). Prostitutes are paid (v.33a), while Jerusalem behaved incomprehensibly by paying her lovers,¹³² all who came to her (vv.33b and 34; the repeated *הַדָּבָר*, “the other way around”, emphasises the absurdity of this situation). Prostitution here is a metaphor for relations with foreign powers.¹³³ In v.32, prostitution without payment is associated with the adultery of a wife who has sexual intercourse not with her husband but with strangers: “Adulterous wife, who

¹³⁰ Cf. Pohlmann 1996, 231 and fn. 192, according to which child sacrifice was rare in Israel and among the neighbouring peoples (cf. Jer 7:29ff; Mi 6:7 or 2 Ki 3:27) and was unequivocally and firmly rejected from the time of the exile; Zimmerli 1969, 357.

¹³¹ Who view it as another supplementary explanation.

¹³² Lovers are also mentioned in vv.36-37, but especially in 23:5.9.22.

¹³³ Cf. also Hos 8:9-10; 12:2; Is 30:6-7 (cf. Pohlmann 1996, 231) and 2Ki 16:7-8 (*שָׂדֵה*); cf. Greenberg, 2001, 343). Cf. also the following discussion of Ezk 23.

receives strangers¹³⁴ instead¹³⁵ of her husband!” This is an interjection that interrupts the train of thought from vv.31b.33 (cf. Jasiński 2018, 112).¹³⁶

Vv.35-43 are primarily a threat or foreshadowing of punishment for Jerusalem, the prostitute (זִנָּה; v.35). God will gather her earlier lovers against Jerusalem (v.37; cf. v.33), i.e., the soldiers of the powers she tried to deal with, along with other enemies (cf. 23:28). He will expose her before them (cf. 23:10; an allusion to rape in wars?; cf. Is 47:3).¹³⁷ In contrast, v.36 not only refers to lovers, but also to idols (גִּלְגָּלִים)¹³⁸ and child sacrifice.¹³⁹ Jerusalem is to be judged and condemned based on the laws concerning adulterous wives and murderesses (v.38a; cf. 23:45)¹⁴⁰: “And I will judge you by the law¹⁴¹ of adulteresses and by the law of women that shed blood”. The punishment is to be death, according to the regulations in Lv 20:10 and Nu 35:33; Dt 19:10. The punishment will be an expression of punishing wrath and jealousy (cf. Ex 34:14 and

¹³⁴ *BHS* (*prb*); Fohrer 1955, 89-90; Zimmerli 1969, 338 (*homoioteleuton*) emend the text following G. However, G proposes a completely different understanding of the text (cf. Chrostowski 1991, 224-226), and TM contains a better reading (TM is translated by Greenberg 2001, 312; Jasiński 2018, 103; also Homerski 2013, 138). The adjective נָךְ (used as a noun) can mean not only a foreigner (cf. Hos 7:9) or a member of another community (cf. Dt 25:5), but also refer to followers of other gods (cf. Jer 2:25; 3:13) – cf. Greenberg 2001, 342; also Martin-Achard 1984, 510-522.

¹³⁵ For the syntax of this expression, cf. Nu 3:45; 8:18. According to Greenberg 2001, 312.342, תַּחַת אִשָּׁה means being under the control or authority of one’s husband (cf. Ezk 23:5; Nu 5:19-20.29).

¹³⁶ A secondary verse according to Fohrer 1955, 89-90; cf. also Zimmerli 1969, 353.

¹³⁷ To this cf. Herrmisson 2003, 192. Differently in e.g. Westermann, Albertz 1984, 422.

¹³⁸ Just this one time in Ezk 16.

¹³⁹ The second part of v.36 is considered an addition – cf. Fohrer 1955, 87; Zimmerli 1969, 360-361; Pohlmann 1996, 229 (which in his view also applies to the lovers’ theme).

¹⁴⁰ Again considered a secondary expansion – cf. Fohrer 1955, 87; Zimmerli 1969, 361, but differently in Pohlmann 1996, 229.

¹⁴¹ In G* sg. like in 23:45 (cf. *BHS*), which invites an erroneous emendation (as in Zimmerli 1969, 339). In 23:45 sg. is used twice separately for the two offences. G* also lacks the “shedding of blood” (cf. *BHS*; Pohlmann 1996, 218).

Pr 6:34; it may be related to the metaphor of marital infidelity, cf. also Ezk 23:25; cf. Reuter 1993, 51-62). The blood motif links (secondarily?) the punishment to child sacrifice (cf. also vv.20-21), and adultery to both indulging with “lovers” and idols (secondarily?). In a much more elaborate way, the punishment is described in the following vv.39-41. A crowd (לְהָרֹבֵץ; v.40; cf. 23:47) will rise up against the unfaithful Jerusalem, which in the immediate context is probably formed of the lover-enemies (together with other enemies – cf. vv.37.39), i.e. foreign nations,¹⁴² or rather foreign armies (cf. 17:17; 23:24; 26:7; according to Greenberg, 2001, 345). She will be stoned, which may have been a punishment for: forbidden cultic practices (cf. Lv 20:2.27; also Dt 17:5 [with לְהַסֵּק])¹⁴³, drawing God’s people away from YHWH towards foreign gods (cf. Dt 13,[7-]11), premarital sexual intercourse or adultery (Dt 22:21 [זִנָּה]; 22:23-25; cf. Kapelrud 1986, 945-948 and above). It may therefore be a punishment for the adulterous Jerusalem (cf. v.38a; cf. Zimmerli 1969, 360-361) and/or in a broader sense for infidelity to God and idolatry. In the current shape of the text, adultery is one of the grounds for capital punishment (along with the murder of children), through which it was indirectly applied to cultic or religious deviance (improper cultic practices and idol worship) and political actions (the lovers Egypt, Assyria and Babylon).

The root נָאֵר is thus used in this chapter in a distinctive way. In v.32, adultery is invoked to illustrate the unusual situation when a prostitute does not take payment, and in v.38 to explain the imposition of the death penalty (while gaining a metaphorical meaning similar to the prostitution metaphor, perhaps as a result of secondary editing).

¹⁴² Differently in Zimmerli 1969, 360: *Rechtsgemeinde* (to that critically Day 2000, 303).

¹⁴³ And also for turning against God (cf. Lv 21:14.16.23), not observing the Sabbath (Nu 15:35-36) and sacrilege (cf. Jsh 7:25). The verb used in Dt is always לְהַסֵּק. Cf. also Schunck 1993, 345-347.

Ezk 23 is an elaborate, figurative outline of the history of Israel and Judah, in which the central term is the root זנה. It is certainly not a literarily homogenous text, but an edited, complex composition (cf. Zimmerli 1969, 536-537; Pohlmann 2001, 339-340).¹⁴⁴ The theme of harlotry appears in all its parts, i.e. vv.(1.)2-27/28-30/31-34/35/36-49¹⁴⁵, but the זנה root is found only in the last of these.

Vv.2-27 are an extended figurative speech about two sisters Oholah-Samaria and Oholibah-Jerusalem.¹⁴⁶ The starting point for such a figurative presentation was certainly Jer 3:6-11 (cf. Zimmerli 1969, 539; Pohlmann 2001, 342; Greenberg 2005, 106; Homerski 2013, 179 and above). The two sisters first had illicit sex (זנה) during their youth in Egypt (vv.2-3.4). Later Oholah lusted for (ענב)¹⁴⁷ and prostituted herself (זנה) with the Assyrians (vv.5-7), but without abandoning prostitution that she had begun in Egypt (v.8).¹⁴⁸ In addition, Samaria made herself cultically impure (טמא; v.7b)¹⁴⁹, lusting not only for the Assyrians (cf. v.5b) but also for their idols (גלילים – cf. 16:36 and 20:7 etc.). The equation of relations with the Assyrians with cultic impurity in the form of idolatry is presumably the result of a secondary expansion.¹⁵⁰ Because of her continued contacts with Egypt, Oholah suffered punishment at the

¹⁴⁴ But the assessment varies in detail (cf. Fohrer 1955, 130-137; Zimmerli 1969, 536-538; Pohlmann 2001, 339-343; Greenberg 2005, 10)3.

¹⁴⁵ There is relative consensus as to its parts, which can be delineated on the basis of content differences and introductory formulas of the messenger – cf. Zimmerli 1969, 536-537; Pohlmann 2001, 339-340; also Greenberg 2005, 103-105; Homerski 2013, 179.

¹⁴⁶ For the meaning of the names cf. Zimmerli 1969, 541-542; Pohlmann 2001, 346; Greenberg 2005, 110.

¹⁴⁷ Regarding this verb cf. *HAHAT*; Zimmerli 1969, 543; Greenberg 2005, 111.

¹⁴⁸ Differently from the similar formulation in 16:15, the Egyptians “poured out their whoring lust upon her”, indicating Egypt’s desire for contact with Samaria (seduction) – cf. Greenberg 2005, 107 and 116.

¹⁴⁹ This word does not appear in Ezk 16.

¹⁵⁰ According to Zimmerli 1969, 544; Pohlmann 2001, 346. Fohrer 1955, 131, only removes “all their idols” as an explanatory gloss. According to Greenberg 2005, 112, religious promiscuity is combined with a political one.

hands of the Assyrians (vv.9-10).¹⁵¹ Despite this, Oholah's fate did not impress her sister Oholibah-Jerusalem (vv.11-27).¹⁵² In her unbridled lust and prostitution she acted even worse than Oholah, for not only did she lust after the Assyrians (and make herself impure – v.13a; cultic impurity suggests that this is an addition; cf. 7b),¹⁵³ but she was infatuated with the Chaldeans (i.e. the Babylonians; vv.14-16a) so that she sent messengers to them (v.16).¹⁵⁴ They prostituted themselves with her (and additionally made Jerusalem impure; an expansion of v.17).¹⁵⁵ Then she turned away in disgust from the Babylonians, but God also turned away from her (v.18) disgusted with her brazen harlotry, especially as she, like her sister (cf. v.8), continued to prostitute herself with Egypt (vv.19-21; cf. 2 Ki 24 – cf. Zimmerli 1969, 547; Pohlmann 2001, 347). A punishment falls on her by God's initiative (vv.22-27): The Babylonians will not forgive Oholibah's political treachery.¹⁵⁶ God will finally put an end to the disgraceful prostitution of the Egyptian period, i.e. political relations with Egypt (v.27; cf. Jer 41:16-43:7; cf. Greenberg 2005, 124; Pohlmann 2001, 348).

The threat of vv.28-30 repeats a number of motifs familiar from earlier verses (cf. v.10a.11.18a.27a and 16:37-39), including the reason for the punishment (v.30b) : whoring with the nations or imitating them

¹⁵¹ Cf. 2 Ki 15:19-20.29; 17:3. For the historical situation cf. Pohlmann 2001, 346-347 and fn. 70 and 71; Greenberg 2005, 11 and *ANET*, 280-281, esp. 283.

¹⁵² They illustrate the fate of Jerusalem and Judah from Assyrian times to the fall in 587/6 B.C. – cf. Pohlmann 2001, 347.

¹⁵³ Cf. Zimmerli 1969, 545; Pohlmann 2001, 347; even if there are different reasons for considering these verses as secondary.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. 2Ki 20:12-19 (and Is 39) or 2Ki 24 – on this cf. Zimmerli 1969, 545-546; Pohlmann 2001, 347.

¹⁵⁵ V.17aβ-b is secondary according to Pohlmann 2001, 339. It is reasonable to ask whether these contacts did not also lead to the adoption or imposition of foreign cultic practices, which is attested, however, only for the period of Assyrian domination (cf. 2Ki 21:5; 23:4-5.11-12).

¹⁵⁶ For the description of punishments, cf. commentaries, especially Zimmerli 1969, 548-550; Greenberg 2005, 122-124 and Pohlmann 2001, 348.

and making oneself cultically impure with their idols (as in v.7b).¹⁵⁷ On the other hand, the figurative speech about the two sisters links vv.31-34 to vv.1-27 by:¹⁵⁸ the cup (a metaphor for misfortune or disaster) of Samaria will be given to Jerusalem. V.35, which is a bridge to the next section, foreshadows Jerusalem suffering the consequences of turning away from YHWH. Wickedness is equated with rejection of YHWH and His will here. This is a generalising summary mainly referring to vv.27 and 29 (cf. Pohlmann 2001, 339-340; Greenberg 2005, 105).

The last section (vv.36-49) wants to be a continuation of the message about Oholah and Oholibah (v.36). This passage is multiply related to the rest of ch.23 as well as to ch.16. Since it appears to be composed of phrases and imagery from these two chapters (plus borrowings from other chapters), it is reasonably regarded as a secondary expansion.¹⁵⁹ Its structure consists essentially of two parts: vv.36-44 are a list of trespasses, vv.46-49 are a threat (cf. the formula of the messenger at the beginning of v.46),¹⁶⁰ and v.45 combines the foreshadowing of judgment (v.45a) and its justification (v.45b). The key theme is the judgment of the two sisters (שפּט in vv.36.45). The judgment begins with the announcement of their cultic offences (תּוֹעֵבֹת; v.36, which is almost identical to 16:2). They committed (v.37) adultery (נָאֵף) with idols (cf. v.7) and the murder of their own children born to God (cf. v.4), who were to become food for idols – a similar juxtaposition is still found in 16:36, where the root זָנָה is used. The slaughter of children for idols returns in v.39a, where the phrase from 16:21 is used.¹⁶¹ Thus they made the sanctuary impure

¹⁵⁷ While this could be a separate unit (cf. Greenberg 2005, 105), we are rather dealing with an editorial expansion (cf. Zimmerli 1969, 551; Pohlmann 2001, 339).

¹⁵⁸ These verses are most likely an expansion – cf. Zimmerli 1969, 551-553; Pohlmann 2001, 339-340.

¹⁵⁹ In addition, grammatical coherence is lacking as well. Cf. Zimmerli 1969, 553; Pohlmann 2001, 340; Greenberg 2005, 103.105-109. As to dating, opinions vary widely.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Zimmerli 1969, 553, who includes v.45 in the threat. However, v.45 gives the impression of a separate introduction to vv.46-49.

¹⁶¹ Cf. also Pietsch 2013, 368 and fn. 654 and 655: v.39aα takes up and interprets

and profaned the Sabbaths (v.38.39aβ-b). While vv.7.30 refer to defiling themselves with idols (in v.17 with political dealings with the Babylonians), here they profaned the sanctuary and the Sabbaths with their impurity (cf. Lv 19:30; cf. Zimmerli 1969, 554).¹⁶²

The not fully understandable vv.40-44 highlight the adulterous behaviour of the two sisters (cf. Pohlmann 2001, 349; also Zimmerli 1969, 554). Vv.40b-41 seem to speak of preparations for an orgy (cf. Greenberg 2005, 128), and in v.42 a multitude of men appear who, unlike in ch.16, bestow ornaments (bracelets and crowns) on the women. V.43, in which the נָא and הָנָה roots return, is obscure and impossible to reconstruct (cf. *BHS*; *HAHAT*; Zimmerli 1969, 535.554; Pohlmann 2001, 338 fn. 20; Greenberg 2005, 102.129).¹⁶³ – it was presumably intended to be a summary of the accusation against the two sisters. V.44 further follows up on the theme of men coming to Oholah and Oholibah, which is compared to visiting a prostitute (הַזְנוּיָהּ woman and women acting scandalously; cf. v.27.29.35 and Jer 13:27; Lv 19:29). As in 16:38, they will be judged (cf. also 16:41aβ) and condemned based on the legal provisions for adulterous wives and murderers/murderesses (v.45) – a direct reference to the conduct depicted in v.37 (cf. also v.39αα). While the judge in 16:38

v.37b in the sense of cultic slaughter, in the spirit of *teknophagia*. According to Day 2000, 294-295, both adultery and murder are metaphors for breaking the covenant and child sacrifice, which could not be considered murder (fn. 30). However, they are equated with murder not only in v.37 (“blood on their hands”), but also in 16:38 and 23:45.

¹⁶² It is interesting that this accusation also applies to Oholah. Profaning the Sabbaths is the theme of 20:13.16.21.24; 22:8, and the expression “defile the sanctuary (שִׁקְרָה)” of 5:11 (and otherwise only in Lv 20:3 and Nu 19:20).

¹⁶³ TM literally: “worn out has adultery, now they will prostitute themselves by prostituting her and she” (?) (slightly different in Fohrer 1955, 137). The following is proposed in the *BHS*, referring to G and S: “Was it not as these [thus] committed adultery and engaged in the deeds of a prostitute?” (translated in Fohrer; Pohlmann: “Did they not thus commit adultery? And by acts of a prostitute they also prostituted themselves.”). And Jasiński 2019, 347: “And I told the one destroyed by adultery: Now she also commits adultery with her fornications”, but without explaining how he arrived at this translation.

was God (cf. also the invitation to pass judgement addressed to the prophet in v.36), here the judges are righteous people. It may be a reference is to the righteous of 18:5-9, who do not commit wicked religious and ethical/social acts, such as worshipping idols or offering sacrifices to them.¹⁶⁴ However, they probably do not form a host/congregation which, at God's call, would carry out the judgment (v.46-47) by stoning them, i.e. decimating their inhabitants ("their sons and their daughters"; cf. v.10.25), and burning their houses (cf. 16:40-41). In vv.24-26 such a judgment is carried out by the assembly of the (hostile) nations (nevertheless, according to v.24, they too judge Jerusalem). They will suffer punishment for their idolatrous conduct (third time in vv.48-49 זָנָה and, exceptional in Ezk, זָנָה גִּלְיָלִים, i.e., sinning with idols and punishment for it; cf. 16:51).¹⁶⁵

Prostitution (the זָנָה root) in this chapter is dealing with foreign powers. An editorial addition to this is cultic impurity (טָמֵא) with idolatry (v.7b.30 cf. also v.49). In v.35 prostitution is used as a metaphor in the broad sense of turning away from YHWH. In contrast, the root הָנָא appears in v.45a borrowed from 16:38 (punishment for adultery), relating adultery as a metaphor to idolatry linked to the spilling of children's blood (v.37 and 45b; cf. 16:36). Vv.37 and 45 are related not only to each other, but also to 16:36.38. Apart from the obscure v.43, the motives of adultery and prostitution are not directly connected. When dealing with men, i.e. foreign nations, the root זָנָה is used, while the root הָנָא is used for idolatry (along with the sacrificial shedding of children's blood). The matter is further complicated by the fact that prostitution as a metaphor is adjacent to the theme of defiling oneself with idols in the editorial expansions (see v.7b.30; cf. above).¹⁶⁶ Apart from v.43, in the last section (vv.36-49) devoted to adultery with foreign deities,

¹⁶⁴ Differently but unconvincingly in Greenberg 2005, 130.

¹⁶⁵ The whole concludes with the formula for knowing YHWH, typical in Ezk (cf. 13:9; 24:24; 28:24; 29:16; also 6:7.13; 7:4.9 etc.).

¹⁶⁶ זָנָה also appears in secondary vv.13.17 (and v.38).

the זנה root only appears in the middle of it, in v.44, but this passage is literarily complex, and prostitution is only mentioned in connection with sexual frolicking with men (vv.40-44). The two roots are thus used differently. This conclusion, however, is strongly undermined by the use of the זנה root in Ezk 16 for cultic and religious infidelity, especially since v.37 (נאִרָה) draws on 16:36, where the source domain of the metaphor is prostitution (the זנה root).

Summary

The motif of adultery in Ezk appears only in expansions, first in connection with the death penalty for the harlot Jerusalem (16:38), certainly because prostitution as such was not punishable.¹⁶⁷ Hence the motif was picked up in 23:45(a). It was also used in 16:32 to explain the bizarre situation when a prostitute forgoes payment. In ch.23, on the other hand, adultery is a metaphor for idolatry (vv.37.45b). Although in Ezk 16 and 23 the motif of adultery is not directly related to prostitution as a metaphor, it includes iniquities that were metaphorically described as prostitution.

3.4. Is 57:3

Is 57:3-13 is not necessarily a single pericope,¹⁶⁸ although the verses are bound together by the common themes of cultic transgressions and the offering of sacrifices to idols.¹⁶⁹ Vv. 3-5 are addressed in the 2nd person *pl.* while vv. 6-13a use the 2nd person *sg. fem.* forms: *pl.* probably refers simply to the Israelites, while *sg. fem.* refers to Jerusalem.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ For exceptional situations where illicit sexual intercourse was indeed punishable, cf. above.

¹⁶⁸ For the separation of the individual pericopes cf. Lau 1994, 151; also Steck 1991, 171-172. Westermann 1986, 256.258, divides these verses into two separate prophetic words (vv.3-6 and 7-13).

¹⁶⁹ Cf. also the list of common words in Goldingay 2014, 102.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Steck 1991, 173 (the addressees in *pl.* are the leaders of the people); Goldingay 2014, 123 (the shift to *fem.* is due to the fact that Jerusalem is referred to as a mother sacrificing her own children); Shores 2019, 625. And according to Koole 2001, 52-53 and 59, we have here a metaphorical reference to the people as an unfaithful bride of

As Jerusalem represents its inhabitants (and those of the surrounding areas), this in fact overlaps with the people (of Judea). They are called to appear before the court (בקרב cf. Is 41:1.5; 48:16; similarly in Is 41:21; also Dt 1:17; cf. Kühlewein 1984b, 680) and at the same time referred to as children of a woman practising divination (cf. Is 2:6; Jer 27:9; a forbidden religious practice in Israel – cf. Dt 18:10.14; 2 Ki 21:6; cf. Koole 2001, 52 and André 1984, 379.381) or “offspring of the adulterer and the prostitute” (TM is unfortunately uncertain and needs emendation).¹⁷¹ If the text-critical solution adopted here is correct, then this cannot refer to the children of an adulterer and a prostitute (cf. Goldingay 2014, 120), because by having intercourse with a prostitute a man would not commit adultery. There is no doubt that we are dealing with a figurative use of both terms (thus also the commentators: Westermann 1986, 256; Koole 2001, 53), in which case the words “children” and “offspring” are not to be understood literally either (differently in Goldingay 2014, 117). The appeal is to a people who commit sinful acts (cf. Koole 2001, 53). In the next verse (v.4b) the addressees are furthermore called children of transgression, sin (פֶשַׁע)¹⁷² and offspring of deceit. שָׁקֵר refers to deceit not only of a social but also of a religious nature. It may have been a judgment

JHWH (?).

¹⁷¹ In TM the verb נה in *impf. cons. q.* 3rd pers. *sg. fem.* or 2nd pers. *sg. masc.* would have to be understood as the phrase “and the one who practices harlotry” (according to Goldingay 2014, 95-96). It cannot refer to the addressees, as the pl. form would be necessary (as in Q^a; such a reading is advocated by Lau 1994, 152). A possible reconstruction may be indicated by G and V (*ptp. masc.* – according to Koole 2001, 53-54; Brzegowy 2019, 614). On the other hand, there is no textual evidence for the change of *ptp. masc.* נִהַרְסָה to *fem.* (thus rightly Goldingay 2014, 95). However, the logic of the text (but isn't this a harmonization of the text?) would indicate an emendation, especially since from v.6 onwards the addressee(s) is a magnitude in *sg. fem.* One could therefore postulate an error of rearranging the order of the letters נ and ה. Most often, both emendations are made together “adulterers and prostitutes” – cf. BHS; Westermann 1986, 256; Stachowiak 1996, 253, who failed to mark the textual emendation; Brzegowy 2019, 614.

¹⁷² A broad term for judicially punishable iniquity, wickedness, always having the dimension of religious deviance – cf. Knierim 1984b, 488-495.

on idolatry or sorcery (Is 44:20; Jer 10:14, etc.). Deceit also includes false hopes placed on illicit cultic practices and/or foreign deities (Jer 3:23; 13:25; cf. above and Klopfenstein 1984b, 1015). Unfortunately, also the (rhetorical) questions in v.4a are uncertain in terms of interpretation. Perhaps they strongly criticise turning or blaspheming against God (cf. Ps.35:21; cf. Westermann 1986, 257; Stachowiak 1996, 254; Brzegowy 2019, 623; Koole 2001, 55 [praising other gods]). Further verses (vv.5-13) expose false cultic practices, although in detail they raise a number of textual and interpretive problems.¹⁷³ Various sacrificial practices are mentioned (vv.5-7) linked to the metaphorical illicit sexual intercourse (vv.7-8). Linguistically they are dependent on criticisms from Hos, Jr, Ezk and the Deuteronomistic traditions (e.g. sacrifices offered at green trees – cf. Hos 4:13-14; “under every green tree” – cf. Jer 2:20; 3:6.13; Dt 12:2; 1 Ki 14:23; 2 Ki 16:4; 17:10 and Ezk 6:13 and 2 Ch 28:4; “on the high hill” – cf. Jer 3:6; preparation of the bed – cf. Ezk 23:17)¹⁷⁴. The addressee from v.6 onwards is Jerusalem, and in v.7 reference is made to a “high and lofty mountain”, which may be a term for the Temple Mount (cf. Is 2:2-3). It seems, therefore, that the illicit cults are associated with the temple in Jerusalem (cf. Lau 1994, 156-157(.159); Koole 2001, 64-65(.66); Shores 2019, 627; more cautiously in Goldingay 2014, 126-127).¹⁷⁵ It is also unclear whether the text describes some cults of YHWH that were deemed illegal or idolatrous cults,¹⁷⁶ especially since

¹⁷³ Cf. Goldingay 2014, 116: complex series of images and concepts that are difficult to identify accurately.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. above and commentaries, e.g. Koole 2001, 56-88, or the general assessment in Goldingay 2014, 117.

¹⁷⁵ In my view, however, this identification of the site is uncertain, as not only green trees but also, for example, high mountains (hills) appear regularly in the context of many cult sites. Are the wadis (v.5.6) therefore sites in the vicinity of Jerusalem (mostly associated with the Molech cult; cf. Koole 2001, 58-59)?

¹⁷⁶ Cf. the problematic: “smooth stones” in v.6 (cf. *HAHAT*; differently in Koole 2001, 59-61: “dead of the gorge”), “memorial” and “hand” in v.8 (cf. Koenen 1988, 48-49.52-53; Lau 1994, 159.161; also Westermann 1986, 257 fn. 3; Koole 2001, 67-68.71; Shores 2019, 627), “king” (Molech?) in v.9 (cf. Westermann 1986, 258; Lau 1994, 162; Koole 2001,

the reference to idol worship may have served only to reinforce criticism of inappropriate forms of worshipping YHWH.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, in vv.7-8 sexual motifs will appear: setting a bed, uncovering (probably an elliptical expression for sexual intercourse – pi. גילה)¹⁷⁸, phallus (if it is not the hand)¹⁷⁹. However, these are so enigmatic that one can only try to guess their meaning.¹⁸⁰

Summary

Calling the Israelites or the inhabitants of Jerusalem the children of an adulterer and a prostitute must be understood figuratively, since the reference to these sexual iniquities was probably intended to criticise the abominable cultic practices that “Jerusalem” was said to have committed on the Temple Mount and its environs. Although the two roots נאף and זנה refer to the same thing, they are not fully identical, since they speak of the father (a theme not developed in this pericope) and the mother to whom vv.6-13a refer.

4. Conclusions

The root נאף literally means “to commit adultery” and its meaning never overlaps with the root זנה. They describe different sexual iniquities.

73; Goldingay 2014, 130), “collection” (of idols?) in v.13 (cf. Lau 1994, 166-167; Koole 2001, 85; Goldingay 2014, 133; Brzegowy 2019, 631, and this without the unnecessary emendation proposed in Marti 1990, 370, or most probably in Stachowiak 1996, 257).

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Lau 1994, 168, who argues that the (scribe) prophet did not refer to any idolatrous cults existing in reality.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. *HAHAT* (elliptical expression, exposure of the genitalia). For proposed emendations (in *BHS prb*; Goldingay 2014, 128) cf. Lau 1994, 160 and Koenen 1988, 49.

¹⁷⁹ Perhaps attested in 1QS 7:13; derived from *רד² “to love” – cf. *HAHAT*, commentaries, e.g. Westermann 1986, 257 fn. 3; Koenen 1988, 52-53; Lau 1994, 161; Goldingay 2014, 96.218-129. Koole 2001, 71, thinks of the monument, the tomb (cf. 56:5) as an allusion to the deities of the underworld, the chthonic world (Baal worship).

¹⁸⁰ Cf. especially Koenen 1988; Lau 1994, 156-161; more cautiously Koole 2001, 65-72

In a figurative sense, they are only directly linked to each other in Jer (the beginning of this process can be seen in Hos 2:4), where they refer to cultic infidelity to YHWH. But it is in just two (Jer 3:6-11; 13:[25-]27) or possibly three places (Jer 5:7-9) that both metaphors illustrate one and the same religious offence. In Ezk, on the other hand, the matter is more complicated. In Ezk 23, which is clearly based on Jer 3:6-11, metaphorical prostitution is used to describe conspiring with foreign powers, the subjugated vassals Samaria and Jerusalem betraying the rulers of Assyria and Babylon by establishing relations with Egypt. Adultery was added secondarily as a metaphor for cultic and religious infidelity to YHWH and acknowledgement of other gods.¹⁸¹ Due to the editorial addition of the cultic impurity motif (טמא), on the other hand, the two metaphors were placed directly next to each other. In Ezk 16, in which prostitution is in turn a metaphor for Jerusalem's religious and cultic infidelity to YHWH, נאִי appears only in the addition of v.32, illustrating the bizarre behaviour of the prostitute Jerusalem by a comparison with an adulterous wife, and in the editorial expansion of v.45, according to which Jerusalem would be condemned on the basis of the law on adultery and murder (prostitution was generally not punishable). These laws refer to indulging with foreign deities and making bloody child sacrifices. As a result of editorial interventions, metaphorically used prostitution and adultery began to overlap, although nowhere are the two source domains directly linked. The late "Trito-Isaiah" passage is both textually and interpretively uncertain, making it impossible to draw any reliable conclusions.

Furthermore, adultery (irrespective of the prostitution motif) was also a metaphor for false prophecy (Jer 23:10-15; 29:23), the treacherous behaviour of one's fellow man (Jer 9:1-10) or the betrayal of the king by the courtiers (Hos 7:3-7).

¹⁸¹ In 23:44 prostitution is associated with chasing foreign men and sexual orgies, alluding to conspiring with foreign powers, and 23:43 is damaged and cannot be interpreted.

Although in a figurative sense זנה and נאף became metaphors for cultic or religious infidelity, with the exception of Jer 3:6-11; 13:(25-)27 (and somewhat differently Ezk 16[,38]), the distinctiveness of their meanings (source domains) was clearly preserved. The נאף root appeared within this metaphorical framework precisely because of its particular literal meaning. It was used when referring to the betrayal of the addressee explicitly referred to as mother and wife (Hos 2:4), to the punishment in the form of a decree of divorce (Jer 3:6-9), to the death penalty (Ezk 16:38 and 23:45) or to the unusual behaviour of a prostitute who does not take payment (Ezk 16:32). It is only for Jer 13:27 that such a reason cannot be identified. Even if both metaphors were used to illustrate cultic or religious departure from YHWH, this does not yet mean that they had lost their distinctiveness. There is no reason whatsoever to postulate a fusion of their meanings even in the case of Jer 3:6-11 and 13:27. Only by recognising that we are dealing with two, sometimes complementary metaphors and different source domains, does a proper interpretation of these passages become possible.

It is therefore a mistake to mix the meanings of the two verbs. One has to distinguish between the two metaphors and their meanings. Nor is K. Adams (2008) correct in her view that prostitution (זנה) is a metaphor (second level metaphor) for adultery (נאף). In Hos 4:13-14 in particular, the two metaphors clearly form a parallelism, referring to different crimes in the source domains (vehicle/figure). In Hos 2:4 and Jer 13:27, on the other hand, these are parallel concepts, and in no way can prostitution be a metaphor for adultery. This also applies to Ezk, to which K. Adams refers to in the first instance. The two metaphors may be adjacent, describing the same iniquity, but nowhere is זנה a metaphor for adultery. One can also already challenge the thesis of the literal meaning of זנה as participation in illicit cults (cf. Riegner 2009 and above), which would have to lead in Hos 4:13-14 to the adoption of the literal sense of זנה and the metaphorical sense of נאף. Since prostitution, as I. Riegner argues, was never punishable, it could not be a metaphor for the cultic

betrayal of YHWH. Such an argument is also falsified by Ezk 23*, where prostitution as a metaphor refers to the betrayal of vassal rulers, which from the point of view of I. Reigner would have to be nonsensical.¹⁸²

Translation: Marta Brudny

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¹⁸² I. Reigner does not attempt to advocate another supposedly literal meaning of זנה, for even though about 1/3 of the זנה root sites occur in Ezk, he does not analyse them apart from 6:9 and 16:20.

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Wykaz autorów

- Piotr Briks**, piotr.briks@usz.edu.pl, Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, ul. Krakowska 71-79, 71-017 Szczecin
- Witold Tyborowski**, tybor@amu.edu.pl, Pracownia Historii Starożytnego Bliskiego Wschodu, Wydział Historii Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza, ul. Uniwersytetu Poznańskiego 7, 61-614 Poznań
- Janusz Lemański**, janusz.lemański@usz.edu.pl, Instytut Nauk Teologicznych Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, ul. Pawła VI nr 2, 71-459 Szczecin
- Łukasz Niesiołowski–Spanò**, l.niesiolowski@uw.edu.pl, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28 00-927 Warszawa
- Sławomir Poloczek**, slawomir-poloczek@wp.pl, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28 00-927 Warszawa
- Kacper Ziemia**, kaz@teol.ku.dk, Karen Blixen Plads 16, 2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark
- Jakub Sławik**, j.slawik@chat.edu.pl, Chrześcijańska Akademia Teologiczna w Warszawie, ul. Broniewskiego 48, 01-771 Warszawa
- Michał Wojciechowski**, m.wojciechowski@uwm.edu.pl, Liliowa 49, 11-041 Olsztyn
- Paweł Filipczak**, pawel.filipczak@uni.lodz.pl, Katedra Historii Bizancjum, Uniwersytet Łódzki, ul. Kamińskiego 27a, 90-219 Łódź
- Kamil Biały**, bialykamil89@gmail.com, Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Krakowska 71/79, 71-017 Szczecin
- Teresa Wolińska**, teresa.wolinska@filhist.uni.lodz.pl, Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, ul. A. Kamińskiego 27A; 90-219 Łódź
- Dariusz Długosz**, dariusz.dlugosz@louvre.fr; Musée du Louvre 75058 Paris 01 (France)