

HOS. 12: A PROPHETICAL POLEMIC AGAINST THE PROTO-ELOHISTIC PATRIARCHAL TRADITION *

Among the pre-exilic prophetic texts which refer directly to the Torah, notoriously few in number, one of the most explicit is Hos. 12, where there are several references to the traditions concerning the patriarch Jacob.

Our aim in this study is to analyse the prophet's understanding of and attitude to the Jacob tradition. For this purpose, it is necessary to consider Hos. 12 as a whole, with special emphasis on its literary structure (Section I), in order to determine the structural and semantic function of the Jacob tradition within the context of the chapter (Section II).

Thereafter, we shall analyse the nature of the contacts between the Jacob texts in Hosea 12 and the corresponding ones in Genesis, taking into account the results of the source-criticism of the latter. Our purpose is to determine, to what extent the Jacob of Hosea can be identified with the Jacob of Genesis (Section III).

Finally, we shall synthesize the two preceding aspects (Sections I-II and III), with a view to establishing the genetic relationship between the prophetic presentation of Jacob and that of the Pentateuch.

I. THE LITERARY STRUCTURE OF HOS. 12

Preliminary to the study of the Jacob traditions in Hos. 12, it is necessary to undertake an analysis of the literary structure of the chapter. It is an evaluation of the function of the Jacob traditions

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in their immediate context which permits an understanding as to why Hosea makes reference to events in the life of the patriarch and his personal attitude towards him.

The structural unity of the chapter is contested by many authors. Harper¹ and Ginsberg² affirm that the present order of the verses is not original and offer reconstructions of the sequence. Rudolph³ proposes to place vv. 11-12 after vv. 13-14. Wolff prefers to see in the chapter « eine kerygmatische Einheit », in which a single theme is developed: Ephraim is guilty and condemned it has cheated and betrayed its God. Nevertheless to the thematic unity does not correspond a discursive unity (Redeeinheit), since there are secondary insertions, though these are in harmony with the thematic context⁴. Similarly, most recently, Diedrich has affirmed that the complex Hos. 12, 1-13, 3 is composed by a long series of « kleinen Einheiten »⁵. But Coote has taken up the defence of both the thematic and structural unity of the chapter: « The chapter... is a unity », which he designates as a *rib*, in order to emphasize its « structural integrity »⁶, rather than the form-critical aspect.

Our own task is to throw light on the logical succession of the parts of the chapter created by the redactor of the final text. Let us begin with some textual observations. The majority of commentators agree that the name « Judah » in v. 3 is out of context. Harper⁷ motivates the assertion in three ways: « *Judah* is not in the thought of the prophet here, nor often elsewhere...; if the text is correct, Judah is given the place of prominence, even before Jacob...; to accept the text is to accept the impossible combination, viz. Yahweh has strife with Judah, (even) *in order to* punish Jacob ». Ginsberg⁸ adds another convincing argument, taken up by Good⁹ and Diedrich¹⁰: v. 4, which specifies v. 3, is clearly concerned with the etymology of the two names, Jacob and Israel. The author wishes

¹ W. R. HARPER, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea*, Edinburgh 1905, pp. 373-374.

² H. L. GINSBERG, « Hosea's Ephraim, More Fool than Knave. A New Interpretation of Hosea XII: 1-14 », *JBL* 80 (1961), pp. 341-342.

³ W. RUDOLPH, *Hosea* (Kommentar zum A. T., XIII, 1), Gütersloch 1966, pp. 220-221 and 230-231.

⁴ H. W. WOLFF, *Hosea* (Biblischer Kommentar A. T., XIV, 1), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973, pp. 268-269.

⁵ F. DIEDRICH, *Die Anspielungen auf die Jakob-Tradition in Hosea 12, 1 — 13, 3*. Ein literaturwissenschaftlicher Beitrag zur Exegese früher Prophetentexte (Forschung zur Bibel, Bd. 27), Würzburg 1977, pp. 144-164 and p. 163. To my regret, the book came to my knowledge only after the completion of my study.

⁶ R. B. COOTE, « Hosea XII », *VT* 21 (1971), p. 402.

⁷ o.c., pp. 378-379.

⁸ o.c., p. 342 n. 4.

⁹ E. M. GOOD, « Hosea and the Jacob Tradition », *VT* 16 (1966), p. 139.

¹⁰ o.c., p. 30.

to show that the two names Jacob-Israel themselves prove the culpability of the patriarch: God is in strife with Israel and wishes to punish Jacob (v. 3), because *ja^cāqōb* — *‘āqab* 'et 'ahîw, and *jîsrā'el* — *šārā* 'et 'elōhîm¹¹. It follows that in v. 3, one should read « Israel » instead of « Judah ».

The name « Judah » is found also at the beginning of our chapter, v. 1b: *wihūdā* *‘ōd rād* *‘im* 'el. The authors agree less as to why the name « Judah » is found here: some think that all v. 1b is a late Judean interpolation¹², some that only the name « Judah » is a Judean correction¹³. We favour the second opinion, holding that « Judah » has taken the place of an original « Jacob ». In such a reading: *w^eja^cāqōb* *‘ōd rād* *‘im* 'el we have an example of the breakup of a composite divine name for rhetorical purposes. Hosea is making an allusion here to the original form of Jacob's name: *ja^cāqōb'el*, in which he sees an indication of the sin of Jacob, which is the cult he pays to El to the detriment of the cult of the true God of Israel, Yahweh (see further on). It follows that v. 1b corresponds with vv. 3-4, where the same technique of etymological interpretation of names of the patriarch reappears. In addition *ja^cāqōb'el* parallels *jîsrā'el*, v. 1a. Both the parallelism and the breakup are intentionally used by the prophet in order to emphasize the theophoric element 'el.

Such a parallelism between *jîsrā'el* and *ja^cāqōb'el* is no hapax in the Bible. D.N. Freedman discerned another example in Deut. 33, 28:

wajjîškōn jîsrā'el betah
bādād ‘an ja^caqob'el

« Israel dwells in safety,
By himself Jacob-el settles »¹⁴.

In addition, if one compares the sequence of names in vv. 1 and 2-3, MT, one notices that they do not correspond:

¹¹ Also WOLFF, o.c., pp. 266-267, cf. n. 3b, accepts the correction: « MT 'Juda' geht wohl auf judäische Redaktion zurück ».

¹² So HARPER, o.c., p. 374 and 376; GINSBERG, o.c., p. 342 n. b: « parenthetic (probably a gloss) »; GOOD, o.c., p. 139 n. 2: « A passage like XII, 1b ... is so tendentious as to appear smugly judean »; similarly J. VOLLMER, *Geschichtliche Rückblicke und Motive in der Prophetie des Amos, Hosea und Jesaja*, Berlin 1971 (*Beihefte zur ZAW*, 119) in the Section: « Der Stammvater Jakob, Hos. 12 », pp. 105-115, see p. 106.

¹³ COOTE, o.c., p. 389 n. 2.

¹⁴ *cān* is from the same root as *mā'ōn* and has the same signification as *gār*. See D.N. FREEDMAN, « The Original Name of Jacob », *IEJ* 13 (1963), pp. 125-126.

- 1: Ephraim, Israel, Judah
 2-3: Ephraim, Judah, Jacob

On the contrary, by adopting the two corrections proposed above, the two series become identical. In addition, the two corrected series now correspond, chiastically, to the concluding series of names in our chapter:

- 1: Ephraim, Israel, « Jacob »
 2-3: Ephraim, « Israel », Jacob

13-15: Jacob, Israel (bis), Ephraim

The existence of the same succession of names in vv. 1 and 2-3 points to the conclusion that v. 1 is a general accusation against Ephraim — Israel — Jacob, indicating three faults: cheating, betrayal of God (*kaḥaš*, *mirmā*) and the illegitimate cult of El (by the breakup of patriarch's original name), while the following verses detail the various faults of the accused¹⁵.

It remains true that v. 1b seems obscure. This is due mainly to the imprecise interpretation of the term 'ēl. The common interpretation makes out 'ēl to be the generic name of the divinity¹⁶, i.e. a designation of Yahweh. If this identification of 'ēl with the God of Israel were true, it would follow that v. 1b is an adversative sentence, praising the Hebrews, which would be in contradiction with v. 3, whether in the MT or according to our two proposed corrections. But the meaning of the text becomes more consequent, if we see in v. 1b a reproach against « Jacob » for still being faithful (*rād* // *ne'ēmān*) to his particular god El. This conclusion is supported by v. 5, where Jacob's relation to El is exemplified¹⁷.

¹⁵ Cf. *mirmā* in v. 8, and in v. 15 an allusion to the same term in the word *tamrūrīm*; cf. WOLFF, o.c., p. 268. V. 5 alludes to the various encounters between Jacob and El.

¹⁶ So e.g. HARPER, o.c., p. 376; GINSBERG, o.c., p. 341; WOLFF, o.c., pp. 271-272.

¹⁷ U. CASSUTO in *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni*, 8 (1932), p. 130; H. NYBERG, *Studien zum Hoseabuche*, Uppsala 1935, pp. 91-93; M. POPE, *El in the Ugaritic Texts (VT-Suppl., II)* Leiden 1955, p. 13; R. B. COOTE, o.c., p. 390 n. 1; W. KUHNIGK, *Nordwestsemitische Studien zum Hoseabuch*, Roma 1974 (*Biblica et Orientalia*, 27), pp. 142-146: « Dass es bei 'ēl und den *qēdōšīm* wohl um den kanaanäischen El und die Mitglieder des Pantheons handelt, ist schon mehrfach angenommen worden. Diese Annahme erscheint mir nach allem am erleuchtendsten ». (p. 143). These authors identify the El in Hos. 12, 1b with the Canaanite divinity. Their identification should be nuanced: the prophet refers in the first place to the god, El, who had revealed himself to the patriarch, but who could not be completely separated from his Canaanite ambience, to which he originally belonged. See also note 35.

That the El of v. 1b is the personal divinity of the patriarch Jacob, is confirmed by another comparison between vv. 1b and 5. In 1b, there is a parallelism, 'ēl // *q^edōšim*; in v. 5, there is a similar parallelism, 'ēl // *mal'āk*¹⁸. The term *q^edōšim* in v. 1b has created difficulties of interpretation¹⁹; but from the comparison between the two pairs of parallels, it follows that *q^edōšim* is the equivalent of *mal'āk*, representing the members of the heavenly court of El, as in Ps. 89, 8, where the pair of parallels in v. 1b also appears.

In v. 5a, the MT 'el (with *seḡol*) should be read as a nominal form, *ēl* (with *šerē*). In v. 5a there is an even clear etymological allusion to the name Israel (*wajjšār 'ēl*) than in v. 4b. In v. 5a, the prophet limits himself merely to juxtaposing the two elements constitutive of the name Israel²⁰. What is more, in v. 5a, 'ēl is in parallelism with *mal'āk*, indicating that 'l is a divine name and not a preposition²¹.

Certain authors hold that the expression *bēt 'ēl* of v. 5b is the name of the divinity of the place Bethel, as in Gen. 31, 13; 35, 7 and in Jer. 48, 13²². Most, however, regard the expression *bēt 'ēl* as the accusative locative form of the geographical name, for *b^ebēt 'ēl*. Good holds a middle position. « Bethel must refer both to the deity and to the place, and the deity must be the subject of the verbs in both lines »²³. His solution clarifies the succession of the subjects in v. 5, while respecting the locative value of the particle *šām* in v. 5b. On the other hand, it is characteristic of Hosea to play on the double meanings of words. To simplify Good, I propose to read in v. 5b *bēt 'ēl* as a divine name, whereas in the following stych, the same term recurs implicitly in a locative sense, by reason of the use of the particle *šām*. V. 5b should therefore be translated as follows:

« (The divinity) Bethel finds him;
There (at Bethel) it (the divinity) speaks to him »²⁴.

¹⁸ For the discussion on 'ēl in v. 5 see after.

¹⁹ See ample discussion in WOLFF, o.c., pp. 271-272 and in KUHNIGK, o.c., pp. 143-144.

²⁰ See later for a more ample discussion on v. 5a.

²¹ Both terms, 'ēl and *mal'āk* appear in the stories about Jacob in Genesis; 'ēl appears in Gen. 28, 3; 31, 13; 33, 20; 35, 1.3; 46, 3; 48, 3. *mal'āk* appears in Gen. 31, 11; 32, 2; 48, 16.

²² So NYBERG, o.c., pp. 94-96; Y. KAUFMANN, *tōldōt hā'ēmūnā hajjis:ā'ēlit* (*History of the Religion of Israel*), V. III, Jerusalem 1947, pp. 134-136: « The Legend of Bethel (Hos. 12) »; GINSBERG, o.c., part III of his article, pp. 343-347.

²³ o.c., p. 146.

²⁴ The common opinion is that *cimmānū* is equivalent to *cimmō*. A philological explanation of the form is given by M. DAHOOD; see it in GOOD, o.c., p. 396. For other observations on the verse see later.

The preceding observations allow a comprehensive understanding of the first part of our text (vv. 1 and 2-7). In v. 1 there is a general accusation against Ephraim — Israel — « Jacob » for the cheating and betrayal of God and for the illegitimate cult of El, the God of Jacob. These two accusations are enlarged upon in vv. 2-5. But the force of Hosea's discourse is concentrated in v. 6. It is wrong to consider this verse as « ein doxologischer Einschub »²⁵. To the betrayal of God by Jacob-Israel and as against the cult of the patriarchal divinity, El, Hosea opposes, by an adversative sentence²⁶, of a liturgical-confessional character, the name of the true God of Israel, Yahweh. The solemn, kerygmatic confession of the name Yahweh, is the semantic axis around which revolves the entire first part of our chapter. In addition, there are literary contacts between Hos. 12, 6 and Ex. 3, 15 (E), which determinate in more detail the identity of Yahweh, the God proclaimed by Hosea. The relevant contacts between the two texts are:

Hos. 12, 6

wjhw
'ēlōhē hašš^ebā'ōt

jhw *zīkrō*

Ex. 3, 15

jhw
'ēlōhē 'ābōtēkem 'ēlōhē...

zeh-šš^emī l^{ec}ōlām
w^ezeh zīkrī l'dōr dōr

The structure of the two sentences is identical, though there is a difference in the divine titles used in the middle part of the sentences. It follows that the identity of the God proclaimed by Hosea is derived from the Exodus-tradition (E): the true God of Israel is the one who revealed himself to Moses on Horeb. In the following v. 7, the concluding verse of the first part of ch. 12, the prophet invites the people, the actual Jacob, to a conversion to the cult of its God (bis *'ēlōhēkā*), from the cult of El, the patriarchal divinity, practised in the temple of Bethel.

In the second part of our chapter, vv. 8-11, the prophet develops another opposition; the contrast now is between Canaan and the desert of the Exodus. The prophet opens this part by an emphatic designation of the name of the accused, Canaan (v. 8), like he opened the first part (v. 2) by apostrophising Ephraim. The sin of cheating (*mīrmā*) in v. 1, is now developed in a description of the sin of Canaan-Ephraim (vv. 8-9). As in the first part, to the sin is

²⁵ WOLFF, o.c., p. 276; HARPER: « an interjectional gloss or addition from the hand of some pious reader of very late days », o.c., p. 382.

²⁶ The initial *wāw* in *wihūdā* must be taken in an adversative sense: *but, on the contrary*. On the adversative *wāw* see KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum A.T.*, Lieferung I, Leiden 1967³, p. 248 (*wāw* — 15).

opposed a solemn affirmation of the identity of the true God of Israel, where it is explicitly stated that he is the God of the Exodus (v. 10a). In v. 7, the concluding verse of the first part, the people is invited to *return* to its God (*b'ē'lōhēkā tāšūb*); here, in vv. 10b-11, God himself will bring about the *return* of the people to the tents of the desert as in the time of the Exodus²⁷, where the word of God, mediated by the prophets will be as abundant as before. The promised return to the tents of the desert (see also Hos. 2, 16) is in deliberate contrast with the name, Canaan, which opens the second part. It follows that the name, Canaan, is semantically bivalent. At the beginning it designates Ephraim as an astute merchant, whereas in vv. 10-11 it designates the country, opposed to the ideal fatherland of Israel, the desert-space of the Exodus.

After vv. 10-11 and prior to the final v. 15, two small units, v. 12 and vv. 13-14, intervene independent of one another and structurally secondary. Their purpose is to prepare the final condemnation²⁸. The vv. 13-14 oppose the two figures of Jacob and the « prophet » Moses. The patriarch flees from the Promised Land and voluntarily lowers himself to the state of a servant, *ēbed*²⁹. In contrast, it is a prophet, Moses, who liberates Israel from the state of being an *ēbed* and leads them to the land from which Jacob flees.

The function of v. 12 is less obvious. It probably refers to two examples of divine punishment. We propose to see in the two keywords, Gilead and Gilgal, two implicit allusions: Gilgal, to the sin of Ephraim (cf. Hos. 4, 15; 9, 15) and Gilead, to the misconduct of Jacob. That the prophet Hosea associates Gilead with the misconduct of Jacob appears to be indicated by Hos. 6, 8, where Gilead is described as *āqubbā middām*. The prophetic audience would naturally associate the expression with *ja'āqōb*³⁰.

The chapter closes with a sentence of condemnation (v. 15), in which the key-word, *mirmā* (vv. 1.8) echoes in the word *tamrūrīm*. The verb *jašīb*, used in the sentence is taken over from v. 3,

²⁷ The precise meaning of *mōēd* is not completely clear; but I agree with WOLFF (o.c., p. 279) who proposes to see in the term an allusion to a « Beggnung (of God) mit Israel in der Wüste ».

²⁸ The two unities appear to have been inserted in order to prepare the final condemnation in Hos. 12, 15. The motive for their insertion is that they both refer, one explicitly, the other implicitly, to Jacob.

²⁹ Hosea, in using the verb *ābad* alludes to the state of *ēbed* in contrast to v. 14, where he refers implicitly to the liberation from the slavery of Egypt.

³⁰ It is difficult to determine what was the sin committed by Jacob in Gilead. It is possible that Hosea is alluding to the pact struck between Jacob and Laban in Gilead, which legitimated the astuteness of the methods employed by Jacob in multiplying his flock (Gen. 30, 25 — 32, 1).

to which one should add the echoes *bē'lōhēkā tāšûb* (v. 7) and *'ôšîb^ekā bā'ôhālîm* (v. 10).

The logical scheme of our chapter could be presented as follows³¹:

- v. 1: *General accusation against Ephraim-Israel-« Jacob ».*
Nature of the accusation: cheating, betrayal, illegitimate cult of El.
- vv. 2-7: **1.st Part:** *The fault of Ephraim-« Israel »-Jacob and call to conversion.*
- v. 2: Fault of Ephraim: political betrayal³²;
- vv. 3-5: fault of « Israel » and Jacob: cheating and illegitimate cult of El;
- v. 6: proclamation of the identity of the true God of Israel, Yahweh;
- v. 7: call to conversion to Yahweh.
- vv. 8-11: **2.nd Part:** *The fault of Canaan-Ephraim and promise of restoration.*
- vv. 8-9: Fault of Canaan-Ephraim: wealth obtained by cheating;
- v. 10a: Proclamation of the identity of God: Yahweh, the God of the Exodus;
- vv. 10b-11: promise of restoration, connected with conversion (see the connection: *'ôšîb^ekā — tāšûb*, v. 7) consisting in a return to the desert-ideal.
- v. 12: *Example of punishment of faults* (of Jacob and Ephraim)³³.
- vv. 13-14: *Contrast between the figures of Jacob-Israel and the « prophet » Moses.*
- v. 15: *Final condemnation of Ephraim.*

II. GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE OF Hos. 12

The literary form of the chapter can be described as a divine accusation of Israel ending with a sentence of condemnation. But in the body of the chapter, both exhortation (v. 7) and promise (vv. 10b-11) are present³⁴.

³¹ See also COOTE, o.c., p. 402.

³² About the political meaning of the last stich of v. 2, see D. J. MCCARTHY, « Hosea 12, 2 — Covenant by Oil », VT 14 (1964), pp. 215-221.

³³ See above in the observations.

³⁴ The expression *rib* in v. 3 is structurally marginal and cannot characterize the literary form of the chapter as a whole.

Regarding the contents, the chapter develops three types of oppositions:

El	◁—→	Yahweh	cf. vv. 2-7
Canaan	◁—→	Tents (desert)	cf. vv. 8-11
Jacob	◁—→	Prophet (Moses)	cf. vv. 13-14

The first two couples are, structurally, the most important, each one synthetizing semantically that part of the chapter in which it is located. The third couple, Jacob — Prophet, though not structurally important, renders explicit aspects already found in the two main parts of the chapter.

Hosea utilizes the series of the three contrasting couples in order to give a plastic description of his conception of the true religion of Israel. It is a conception placed in a strict relation with the events of the Exodus, as follows from the three second elements of the cited couples, which are three characteristic Exodus-concepts: Yahweh, tents, prophet (Moses)³⁵.

To this prophetic religious conception is opposed that which is reflected in the cult practised in the patriarchal sanctuaries such as Bethel, where God was still invoked under the title of El. Moreover, in the patriarchal sanctuaries, the sacred legend of the place presented the patriarchal founder in a light which was not always morally acceptable. Further, one of the themes there celebrated in the cult was the promise of the land of Canaan to the Patriarch and its consequent eternal possession by his descendants³⁶.

Hosea opposes to the above-mentioned three characteristic elements of the patriarchal religion (El, promise of the land, hero-founder), another God, Yahweh, another land, the desert, and another hero-founder, Moses. Especially dramatic is the contrast between Jacob and Moses³⁷. The ideal father of the people could

³⁵ Eissfeldt found the same contrast between the religion of Jacob and that of Moses, basing himself only on the stories of Gen. 28, 10 — 35, 15 and Ex. 24: while all his life, Jacob deals with the god El, Moses has to deal uniquely with Yahweh. Cf. O. EISSFELDT, « Jakobs Begegnung mit El und Moses Begegnung mit Jahwe », *OLZ* 58 (1963), coll. 325-331 (= O. EISSFELDT, *Kleine Schriften*, IV, Tübingen 1968, pp. 92-98).

³⁶ The theme of the promise of the land of Canaan made to Jacob was therefore celebrated in the cult of Bethel. Correspondingly, in the tradition of Genesis, one reads about the promise of the land in both accounts of the theophany to Jacob in Bethel, Gen. 28, 13 and 35, 12.

³⁷ Hosea does not make explicit use of the name of Moses, which was

not be one who flees from the land promised to him, to become a servant in order to marry a woman. Moses did the opposite. He led the people to Canaan, liberating them from the slavery and protecting them from harm. Hosea designates Moses as « prophet ». His intention is evident, to include in the concept of « prophet » all those similar to him, to whom the task had been entrusted of announcing and defending the true Yahwistic religion³⁸.

It is very probable that our chapter is a specific polemic against the sanctuary of Bethel. In fact, it is only in the patriarchal traditions connected with Bethel that one finds the three elements together: Jacob, El, promise of the land (Gen. 28, 10-22; 35, 1-16). Moreover, amongst the various Jacob's traditions found in Hos. 12, only one of them is localized, that of the theophany of Bethel.

III. THE TRADITIONS CONCERNING JACOB IN HOS. 12.

The structural analysis of our chapter in Section I allowed an evaluation of the function of the Jacob-traditions in the ensemble of the chapter, Section II. These traditions have now to be placed in relation to the Jacob-traditions of Genesis.

In our chapter the Jacob-traditions are found limited to two sub-units: vv. 4f and vv. 13f³⁹. The second sub-unit does not present any particular difficulties of interpretation. It is otherwise with vv. 4f, in which the syntactical structure and various expressions render the meaning obscure. So I begin with a discussion of v. 4f.

a) Analysis of vv. 4f

- (4a) *babbēten ʿāqab 'et 'āhîw*
 (4b) *ûb'ônô sārâ 'et 'ēlôhîm*
 (5aα-β) *wajjāsar 'el mal'āk wajjukāl*
 (5aα-β) (corrected reading: 5aα *wajjisar 'el*
 5aβ *mal'āk wajjukal*)
 (5aα) *bākā wajjithannen lô*
 (5b) *bêt-'el jimšā'ennû*
 (5b) *wēšām j'dabbēr 'immānû*

not bivalent like Jacob, Israel (patriarch or people), Canaan (merchant, territory), Bethel (divinity, locality). The word 'prophet' could be applied either to Moses or to succeeding prophets. Evidently Hosea conceives the prophetic office as a continuation of the Mosaic ministry.

³⁸ It is not accidental that the same opposition to Bethel is found also in Amos (7, 10-13).

³⁹ Here we take into account only the explicit references to the Jacob

The text presents two principal problems, the syntactical structure and the meaning of v. 5 α - β , and the succession of the subjects of the six verbs found in v. 5.

The text of v. 5 α - β is a crux interpretum. Three of the four words of the verse are difficult:

wajjāšar: In view of the presence of *šārā* in v. 4b, one expects a form derived from the same root: *wajjišar*. But the vocalization of the MT supposes a verb of the form *ʿajin-wāw, šwr*, which is thought to be a by-form of *šārā*⁴⁰, or a verb of the form *ʿajin-ʿajin, šrr*, denominative verb from *šar*, with the significance of « dominate », « prevail »⁴¹.

'el: The MT vocalization of *'l* as a preposition, is in contrast with the parallel *'et* in the preceding verse and also with the *ʿim* in the corresponding text of Gen. 32, 29. Usually a harmonization of v. 4b and 5a is proposed so as to read *'et* also in v. 5a⁴². Others change *'el* to *'ēl*⁴³.

mal'āk: The same group of authors that read *'ēl*, understand *mal'āk* as a gloss of *'ēl* and suggest its suppression⁴⁴.

It is also our opinion that *'l* should be read as a name, *'ēl*. In favor of a nominal form, in addition to the antecedent *'ēl* in v. 1b, there is the clear intention of the prophet to make a fresh allusion to the name *jišrā'ēl*. On the other hand there is no need to suppress *mal'āk*, for in v. 5 α - β , there is a parallelistic structure characteristic of ancient Hebrew-Canaanite poetry: a distich having an incomplete parallelism with compensation. *'ēl* and *mal'āk* constitute a parallel pair of terms, while *wajjukāl* is the element compensating for the absence of a precise parallel to *wajjišar*. The prosodic structure of v. 5 α - β is therefore as follows:

wajjišar 'ēl

« He fought El,

mal'āk wajjukāl

an angel, and prevailed ».

tradition, excluding, consequently, texts such as Hos. 12, 1b (corrected reading) 7.8.12a.

⁴⁰ See HARPER, o.c., p. 384; H. BAUER — P. LEANDER, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache*, Tübingen 1922, p. 401, n.; RUDOLPH, o.c., p. 222, n. 5a.

⁴¹ So WOLFF, o.c., p. 267, n. 5a; COOTE, o.c., p. 395; L. RUPPERT, « Herkunft und Bedeutung der Jakob-Tradition bei Hosea », *Biblica* 52 (1971), pp. 495 and 496 n. 1.

⁴² HARPER, o.c., p. 381 and p. 384; A. B. EHRLICH, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel*, Band V, Leipzig 1912, p. 203.

⁴³ See M. GERTNER, « The Massorah and the Levites. Appendix: An Attempt at an Interpretation of Hosea XII », *VT* 10 (1960), p. 277 and p. 275.

⁴⁴ See also W. L. HOLLADAY, « Chiasmus, the Key to Hosea XII, 3-6 », *VT* 16 (1966), p. 56.

Because of a lack of understanding of the prosodic structure of v. 5a α - β , the MT was led to think that *wjšr*, being followed by the supposed preposition 'l, was not derived from *sārā* of v. 4b. In consequence MT vocalized *wajjāšar*, from the root *šwr* or *šrr*. It was difficult for MT to accept that the same verb in two contiguous lines, forming a quasi-parallelism, could in the first case, be transitive (v. 4b)⁴⁵ and in the second case, be prepositional.

Our interpretation is confirmed by confronting v. 5a α - β with the corresponding text in Gen. 32, 29:

sāritā 'im 'ēlōhīm
w^{cc}im 'anāšim wattukāl
 « You fought with God,
 and with men, and prevailed ».

The two texts are practically identical, both possessing the same prosodic structure⁴⁶.

The second problem connected with our text of Hos. 12, 4-5, is equally complex: the problem of the succession of subjects to the various verbs in the two verses. Verse 5b has already been treated in the first Section of this paper, where it was concluded that Bethel, like the terms Jacob-Israel, Canaan, prophet, is semantically bivalent, designating in v. 5b α the divinity, Bethel, whereas in v. 5b β , the same term recurs implicitly in a locative sense, in virtue of the locative *šām*.

Whether in the line 5a γ , there is an allusion to the same tradition found in v. 5a α - β or to some other tradition, it is difficult to decide. It would appear that the subject of the two verbs in v. 5a γ is the same as that in v. 5a α - β , i.e. Jacob, seeing that the subject changes explicitly in v. 5b⁴⁷.

There remains the critico-literary analysis of v. 5a. Does it really belong to Hosea? In the light of the repetition (*sārā*, *wajjīšar*) in v. 4b and v. 5a α - β and given the archaic form of 5a α - β , one proposes to see in v. 5a a quotation from an external poetic source, perhaps

⁴⁵ In Hos. 12, 4b 'et is the particle designating the grammatical object, as is required by the exact parallelism between Hos. 12, 4a and 12, 4b. In Gen. 32, 29, the corresponding *'im* is in accordance with the prose style of the context.

⁴⁶ At first sight the couple *mal'āk* // 'ēl does not appear to be synonymous with *'anāšim* // 'ēlōhīm. However, 'ēlōhīm is an expansion of 'ēl. The interchangeability of *mal'āk* and *'anāšim* is attested in the Bible; see e.g. Gen. 18-19, where the terms *jhw* (18, 1.17), *'anāšim* (Gen. 18, 2.16), *mal'ākīm* (Gen. 19, 1) are employed successively for the same persons. In Jdg. 13, *mal'āk jhw* of v. 2, is called in v. 6 of the same chapter: 'š hā'ēlōhīm ūmar'ēhū kēmar'ēh *mal'āk 'ēlōhīm*.

⁴⁷ So also WOLFF, o.c., pp. 275-276; HARPER, o.c., 381; GOOD, o.c., 492 and 496.

from the sacred legend of Jacob as recited at Bethel; but greater certitude is impossible in view of the limitations of the material at one's disposal.

b) *The tradition concerning the birth of Jacob: Hos. 12, 4a*

Synopsis of the texts:

	Hos. 12, 4a: <i>babbeten</i> <i>ʿaqab</i> 'et 'ahiw
Birth of Jacob	{ Gen. 25, 24 (J): <i>wajjiml'û jāmēhā lāledet</i> <i>wʿhinnēh tōmim bʿbitnāh</i>
	{ Gen. 25, 26 (J): <i>wʿahārē-kēn jāšā' 'āhīw</i> <i>wʿjādō 'ōhezēt baʿāqēb ʿēsaw</i>
Jacob steals the blessing	{ Gen. 27, 35 (E): <i>bā' 'ahikā bʿmirmā wajjiqqah</i> <i>birkātekā</i>
	{ Gen. 27, 36 (E): <i>hāki qārā' šʿmō jaʿāqōb</i> <i>wajjaʿqʿbēni zeh paʿāmajim</i>

The contents of Hos. 12, 4a⁴⁸ refer to stories about the birth of Jacob; but its more evident literary contacts (see the words in italics above) are with the episode of the stolen blessing.

The verb *ʿaqab* has two meanings: 1. Qal, to cheat (see Gen. 27, 36 and Jer. 9, 3); 2. Piel, to stop forcibly, arrest (compare with the by-form in the Mishnah, *ikkēb*), as in Job 37, 4 and in Ugaritic⁴⁹. In Genesis one encounters two different etymologies of the name Jacob. In Gen. 27, 36 (E), the name is interpreted according to the Qal, while in Gen. 25, 26 (J) there is an interpretation of the name which presupposes the Piel (see also Gen. 25, 22-23 J, that concord with this interpretation of the name)⁵⁰.

In order to solve the question of the relation between Hos. 12, 4a and the Jacob-tradition in Genesis, one has first to determine whether Hosea intended to use the verb *ʿaqab* according to the Qal or to the Piel. Cassuto translates *ʿaqab* in Hos. 12, 4a « to bring

⁴⁸ For the determination of the sources I follow in general the analysis of J. SKINNER, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, Edinburgh 1930. See also H. GUNKEL, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, Göttingen 1902; O. PROCKSCH, *Das nordhebräische Sagenbuch: die Elohimquelle*, Leipzig 1906; H. CAZELLES and J.-P. BOUHOT, *Il pentateuco*, Brescia 1968. Gen. 27, 35f. according to Gunkel and Skinner belongs to E; but there is no agreement among the other authors.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. AISTLEITNER, *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache*, Berlin 1974, nr. 2086: *zurückhalten, hindern* (form Piel).

⁵⁰ « To seize the heel » is an image derived from the action « to halt », « to arrest » as designated by the Piel, *iqqēb*.

him back forcibly », thus according to the Piel⁵¹. As against Cassuto, we are led to conclude that *ʿāqab* in Hos. 12, 4a signifies « to cheat », according to the Qal, and this for several reasons: the Masoretic tradition, the terminology of the context of our text, *mirmā*, *kaḥaš*, *kāzāb*, the linguistic affinity between Hos. 12, 4a and Gen. 27, 35f.

If it is the case that Hos. 12, 4a uses *ʿāqab* according to the Qal, it follows that the Jacob-tradition in Genesis does not know about a story concerning the birth of Jacob, in which he « cheats » his brother in their mother's womb. At first sight, it would appear that the story of Jacob cheating in the womb seems to be excluded by what is said in Gen. 27, 36. Nevertheless, in view of the relevant literary contacts between Hos. 12, 4a and Gen. 27, 35f, which belong to the E tradition (in the opinion of Procksch, Gunkel and Skinner), it is very probable that a story of Jacob cheating in the womb was contained in the original E tradition. The original E story to which Hosea makes allusion could have been substituted by the actual story in Gen. 25, 22-25, from the J tradition⁵².

c) *The struggle with the angel: Hos. 12, 4b-5a*

Synopsis of the texts:

Hos. 12, 4b-5a: (4b) *ūb'ōnō šārā 'et 'ēlōhīm*
 (5a) *wajjīšar 'ēl*
 (5a) *mal'āk wajjukāl*
 (5a) *bākā wajjithannen lō*

Gen. 32, 29b (E): *kī šārītā 'im 'ēlōhīm*
w'ēim 'ānāšim wattūkāl

At the beginning of this Section, the poetical structure of Hos. 12, 5a-β has already been dealt with and its fundamental identity with Gen. 32, 29b demonstrated. Verse 29b is a more developed form of the primitive line in Hos. 12, 5a-β, developed and clarified through the insertion of the preposition *'im*.

The passage of the struggle between Jacob and his mysterious opponent (Gen. 32, 23-33) presents notable difficulties for literary

⁵¹ U. CASSUTO, « The Prophet Hosea and the Books of the Pentateuch », in U. CASSUTO, *Biblical and Oriental Studies*, Vol. I: « Bible », Jerusalem 1973, p. 84 (original composition in 1933).

⁵² Similarly Procksch (following Holzinger): as E offers an etymological interpretation of the name Esau at his birth (Gen. 25, 30), so the same source offered originally an etymological interpretation of the name Jacob; now the later interpretation is wanting. See O. PROCKSCH, *Geschichtsbetrachtung und geschichtliche Überlieferung bei den vorexilischen Propheten*, Leipzig 1902, p. 119 and n. 2.

analysis. In particular the documentary source of v. 29b is under dispute⁵³. Nevertheless, in v. 29b there are clear traces of the Elohist hand: the divine name *'ēlōhîm*, the mention of the angel (under the title, *'ānāšîm*), the use of the verb *wattûkāl*, as in Gen. 38, 8 (E) and Num. 13, 30 (E). As we saw at the beginning of the present discussion, there are contacts between Hosea and Gen. 32, 29b; but since v. 29b belongs to E, it follows that we have here, once more, evidence that Hosea knew the patriarchal traditions according to the E version. Nevertheless, the two versions of the distich, Gen. 32, 29b and Hos. 12, 5α-β, are not completely identical: the version in Genesis is more recent than that in Hosea, having been rendered syntactically more explicit. Comparing the two versions of the distich, one could perhaps determine some of the criteria used by E in the redaction of his sources. But as we have seen, since the distich, Hos. 12, 5α-β, was probably taken by the prophet from an external source, it is not possible to draw conclusions concerning Hosea himself from the contacts between the two texts.

The allusion to the weeping and supplication of Jacob (Hos. 12, 4αγ) has no explicit parallel in Genesis. Several explanations have been suggested: a) that weeping and supplication are « die Folge von Gottes Zuschlagen »⁵⁴; b) a « Verstärkung des Bittflehens, die Hosea von sich aus hinzufügt »⁵⁵; c) that Hosea is alluding to a tradition not preserved in Genesis⁵⁶; d) that *bākâ* has been derived from *bwk* (compare *nābôk*): to *bk* would have been added the *-h*, representing the masc. sing. suffix, 3rd person, so as to give the reading: « He (Jacob) perplexed him and got mercy for himself from him »⁵⁷; e) finally it has been suggested that Hosea is re-interpreting the story of the struggle of Jacob⁵⁸. Hos. 12, 5αγ is the only line amongst those verses in Hos. 12 referring to Jacob, which has no clear and explicit literary contact with the parallel tradition in Genesis. In the light of this fact it becomes difficult to hold the view that Hos. 12, 5αγ is nothing but an allusion or an interpretation of the insistent demand made by Jacob to his mysterious opponent

⁵³ According to Gunkel, o.c., p. 325 and SKINNER, o.c., p. 407 (the author is very doubtful) v. 29 belongs to J. For PROCKSCH, (*Geschichtsbetrachtung*, pp. 119-122) it belongs to E.

⁵⁴ WOLFF, o.c., p. 276.

⁵⁵ RUDOLPH, o.c., p. 229; similarly P. R. ACKROYD, « Hosea and Jacob », *VT* 13 (1963), p. 251, and A. BENTZEN, « The Weeping of Jacob, Hos., XII, 5a », *VT* 1 (1951), pp. 58-59; also CASSUTO, o.c., p. 85.

⁵⁶ e.g. GOOD, o.c., p. 144: an aetiological tradition connected with the *'allôn bākût* of Gen. 35, 8. According to HOLLADAY, o.c., Hos. 12, 5αγ alludes to Jacob's weeping, when he encounters Esau, Gen. 33, 4.

⁵⁷ COOTE, o.c., p. 392 and 395f.

⁵⁸ RUPPERT, o.c., p. 497.

(Gen. 32, 27). It is more likely that even Hos. 12, 5a is a literary reference to a version of the story which has not been preserved⁵⁹.

d) *The apparition of the divinity Bethel to Jacob*

Synopsis of the texts:

Hos. 12, 5b: *bêt-'ēl jimšā'ennū wəšām jədabbēr 'immānū*

Gen. 35, 13 (P): *wajja'al mē'alājw 'elohim
bammāqôm 'āser-dibber 'ittō* (cf. Gen. 35, 14f E)

In the preceding discussion we reached the conclusion that in Hos. 12, 15b the subject is the divinity, Bethel, whereas in the second line of the verse, in addition to its divine connotation, Bethel assumes implicitly its usual geographical sense. The two verbs of Hos. 12, 5b, *māšā'* and *dibbēr*, characteristically designate a divine apparition and the associated revelation. Both verbs are found together in theophany to Hagar: *wajjmšā'āh mal'āk jhwh* (Gen. 16, 7) and *wattiqrā' šēm-jhwh haddōbēr 'elēhā 'attā 'ēl rō'i* (ibid., v. 13)⁶⁰. The parallel confirms also that the pair of verbs *māšā'* and *dibbēr* has as its subject the divinity, and the human being as the recipient.

There are three groups of texts dealing with the theophany to Jacob at Bethel: a) the nocturnal theophany at the time of Jacob's flight, Gen. 28, 11-22 (E, except for vv. 13-16 which are from J); b) the theophany at the time of the patriarch's return from Paddan-Aram, Gen. 35, 9-15 (P)⁶¹; c) a series of retrospective references to the first theophany: Gen. 31, 13; 35, 1.3.7 (all from E)⁶².

In Gen. 28, 11-22, the central description of the theophany belongs to J, vv. 13-16, but the entire context is from E. In the

⁵⁹ PROCKSCH has noted that the form *Hitpael*, *hiḥannēn*, reappears in the Pentateuch only in Gen. 42, 21 (E) (*Geschichtsbetrachtung*, p. 122).

⁶⁰ In the angelic apparition to Agar in Gen. 16, we have the connection between *māšā'* (in its theophanic meaning), v. 7, and *rā'ā*, v. 13. This connection illuminates Hos. 9, 10, where *māšā'* and *rā'ā* are parallel; probably Hosea is here alluding to the theophany of Yahweh to Israel in the desert, and not to a special « nicht mit Ägypten verbundene Erwählungstradition » (WOLFF, o.c., pp. 212-213).

⁶¹ The analysis of the sources in the last two verses of the passage is under dispute. According to several authors, among whom PROCKSCH (o.c., pp. 122f.), v. 14 belongs to E. CAZELLES (o.c., p. 251) ascribes vv. 14-15 to E. But the sentence, *(bam)māqôm 'āser dibber 'ittō* is present in each of the three verses 13-15. GUNKEL (o.c., p. 343f.) holds that the cited sentence is in vv. 14-15 a gloss, having the purpose of harmonizing vv. 14-15 with v. 13 (P).

⁶² Gen. 48, 3 (P) connects itself with 35, 9-13 (P).

insertion of J, vv. 13-16, Yahweh appears in person to Jacob, in contrast to the series of retrospective references (esp. Gen. 35, 1. 7), according to which the divinity El-Bethel appears to Jacob fleeing to Harran. One is therefore led to conclude that the Yahwistic insertion took the place of the original E theophany of the divinity El-Bethel escorted by his celestial court, the motive for the substitution being the polytheistic overtones of the original theophany, as transpires also from Gen. 35, 7.

Comparing Hos. 12, 5b with the three groups of the texts in Genesis concerning the theophany to Jacob at Bethel, one is struck by the fact that the most explicit literary contacts are with the series of retrospective references: Gen. 31, 13; 35, 1.3.7 (E), texts which allude to the theophany of E, which has been replaced by the version of J in Gen. 28, 13-16.

The following are the literary contacts between Hos. 12, 5b and the series of retrospective references (see words in italics):

- Gen. 31, 13: *'ānōki hā'el bêt-'el 'āšer*
māšahtā šām maššēbā 'āser nādartā li šām neder
- Gen. 35, 1: *qūm 'āleh bêt-'el w'ešeb-šām wa'āseh-šām mizbēah lā'el*
hannir'eh 'ēlēkā b'borhākā
mippnē 'ēsāw 'āhikā
- Gen. 35, 3: *w'nāqūmā w'nā'āleh bêt-'el w'e'ēseh-šām mizbēah lā'el...*
- Gen. 35, 7: *wajjiben šām mizbēah wajjiqrā'*
lammāqōm 'el bêt-'el ki šām niglū 'ēlajw
mippene hā'elōhim b'borhō mippnē 'āhīw

In the above texts, the connection between *bêt-'el* and *šām* is constant. The same connection is also found in Hos. 12, 5b. In the series of retrospective references, *bêt-'el* designates a divinity, a phenomenon which is found only in the above-mentioned series of retrospective references in Genesis, in Hos. 12, 5b and in Jer. 48, 13. The theophany is connected with the flight of Jacob in Gen. 35, 1.7, and also, though less strictly in Hos. 12, 5b (theophany), 13 (flight). The theophany is designated in both Genesis and Hosea by verbs which are akin in meaning: *nir'eh* (Gen. 35, 1), *niglū* (Gen. 35, 7), *māšā'* (Hos. 12, 5b).

Another parallel is between Hos. 12, 5b and Gen. 35, 13-15 (P), where the revelation is described by the use of the verb *dibbēr*; but this expression is too generic to indicate a direct literary contact.

We conclude, therefore, that Hos. 12, 5b alludes to the first theophany to Jacob at Bethel, when he is in flight to Harran / Aram; but the version of the theophany to which Hosea alludes is

one very similar to that partially preserved in the series of the retrospective references (E) cited above. A conclusion which confirms the proximity of Hosea to the Ephraimite-Elohistic tradition.

e) *The flight of Jacob to Aram: Hos. 12, 13a*

Synopsis of the texts:

Hos. 12, 13a: *wajjibrah ja'äqōb s'edēh 'ārām*

Gen. 27, 43 (J): *qûm b'rah-l'kâ 'el-lābān 'āhî ḥārānā*

Gen. 28, 2a (P): *qûm lēk paddenā 'ārām*

Gen. 35, 1b (E): *qûm 'ālēh bêt-'ēl...*

*lā'ēl hannir'eh 'ēlēkā beborhaha b'borḥākā mipp'nē
'ēšāw 'āhikā*

Gen. 35, 7b (E): *kî šām niglû 'ēlājw ha'elohim*

b'borḥô mipp'nē 'āhîw

In v. 13a, Hosea refers to the flight of Jacob from the anger of his brother, Esau. Hosea regards the action of Jacob as a fault, making his flight the theme on which he insists. Taking *bārah* as the principal term of v. 13a and comparing the verse of the prophet with the parallel texts in Genesis, one remarks that Hosea is in agreement with the traditions of J and E, and in contrast with P. The two texts, Gen. 27, 43 (J) and 35, 1b.7b (E) present the journey of Jacob as a flight, while Gen. 28, 2a (P) presents the journey as a pleasant voyage in search of a wife (see Gen. 27, 46 — 28, 9, for the story according to P). Though J and E both present the journey as a flight, there is a significant difference between the two sources. For J (Gen. 27, 43), the goal of the flight is Harran (see also Gen. 27, 43; 28, 10; 29, 4), whereas, according to E. Jacob flees to the land of the *b'nē qedem* (Gen. 29, 1). Only the tradition of P has a goal partially concordant with the data in Hos. 12, 13: *paddān 'ārām // s'edeh 'ārām*. Procksch has demonstrated that for E the geographical designation *'ereš b'nē qedem* corresponds to *'ārām*: E knows Laban as « the Aramean » (Gen. 30, 20.24); in Num. 23, 7 (E) *ḥarārē qedem* corresponds to *'ārām*. « Wenn also E als Reiseziel Jakobs in Aram das Land der *b'nē qedem* nennt, so meint er Aram damit »⁶³.

The partial concordance of *s'edēh 'ārām* in Hos. 12, 13a with the geographical data of P in Gen. 28, 2a can be explained as a dependence of P from the correspondent traditions of JE⁶⁴.

⁶³ PROCKSCH, *Geschichtsbetrachtung*, p. 123f.

⁶⁴ SKINNER, o.c., p. 374: the journey of Jacob according to P « is taken over from the earlier tradition (JE) ».

f) *Jacob's employment with Laban: Hos. 12, 13b*

Synopsis of the texts:

Hos. 12, 13b: <i>wajja^cābōd jisrā'el be'issā ūbe'issā šamar</i>	
Gen. 29, 15-30: Jacob's double marriage	v. 18b (E): <i>'e'ēbodkā šeba^c šānīm b'rāhēl</i>
	v. 20a (E): <i>wajja^cābōd ja^cāqōb b'rāhēl šeba^c šānīm</i>
	v. 25b (E): <i>hālō' b'rāhēl 'ābadtī 'immāk</i>
	v. 27b (E): <i>ba^cābōdā 'āšer ta^cabod 'immādī</i>
	v. 30b (E): <i>wajja^cābōd 'immō 'ōd šeba^c šānīm 'āhērōt</i>
Gen. 30, 25-43: Jacob augments his flock	v. 26 (E): <i>t'nā 'et-nāšaj w'e't-jēlādaj 'āšer 'ābadtī 'ōtkā bahen bāhēn w'e'lēkā kī 'attā jādātā 'et 'ābōdati 'āšer 'ābadtīkā</i>
	v. 29a (E[J]): <i>: 'attā jādātā 'et 'āšer 'ābad tīkā</i>
	v. 31b (E[J]): <i>: 'āšūbā 'er^ceh šō'nkā 'ešmōr</i>
Gen. 31: Jacob's flight from Laban	v. 6 (E): <i>w'e'attēnā jēdaten kī b^ckol- kōhī 'ābadtī 'et-'ābīken</i>
	v. 41 (E): <i>'ābadtīkā 'arba^c-cešrēh šānā bištē b'enōtēkā w'e'sēš šānīm bešō'nekā</i>

Hosea describes Jacob's employment with Laban by the use of two verbs, *'ābad* and *šamar*. The verb *šamar* occurs in the cycle of stories concerning Jacob and Laban in Genesis, once only: Gen. 30, 21b. In contrast *'ābad* occurs repeatedly in three stories of the same cycle: five times in the story of Jacob's marriage (Gen. 29, 15-30), twice in the story of Jacob's astuteness in multiplying his flock (Gen. 30, 25-43), finally, twice again in the story of the flight of Jacob from Laban (Gen. 31).

Though it is difficult to distinguish the documentary sources of these stories, the critics have reached broad agreement in assigning the complex of the story of Jacob's marriage to E (Gen. 29, 15-30), making use of criteria independent of the presence of the two verbs *'ābad* and *šamar*⁶⁵. Similarly, they assign to E the texts Gen. 30, 26; 31, 6.41⁶⁶. Moreover, in Gen. 30, 21b, which belongs to J, the verb *'ešmōr*, which is a doublet of *'er^ceh* without the expected complement, is derived from E⁶⁷.

⁶⁵ SKINNER, o.c., p. 381; so also GUNKEL and PROCKSCH.

⁶⁶ So SKINNER, GUNKEL, PROCKSCH etc.

⁶⁷ GUNKEL, o.c., p. 303; A. DILLMANN, *Die Genesis*, 1892⁶, p. 346; PROCKSCH, o.c., p. 124; SKINNER: « *'ešmōr* must be deleted » (o.c., p. 391); similarly *Biblia Hebraica*, ed. R. Kittel, Stuttgart 1937³, apparatus ad locum.

Amongst the texts containing the verb *ʿabad*, the only one which is said to belong to J, is Gen. 30, 29. In reality, there is no intrinsic evidence for assigning this verse to J; but because it prepares the succeeding verse, which undoubtedly belongs to J⁶⁸, it has been so assigned. Nevertheless, even within this verse, Gen. 30, 29, there is a doublet: *'et 'āšer ʿābadtikā* (v. 29a) = *'et 'āšer hājā miqnēkā 'ittī*. The two sentences, awkwardly arranged by the double *'et 'āšer* repeat the same concept; but only v. 29b is presupposed by v. 30, insofar as only in these two texts is there a mention of the small flock which increases in number. There is a motive therefore to think that even Gen. 30, 29a belongs to E. It follows that it is characteristic of E to describe the employment of Jacob with Laban by the two words *ʿabad* and *šamar*.

One can conclude therefore that the various literary contacts of Hos. 12, 13b with the stories of the cycle of Jacob and Laban all take place within the context of the Elohist tradition⁶⁹.

Conclusions

Summarizing the study of Section III, we present the following results:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Hos. 12, 4a: | Jacob's cheating at birth | ⇨ a story proper to the E tradition, but not retained in Genesis. |
| Hos. 12, 4b-5a: | Jacob's struggle with the angel | ⇨ parallel text in Gen. 32, 29 (E), but more developed than that in Hosea. |
| Hos. 12, 5a: | Jacob's weeping | ⇨ not retained in Genesis. |
| Hos. 12, 5b: | the apparition of the divinity, Bethel, to Jacob | ⇨ retained in Genesis only indirectly in the series of retrospective references (E). |
| Hos. 12, 13a: | Jacob's flight to Harran | ⇨ the flight is recounted in J and E, but the destination is concordant more with E than J. |

⁶⁸ So GUNKEL, o.c., p. 304.

⁶⁹ Procksch takes exclusively in consideration the expression *ʿabad b^e*, that occurs only in Gen. 29, 18.20.25; 30, 26 and 31, 41, all belonging to E.

Hos. 12, 13b: Jacob's employment with Laban ⇨ parallels in E: ample development of the theme, *'ābad*; brief allusion to the theme *šāmar*.

From the above scheme, it follows that the Jacob traditions as known to Hosea, were akin to the corresponding traditions of E⁷⁰. But only three texts in Hosea have now a direct parallel in E: Hos. 12, 4b-5aβ.13a.13b. The textual correspondence between the three passages from E and those from Hosea is not perfect. From a comparison between Gen. 32, 29 (E) and Hos. 12, 5aα-β it followed that the E text was more recent than that in Hosea⁷¹. Comparing the two poetical texts of Hos. 12, 13a (Jacob's flight) and 12, 13b (Jacob's employment) with the corresponding texts in Genesis, we see that the verbs used by Hosea to describe Jacob's activities, *bārah*, *'ābad*, recur repeatedly in E, as leitmotifs of the prose story. This fact indicates the anteriority of Hos. 12, 13a.13b, as compared with the corresponding prose texts in Genesis.

On the other hand, considering the contents of the two Jacob traditions in Hosea and in Genesis, we note that Jacob's conduct in E does not expose him to reproach; in fact E presents him « als Vorbilder religiös-sittlichen Verhaltens »⁷². Hosea, on the contrary, finds in *his* Jacob traditions, motives for accusing the patriarch of improper conduct. The form of the tradition known to the prophet, is not, then, identical with that retained in the moralizing E document⁷³. Still, there are indubitable contacts between Hos. 12 and the E tradition. The problem is to explain the presence of similarities and contrasts in the two forms of the same tradition.

Previously we suggested that Hos. 12, 5aα-β (and perhaps, even, the remainder of v. 5), is a citation from the sacral legend concerning Jacob, which was recounted at the sanctuary of Bethel. This seems also to be the case with v. 13. Verse 13 is parallel to v. 14 in form, although the correspondence between the elements is not syntactically parallel⁷⁴. The fact is best explained by supposing that

⁷⁰ There are also other minor contacts between Hos. 12 and the E tradition: *mirmā* (vv. 1.8) and, in a parallel context Gen. 27, 35 (E); the form *hithannēn* (v. 5) that in the Pentateuch is paralleled only by Gen. 42, 21 (E); the contact between v. 6 and Ev. 3, 15 (E). Several authors reached the same conclusion. So PROCKSCH concludes: « Nach diesen Ergebnissen kann ohne Unvorsichtigkeit gesagt werden, dass Hosea sowohl in der Patriarchengeschichte der Überlieferung der Quelle E folgt » (*Geschichtsbetrachtung*, p. 133). Similarly RUPPERT: « Und doch lässt sich gerade im Verständnis der Jakob-Tradition eine erstaunliche Geistesverwandtschaft Hoseas mit dem ... elohistischen Geschichtswerk feststellen » (o.c., p. 503).

⁷¹ See over, Section III, c.

⁷² RUPPERT, o.c., p. 503.

⁷³ See the same argument in RUPPERT, o.c., p. 502.

Hosea was employing, at least in v. 13, an already established formula, which had probably the same origin as v. 5, i.e. from the sacred patriarchal legend of Bethel.

One of the characteristics of the cultic patriarchal legend was its independence from the other body of traditions concerning the Exodus-Sinai events, where the main hero was Moses. What is more, the original patriarchal tradition, as recounted in the patriarchal sanctuaries, presented itself as a complete and self-sufficient theological system, deriving its salvific function exclusively from the divine blessing and promise addressed to the patriarch. The Mosaic traditions being ignored, the figure of the patriarch as presented in the cultic legend, was sometimes in conflict with the Sinaitic Law. This partial presentation of the salvific-historical events, was a threat to the genuineness and integrity of the religion of Israel. Therefore the prophet Hosea reacts, not in order to deny all value to the patriarchal tradition, but with the purpose of completing it, integrating it into the complex of the Mosaic tradition⁷⁵. In doing so, the prophet acts and presents himself as the herald and guardian of the mosaic tradition⁷⁶. We do not know if the criticism of the prophet was accepted by the priests of Bethel⁷⁷. What we do know, is that, following the preaching of the prophet, a school of sympathizers undertook a thorough reworking of the patriarchal traditions, combining them with the Mosaic Exodus traditions, harmonizing the patriarchal figure(s) with the new theological context. The final result of their re-elaboration is the E document⁷⁸.

As we saw from the comparison between the Jacob traditions in Hosea and those in Genesis, there is a direct dependence of the Jacob traditions in Genesis (E) on those in Hosea. The Jacob traditions found in Hosea are taken from, or at least, depend on the sacral patriarchal legend of Bethel. We can designate the Jacob legend of the temple of Bethel as « proto-Elohistic », in order to express its close literary affinity with E, and at the same time its anteriority to the same document.

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⁷⁴ In our text *nābī'* is conceptually balanced by *ja'āqōb*, but syntactically it is balanced by *b'eššā'*; moreover v. 13 has three verbs, the parallel v. 14 has only two.

⁷⁵ The same thought is expressed by RUPPERT: « Die Erzvätertradition ist bei Hosea völlig in die Exodus- und damit in die alte sakrale Volksüberlieferung Israels eingebunden, also eine relativ eigenständige Heilstradition » (o.c., p. 501).

⁷⁶ Cf. the title *nābī'* applied to Moses; Moses and Hosea belong therefore to the same ideal group.

⁷⁷ See anyway Am. 7, 10-17.

⁷⁸ The influence of the prophets on the E document is notorious. For a synthesis of the recent discussions on the E document, see J. F. CRAGHAN, « The Elohist in Recent Literature », *BTB* 7 (1977), pp. 23-35.