

# **“Cain Rules the World”: Léopold Szondi, Genesis 4, and the Nature of Evil**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a dialogue between the stories of sibling rivalry in Genesis and the theories of Léopold Szondi (1893-1986), in particular his work on the analysis of fate (*Schicksalsanalyse*) and his theory of the Cain complex. It is situated as a critical psychological reading of Gen 4, the subsequent sibling stories in Genesis, and a historical biographical examination of Szondi in light of biblical studies. I argue that Szondi's Cain complex is a suitable framework for psychological biblical criticism because it was developed, in part, through close engagement with biblical and extra-biblical literature and provides insights that have been neglected by other more traditional psychological interpretations such as those shaped by Freudian and Jungian approaches. Szondi was a Hungarian-Swiss physician and psychoanalyst whose major contribution to depth psychology was the establishment and development of *Schicksalsanalyse*. Two of the most important components of Szondi's approach were his identification of the familial unconscious and the Cain complex through which he sought to provide explanations both for the origins of human evil and its restitution. Within the anglophone academy, the thought and work of Szondi is largely unfamiliar, yet the myth of Cain and Abel (Gen 4) continues to resonate in the popular imagination. Szondi's work on Cain thus occupies a confluence between currency and neglect. This thesis addresses three interrelated primary questions concerning an explanation of Szondi's Cain complex and the explication of its origins; what a Szondian *re-reading* of Gen 4 and the other sibling stories of Genesis might reveal about the overarching structure of Genesis; and Szondi's model for resolving the 'Cain complex' and how it compares with the biblical tradition.

My original contribution to knowledge is the advancement of and contribution to an 'effective history' for Szondi in English language scholarship, specifically in the field of biblical psychological criticism. This is achieved via a Szondian *re-reading* of Gen 4 and the subsequent sibling stories in Genesis. It is a dialectic process shaped by Hans Georg Gadamer's *Wirkungsgeschichte* and Hans Robert Jauss's concept of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* in which 'conversations' take place between myself and Szondi; Szondi, the authors of the Cain and Moses narratives, and later commentators; and the compiler of Genesis and me. Through a close textual and situational analysis, including biographical specifics of Szondi, I explore ideas concerning the origins of evil and violence, their relationship with humanity and civilisation, and the author or compiler of Genesis' understanding of such. I also critique Szondi's proposition concerning the possibility of restitution, which he locates in the metaphorical figure of Moses, demonstrating that the author of Genesis posits a different solution to negate or mollify the destructive aspects of the human condition.

In the aftermath of World War II, the figure of Cain came to symbolise the innateness of human aggression and violence. This phenomenon is particularly evident in German language discourse of that era. This was the setting against which Szondi articulated his concept for an elucidation of both the origins and resolution of human violence and evil, formed within the paradigm of his own psychological framework for the factors constituting human fate. It is particularly evident in his two texts which are the central focus of this thesis: *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen* (1969) and *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* (1973).

Szondi's work was profoundly influenced by his life experiences including the Judaism of his father, his experiences of combat in World War I, and as a victim of persecution during the Holocaust. When he came to give expression to his theory concerning the roots of violent human aggression and evil, Szondi's scholarship, experiences, and his faith all coalesce in his presentation of Cain and Moses as metaphorical figures for both the cause and restitution of human evil. According to Szondi, the Cain complex is both initiated and resolved through a spectrum of human behaviour which he called the Cain-Moses dialectic. At either end of this dialectic stand the metaphorical figures of Cain and Moses representing the onset of violent tendencies and their restitution respectively.

The application Szondi's theory of the Cain complex to the sibling stories in Genesis reveals both the presence of what he called the 'Cainitic traits' of anger, jealousy, and physical or psychological aggression along the ancestral line and the gradual diminution of aggression and violence across the narrative arc of Genesis. While other scholarship has noted this attenuation of violence across Genesis, this study argues that a Szondian reading of the arrangement of the sibling stories demonstrates that, while violence and killing were brought into the world through the figure of Cain, the figure of Joseph symbolises the victory over the destructive Cainitic traits. The finding of this study thus diverges from Szondi's conclusions about the importance of the figure of Moses as the solution to the problem of violence that was inaugurated by Cain. The thesis therefore highlights an implicit tension between the figures of Joseph and Moses vis-à-vis Szondi's Cain complex. While both channel the destructive impulses of their Cainitic inheritances into establishing new paradigms for society, the biblical account also reveals that both approaches are fraught with the potential for adverse consequences.

# DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Name: Adam Jessep

Signed.....

Date: November 2020

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ANE	ancient Near East
<i>ANES</i>	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i>
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BDB</i>	<i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic.</i> Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> based on the Leningrad Codex B19 <sup>A</sup> (L)
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>BR</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CW	The Collected Works of C.G. Jung.
DH	Documentary Hypothesis
DtrH	Deuteronomistic History
FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBQ</i>	<i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHebS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JModJewStud</i>	<i>Journal of Modern Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</i>

LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic text
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
Pirque R. El.	Pirque Rabbi Eliezer
SE	Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Work of Sigmund Freud
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
SymS	Symposium Series
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
Tanh.	Midrash Tanhuma
Tg.Ps.-J.	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Old Testament (OT) scholar, André LaCocque, has suggested that because the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4) is so well and universally known there can hardly be a first ‘reading’ of it.<sup>1</sup> Over the centuries, the story of Cain’s murder of his brother Abel has inspired numerous artists in the Western tradition – from Titian to Bruce Springsteen – and it continues to resonate in the popular imagination through music, film, and literature. This near ubiquity of the story of Cain and Abel in the arts results in such a familiarity that aspects of the innate strangeness of the story perhaps go unnoticed.

In Gen 4 the reader is presented with the second act of the biblical post-Creation mythos, a fratricide, following the parents’ initial defiance of a divine command. On one level the two sins are linked by their absolute, irredeemable qualities. The biblical author’s decision to depict a fratricide also has correlatives in other ancient myths concerning the creation of the cosmos or the founding of a city.<sup>2</sup> Yet while the story does have similarities with these other tales from antiquity, in other respects it is markedly different. This is not a grand sweeping saga in which the main players are heroes, kings, or demi-gods (e.g. Osiris and Set, or Romulus and Remus). Rather, this is the story of a cropper who murders his brother, a shepherd. Such subjects are thus comparatively humble and unimpressive.

Perhaps the most peculiar feature of the story is the ambiguous portrayal of the deity, whose motives in the narrative remain unclear. The reader is told the brothers made offerings to YHWH, who in turn favours one over the other, but the rationale for YHWH’s decision is never incontestably revealed (Gen 4:3-7).<sup>3</sup> As a result of his rejection, Cain becomes apoplectic with envy and murders his brother (v. 8). Questions thus arise: Does YHWH provoke Cain? Does YHWH show enough ‘due diligence’ for the welfare of the primeval family? Equally puzzling, YHWH then spares Cain’s life despite being adamant and explicit in other parts of the Hebrew Bible (HB) that the correct punishment for murder should be death.<sup>4</sup> Cain, not only spared but *protected* by YHWH (v. 15), goes on to found a city and his descendants establish the fundamentals of civilisation (vv. 17-24).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> André LaCocque, *Onslaught Against Innocence: Cain, Abel, and the Yahwist* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008), 1.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. the Egyptian story of Osiris and Set, the Phoenicians’ Hysouranios and Ousoos, or the founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus.

<sup>3</sup> English language Bible references throughout the study refer to the NRSV.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gen 9:6; Exod 21:12; Deut 19:4-13.

<sup>5</sup> The biblical author places particular emphasis on Lamech, the seventh generation from Adam, who embodies an escalation of violence within the narrative framework.

So much is conveyed in such brevity. The narrative gaps in the text not only permit a range of interpretative stances but also serve to draw the reader into the author's creation. These two factors perhaps explain, at least in part, the ongoing fascination with the story of Cain and Abel. This endurance is particularly evident in the work of Léopold Szondi (1893-1986), whose engagement with the Cain and Abel narrative was the basis for his theory of the Cain complex.

Léopold Szondi was born Lipót Sonnenschein in 1893 in Nyitra, in the Austro-Hungarian province of Pressburg. He was the twelfth child in a religious German and Slovak-speaking Jewish family. When he was aged five his family moved to Budapest. It was there, in 1911, when Szondi was aged 18, his father died – it was the same year he commenced studies in medicine at Pazmany-Peter University. While Szondi would later give up some aspects of Judaism, the religion of his father had a profound influence on him, and he would remain a Jew and a believer throughout his life.<sup>6</sup>

Szondi's studies were interrupted by the onset of World War I. Between 1914 and 1918 he served in the Austro-Hungarian army where he experienced trench warfare on both the Carpathian and Italian fronts, which also resulted in him being wounded. Although he was drafted, it appears that he served with some distinction. After completing training, he was given the rank of medical sergeant (*Sanitätsfeldwebel*) and was subsequently promoted to medical lieutenant (*Sanitätsleutnant*) and battalion doctor (*Bataillonsarzt*) over the course of the war.<sup>7</sup>

Following the war, he continued his studies and eventually practised medicine as an endocrinologist in Budapest. In 1926 he married Lili Radnanyi and by 1929 he was the father of two children, Vera and Peter.<sup>8</sup> In 1927 he was appointed Professor of Psychopathology at Pazmany-Peter University and a Director at the Royal Hungarian Institute for Psychopathology and Psychotherapy. Throughout the 1930s he accumulated a degree of professional eminence and prestige, making breakthroughs in the hereditary nature of stuttering, migraines, and epilepsy.<sup>9</sup>

However, the trajectory of Szondi's career was once again interrupted, this time by the introduction anti-Semitic laws by the pro-Nazi Hungarian government in the late 1930s. Following the Nazi

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Hughes, "Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies," *JR* 87, no. 1 (2007): 59–78. Szondi's early life and family are examined in more detail in §5.4.

<sup>7</sup> Karl Bürgi-Meyer, *Leopold Szondi: Eine Biographische Skizze* (Zürich: Szondi-Verlag, 2000), 28.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Szondi was a noted literary critic and inaugurator of critical work on the poet Paul Celan. He died by suicide in 1971.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1992), 7-8.

invasion of Hungary in March 1944, the Szondi family home was expropriated, and the family was relocated to a ghetto in Budapest. Szondi and his family were also forced to wear the yellow Star of David, marking their Jewish identity.<sup>10</sup> In August 1944, the family was able to evacuate Budapest on board the infamous ‘Kasztner train.’ Thinking they were to emigrate to Palestine, after ten days on the train they instead alighted to find themselves in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in northern Germany. After five months imprisonment, the family were released following the intervention of the American Red Cross, and eventually came to settle in Zürich, Switzerland.<sup>11</sup>

According to Szondi scholar Richard Hughes, Szondi’s personal experiences “arose in the contexts of his father’s death, trench warfare, homelessness, persecution, and exile. These occurred as shock events, revealing dramatic patterns of irony and tragic reversal,” which would ultimately lead to the development of his theories of familial unconsciousness, human aggression, and religious belief.<sup>12</sup> Such themes are threaded through his major works in genotropism,<sup>13</sup> the Szondi test, the Cain-Moses polarity, and the pontifical ego, all of which are the constituent elements of a depth-psychology he invented and developed called *Schicksalsanalyse* (Analysis of Fate). It is his works related to *Schicksalsanalyse*, the familial unconscious, and Cain which are the central concern of this study.

## 1.1 Rationale for this Study

Léopold Szondi’s work on Cain occupies a curious junction between currency and neglect. While the thought and work of Szondi is largely unfamiliar today, at least within the anglophone academy, the myth of Cain and Abel still resonates in the popular imagination. The immortal wandering figure of Cain continues to be used symbolically and allegorically, particularly in literature, film and

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<sup>10</sup> Hughes, “Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies,” 61.

<sup>11</sup> §6.4 deals with this part of Szondi’s life in more detail.

<sup>12</sup> Hughes, 64.

<sup>13</sup> Genotropism is Szondi’s theory of the influence that latent recessive genes retain in directing unconscious aspects of one’s life such as choices in love, marriage partner, vocation, friendships, illnesses, and mode of death. Ref. Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 17-19.

television, as well as in popular music, to explore themes related to conflict, violence, and evil.<sup>14</sup> It is noteworthy that certain motifs from the Bible still seem to retain a sufficient hold on the collective imagination such that they are understood within both so-called high and popular cultures, even in what is now conceded as the ‘post-Christian’ West.<sup>15</sup> Genesis 4 represents one such motif.

This study aims to advance a *Wirkungsgeschichte* (effective history or history of influence) for Léopold Szondi in the anglophone academy via a reading of Gen 4 and the subsequent sibling stories in Genesis through the lens of his concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* and his theory of the Cain complex. The thesis will present a multivalent approach to Gen 4, its context within Genesis and the Pentateuch more broadly, and Léopold Szondi’s interpretation of that text, drawing on concepts and approaches from biblical exegesis, social sciences, systematic theology, and depth psychology. Put succinctly, this thesis will present a reading of Gen 4 and the subsequent sibling stories in Genesis through the lens of Szondi’s reading of Gen 4 and the Torah more broadly.

This study will seek answers to three interrelated primary questions: What is Szondi’s ‘Cain complex’ and what were the factors that influenced him in its formation? What does a *re*-reading of the Cain and Abel myth and the other sibling stories of Genesis in dialogue with Szondi’s articulation of the ‘Cainitic’ personality reveal about the overarching structure of Genesis? What is Szondi’s model for resolving the ‘Cain complex’ and, thus, the problem of violent human aggression, and how does this compare with the biblical tradition?

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<sup>14</sup> By way of providing some recent examples, in 2009 the Portuguese writer José Saramago published the novella *Cain*, in which Cain wanders through and is witness to some of the key events depicted in Book of Genesis as part of the author’s attack on theism and the authoritarian God-image. In 2016 an anthology of poetry centred upon the figure of Cain was published by British playwright Luke Kennard. In this anthology Cain lives on in the twenty-first century as a psychiatric nurse who provides therapy for the narrator during the breakdown of his marriage and family situation. The centrepiece of the anthology is a sequence of thirty-one anagram poems based on Gen 4:9-12. The themes of terror, genealogy, and violence are interwoven through several of the poems. The 2005 album *Don’t Believe the Truth* by Oasis, a band that were well-known for tensions between its two leading figures, the brothers Liam and Noel Gallagher, contains the song “Guess God thinks I’m Abel.” The heavy metal band Avenged Sevenfold was formed in 1999 and take their name from Gen 4:24. The television series *Supernatural* (2005-present) and *Lucifer* (2016-present) both have recurring characters based on the supposedly immortal biblical figure of Cain, with the former even using the Mark of Cain (Gen 4:15) as a recurring trope and plot device. The 2015 horror film *He Never Died* portrays Cain as an immortal cannibalistic drifter. What many of these depictions have in common are the key ideas of Cain as both immortal and itinerant.

<sup>15</sup> For example, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, declared Britain was post-Christian in a newspaper interview in April 2014. (Tim Ross, Cole Moreton, and James Kirkup, “Former Archbishop of Canterbury: We Are a Post-Christian Nation,” *Sunday Telegraph*, April 26, 2014, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10790495/Former-archbishop-of-Canterbury-We-are-a-post-Christian-nation.html>.)



## 1.2 Contributions to the fields of Hebrew Bible, Theology, and the Humanities

The two major foci of this study are Gen 4, its function within, and relationship to, the remainder of the book of Genesis, and the biography and thought of Léopold Szondi. As such, this thesis will adopt an interdisciplinary approach to these two main concerns utilising elements from biography, history, systematic theology, and, principally, psychological biblical criticism.

Psychological hermeneutics is a relatively recent approach to biblical criticism. Even so, in terms of depth psychology and psychoanalytical approaches, this branch of biblical research, exegesis and interpretation has been dominated by theories espoused by figures such as Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, Melanie Klein, and Jacques Lacan.<sup>16</sup> Although there has been some prior scholarship relating to Léopold Szondi and his theories vis-à-vis systematic theology, it remains comparatively small in scale; moreover, his theories have not yet been integrated into the field of biblical criticism. The driving thesis of this study is that while Szondi's theories and ideas have generally been overlooked by the academy, some, such as the familial unconscious and the Cain complex, can provide a novel insight into the Bible and its interpretation. Hence, the primary hope for this study is to inaugurate a new arena of Szondian psychological hermeneutics and readings of biblical texts.

I also envision secondary contributions to be made to the fields of theology and the humanities more generally. Because of Szondi's preoccupation with the origins and catalysts for violence and their relationship to the emergence of monotheism, this study will also speak to those areas of systematic theology concerned with the nature of evil, theodicy, election, conflict resolution and reconciliation, particularly as these relate to the Abrahamic religious traditions. The 'fratricide' motif as implied in the Cain complex is relevant for the Abrahamic faiths by virtue of their shared religious heritage. The familial links between the three faiths are clearly established by their sacred texts and their traditions.<sup>17</sup> As a possible avenue for the further exploration of the applicability and relevance of

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<sup>16</sup> For an overview of psychological approaches to biblical texts see Wayne G. Rollins and D. Andrew Kille, eds., *Psychological Insight into the Bible: Texts and Readings* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> To summarise the connections briefly, Abraham, through his second son, Isaac (Gen 21:1-3), is the ancestor of the Israelites and, therefore, the initial patriarch of Judaism. As for Christianity, aside from Jesus of Nazareth's obvious Jewishness, the author of Matthew's Gospel makes it clear that Jesus was a direct descendant of Abraham via David (cf. Matt 1:1-17). As one might expect, a first-century Jew who could not trace their ancestry directly to David would have been far more unusual than one who could, particularly given that the HB states that David fathered 19 *sons* who reached maturity (1 Chron 3:1-9). Finally, Islamic tradition holds that Abraham's first-born son, Ishmael (Gen 16:4-16), was the ancestor of the prophet Muhammad. This is likely the result of the Qur'anic assertion that Abraham founded Mecca (Quran 2:125-6; 22:26) which may have inspired later Muslim commentators to identify Ishmael as the ancestor of Muhammad. This can be evidenced, for example, in the opening of Muhammad ibn Ishaq's eighth century biography of the prophet Muhammad.

Szondi's ideas, a Szondian model for the at times complex issue of interfaith dialogue within the Abrahamic faith traditions could prove beneficial and productive.

Finally, this study will also emphasise the book of Genesis not only as a foundational sacred text but as a coherent ancient text. The author or compiler of Genesis should be considered a masterful artist and reader of humanity alongside the great poets. It is my hope that this study will be of interest not only to scholars of the HB but to readers from other disciplines within the humanities more broadly, some of whom might otherwise find Genesis' cultural ubiquity and religious associations to be barriers to receiving it as a literary artwork in its own right.

### **1.3 Why Cain? Why Szondi?**

On 22 May 2013, Lee Rigby, a twenty-five-year-old soldier, was run down, set upon, and murdered by two men while he was walking to work at the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, London. The attack made headlines around the world because of its savagery and the fact that Rigby's attackers were videoed in the immediate aftermath. One of the murderers, his hands covered in Rigby's blood, holding a large carving knife and a meat cleaver, claimed that Rigby was killed to avenge the deaths of Muslims around the world: "It is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,"<sup>18</sup> he claimed. At the time of his death, Rigby was not wearing his uniform – the only thing that identified him as a soldier was the jumper advertising a military charity that he was wearing and his proximity to the barracks.

At the time of the murder, I was in a process of discernment for ordination with the Anglican diocese of Adelaide and the final stages of a theology degree. I was also still 'transitioning' from a nine-year period of military service to civilian life. Images of war and terrorism filtered through into everyday life then, as they do now, on screens and printed media. This one particular incident, however, affected me greatly. Years before, I had been ordered not to travel to and from work in military uniform when working at Defence Plaza in Sydney for fear it could elicit a confrontation or assault. Carrying no, or few markers designating that we belonged to the armed forces, and thus wearing no uniform on the way to work – like Rigby – was instilled in my colleagues and me. I felt a connection to Rigby and found it easy to empathise with the shock and terror he must have experienced in the final moments of his life. Rigby's murder also emphasised my experience of vulnerability, paradoxically, as a member of the military – an organisation, in the words of Samuel Huntington,

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<sup>18</sup> "Woolwich attack: the terrorist's rant." *The Telegraph*. 23 May 2013. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10075488/Woolwich-attack-the-terrorists-rant.html>. Accessed 18 June 2018.

“whose primary function is the application of violence.”<sup>19</sup> The logic of Rigby’s attacker in contrast was to identify and use their markers of vulnerability, namely their Muslim identity, and to transform their resentment and perceived sense of suffering into inflicting suffering on Rigby. Equally affronting for me, however, was the image of God that the attackers espoused and by which they seemed to be inspired.

That event of May 2013 has led to ongoing questions for me about the role of religious faith in my life and the phenomena of religious belief more broadly, especially its connection with war and violence. Building on my previous research on the Bible, power, authority, and war, my research interests have thus shifted to explorations of violence and killing, the dialectics of strength and vulnerability, and the interpretation of such in biblical literature. Through wide reading I narrowed my main interest to the work of a Hungarian-Jewish psychoanalyst, Léopold Szondi. Szondi looked to his own faith and traditions for an explanation of the causes and catalysts of human aggression and violence. As a veteran of World War I, a victim of Nazi persecution, a Holocaust survivor, an exile, and refugee, Szondi identified that he himself was afflicted and affected by what he termed the ‘Cain complex.’ The story of Cain’s murder of his brother Abel remains particularly apt given that almost daily we are confronted with the problem of human violence.

#### **1.4 Outline of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of nine chapters. While chapters 1 and 9 introduce and conclude the study respectively, the bulk of the argument is explicated in chapters 4 through to 8, with chapters 2 and 3 providing details of the methodology and a review of relevant scholarship.

Chapter 2 outlines the methodology of the thesis and reviews some of the relevant literature and scholarship related to Szondi. This chapter draws on works in psychoanalysis, biography, and *Rezeptionsästhetik* as methods through which one can engage with Léopold Szondi and his body of work. Scholarship on Szondi is then reviewed with a particular emphasis on works related to his theory of violent human aggression. Consideration is also given to more prominent theories concerning the origins of and motivations for human aggression and how these relate to this study. Chapter 3, “Exegetical Observations on Genesis 4”, is an adjunct to Chapter 2. It is an overview of

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<sup>19</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 11.

scholarship on Gen 4 that approaches the text via its two major pericopes: the fratricide (vv. 1-16) and the genealogy of Cain (vv. 17-24).

The argument proper begins in Chapter 4, “*Schicksal*: Fate in a Szondiian Reading of Genesis 4.” This chapter establishes two patterns which can be evidenced in the bulk of the argument across succeeding chapters. First, each chapter begins with a brief vignette from my field trip to Zürich examining the archives of the Szondi-Institut, situated in Szondi’s former family home. These vignettes will draw attention to and make conscious my own subjectivity in seeking answers to the primary questions of this study. As Szondi’s son, noted literary scholar Peter Szondi, affirmed; “True objectivity is bound up with subjectivity.”<sup>20</sup> Moreover, this device reflects the movement between subjectivity and objectivity that is evident in the senior Szondi’s works. The second pattern established in Chapter 4 is the movement between the biblical text(s) in question and Szondi’s biographical specifics and writings. By way of illustration, in Chapter 4 the background of ‘*das Schicksal*’ is explicated both within its broader tradition in German-speaking Europe, its function within Szondi’s concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* and his subsequent reading of Gen 4. Following this, there is an evaluation of Szondi’s reading of the Cain and Abel myth through an analysis and illustration of the roles that fate and destiny play in both the narrative and its reception, particularly in rabbinic literature.

In Chapter 5, “The Familial Unconscious and the Genius of Genesis,” the study moves beyond the Gen 4 narrative to present a reading of the concept of תולדת in Genesis. This provides the foundations for an examination of Szondi’s theory of the familial unconscious. Accordingly, the milieu of Judaism within Hungary during the second half of the nineteenth century is elucidated and consideration is given to the influence it may have had on Szondi and his family. I argue that the interest in genealogy that is evident in both Genesis and nineteenth century Hungarian Judaism is also manifest in Szondi’s *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen* and bears some relationship to it. In the final part of the chapter, Szondi’s own familial history is explored, and I suggest how these biographical details were influential in the formation of his theories.

Chapter 6, “*Das Böse*: Szondi’s Concept of ‘Evil’ and the Cain Archetype,” largely steps away from the integration of biblical exegesis and hermeneutics to concentrate on aspects of Szondi’s biography in order to investigate Szondi’s understanding of *das Böse*. While the chapter commences with an examination of two Jewish interpretations of evil as it appears in the Primeval History, concepts from

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<sup>20</sup> Peter Szondi and Harvey Mendelsohn, “Hope in the Past: On Walter Benjamin,” *Critical Inquiry* 4, no. 3 (1978): 491–506.

the fields of psychoanalysis and ethology are given more prominence, thereby reflecting the weight Szondi himself gives to each. Following World War II, a distinct appeal to Gen 4 as a metaphor evidenced in post-Shoah German language literature is observed. These perceived allusions to Gen 4 and the figure of Cain are examined in more detail in the second part of the chapter which deals with the genre of ‘violontology.’<sup>21</sup> The latter half of the chapter will explore in-depth two of Szondi’s most illuminating examples of the so-called ‘Cainitic’ personality, which are the two case studies he uses in his explanation of ‘Cain the War Criminal’ in *Kain*.

Taken together, chapters 4, 5 and 6 also represent a narrowing of focus that corresponds to the functioning of the associated theories and concepts of the Szondian model. Chapter 4 deals with Szondi’s overarching contribution to the field of psychoanalysis, that is the magisterial concept of *Schicksalsanalyse*. In Chapter 5 the focus narrows to consider Szondi’s theory of the familial unconscious that is integral to *Schicksalsanalyse*. Finally, Chapter 6 analyses the Cain complex which, according to Szondi, manifests within the familial unconscious and is central to two of his key works that are the focus of this study. Like a Matryoshka doll for depth psychology, the movement of these chapters reflects the nested sequence of Szondi’s theories and reveals the layers of his model relevant to this study.<sup>22</sup>

Chapter 7 returns to the biblical text, with attention given to the motif of familial conflict within the book of Genesis. Consequently, Chapter 7 also marks a temporary departure from considerations of Szondi’s biographical data and other influences. I argue that reading the major accounts of sibling rivalry in Gen 4-37 through the lens of Szondi’s Cain complex and Gen 4 as an establishing narrative reveals that the theme of sibling rivalry acts as an organisational framework and as a driver of plot in Genesis and, thus, also emphasises the coherence of the received text. Furthermore, while the focus narrows in the study’s explication of Szondi’s theories, the reading of the biblical text simultaneously expands from Gen 4 to encompass the remaining narratives dealing with siblings in conflict across Genesis. There is thus a concurrent convergence and divergence that is evidenced in the structuring of this study.

In Chapter 8 there is a return to the pattern previously established, namely the movement between the biblical text(s) in question and Szondi’s biographical specifics and writings. Szondi’s answer to the

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<sup>21</sup> This term is defined in §6.3.

<sup>22</sup> In some respects, this narrowing of the focus within both the study and the Szondian model also reflects the process within psychoanalysis to reveal and make conscious the functioning of the unconscious of the subject.

problem of Cain is symbolised in the figure of Moses. His argument for Moses is expounded and critiqued then compared with the culmination of the narrative structure of Genesis that is vested in the sibling rivalry accounts. This demonstrates that the compiler of Genesis presents their own solution to the problem of Cain, and that this solution is embodied in the figure of Joseph.

## CHAPTER 2    **METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW OF ‘SZONDI’ SCHOLARSHIP**

According to David R. Blumenthal ‘reading’ correlates to ‘calling,’ a connection he derives from the fact that the two concepts are connoted by the same verb in Hebrew: קריאה.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, reading must also be ‘proclaiming’ since it too is a cognate of קריאה. To read is then, as Blumenthal argues, “to speak, to address, to communicate... it is also to give and receive simultaneously. Text is voice, and voice is text.”<sup>2</sup> This study will present a *re*-reading of the text of Gen 4 within its broader intertextual context in Genesis and the Pentateuch, in dialogue with Szondi’s reading of the same.

As discussed in the Introduction, in this study I adopt a multi-disciplinary approach to the primary questions, and, as such, a number of methodologies are utilised. The main ones were instilled in me over the course of my education and career. I initially trained as a teacher of history, literature, and religious studies, and the reader will likely perceive the coalescence of these three disciplines in this study. Since those early stages of my professional career, I have completed postgraduate studies in ancient history, a degree in theology specialising in OT literature, and a nine-year career in the Australian Army. All of these disparate elements are herein brought together, representing the culmination of my education, work, and research interests to date.

### **2.1 Overview of Methodologies**

There is no one overarching methodological approach that has been adopted in this study. Instead, there is the interweaving of a number of approaches that is in keeping with its multidisciplinary character. For example, in Chapter 5 a literary approach to the biblical text, namely a form critical approach that presents a synchronic reading of the ‘final form’ of Genesis, is followed by a historical explication of Neolog Judaism in Hungary that is in turn linked with a biographical approach to Léopold Szondi and his father. Hence, in one chapter three significant methodological approaches can be discerned: biblical exegesis, history, and biography. While such interweaving of approaches and ideas is carried throughout, there are, however, three methodological approaches that are predominant: a depth psychological hermeneutic, biography, and a reader response approach shaped by Hans Robert Jauss’s reception history hermeneutic. The first two of these reflect this study’s

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<sup>1</sup> David. R Blumenthal, *Facing the Abusing God* (Louisville KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 57.

<sup>2</sup> Blumenthal, *Facing the Abusing God*, 57.

movement from the biblical text to the life and work of Szondi and back again, while the third captures the holistic conceptualisation of the study. In addition, as will be demonstrated below, all three of the main methodological approaches are complementary.

### *Psychological Criticism*

Psychological approaches to biblical exegesis are comparatively new in the field.<sup>3</sup> It could be argued, however, that psychological criticism and hermeneutics can trace its origins to the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher. According to Schleiermacher, interpretation always has two sides, one grammatical, the other psychological, and it was his identification of the latter aspect that was particularly novel in his approach.<sup>4</sup> Schleiermacher's concern for psychological interpretation was, nevertheless, limited to considerations of an author's psychology and what is unique to a particular author rather than a focus on the narrative on its own merits (see below).

In terms of psychoanalysis, it is Paul Ricoeur who has done most to situate this system of psychological theory in the discipline of hermeneutics.<sup>5</sup> His focus on the theories and works of Freud was undertaken in the context of wider reconsiderations of the scientific legitimacy of Freud's assertions.<sup>6</sup> Ricoeur argued that to read psychoanalysis scientifically was to misunderstand the nature of the practice. Ricoeur argued that psychoanalytical concepts and theories should be assessed "according to their status as conditions of the possibility of analytic experience, insofar as the latter operates in the field of speech... but not as theoretical concepts of an observational science."<sup>7</sup> As John Thompson points out, Ricoeur emphasises psychoanalysis as "an interpretive discipline

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<sup>3</sup> Ilona N. Rashkow, "Psychology and the Hebrew Bible, Read Through the Lenses of Freud and Lacan," in *Psychological Hermeneutics for Biblical Themes and Texts: A Festschrift in Honor of Wayne G. Rollins*, ed. J. Harold Ellens (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), 235–56.

<sup>4</sup> For an overview of the historical background to the development of psychological biblical hermeneutics see J. Harold Ellens, ed., *Psychological Hermeneutics for Biblical Themes and Texts: A Festschrift in Honor of Wayne G. Rollins* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), 21–24.

<sup>5</sup> John B. Thompson, "Editor's Introduction" in Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, trans. John B. Thompson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6. See also Steven J Sandage et al., "Hermeneutics and Psychology: A Review and Dialectical Model," *Review of General Psychology* 12, no. 4 (2008): 344–64.

Alternatively, it has also been suggested that Jacques Lacan did much to integrate psychoanalysis into philosophy during the 1960s. (See Rashkow, "Psychology and the Hebrew Bible, Read Through the Lenses of Freud and Lacan," 241.)

<sup>6</sup> For example, Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy; an Essay on Interpretation*, The Terry Lectures, Yale University (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970); and Paul Ricoeur, "The Question of Proof in Freud's Psychoanalytic Writings", in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 247–73. Ricoeur was generally critical of the psychoanalytical approach of Jacques Lacan.

<sup>7</sup> Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy; an Essay on Interpretation*, 375. See also Hans Jurgen Eysenck, *Uses and Abuses of Psychology*. The Pelican Psychology Series. (London, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1953), for an antecedent on Ricoeur's position regarding psychoanalysis and science.



concerned with relations of meaning between representative symbols and primordial instincts.”<sup>8</sup> Ricoeur is arguably most responsible for shepherding psychoanalytical concepts from the domain of empirical science into the realm of philosophy as a valid means of interpretation and understanding.<sup>9</sup>

Wayne Rollins, who inaugurated the Psychology and Biblical Studies section in the Society of Biblical Literature, claims that psychological biblical criticism is, on one hand, psycho-hermeneutical and exegetical on the other.<sup>10</sup> He defines psychological biblical criticism as consisting of three elements.<sup>11</sup> The first is that unconscious and conscious processes informed the biblical authors, their communities, and their readers and interpreters.<sup>12</sup> This is a fundamental premise. The second element is a two-fold objective that deals with both the psychological context and content of a text that accentuates the text as “a psychic product, reality, symptom, and event, and as a source of commentary on the nature, life, habits, pathology, health, and purpose of the psyche/soul.”<sup>13</sup> The final element concerns the notion of adequacy in determining valid psychological interpretation. In this Rollins largely follows D. Andrew Kille.<sup>14</sup>

Kille asserts five criteria to establish an adequate psychological interpretation.<sup>15</sup> Using Gen 3 as a case study, Kille argues that psychological interpretation should first deal with the text as a whole, noting genre, themes, allusions etc. across the entire work. Second, it should also deal with the distinctiveness of a text vis-à-vis authorship, genre, literary and linguistic features, and structure. Thus, the first two criteria, respectively, deal with what makes a text both typical and unique. Third,

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<sup>8</sup> Thompson in Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Following Ricoeur, a number of scholars attempted to demonstrate the scientific validity of Freudian psychoanalysis. Fisher and Greenberg, for example, urge a less sceptical approach to concepts such as the Oedipus complex. (See Seymour Fisher and Roger P. Greenberg, *The Scientific Credibility of Freud's Theories and Therapy* [New York: Basic Books, 1977], 401.) Kline concurs, asserting that studies have demonstrated that Freud's theories of repression and the Oedipus complex had been supported by evidence. (See Paul Kline, “The Status of Freudian Theory in the Light of the Evidence,” in *Fact and Fantasy in Freudian Theory*, 2nd ed. [London: Taylor and Francis, 1981].) Farrel concludes that “it is clear that science gives the analytic theory more support than any other psychodynamic offering.” (See B.A. Farrell, *The Standing of Psychoanalysis* [New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981], 201 cited in Dan W. Forsyth, “Sibling Rivalry, Aesthetic Sensibility, and Social Structure in Genesis,” *Ethos* 19, no. 4 [1991]: 453–510.) For an overview of objections to Freudian literary theory see Rashkow, “Psychology and the Hebrew Bible, Read Through the Lenses of Freud and Lacan,” 240-4.

<sup>10</sup> Wayne G. Rollins, *Soul and Psyche: The Bible in Psychological Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 115-181.

<sup>11</sup> Rollins, *Soul and Psyche: The Bible in Psychological Perspective*, 92-4.

<sup>12</sup> Rollins, 92.

<sup>13</sup> Rollins, 94.

<sup>14</sup> Rollins, 94, cites Kille's 1997 doctoral dissertation which was published in 2001. (See D. Andrew Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism: Genesis 3 as a Test Case* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001].)

<sup>15</sup> Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism: Genesis 3 as a Test Case*, 49-53.

it accounts for the greatest number of factors found in the text and explicates the greater convergence between them. An adequate interpretation is neither narrow nor is it far-fetched, but it “must be coherent with human experience or what we know from other sources.”<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, when compared to other interpretations “an adequate interpretation will be equal to or more successful at explaining irregularities in the text.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, psychological interpretation is potentially at least as valid as, for instance, text critical approaches in accounting for a biblical text’s narrative gaps and other ambiguities. Fourth, the interpretation must facilitate multiple explanations and understandings of a text. It should avoid reducing the text to a “single aspect or referent.”<sup>18</sup> Finally, an adequate interpretation will enable appropriation. In articulating this criterion, Kille expresses something approximating Jauss’s *Rezeptionsästhetik* (see below) as he declares: “Appropriation involves not only an analysis of various aspects of the text, it requires *re-expression* of those elements in a way that the reader can grasp.”<sup>19</sup>

Psychological biblical criticism has to date been dominated by Freudian and Jungian perspectives.<sup>20</sup> As such, interpretations tend to vary between emphasising the subjective, individual aspects of the unconscious viz. Freud and the “objective unconscious” of Jung.<sup>21</sup> Rollins argues that though both Freud and Jung concur that the unconscious is a factor in all human expressions, consisting of both personal and historical dimensions, they differ in regards to its application to biblical interpretation. Freud’s approach sought to identify and highlight the pathogenic elements within religion, i.e. “the dark side of the psyche and its capacity for causing mischief... and the potentially toxic and caustic nature of some religious texts.”<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, Jung’s approach was inclined to accentuate the therapeutic aspects of religious texts: as Rollins argues, “a primary goal of reading of the Bible through the lens of psychological insight is to come to understand... the secret of the therapeutic effect the Bible can have on the human psyche.”<sup>23</sup> These approaches to biblical interpretation reflect

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<sup>16</sup> Kille, 51.

<sup>17</sup> Kille, 53.

<sup>18</sup> Kille, 53.

<sup>19</sup> Kille, 53. Italics are mine.

<sup>20</sup> See Wayne G. Rollins, *Jung and the Bible* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1983); Wayne G. Rollins and D. Andrew Kille, eds., *Psychological Insight into the Bible: Texts and Readings* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), esp 40-55.

<sup>21</sup> Donald Capps, “Psychological Biblical Criticism: Envisioning Its Prospects,” in *Psychological Hermeneutics for Biblical Themes and Texts: A Festschrift in Honor of Wayne G. Rollins*, ed. J. Harold Ellens (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), 43–60.

<sup>22</sup> Wayne G. Rollins, “Freud and Jung”, in Rollins and Kille, *Psychological Insight into the Bible: Texts and Readings*, 46.

<sup>23</sup> Rollins, “Freud and Jung”, 47.

the different theories of Freud and Jung on the origin and purpose of the unconscious mind, and they are illustrative of the difficulty in assimilating the two approaches.

Szondi recognised the epistemological gap in Freudian and Jungian approaches to the unconscious and saw his own system as capable not only of bridging the gap but of unifying and integrating psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. Accordingly, he claimed that Freud's psychoanalysis represented "the ontogeny" and Jung's 'Analytical psychology' that of "the archaeology of the deep mental processes," but connecting the two systems was his concept of *Schicksalanalyse* which was "the genealogy."<sup>24</sup> Central to this system is Szondi's concept of the familial unconscious (*das familiäre Unbewusste*), which is based on 'genealogy.' In a Szondian framework, 'genealogy' includes an individual's familial ancestry, heredity, and genetic determination.<sup>25</sup> The familial unconscious thus represents the ancient interplay of an ancestor's traits on the life of his or her descendent. The descendent has received her genetic structure from her ancestors and this, in turn, significantly determines her possibilities in life. Central to his concept of the familial unconscious is what Szondi identified as the 'Cain complex,' whereupon he was inspired by the use of Greek mythology and literature in Freudian psychoanalysis to advance the biblical figures of Cain and Moses as metaphors for his theoretical framework.

Building on Freudian psychoanalysis of Oedipus and its emphasis on the sex drive, Szondi examined the paroxysmal drive within the context of the Cain and Abel myth in order to offer a new perspective on human aggression.<sup>26</sup> He subsequently developed the concept of the 'Cain complex' as a metaphor for the origin of violence. As a person of faith, Szondi argued that the Cain complex is central to monotheism, viz. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (i.e. the Abrahamic faith traditions). This is because, according to Szondi, these faiths cannot be interpreted psychoanalytically through the Freudian framework of the Oedipus complex, since the parent is not the enemy in the Abrahamic religions.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Ich-Analyse*, vol. 4, *Schicksalanalyse* (Bern and Stuttgart: Verlag Hans Huber, 1956), 21.

<sup>25</sup> Eniko Gyongyosine Kiss, "Personality and the Familial Unconscious in Szondi's Fate-Analysis," *Empirical Text and Culture Research* 4 (2010), 71.

<sup>26</sup> The concept of 'drives' is contentious. Psychologists today tend to refer to 'affects,' 'inner excitements' and 'motivations' rather than drives. However, there are some calls within the scientific community for a re-evaluation of the Freudian theory of drives. For one recent example, see Michael Kirsch and Wolfgang Mertens, "On the Drive Specificity of Freudian Drives for the Generation of SEEKING Activities: The Importance of the Underestimated Imperative Motor Factor," *Frontiers in Psychology* 9, no. May (2018): 616. In this study, I will use the term 'drives' since that is what Szondi referred to them as. However, the contested nature of the idea of 'drives' is acknowledged.

<sup>27</sup> See also Kalman J. Kaplan and Matthew B. Schwartz, "Jacob's Blessing and the Curse of Oedipus: Sibling Rivalry and Its Resolution," *Journal of Psychology and Judaism* 22, no. 1 (1998): 71–84.

Drawing on these insights, the centrepiece of this study is a reading of the sibling stories in Genesis, in which Gen 4 functions as the establishing narrative, through the lens of Szondian *Schicksalsanalyse*. In so doing, I will attempt to demonstrate that a Szondian approach to biblical interpretation can assimilate both the pathogenic Freudian and the therapeutic Jungian approaches.

### **Biography**

In its simplest expression, ‘biography’ is the life history of a subject. The ‘biographical method’ is the collection and consequent analysis of data in order to provide an account of a subject’s whole life or a portion of life.<sup>28</sup> In recent decades the so-called ‘biographical turn’ has become a feature in qualitative research across disciplines. According to Robert Miller and Brian Robert, this is due to the perceived usefulness of placing an individual at the centre of investigation within a “nexus of social networks and an evolving historical context.”<sup>29</sup> When reading Szondi’s material, it becomes evident that he was not ambivalent about making his own linkages between his theories and life events. He makes these connections quite explicit, for example, in interviews and in an autobiographical sketch published around the time of *Moses, Antwort auf Kain*.<sup>30</sup> This is not surprising since the psychoanalytical process is intensely biographical by its very nature. A complementarity between biography and psychological criticism as methodologies is thus emphasised.

There is a significant amount of biographical data concerning some of the more significant events in Szondi’s life, such as the influence of his father, his adolescent interest in the works of Dostoyevsky, his experience of war, and the dream which was to become the catalyst for his theory of the familial unconscious. However, there is less data concerning the effect that other momentous events in his life may have had on shaping his thought and work. Regarding these events Szondi, too, is often silent, or at least more reticent to acknowledge their influence. Two examples are particularly illustrative of this.

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<sup>28</sup> R.L. Miller and Brian Roberts, “Biographical Method,” in *The A-Z of Social Research*, ed. R.L. Miller and J. Brewer (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 2011), 16–17.

<sup>29</sup> Miller and Roberts, “Biographical Method,” 16.

<sup>30</sup> See Léopold Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung,” in *Psychotherapie in Selbstdarstellung*, ed. Ludwig J. Pongratz (Bern: Huber, 1973), 413–57; and Robert Maebe. “BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi.” Uploaded on May 1, 2017. YouTube video, 57.41 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A624ASNPzk>, for two examples.

Although he frequently cited his father's Judaism as very influential and noted that he belonged to the Neolog denomination, Szondi does not divulge what specific aspects of this may have been integrated into his work on fate, genealogy, or Cain. Yet an examination of the history and distinctiveness of Judaism in Hungary in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reveals a number of elements that appear analogous with Szondi's theories. In using a biographical approach in Chapter 5, I draw links between Hungarian Jewish history and Szondi's theories and postulate how he may have been influenced by them, thus demonstrating the depth and influence of his Jewish identity.

A second example concerns Adolf Eichmann. Eichmann is the focus of a major case study in Szondi's *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen*, yet Szondi avoids directly referencing the role Eichmann played in the persecution of his family and their dramatic change of fortune. Szondi makes a claim to objectivity in his presentation of the Eichmann case study; however, by making the connections between the presentation in *Kain* and Szondi's biographical specifics, additional layers of meaning and a deep subjectivity are revealed. These in turn enhance comprehension of both the 'Cainitic' personality and the psychology of Szondi as author.

The choice to present Szondi and his theories within the context of his times is a means of explicating the 'how' and 'why' of his thought and work. There is consequently a close connection to 'history' in the type of biographical method I pursue, namely an interpretative element that is distinct from a straightforward record of life events.<sup>31</sup> The form of biographical method that best describes what I have attempted herein is the 'artistic-scholarly' approach as first defined by James Clifford.<sup>32</sup> In such an approach, Clifford suggests that the biographer takes on the same depth of research as an objective biography, but does so in the role of "an imaginary creative artist."<sup>33</sup> At various points I make connections between Szondi's familial and social networks and his historical context in order to creatively hypothesise and posit the motivations for his theories of the unconscious.

Similarly, consideration will be given to the motivations of the biblical characters at the centre of this study such as Cain, Jacob, Rachel, and Joseph. Much of this approach is in keeping with the methodology of psychological criticism, thereby highlighting another point of connection between

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<sup>31</sup> L. Smith, "Biographical Method," in *Sage Library of Research Methods: SAGE Biographical Research*, ed. J. Goodwin (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 2012), 1–36.

<sup>32</sup> James L. Clifford, *From Puzzles to Portraits: Problems of a Literary Biographer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), cited in Smith, "Biographical Method."

<sup>33</sup> Clifford, cited in Smith, 12.

these two methodologies. However, the narrative gaps and intertextual allusions that are a feature of Genesis also invite an artistic-scholarly approach to the presentation of the central characters and a reading of the sibling stories through a Szondian framework.

### ***Wirkungsgeschichte and Rezeptionsästhetik***

Having outlined the two major methodological approaches that I have adopted, I conclude this overview of methodologies by briefly explaining the macro-level theoretical movement of the thesis. In the previous chapter, I noted that one of my objectives is to advance a *Wirkungsgeschichte* for Léopold Szondi in the anglophone academy. Hans-Georg Gadamer first outlined the concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte* in only a few pages of his seminal 1960 work *Warheit und Methode* (published in English as *Truth and Method*).<sup>34</sup> *Wirkungsgeschichte* has been translated alternatively as “effective history” or “history of effects.”<sup>35</sup> While the distinction between these two interpretations is nuanced, a difference is nevertheless implied. Ulrich Luz argues that if *Wirkungsgeschichte* is understood as the “history of effects” it becomes synonymous with *Rezeptionsgeschichte* (reception history) as defined by Jauss, a one-time pupil of Gadamer.<sup>36</sup> However, Luz asserts that the term “effective history” is much closer to what Gadamer meant and further, that “history is ‘effective’ because it is a basic foundation which carries our life.”<sup>37</sup>

Anthony Thiselton states that Gadamer’s formulation of *Wirkungsgeschichte* was influenced by his mentor Martin Heidegger and his concept of ‘horizons’ and by Georg Friedrich Hegel’s ‘historical reason,’ i.e. the teleological unfolding of history according to the dictates of reason.<sup>38</sup> Gadamer defines ‘horizon’ as “the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point.”<sup>39</sup> Horizons can be limited or broad. By asking the right questions the particular historical horizon can be acquired, “so that what we are seeking to understand can be seen in its true dimensions.”<sup>40</sup> This leads to historical consciousness wherein the past is approached in terms of its

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<sup>34</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 267-74.

<sup>35</sup> Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Eerdmans, 2009), 218.

<sup>36</sup> Ulrich Luz, “The Contribution of Reception History to a Theology of the New Testament,” in *The Nature of New Testament Theology*, ed. Chritsopher Rowland and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), 123–34.

<sup>37</sup> Luz, “The Contribution of Reception History to a Theology of the New Testament,” 125.

<sup>38</sup> Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*, 218-9, 225. Cf. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 268.

<sup>39</sup> Gadamer, 269.

<sup>40</sup> Gadamer, 270.

own historical horizon. “To this extent,” Gadamer argues, “it seems a legitimate hermeneutical requirement to place ourselves in the other situation in order to understand it.”<sup>41</sup>

*Wirkungsgeschichte* is exercised in this study via two approaches that reflect the distinction between ‘history of effects’ or influence and ‘effective history.’ The first of these is comparatively straightforward while the second requires more exposition.

I have mentioned already that Szondi has very little to no history of influence in the anglophone academy. In the chapter that follows I review literature that examines the sibling stories in Genesis through psychoanalytical lenses and/or seeks to place Gen 4 as an establishing narrative (see §3.5, and also §7.2). What I believe becomes apparent in that discussion is a form of scholarly circumlocution of a conceptual and theoretical structure that Szondi’s thought defines and makes explicit. Szondi’s concept might, therefore, offer those scholars concerned with the psychology of the sibling stories in Genesis and the movement that, together, they form throughout the book a nomenclature, taxonomy, and a theoretical framework or some other additional insight. However, since Szondi has no *Wirkungsgeschichte* in English language scholarship broadly and psychological biblical criticism specifically, they can only suggest what the sibling stories do not represent – e.g. the oedipal paradigm – rather than what they do embody, which is, as I will argue, articulated by Szondi’s Cain complex.<sup>42</sup> The provision of a *Wirkungsgeschichte* for Szondi thus enables the psychological framework that underpins the arrangement of the sibling stories in Genesis to be ‘named.’

In terms of *Wirkungsgeschichte* as ‘effective history,’ the relationship between Gadamer’s concept and Jauss’s identification of the reception history (*Rezeptiongeschichte*) hermeneutic is illuminating

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<sup>41</sup> Gadamer, 270.

<sup>42</sup> Matthew Richard Schlimm does note Szondi scholar and theologian Richard Hughes’s 1982 book *Theology and the Cain Complex* and his 2007 article “Schicksalsanalyse and Religious Studies” (see §2.2 ‘Léopold Szondi’ below) but does not refer to Szondi explicitly, only referring to him as “another psychologist” alongside Freud and Jung. (Ref. Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness: The Ethics of Anger in Genesis* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011], 14 n.49.) Such scholarly indifference to Szondi and his theories, particularly from somebody who is at least peripherally aware, is emblematic of his lack of *Wirkungsgeschichte* in the anglophone academy.

and provides an additional theoretical foundation.<sup>43</sup> Jauss was mentored by Gadamer, and his articulation of reception history shares some similarities with Gadamer's *Wirkungsgeschichte* concept.<sup>44</sup> For example, Jauss was particularly influenced by Gadamer's analysis of 'horizons' to which he introduced the concept of *Erwartungshorizont* (horizon of expectation).<sup>45</sup> Literature, Jauss stresses, is not historical in the sense of a 'fact,' but it is, nevertheless, an 'event.' Facts, if applied to literature are essentially meaningless, whereas the "coherence of literature as an event" is facilitated not only by its production, but also by the "horizon of expectations" of "contemporary and later readers, critics and authors."<sup>46</sup>

Literary scholar, Mark Knight is, however, critical of Jauss's formulation of reception history in that it is more rigid and espouses a more scientific approach than Gadamer's open-ended explorations and is less dynamic as a result. Because of this, Knight claims that "Jauss's work threatens to make reading overly reliant on the sort of empirical approach that ignores the particular issues that arise whenever a text and reader meet."<sup>47</sup> Nonetheless, Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* emphasises the still unfinished meaning of a text and the reciprocal nature of the historical influence of a work in which both the object and the reader each influence the other in shaping meaning.<sup>48</sup>

Jauss's framework is based on seven propositions, developed, in the main, against Marxist and formalist literary theories.<sup>49</sup> Taken together these seven theses "detail a definite agenda for literary studies."<sup>50</sup> Jauss initially rejects value-neutral historical objectivism in his renewal of literary history, which rests on "the preceding experience of a literary work by its readers."<sup>51</sup> He then moves to define and further explain what he identifies as the "horizon of expectation," which is derived from an understanding of earlier texts and, as has been mentioned, is shaped by Gadamer. The horizon leads

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<sup>43</sup> Anthony C. Thiselton, "Reception Theory, H. R. Jauss and the Formative Power of Scripture," *SJT* 65, no. 3 (2012): 289–308. For overviews of the relationship between Gadamer's concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte* and Jauss's concept of reception history (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) see Mark Knight, "Wirkungsgeschichte, Reception History, Reception Theory," *JSNT* 33, no. 2 (2010): 137–46; and Robert Evans, *Reception History, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation: Gadamer and Jauss in Current Practice*, vol. 14, Scriptural Traces (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014).

<sup>44</sup> Knight, "Wirkungsgeschichte, Reception History, Reception Theory," 139.

<sup>45</sup> Evans, *Reception History, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation: Gadamer and Jauss in Current Practice*, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Paul De Man, vol. 2, Theory and History of Literature (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), 21-2.

<sup>47</sup> Knight, "Wirkungsgeschichte, Reception History, Reception Theory," 138–40.

<sup>48</sup> Thiselton, "Reception Theory, H. R. Jauss and the Formative Power of Scripture," 291.

<sup>49</sup> Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, xi.

<sup>50</sup> Knight, 139.

<sup>51</sup> Jauss, 20.



to the third of Jauss's theses or propositions: formation. This is what Jauss refers to as "horizontal change."<sup>52</sup> Thiselton illustrates Jauss's idea of horizontal change with reference to the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), arguing that, to the first audience of that story the terms 'good' and 'Samaritan' formed a contradiction; hence, "[t]he old horizon of expectation becomes reversed by a new horizon."<sup>53</sup> Next, a reconstruction of the horizon of expectations leads to the logic of a conversation between a contemporary reader and the previous receptions of a text.<sup>54</sup> In a later work Jauss augmented this thesis, framing the proposed conversation around "a history of the question and questioning."<sup>55</sup> The posing of questions is critical to what Jauss refers to as the "aesthetic mode," best exemplified in the form of a nested question; 'Can this text be understood differently, and still differently, and differently again?'<sup>56</sup> Thus, there is potential for endless dialogue between a reader and past interpretations. Moreover, this fourth proposition also implies that the text is potential meaning, which is not actualised until the reader appropriates it thereby completing the act of communication.<sup>57</sup>

The final three of Jauss's theses are particularly pertinent to both Szondi and the approach taken here. In his fifth thesis, Jauss asserts that "the interpreter must bring his [or her] own experience into play."<sup>58</sup> This element of Jauss's hermeneutic is of particular relevance since both Szondi's experiences of warfare, exile, and the Shoah, and my own experiences, particularly those acquired as a member of the military and my response to the event which was my initial catalyst for undertaking this study, have informed our readings of certain biblical texts, including Gen 4.

In his sixth thesis, Jauss affirms that true diachronic meaning embraces a series of synchronic cross-sections, as he declares: "The historicity of literature comes to light at the intersections of diachrony and synchrony."<sup>59</sup> The current study is the embodiment of this sixth thesis. My search for understanding of Gen 4 (and the other sibling stories) is shaped through an interaction with Szondi's

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<sup>52</sup> Jauss, 25.

<sup>53</sup> Thiselton, 293.

<sup>54</sup> Jauss's concept also bears similarities to some approaches to reader response hermeneutics. In fact, literary theorist Paul de Man has argued that Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* is the approximation of American reader-response hermeneutics. (See Paul de Man, "Introduction" in Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, viii.)

<sup>55</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, "A Questioning Adam: On the History of the Functions of Question and Answer" in *Question and Answer: Forms of Dialogic Understanding*, vol. 68, *Theory and History of Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 51.

<sup>56</sup> Jauss, *Question and Answer*, 54.

<sup>57</sup> Thiselton, 294.

<sup>58</sup> Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 34.

<sup>59</sup> Jauss, 37.

own interpretation, understanding and application, which in turn was shaped by his Jewish identity, his reading of rabbinic interpretations of the text alongside those of the early Christian church and Islam, and his experiences of war and violence. Hence, each of these could be said to represent a synchronic stratum of meaning.

Since one of my aims is to determine if a Szondian depth-psychological reading of Gen 4 and the other sibling stories in Genesis can assist in opening a new understanding or amplification of the resolution to the phenomenon of violence, a potential socially formative function is also inherent.<sup>60</sup> This accords with Jauss's articulation of his seventh and final thesis which is the "socially *formative* function of literature."<sup>61</sup>

Thiselton contends that this appeals to a creativity in reading and successive readings as that which has the potential to shape society.<sup>62</sup> Jauss argues that the aesthetic role played by the mode of question and answer (see above) "can become an excellent means of opening the way to understanding the other" while simultaneously proving a means for interpreting texts differently.<sup>63</sup> In this way, Jauss's reception history also leads to a "hermeneutics of the Other," an idea he would later articulate more explicitly in *Wege des Verstehens* (1994), which points to formation as having, as Gadamer asserted, "goals *beyond the self*."<sup>64</sup> Through creative encounters with "the Other," Jauss argues, society could be shaped in a process that he elsewhere calls "alterity." According to Jauss, alterity is:

the particular double structure of a discourse which not only appears to us as evidence of a distant, historically absent past in all its surprising 'otherness,' but also is an aesthetic object which, thanks to its linguistic form, is directed toward an *other*, understanding consciousness – and which therefore also allows for communication with a later, no longer contemporary addressee.<sup>65</sup>

In this study the primary aesthetic objects are *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen; Moses, Antwort auf Kain*; Gen 4; and Genesis more broadly. Each of these objects point to, in Jauss's words, "an *other*,

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<sup>60</sup> Though it is not necessarily the primary and overt thrust of this study.

<sup>61</sup> Jauss, 40. Jauss's italics.

<sup>62</sup> Thiselton, "Reception Theory, H. R. Jauss and the Formative Power of Scripture," 295-6.

<sup>63</sup> Jauss, *Question and Answer*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> Thiselton, 295-6, citing Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 10. Thiselton's italics.

<sup>65</sup> Hans Robert Jauss and Timothy Bahti, "The Alterity and Modernity of Medieval Literature," *New Literary History* 10, no. 2 (1979): 181–229.

understanding consciousness,” namely Szondi, the author of Gen 4, and the compiler of Genesis respectively. Their ‘otherness’ is not only constituted by their historical distance from me – their “later, no longer contemporary addressee” – but also through the linguistic forms inherent in both the aesthetic objects and the understanding consciousnesses that are the subjects of this thesis. The dialogue is conducted in a number of languages that both serve to add a degree of difficulty to the conversation and contribute to the tangible sense of otherness. In producing this study, I have engaged with texts written in German and Biblical Hebrew, and, as a native English speaker, this has added an additional level of complexity.<sup>66</sup> However, it has also broadened the horizon of my thesis as I engage with cultures removed from my own not only temporally but linguistically.<sup>67</sup>

To recapitulate briefly, I am *re*-reading Gen 4 and the related biblical texts in conversation with Szondi and those with whom he himself dialogued; namely, interpreters from the Abrahamic faith traditions from various historical periods to create a type of ‘midrash’ on the nature of violence and aggression. Together, *Wirkungsgeschichte* and *Rezeptionsästhetik* represent an appropriate guiding framework within which this conversation will occur. As mentioned, Luz makes the connection between *Wirkungsgeschichte* and *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, but he asserts further that the latter is “an excellent tool to regain the former, what we might call the ‘consciousness of effective history.’”<sup>68</sup> The New Testament (NT) scholar, Robert Evans, reinforces the complementarity of the terms when he asserts that “both *Wirkungsgeschichte* and *Rezeptionsgeschichte* insist on a dialectic, a bi-directional operation between text and reader, neither of which is passive to the impulses of the other.”<sup>69</sup> What I present here is, ultimately, a dialectic process between myself and Szondi, Szondi and the author of Gen 4, and the compiler of Genesis and me. Jauss himself affirms this dialectic:

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<sup>66</sup> The German language texts referred to in this study include all of Szondi’s writings cited (except for a 1937 article published in *Acta Psychologica*, a 1964 article published in *American Imago*, and his correspondence with Richard Hughes); the biography written by Karl Bürgi-Meyer; adaptations of his work published by Friedjung Jüttner; the three-volume exegetical, psychoanalytical, and philosophical treatment of Gen 1-11 written by Eugen Drewermann; literature published by the Szondi-Institut in Zürich; and a volume of essays concerning the Cain and Abel narrative, *Brudermord: Zum Mythos von Kain und Abel*, that was published in 1975. The Biblical Hebrew text is the *BHS*, based on the Leningrad Codex B19<sup>A</sup> (L).

<sup>67</sup> While I previously received training in biblical Hebrew during my undergraduate studies, I undertook an academic German reading course in the course of preparing this thesis. The course was provided by the University of Wisconsin’s Independent Learning program and funded through Flinders University’s College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

<sup>68</sup> Luz, “The Contribution of Reception History to a Theology of the New Testament,” 125.

<sup>69</sup> Evans, *Reception History, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation*, 15.

This imaginary conversation survives and is activated only when a later author reopens it by recognising an earlier author as his [or her] predecessor, and by finding those questions of his [or her] own that lead beyond the answers provided by the ‘source.’<sup>70</sup>

## 2.2 Overview of Scholarship Relevant to Léopold Szondi

Although there is comparatively little English-language scholarship on Léopold Szondi, there is a vast literature regarding related ideas, history, and texts. This literature concerns the Holocaust, the history of Hungarian Jewry, the works of significant figures in the field of psychoanalysis such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, and, of course, biblical criticism related to the myth of Cain and Abel, the Primeval History, and the book of Genesis more broadly. Such a vast array of literature has the potential to make a study like this unwieldy and is therefore beyond the scope of this project. As such, I present the relevant literature that is salient to and reflected in my analysis. I begin with a brief discussion of ‘evil’ and the importance of approaching this subject seriously. The discussion then moves to scholarship concerning Léopold Szondi, where I consider his role as a witness to evil and hypothesise why his thought and works have largely been overlooked in anglophone contexts. Szondi’s Cain complex and its associated Freudian concepts are then summarised, before the discussion concludes with an overview of approaches to the concept of aggression. In the final part of the chapter, I explain in detail my rationale for choosing not to focus on two prominent approaches to violence represented by Walter Burkett’s *Homo Necans* and René Girard’s *Violence and the Sacred*, both of which were first published in 1972. There are critical differences between the approaches to the themes of rivalry, aggression, conflict, and violence espoused by Burkett and Girard and those advocated by Szondi. These differences are highlighted, particularly the emphasis on the collective versus the importance of individual choice in Szondi’s framework. However, before I present a review of the relevant key literature, it will be necessary to clarify one of the central terms of this study.

### *The Question of ‘Evil’*

‘Evil’ is at the core of this study, both figuratively and literally, and so the question arises: When the word ‘evil’ is written or spoken what is it exactly that is being referred to? It is a particularly apt question because during the latter half of the twentieth century the concept appears to have been

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<sup>70</sup> Jauss, *Question and Answer*, 57.

exploited, particularly in the arenas of entertainment and politics.<sup>71</sup> This has resulted in a perceived semantic decline of the conceptual power of ‘evil.’

Modern cultural influences are one of the factors behind this diminution. As popular entertainment has become ever more ‘cartelised’ by fewer large corporations, and therefore more homogenised, the dialectic between concepts of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ has become less nuanced, less sophisticated, less profound, and less revealing of any insight into innate aspects of the human condition. The semiotician and author Umberto Eco identified the shortcomings of what could be called this ‘Disneyfication’ of culture in his 1975 essay “Travels in Hyperreality.” Eco recognised that the drive for profit cocoons people from serious metaphysical questions “because the consumers want to be thrilled not only by the guarantee of the Good but also by the shudder of the Bad.”<sup>72</sup> ‘Disneyfication’ is, according to David Lyon, not only the process in which the Disney corporation is dominating more and more sectors of society but also “a process that diminishes human life through trivialising it, or making involvement within it appear less than fully serious.”<sup>73</sup> Disney is thus a by-word and symbol for the increasing consumerism, shallowness, and consolidation of popular culture under the ownership of large conglomerates such as Apple, Google, and Amazon. Nevertheless, given its ownership of numerous entertainment and media properties including Marvel Studios, Pixar, and

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<sup>71</sup> Two prominent uses of the term ‘evil’ in the political sphere are evidenced in speeches delivered by the US presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. Bush’s use of ‘evil’ in his State of the Union address in February 2002 was used to define the “axis of evil,” viz. Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, as states that sponsored terrorism and sought to procure or develop weapons of mass destruction. According to history of religions scholar Bruce Lincoln, Bush and the architect of the September 11 attacks, Osama bin Laden, both sought through their rhetoric to “construct a Manichaeian struggle, where Sons of Light confront Sons of Darkness, and all must enlist on one side or another.” (See Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003, 20].) Bush’s use of the term ‘evil’ was one of his main rhetorical devices – he described Osama bin Laden as an “evil man” on numerous occasions – in his attempt to create a dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ (Ref. Karen Cronick, “The Discourse of President George W. Bush and Osama Bin Laden: A Rhetorical Analysis and Hermeneutic Interpretation,” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 3, no. 3 [2002].) Although it was against the backdrop of the September 11 terrorist attacks when Bush made his recourse to ‘evil,’ it should, nevertheless, be regarded as a highly charged term.

Reagan’s speech of March 1983 in which he labelled the Soviet Union the “evil empire” provides a relevant antecedent to Bush’s use of evil. Reagan’s speech was delivered to the National Association of Evangelicals, but it was not the first occasion he referred to the Soviet Union as ‘evil.’ (See Ronald Reagan, “Address to the National Association of Evangelicals” [speech, National Association of Evangelicals Convention, Orlando, FL, 8 March 1983]). In a June 1982 speech to the House of Commons in the UK parliament he used the word ‘evil’ twice, drawing an almost Manichean contrast between “the forces of good” that would “ultimately rally and triumph over evil.” (Ref. Ronald Reagan, “Address to Members of the British Parliament” [speech, Parliament of the United Kingdom, London, 8 June 1982]). Most noteworthy is the nexus between the political realm and evangelical Christianity vested in the presidencies of Bush, a self-identifying evangelical, and Reagan who won the US presidency in 1980 with support from southern evangelicals. (Ref. Daniel K Williams, “Reagan’s Religious Right: The Unlikely Alliance between Southern Evangelicals and a California Conservative,” in *Ronald Reagan and the 1980s: Perceptions, Policies, Legacies*, ed. Cheryl Hudson and Gareth Davies [New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2008], 135–49.)

<sup>72</sup> Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays* (London: Pan Books in Association with Secker & Warburg, 1987).

<sup>73</sup> David Lyon, *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press in Association with Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

Lucasfilm, three of the most profitable franchises in contemporary popular culture, Disney is arguably the symbol *par excellence* of the process of homogenous consumerism to which it has leant its name. This process has resulted in an inundation of films and other media that unceasingly regurgitate the ‘good guys versus bad guys’ trope. Consequently, ‘evil’ is reduced to something that antagonists ‘do’ or ‘are’ in order to give protagonists (i.e. the conglomerates’ assets) something to fight against ‘because the plot needs to happen’ and tickets and merchandise need to be sold. In short, though it is seemingly preoccupied with the conflict between good and evil, Western mass-culture has, ironically, brought about the trivialisation of the metaphysical significance of the nature of good and evil.

The exploitation and consequent semantic contraction of ‘evil’ that has resulted from both its ubiquity and lack of depth in mass-culture and its association with the fraught relationship between politics and religion could help to explain why there is a perceived inclination, at least outside the disciplines of philosophy and theology, to avoid reference to it. The literary critic, Terry Eagleton, asserts that when it comes to terrorism, for example, scholars tend to be more “at home with imperial power and guerrilla warfare, but embarrassed on the whole by the thought of death, *evil*, sacrifice, or the sublime.”<sup>74</sup>

The philosopher, Peter Dews, argues that the resistance of secularist and humanist scholars to the idea that concepts such as evil “are any more than figures of speech, metaphors for extreme – but also extremely subjective – moral experiences” is understandable. According to Dews, it is in some respects reasonable that such thinkers are uncomfortable with the perceived incongruity between questions of theodicy and the achievements of modernity, as he concludes: “Better not to overcome evil, than to do so as marionettes in some divinely scripted play with a guaranteed happy ending.”<sup>75</sup> However, Dews also suggests such arguments espouse a narrow view of religion. Religion, he argues, should not be incompatible with secularist approaches to evil. He thus posits a philosophical articulation for the “experience of reconciliation, of a world in which evil is ultimately defeated.”<sup>76</sup> In so doing, he also acknowledges that in light of “profound, far-reaching desecrations of the human,” such as is revealed in the Holocaust, the possibilities for forgiveness and reconciliation seem ever more remote.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Terry Eagleton, *Holy Terror* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 7. Italics are mine.

<sup>75</sup> Peter Dews, *The Idea of Evil* (Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2008), 13.

<sup>76</sup> Dews, *The Idea of Evil*, 13.

<sup>77</sup> Dews, 12.

Regarding modernity, the moral philosopher Susan Neiman argues that the modern age both commenced in 1755 with the Lisbon earthquake and ended with the Holocaust. These two events, separated by a span of almost 200 years, resulted in the conceptualisation of two distinctive categories of evil. The first of these emerged following the destruction of the city of Lisbon after the earthquake that killed thousands of its citizens. This event shook some of the Enlightenment's great thinkers. In response to news of the earthquake, Kant, Voltaire, and Rousseau were all compelled to write about it, struggling with theodicy and the venerable problem of evil. This was a problem which had occupied philosophers since antiquity, and in the HB had its apogee in Wisdom literature, particularly in the Book of Job.<sup>78</sup> The question that provided the impetus for Enlightenment thinking was a thus theodicean one concerning the role of God, specifically the theistic concept of God advocated by the Abrahamic faiths, in permitting suffering, particularly so-called innocent suffering.

The second conceptualisation of evil has its genesis in the concentration camp at Auschwitz. Neiman argues that over the course of two hundred years, the questions that arose in response to each of these events shifted from one which was essentially theological, assuming God as the chief agent in human and earthly affairs, to one that is assuredly humanistic in orientation. This latter perspective is, for example, evident in the question Neiman uses for illustrative purposes: “[H]ow can human beings behave in ways that so thoroughly violate both reasonable and rational norms?”<sup>79</sup> In short, philosophical conceptions of evil have moved from integrating the realities of human cruelty and human suffering – what might be called ‘natural evil’ – to the current post-Shoah understanding that defines evil as the result of absolute human wrongdoing such that it defies our drive for atonement or explanation. As Neiman declares:

It is just this sense that the problems are utterly different which marks modern consciousness. The distinction between natural and moral evil that now seems self-evident was born around the Lisbon earthquake and nourished by Rousseau. Radically separating what earlier ages called natural from moral evils was thus part of the meaning of modernity.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Kant was also occupied with the concept of radical evil as a moral category and claimed that there was a universal propensity to evil: “Man [sic] is by nature evil” he concluded in *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. Put in its simplest terms, radical evil, according to psychoanalyst Ruth Stein, “is the refusal, out of self-interest, to do one’s duty.” (See Ruth Stein, *For Love of the Father: A Psychoanalytic Study of Religious Terrorism* [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010], 128.) However, Kant also defines the concept of “diabolical evil”, though he discounts its applicability since there can be no denial of moral law, of which human beings are innately aware. Diabolical evil, as the name suggests, implies a devilish origin for evil rather than a human one.

<sup>79</sup> Susan Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought: An Alternative History of Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002), 3.

<sup>80</sup> Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought*, 3-4.

If, as asserted by Eagleton and Dews, some contemporary secular and humanist scholars shun seriously confronting the concept of evil, the endeavour to make the reality of evil intelligible has, historically, not been restricted to the disciplines of philosophy and theology. This is particularly evident in German-language scholarship following World War II. A cursory examination of some of the German language texts relevant to this study seems to suggest that post-1945 German language academic writing readily embraced the use of *das Böse*, a cognate for ‘evil.’<sup>81</sup> As the focus shifted in the post-Shoah context to the actions of human beings, the origins of evil also became a concern for the disciplines of psychology and biology, specifically ethology. These fields are of particular relevance to Szondi since he enters into dialogue with each in explicating his *Schicksalsanalyse* theory and his concept of evil that is central to it. Dews is correct in identifying the need for scholarship to renew, reassert and reclaim the seriousness of the idea of evil.<sup>82</sup> As such, Szondi is a figure whose contribution to the idea of evil is worthy of consideration.

### ***Léopold Szondi***

Several texts have dealt with the biography of Léopold Szondi. In 1973, Szondi contributed a chapter to a book profiling prominent psychoanalysts that detailed specifics of his autobiography and linked these to the development of his theoretical framework.<sup>83</sup> This has proven a valuable resource, not only for the insights provided but more so for the approach taken, which has been a model for this study. Richard Hughes, an American Szondi scholar and theologian, provides some biographical background on Szondi in two of his books, which, since they are written in English, have been particularly useful.<sup>84</sup> A biographical sketch written by one of Szondi’s former collaborators, Karl Bürgi-Meyer, has also been a source of insight into Szondi’s parents, his large extended family, and early years in Budapest; however, there are some gaps in Bürgi-Meyer’s presentation and in some

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<sup>81</sup> Consider, for example, the subtitle of the central text of this study, *Gestalten des Bösen* (Embodiment of Evil). In 1952 Martin Buber, one of the significant influences on Szondi’s thought, published *Bilder von Gut und Böse* (Images of Good and Evil). Then there is the title of Eugen Drewermann’s three-volume examination of the so-called Yahwistic corpus in Genesis, *Strukturen des Bösen* (Structures of Evil), first published in the mid-1970s, and, more recently, Gabrielle Oberhänsli-Widmer’s historical overview of good and evil in Jewish art and literature in *Bilder vom Bösen im Judentum* (Images of Evil in Judaism) published in 2013.

By way of contrast, a catalogue search conducted in June 2019 of English language ‘books’ with the word ‘evil’ in the title published between 1940 and 2000 held by Australian university libraries revealed approximately 350 results. Most of these were related to philosophy, religion (theodicy), and anthropology.

<sup>82</sup> Dews, 13-4.

<sup>83</sup> Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung.”

<sup>84</sup> Richard Hughes, *Theology and the Cain complex* (University Press of America, 1982); Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*.



instances it conflicts with what has been declared elsewhere.<sup>85</sup> Both Hughes and Bürgi-Meyer have relied on an earlier biography of Szondi written by the Swiss biographer Dino Larese.<sup>86</sup> The archives of the Szondi-Institut were helpful in sourcing personal correspondence between Szondi and his colleagues and friends and making connections between his work and important collaborators.<sup>87</sup>

Another important figure for the presentation of Szondi's biographical specifics in this study is his former pupil and colleague, Friedjung Jüttner. Jüttner is an expert interlocutor on Szondi's theories, having adapted and refined them for his own clinical and therapeutic purposes.<sup>88</sup> Jüttner further provided insights and anecdotal evidence into Szondi's personality, which feature prominently in chapters 6 and 8.

In contextualising the life and work of Szondi there are several aspects that are most conspicuous. Firstly, there is the context of the experience of war and a generation's expectations for the promise of modernity. Szondi experienced both the twentieth century's world wars which saw the optimism of modernity and the positive view of humanity crumble in the face of the reality of mass industrialised destruction. Particularly noteworthy is that across both wars Szondi himself occupied the role of killer (collectively as a member of the Austro-Hungarian army, if not individually) and victim at various periods.<sup>89</sup> His time on the front lines of World War I proved a pivotal experience. He witnessed many men die and came to the realisation that death was an abstraction – only living and killing existed.<sup>90</sup>

Another aspect is his Jewish identity. Although Szondi specified that he gave up the dogmatic rites of Judaism, he nevertheless “remained a Jew and a believer” throughout his life.<sup>91</sup> The strength of this identity is perhaps best exemplified in his treatment of Moses in *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* (as

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<sup>85</sup> Ref. §5.4 n. 87 for an example.

<sup>86</sup> Dino Larese, *Leopold Szondi: Eine Lebensskizze* (Amriswil: Amriswiler Bücherei, 1976).

<sup>87</sup> I visited the archives of the Szondi-Institut between 9-12 July 2019. The trip was partially funded by an Overseas Travel Grant from Flinders University.

<sup>88</sup> Friedjung Jüttner, *Wähle, Was Du Bist!* (Zürich: Szondi-Verlag, 2009); Friedjung Jüttner, *Nimm dein Schicksal in die eigene Hand!* (Zürich: Versus Verlag, 2012). I met with Jüttner and interviewed him on two occasions during a field trip to Zürich.

<sup>89</sup> Szondi refers to his participation in combat in World War I as a critical event in relieving him of the anxiety and fear of death: “During the war I reconciled myself with death. Before that, I was scared of death every day I had. Not true, I was terrified of death. But there I completely lost this fear of death.” (Ref. Karl Bürgi-Meyer, *Leopold Szondi: Eine Biographische Skizze* [Zürich: Szondi-Verlag, 2000], 28.)

<sup>90</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung,” 414.

detailed in Chapter 8). Although Szondi's hypothesis and presentation of Moses is not without problems, a fact he himself seems to recognise on one level, his insistence in presenting Judaism's "greatest son" as the model for resolving the problem of jealousy, anger, rage, and violence is shaped by his Jewish identity.<sup>92</sup>

### Szondi the Witness

In the history of Europe in the twentieth century there is an overlap of themes such as the experience of war, the end of modernity, anti-Semitism, and Jewish identity; as such, Szondi's life and work occupy a junction between them. In both *Kain* and *Moses* Szondi speaks not only with the voice of a psychotherapist but also the voice of a *superstes* – a witness and survivor. These works are a testimony to violence, killing, and absolute human wrongdoing. The semiotician Emile Benveniste distinguishes the Latin term *superstes* as one who exists "beyond an event which has destroyed the rest... A man [sic] who has passed through danger, or a test, a difficult period, who has survived it."<sup>93</sup> A *superstes* is thus a witness by virtue of surviving.<sup>94</sup> Szondi as *superstes* is most unambiguously embodied in the sections of *Kain* that deal with the war criminals Márton Zöldi and Adolf Eichmann.

The poet Paul Celan, however, writes that, "No one bears witness for the witness."<sup>95</sup> Celan thus intimates a distinction between *superstes* as a kind of 'second order' witness and the true witness who is no longer able to testify.<sup>96</sup> Jacques Derrida, on the other hand, nuances such a distinction. The witness of the witness performs a critical function for the addressee of the testimony who "did not see it and never will see it."<sup>97</sup> Putting such semantic distinctions aside, Szondi's testimony and voice as a *superstes* is important. Not only does it, in part, explain his interest in the psychology and the motivations of killers and ex-killers, to an addressee (using Derrida's nomenclature) who is part of a

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<sup>92</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* (Bern: Verlag Hans Huber, 1973), 9.

<sup>93</sup> Emile Benveniste and Jean Lallot, *Indo-European Language and Society*, trans. Elizabeth Palmer (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1973), 525.

<sup>94</sup> Benveniste and Lallot. 526

<sup>95</sup> Paul Celan, "Ashglory" in *Paul Celan: Selections*, ed. Pierre Joris, vol. 3, Poets for the Millennium (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2005). Celan is of relevance not only because he represents the voice of a Jewish intellectual from the German-speaking lands, but also because he had an intimate connection to the Szondi family through Szondi's son, Peter, a noted literary critic and scholar. Peter, who was friends with the poet, also inaugurated critical work on Celan through his 1972 work *Celan-Studien*, published posthumously after his death by suicide in 1971 (a year after Celan's own suicide by drowning).

<sup>96</sup> See also Sonja Boos, *Speaking the Unspeakable in Postwar Germany: Toward a Public Discourse on the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 155.

<sup>97</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Sovereignities in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 73-6. Derrida then moves on to explain that neither the addressee nor the witness of the witness are present to the event, since the addressee was absent and the witness is no longer "presently present."

generation and a geography never exposed to the scale of violence, war, and killing as seen in the first half of the twentieth century, Szondi's hypothesis on the nature of evil carries with it the weighty credibility of somebody who was a victim, a survivor, and a witness.<sup>98</sup>

### Why has the Academy Disregarded Szondi?

Szondi's hypotheses concerning a genetic origin for violence must also be examined within the context of the 'nature vs. nurture' debate in the social sciences during the latter half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. This debate was pervaded by ideas such as eugenics, determinism, and racism.<sup>99</sup> Eugenics had a two-fold nature in that, on the one hand, it encouraged people of 'good health' to reproduce, while on the other, it actively prevented others from reproducing in an attempt to eliminate diseases and disabilities. Originating in Britain, the term 'eugenics' was first coined by scientist Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin. Historian Daniel Kevles has written extensively on eugenics, asserting that around the turn of the twentieth century it found a ready reception in the United States where it coalesced with the new science of genetics.<sup>100</sup> This movement in turn piqued the interest of German scientists and bureaucrats where it fused with established philosophical concepts such as Friedrich Nietzsche's *Übermensch* and the political ascendancy of the National Socialists. What was originally envisioned as a non-coercive means of improving human health and reproduction (to give eugenics its most generous interpretation), became corrupted, eventually metastasising into a highly charged concept following World War II, mainly "because of increasingly controversial efforts by governments to get rid of undesirables from the top down."<sup>101</sup> Although such policies included instances of forced sterilization in the United States, they reached their most extreme and horrific expression in the death camps administered by the Nazis.

Within Szondi's native Hungary, the eugenics movement found expression among a diverse range of political orientations. Marius Turda, a historian of biomedicine, asserts that in the second decade of

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<sup>98</sup> Regarding the possibility that Szondi also took part in killing during World War I, Szondi distinguishes his role as a medic on the front lines from the regular soldiery. There is no mention that he ever killed, although he was involved in very intense and heavy combat, particularly against Russian forces on the Carpathian front. See Karl Bürgi-Meyer, *Leopold Szondi: Eine Biographische Skizze*, 28-9.

<sup>99</sup> Robert Plomin, *Blueprint: How DNA Makes Us Who We Are* (London: Allen Lane, 2018).

<sup>100</sup> Daniel J. Kevles, "The History of Eugenics," *Issues in Science and Technology* 32, no. 3 (2016): 45–50. See also Daniel Kevles *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>101</sup> Daniel Kevles, "The History of Eugenics," 46.

the twentieth century Hungary was “in the vanguard of eugenic thinking in Europe.”<sup>102</sup> Following World War I key eugenicists aligned with the political left became prominent figures in the Hungarian bureaucracy and academia. However, the short-lived communist regime of Béla Kun in 1919 led to a counter-revolution in 1920 which resulted in right-wing racial nationalists dominating the political sphere. Consequently, eugenics programs metamorphosed from social, philanthropically oriented programs advocated by figures on the left to those which prioritised what one leading eugenicist on the right called “race regeneration.”<sup>103</sup> Eugenics in Hungary thereby reflects the same transformation of the movement’s objectives and methods that were evidenced in both the United States and Germany.

Eugenics was an active issue in Hungary during the period that Szondi was completing his medical studies. Although initially trained as an endocrinologist, Szondi’s forays into the nexus between biology and psychology were first motivated by an interest in the role genetics could play in love or choice of marriage partner.<sup>104</sup> He witnessed first-hand the effect that these choices had on the lives of those around him, both as a member of a large family with twelve children all of whom were married and, particularly, in his clinical practise. After years of clinical practise, Szondi would attempt to prove what he calls “recessive gene theory” as a significant factor in the choice of love.<sup>105</sup> As a psychotherapist he examined the family trees of hundreds of his patients. This is examined in further detail in chapters 4 and 5; however, for now it is sufficient to note that Szondi’s interest in genetics as a driver of human psychology must be considered in the context of the now discredited eugenics movement. It may thus be one explanatory factor as to why his work has been disregarded.<sup>106</sup>

Another potential contributing factor in the anglophone academy’s lack of interest in Szondi is tied to the fate of his eponymously titled projective personality test, the Szondi Test, for which he initially

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<sup>102</sup> Marius Turda, “The First Debates on Eugenics in Hungary, 1910–1918,” in *Blood and Homeland’: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940*, ed. Marius Turda and Paul Weindling (Herndon: Central European University Press, 2006), 186.

<sup>103</sup> Turda cites Géza von Hoffman, who was an internationally recognised Hungarian eugenicist and contributor to debates on racial hygiene and sterilisation. (Turda, “The First Debates on Eugenics in Hungary, 1910–1918,” 216.)

<sup>104</sup> Léopold Szondi, “Contributions to ‘Fate Analysis’: An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love,” *Acta Psychologica* 3 (1937): 1–80.

<sup>105</sup> Szondi, “Contributions to ‘Fate Analysis,’” 25-31. Szondi appeals to a Mendelian understanding of heredity. However, it should be noted that Szondi’s work on *Schicksalsanalyse* represents what Hughes identifies as a “shift from genetics to depth psychology in his work.” (See Hughes, *Return of the Ancestor*, 73). Hence the focus of this study is not on the biological science which underpins Szondi’s work but the psychological, though the two are related, the prior informing the latter.

<sup>106</sup> N.B. Eugenics as a particular line of argument will not be pursued in relation to my exploration of the Cain complex.

became most well-known.<sup>107</sup> The Szondi Test was first developed by Szondi in the mid 1930s and consists of forty-eight cards of pictures of individuals suffering from what at the time were one of eight types of mental illness. The subject selects a range of cards that they find appealing or repellent. The selections are recorded, and this process is repeated up to ten times over a number of days to give a personality diagnosis. A survey of correspondence sent to Szondi, held in the archives of the Szondi-Institut in Zürich, reveals significant interest in the test from universities and psychologists from around the world in the aftermath of World War II. While initially very popular in the West, as attested to by the correspondence Szondi received, it has lost much of its credibility and is no longer used on the scale it once was.<sup>108</sup> In a recent article, Mary Bergstein, an art historian, argues that one of the reasons for the Szondi Test's lack of validity was the fact that the images he selected were antiquated even by the standards of the time in which he adopted them, having been taken from psychiatric texts published around the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, his test, according to Bergstein, occupies "the intersection of two fallacies...: that the individual's physical appearance is the external marker of internal conditions, and that photography is an infallible, transparent means of revealing the world's 'facts.'"<sup>110</sup>

Szondi's advocacy of what is now a widely discredited projective personality test, his promotion of a genetically based psychoanalytic theory developed in the milieu of the eugenics movement, with its attendant implication of a type of biological and psychological determinism are all problematic for the contemporary reader of his work. Perhaps these factors go some way to explaining why he has been largely overlooked by an audience that is uncomfortable with concepts such as eugenics, a determinism that appears to privilege the 'nature' side of the 'nature vs nurture' debate, and a diagnostic tool for personality that seems to stand in opposition to evidenced-based assessments.

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<sup>107</sup> In 1949 Susan Deri, a student and friend of Szondi who had fled to the United States from Hungary in 1941, published *Introduction to the Szondi Test: Theory and Practice*, a comprehensive English language explanation of the test was considered fundamental to the reception of Szondi's work in English.

<sup>108</sup> A ResearchGate forum on the Szondi Test from 2014 initiated by Enikő Kiss, a professor of psychology at the University of Pécs and Szondi scholar, elicited several emphatic responses to her post indicating that the Szondi Test was considered, among other things, "a joke", "an example of 'how not to do it'" and "akin to tarot cards or I Ching coins." In response, Kiss indicates that in Hungary it remains in use in clinical and applied psychology and is an accepted method in judicial processes. The 'chat' is an illuminating insight into the different attitudes in western and eastern approaches to psychology and psychoanalysis. (Ref. Enikő Kiss, "Does Anyone Know about the Szondi Test?," ResearchGate, accessed November 8, 2019, [https://www.researchgate.net/post/Does\\_anyone\\_know\\_about\\_the\\_Szondi\\_projective\\_test](https://www.researchgate.net/post/Does_anyone_know_about_the_Szondi_projective_test).)

<sup>109</sup> Mary Bergstein, "Photography in the Szondi Test: 'The Analysis of Fate,' History of Photography," *History of Photography* 41, no. 3 (2017): 217–40.

<sup>110</sup> Bergstein, 218.

Moreover, the assertion that there may be elements in our psychologies and personalities that we can do very little about is a particularly vexed proposition. The behavioural geneticist, Robert Plomin, alludes to this phenomenon when he writes that for much of his career it was “dangerous professionally to study the genetic origins of differences in people’s behaviour and to write about it in scientific journals.”<sup>111</sup> In the first volume of *Schicksalsanalyse*, Szondi also asserts at that the implacable nature of heredity results in a reluctance to accept its influence on who we are:

This determination of fate certainly has a depressing, often even a shocking effect at first...  
Something in us always revolts against the possibility that blood relatives (*Blutsverwandte*) can influence our personal will even after we have long since buried them.<sup>112</sup>

In a recent book, written for a non-specialist audience, Plomin argues that over the past thirty years there has been a re-evaluation of the influence of genetics, i.e. the billions of steps in the DNA sequence we inherit from our parents, in shaping the human individual. According to Plomin, genetics and heritability may be more influential in determining one’s physical attributes, cognitive abilities, and psychology than had previously been thought. DNA has been particularly revolutionary for the discipline of psychology, which for most of the twentieth century was shaped by a primacy afforded to the environmental factors that contribute to an individual’s development. It must be noted, however, that Plomin does not suggest that the influence of DNA should equate to a fatalistic determinism. He emphasises that DNA and genetic science is probabilistic rather than deterministic.<sup>113</sup> This position accords with Szondi’s theory, which emphasises the importance of choice in determining fate. Thus, although his ideas regarding genes must be re-examined in light of recent discoveries in genetic science, perhaps it is timely, given the consequent developments in behavioural genetics and psychology, that Szondi’s concepts concerning the relationship of genes and heritability to depth psychology be reconsidered and reassessed.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Plomin, *Blueprint*, xi.

<sup>112</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Schicksalsanalyse: Wahl in Liebe, Freundschaft, Beruf, Krankheit und Tod*, 5th ed., vol. 1, *Schicksalsanalyse* (Basel: Schwabe & Co Verlag, 2004), 33.

<sup>113</sup> Plomin, *Blueprint*, 103, 156.

<sup>114</sup> N.B. this is not the task of this current study.

### *The ‘Cain complex’*

In 1969 Szondi published *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen* (Cain: Embodiment of Evil) in which he presents the figure of Cain as a metaphor for and “symbol of evil, whose ego is driven to pent-up emotion and boundless greed.”<sup>115</sup> This was followed in 1973 with the publication of *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* (Moses: Answer to Cain), which is, for want of a better term, the ‘sequel’ to his earlier work. Along with its clinical sources, Szondi’s identification of the Cain complex is also shaped by linguistic and literary sources, principally the Torah, the Talmud, and Medieval Kabbalistic texts, thereby placing him within the tradition of Rabbinic Judaism.<sup>116</sup>

In comparison to *Kain*, *Moses* presents as more philosophical, religious, and exegetical and less clinical in its outlook. Whereas the reception of Gen 4 takes up one third of *Kain*, in the latter work, the biblical story and related traditions surrounding Moses constitute more than two-thirds. In *Kain* Szondi uses thirty-three case studies to explicate his concept of the Cain complex, in *Moses* there are only seven used to describe the resolution of the complex. Finally, it must be noted that Szondi situates the ‘Cainitic’ aspects of the Cain complex in biology while the ‘Mosaic’ aspects (which Szondi at times referred to as the “Moses complex”) are situated in psychology and a type of spirituality exercising an influence on the ego.<sup>117</sup>

Prior to *Kain*, Szondi had published a five-volume series on *Schicksalsanalyse* (analysis of fate). In both *Kain* and *Schicksalsanalyse*, Szondi articulates the notion of the familial unconscious (*Das familiäre Unbewusste*) “to describe the role of individuals’ familial ancestry [in] grounding their choices.”<sup>118</sup> Szondi’s familial unconscious has been described as a “bridge” between Sigmund Freud’s personal unconscious and Carl Gustav Jung’s notion of the collective unconscious.<sup>119</sup> To date, *Kain*, *Moses* and much of *Schicksalsanalyse* remain untranslated into English.<sup>120</sup> However, in one brief English language paper published around the same time as his final volume of

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<sup>115</sup> Hughes, “Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies.”

<sup>116</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 109.

<sup>117</sup> Richard Hughes, “Letters from Szondi: Dialogue Between a Psychiatrist and a Theologian,” trans. Arthur C. Johnston, *SzondiForum.Org*, accessed April 2, 2019, [http://szondiforum.org/Hughes-Szondi\\_letters\\_article.pdf](http://szondiforum.org/Hughes-Szondi_letters_article.pdf), 9-10. See also Figure 4-2 and the Introduction to Chapter 8 of this study.

<sup>118</sup> Enikő Gyöngyösi Kiss. “Personality and the Familial Unconscious in Szondi’s Fate-Analysis.” *Empirical Text and Culture Research*, 4 (2010), 71.

<sup>119</sup> Kiss, “Personality and the Familial Unconscious in Szondi’s Fate-Analysis”, 74.

<sup>120</sup> All references to the original German language texts of Szondi herein have been translated by me.

*Schicksalsanalyse*, Szondi identified what he termed the ‘Cain complex’ as an explanation for the phenomenon of human aggression.<sup>121</sup>

Szondi’s work builds on the well-known Freudian psychoanalysis of Oedipus and its emphasis on the sexual instinct. In fact, Szondi’s Cain and Moses polarity is in direct dialogue with Freud’s Oedipus complex, something Szondi himself makes explicit in the introduction to *Kain* when he states that his aim is to make the figures of Cain and Moses central to *Schicksalsanalyse* in the same way Oedipus is central to psychoanalysis.<sup>122</sup>

In the popular imagination, the Oedipus complex is structured as follows: in the infantile phase of sexual development a child will identify with his/her same-sex parent and be attracted erotically to the parent of the opposite sex. Put crudely, “the little boy wants to have his mother and be his father; the little girl wants to be her mother and have her father.”<sup>123</sup> Eventually the child will see the same-sex parent as an obstacle to erotic attachment with the opposite sex parent, at which point the child develops feelings of hostility towards the same-sex parent, hence the metaphor of Oedipus. These infantile feelings of hostility coexist with the desire to be the same-sex parent, so that overall, the child is said to be emotionally ambivalent towards the same-sex parent. According to Jonathan Lear, the problem with this common (mis)understanding of the Oedipus complex is that Freud does not actually believe it ever occurs. What Freud does think is taking place within the Oedipus complex is a more nuanced emotional ambivalence that develops during childhood and is directed against all of the important people in the child’s life.<sup>124</sup> Although many of Freud’s hypotheses have been discounted by modern clinical psychology, some of his ideas, particularly that of the Oedipus complex, still retain some influence within artistic and literary endeavours and the interpretation of such. This study seeks to advocate a similar sphere of influence for Szondi.

Freud initially assigned the drive for mastery and power to the sexual drive, which he further defined as sadism. Sadism, according to Freud, had a life-preserving function apropos its manifestation as aggression.<sup>125</sup> In one sense, however, his definition of sadism lacks a reference to any sexual character. Instead, Freud argued that “sadism consists in the exercise of violence or power upon some

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<sup>121</sup> Léopold Szondi, “Thanatos and Cain,” *American Imago* 21, no. 3 (1964).

<sup>122</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Kain, Gestalten des Bösen* (Bern: Verlag Hans Huber, 1969), 8.

<sup>123</sup> Jonathan Lear, *Freud*, Routledge Philosophers (New York: Routledge, 2005), 182.

<sup>124</sup> Lear, *Freud*, 182-4.

<sup>125</sup> Sigmund Freud, “The Sexual Aberrations”, in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 2nd ed., vol. 57, International Psycho-Analytical Library (London: Hogarth Press, 1962).



other person as object.”<sup>126</sup> Every form of human aggression is therefore to be considered as sadism, and the entire sphere of human aggression is, according to a Freudian interpretation, incorporated in sexuality.

Nevertheless, Freud would later identify a non-sexual driver for aggression which he termed “Thanatos,” or the death-drive.<sup>127</sup> Such interpretations of the drivers of aggression in terms of sadism and/or the death drive ultimately fail to understand the complexity of the aggressive phenomenon.<sup>128</sup> However, as Jens de Vleminck, a Belgian scholar specialising in the philosophy of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, argues, “one could say that by acknowledging the non-erotic aggression of the defused, unbound death drive Freud in some way anticipates a kind of acquaintance with paroxysmal aggression.”<sup>129</sup>

In contrast to Freud, Szondi does not reduce the complex phenomenon of human aggression to only one drive, that is, neither to the death drive nor to the paroxysmal ‘Cain factor’: “In the Schicksals-analytic system of drives, accordingly, there is no unitary lethal drive.”<sup>130</sup> In fact, Szondi resolves the problem by understanding it from within his own quadrilateral drive system: “The phenomenon which Freud designated Thanatos, or the destructive drive, is a complex of drive factors in whose development four different thanatotropic factors [i.e. sexual, ego, contractual, and paroxysmal] combine in a remarkable interaction”<sup>131</sup> (see Table 2-1 below). It is the paroxysmal factor which is central to Szondi’s identification of the Cain complex.

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<sup>126</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” in *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 14, SE (London: Hogarth press, 1915), 127.

<sup>127</sup> See Sigmund Freud, “Civilisation and Its Discontents,” in *The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 21, SE (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961) and *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970).

<sup>128</sup> Jens De Vleminck, “The Legacy of Cain: On Human Aggression,” *Szondiana: Zeitschrift Für Tiefenpsychologie und Beiträge zur Schicksalsanalyse* 28, no. 1 (2008), 329-30.

<sup>129</sup> De Vleminck, “The Legacy of Cain: On Human Aggression,” 333.

<sup>130</sup> Szondi, “Thanatos and Cain,” 58.

<sup>131</sup> Szondi, 58.

Table 2-1. Szondi's Drive System (Triebssystem)

4 Drives	8 Basic Needs	16 Polar Tendencies	
(S) Sexual	'Eros' – affection, love (h)	Sensual (h+)	
		Platonic (h-)	
	Aggression – dominance, action (s)	Giving (s+)	
		Receiving (s-)	
(P) Paroxysmal/Affect	Coarse emotions (e)	“Goodness” (e+) – love, courage, joy, passion	‘Abel’ / ‘Moses’
		“Evil” (e-) – anger, rage, envy, jealousy, hatred, vengeance	‘Cain’
	Refined emotions (hy)	Showing (hy+) – exhibitionism, self-affirmation, self-worth	
		Hiding (hy-) – shame, anxiety, guilt, remorse, restitution	
(Sch) Ego	Possessing (k)	Introjection (k+)	
		Negation (k-)	
	Being – expansion, spirituality (p)	Inflation (self-centred) (p+)	
		Projection (you-centred) (p-)	
(C) Contactual/Relational	Acquisition (d)	Seeking (d+)	
		Persisting (d-)	
	Attachment (m)	Bonding (m+)	
		Separating (m-)	

The table above has been adapted from the work of two Szondi scholars: Jüttner and Hughes.<sup>132</sup> As the table makes clear, Szondi differentiates between aggression, which can be found across the drives, and ‘evil’ acts which are motivated by the crude ‘Cainitic’ affects anger, rage, envy, jealousy, hatred, and vengeance. The paroxysmal drive is centred upon the emotional realm of existence and constitutes the ‘Cainitic’ or ‘Abelitic’ emotions acting independently (that is, in the ‘coarse’ or crude emotions – *grobe Gefühle*) or together in a complex interaction in what Szondi refers to as the refined emotions (*zarte Gefühle*). For example, following an act of violence, the perpetrator – i.e. the metaphorical Cain – may experience feelings of shame and anxiety which may then lead to a sense

<sup>132</sup> Friedjung Jüttner, *Wähle, Was Du Bist!*, 35; Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 43-50.

of remorse in which he or she then moves towards restitution thereby assuming the mantle of Abel. Alternatively, an Abel figure's sense of self-affirmation and desire for self-worth can transmute into violence motivated by extreme exhibitionism, and hence the Abel becomes a Cain.

Szondi estimates that approximately 20% of the population exhibits the Cainitic paroxysmal pattern, of whom 6% are overt Cainites and 14% are "disguised" Cainites.<sup>133</sup> He claims that it is not the prevalence of Cainitic personality types that is a threat to society, "but the fact that it is precisely these [disguised] Cainites who hold the political, economic, artistic and highest scientific positions in society."<sup>134</sup>

In the second part of *Kain*, Szondi moves on to investigate thirty-three in-depth case studies in order to illumine various aspects of this Cainitic personality vis-à-vis *Schicksalsanalyse*, i.e. the so-called Cain complex, which he then forms into a taxonomy. There are four major categories, these being the 'Ill Cain,' the 'Criminal Cain,' the 'Neurotic Cain,' and 'Cain, the everyday person.' Within each of these major categories are subcategories. One of these subcategories is of most interest for this study, 'Cain, the War Criminal,' which forms part of the theme dealing with criminality. This will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6; however, at this stage it should be noted that 'Cain, the War Criminal' represents a different approach to all the other case studies Szondi employs. It is also within this subcategory that Szondi's theory moves from a distinctly clinical application to a more universal and philosophical application. I argue such an application is useful to biblical interpretation and theology in much the same manner that Freud's and Jung's theories are, today, of more interest and relevance to the fields of literature studies and philosophy, for example, than they are for clinical psychology.

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<sup>133</sup> Szondi bases his claim on a sample of 100 clinical studies of families comprising 2449 people in total. The results and analysis of these tests were detailed in *Schicksalsanalyse*, vol. 3, (1965), cited in *Kain*, 163-4. By way of comparison the *DSM-5* claims a range of between 0% and 6.2% for Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) and 0.2% and 3.3% for Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD) in the US adult population. (Ref. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders : DSM-5*, 5th ed. [Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association, 2013], 661, 671.) I believe that such personality disorders bear some resemblance to and correlation with Szondi's explication of the overt and unresolved Cainitic personality.

<sup>134</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 164.

Although his works have been translated into the Romance languages, as mentioned already, most of Szondi's major works remain untranslated into English.<sup>135</sup> The English language scholarship that has been undertaken on Szondi's work, particularly *Schicksalsanalyse* and the Cain complex, has predominantly been taken up by Hughes, who has produced a number of books and articles concerned with Szondi's work. Of most relevance for this study are three of his books. *Theology and the Cain complex* (1982), presents a theory of destiny informed by the experience of evil. Hughes draws on materials related to religion, psychiatry, and history in an attempt to develop a theological exposition of Szondi's understanding of genetics which informed his explanation of the Cain complex. *The Return of the Ancestor* (1992) is Hughes's attempt to present the principal ideas of what he terms Szondi's "systematic psychiatry," which is something akin to systematic theology.<sup>136</sup> In this book Hughes draws links between Szondi's theory of religion and his entire system with a particular emphasis on the relationship between Szondi's concept of genotropism and destiny. The final work is *Cain's Lament* (2001).<sup>137</sup> This is an interdisciplinary exposition of the Cain story drawing on Szondi's psychiatry. Hughes updates his understanding of Szondi's genetic theory and puts it into a multi-generational context. He discusses the perspectives on Cain in Judaism, the NT, and the Church Fathers up to Martin Luther, including Anglo-Saxon mythology. Taken together the three works present an overarching insight to the evolution of one scholar's dialogue with Szondi, the second and third of which each represent a more highly developed work than the one preceding it.<sup>138</sup> Nevertheless, as engaging as Hughes' explanations are, they are also somewhat uncritical of the more problematic aspects of Szondi's theories.

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<sup>135</sup> Szondi's major works that have been translated into English are: Susan Deri, *Introduction to the Szondi Test* (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1949); Gertrude Aull, *Experimental Diagnostics of Drives* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1952); Léopold Szondi, *Ego Analysis: The Foundation for the Union of Depth Psychologies*, trans. Arthur C. Johnston, 2008, [www.szondiforum.org/I\\_Ego\\_Analysis.pdf](http://www.szondiforum.org/I_Ego_Analysis.pdf) (NB this only presents the second part of Szondi's *Ich-Analyse*).

Although not a focus of this study, the difference in the receptions and influence of Szondi's work in francophone and Latin speaking nations compared to that in anglophone nations is noteworthy and perhaps reflects nuances in the development of psychology and psychoanalysis in the relevant countries.

For his part, Szondi expressed a level of dismay that English language scholarship had been reluctant to embrace his ideas. In a letter to Richard Hughes, Szondi writes that "so far the English speaking countries have dissociated themselves very much from fate analysis. This stands in contrast to the French and Spanish speaking countries, where – for example in Belgium, France, Spain, Mexico etc – I found at the universities many readers and scholars, mainly among the psychiatrists, psychologists, theologians, philosophers, ethnologists." (Hughes, "Letters from Szondi", 4)

<sup>136</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 2.

<sup>137</sup> Richard Hughes, *Cain's Lament: A Christian Moral Psychology* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2001).

<sup>138</sup> Richard Hughes, email message to author, 23 June 2016

More recently, De Vleminck has written several articles on the interrelationship of Freudian psychoanalysis and Szondi's fate analysis concept.<sup>139</sup> De Vleminck, who is based at the Catholic University of Leuven, has in turn been influenced by the psychoanalyst Jacques Schotte, a professor at Leuven and the co-founder of the Belgian School of Psychoanalysis. Schotte integrated Szondi's *Schicksalsanalyse* and Ludwig Binswanger's *Daseinsanalyse*, a psychoanalytic approach based on Martin Heidegger's existentialism, into what he terms 'anthropopsychiatry.'<sup>140</sup> Schotte's major contribution to Szondian depth psychology is his 1990 publication *Szondi avec Freud — Sur la voie d'une psychiatrie pulsionnelle*.<sup>141</sup> He also contributed the entry on Szondi in the *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*.<sup>142</sup> However, of most use for current purposes is his hour long interview with Szondi for Belgian television that was broadcast in the 1970s, which, at the time of writing, is available in the public domain.<sup>143</sup> In this interview, Szondi integrates his biography with his theories of depth psychology to present a holistic overview of the interconnections of his life and work. A similar approach has been adopted herein.

### ***The Origins of Violent Aggression***

Konrad Lorenz and Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt are two key thinkers in the field of ethology who played a role in shaping the thinking of Szondi.<sup>144</sup> In 1963, the Austrian ethologist Lorenz published *Das Sogenannte Böse: Zur Naturgeschichte der Aggression* ('So-called Evil: on the natural history of aggression'), which was translated into English in 1966 and published under the somewhat more prosaic title *On Aggression*.<sup>145</sup> Aggression, according to Lorenz, is an essential and innate feature of biology. It is related to natural selection since animals are biologically programmed to compete for

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<sup>139</sup> See De Vleminck, "The Legacy of Cain: On Human Aggression"; Jens De Vleminck, "Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms," *International Forum of Psychoanalysis* 19, no. 3 (2010): 172–84; and Jens De Vleminck, "Caïn et Abel, Fils Prodiges de La Psychanalyse?," *L'Evolution Psychiatrique* 76, no. 2 (2011).

<sup>140</sup> Christophe Chaperot, "Un Avenir Pour La Psychiatrie ? À Propos De... 'L'anthropopsychiatrie De Jacques Schotte' de Jean-Louis Feys," *L'Evolution Psychiatrique* 75, no. 3 (2010): 500–508.

<sup>141</sup> Jacques Schotte, *Szondi Avec Freud — Sur La Voie d'une Psychiatrie Pulsionnelle*, Bibliothèque de Pathoanalyse (Bruxelles, Paris: De Boeck Université, Éditions universitaires, 1990).

<sup>142</sup> Jacques Schotte, "Szondi, Leopold (1893-1986)," in *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Alain de Mijolla (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005).

<sup>143</sup> Robert Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

<sup>144</sup> Though there is only a single though critical reference to Lorenz's seminal work in *Kain*, Szondi nevertheless engages with it at length in a later work. (See Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten* [Bern: Verlag Hans Huber, 1980], 107-110, 118-121, 161-163.) As is discussed in Chapter 6, it was not only the theoretical and scientific aspects of Lorenz's output that were influential. Another important consideration in Szondi's articulation of the Cain complex was Lorenz's past as a member of the NSDAP and his enthusiasm for Nazi doctrines. (See Peter Klopfer, "Konrad Lorenz and the National Socialists: On the Politics of Ethology," *International Journal of Comparative Psychology* 7, no. 4 [1994]: 202–8.)

<sup>145</sup> Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, trans. Marjorie Latzke (London: Methuen, 1966).

access to finite resources, and it therefore follows that aggression is good, or at least value neutral. Aggression has the effect of ensuring the survival of the species because the struggle between members of the species in the choice of sexual mate and for leadership ensures that the strongest conspecifics contribute to the reproduction and the flourishing of the species. According to this ethological theory, aggression is a spontaneously manifesting impulse which serves to preserve the species.

Lorenz identifies two types of aggression: intraspecific and interspecific.<sup>146</sup> Lorenz's student Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt develops his teacher's division of aggression as intraspecific and interspecific and argues that each employs distinct motor sequences.<sup>147</sup> Ultimately, however, both Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Lorenz contend that aggression is innate among animals and humans alike. Ethology, therefore, concurs with Szondi's assessment of the innateness of violent human aggression and his linkage of it to biology. As is explored in Chapter 6, ethological literature in the aftermath of World War II also makes a distinct appeal to the figure of Cain as a metaphor for the earliest human origins of violent human aggression.

#### Walter Burkert and René Girard

Because Walter Burkert's seminal work *Homo Necans* was first published in English in 1983, his thesis has often been viewed as a successor to René Girard's mimetic theory as outlined in *Violence and the Sacred*, an issue Burkert himself acknowledges in the preface to the English edition.<sup>148</sup> However, both *Violence and the Sacred* and the first German language version of *Homo Necans* were published in the same year, 1972. Interestingly, each does appear to offer a parallel focus on the link between religion and violence. Since the themes of rivalry, aggression, conflict, and violence are of central interest here, the theories of Burkert and Girard would on one level appear to be appropriate

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<sup>146</sup> Intraspecific being restricted to acts of aggression within a particular species, and interspecific to those interactions between different species.

<sup>147</sup> Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Love and Hate: On the Natural History of Basic Behaviour Patterns* (London: Methuen, 1971).

<sup>148</sup> Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

theoretical frameworks through which a dialogue with Szondi could be constructed.<sup>149</sup> However, neither Burkert's nor Girard's theories will form a central component of this study, not only because Szondi does not engage with either of these theorists, but for a number of reasons as follows.

Burkert's theory of aggression relies upon that of Lorenz's ethologically based understanding of intraspecific aggression. As early human beings moved from interspecific aggression, motivated by hunting, to intraspecific aggression there was an inevitable move to the killing of other human beings. Burkert asserts that atonement for the guilt that was associated with the killing of another human eventually became ritualised. Using examples from ancient Greek religion and mythology, Burkert claims that such rituals are at the centre of all religious activity.<sup>150</sup>

While Burkert's theory largely approximates Szondi's perspective, there are several differences. These points of contention are dealt with concisely by Hughes; however, two are worthy of further explication.<sup>151</sup> First, as Burkert is reliant upon the work of Lorenz he is susceptible to a similar weakness in Lorenz's argument. As is dealt with in more in §6.2, Lorenz seems to confuse violence and aggression – on the one hand it plays a role in natural selection but on the other he labels it “evil.” Burkert's work lacks a similar distinction. Second, the HB is by no means monolithic in its regard for sacrificial ritual. It seems some sin/guilt is beyond being atoned for through the mechanism of sacrifice (e.g. 1 Sam 3:14); while at other points God is depicted as disinterested in sacrifice, demanding instead a personal acceptance of wrongdoing, penitence, and change in behaviour (e.g. Ps 51 cf. 2 Sam 12).

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<sup>149</sup> Both Burkert's and Girard's theories deal with origins of collective violence, and might, consequently, be viewed as an appropriate 'diptych' to Szondi's identification of the origins of aggression and violence within individuals, noting that Szondi himself questions whether the 'Cainitic' personality is part of the “immutable nature of humanity in general” or the traits of particular human variants. (Ref. Szondi, *Kain*, 13.) Furthermore, since it is a widely discussed and recognised anthropological theory with Judeo-Christian theological origins, albeit with a broader application, Girard's mimetic theory could be a useful tool for illuminating Szondi's far less well-known psychological theory with Jewish origins, the application and validity of which I seek to investigate. (See James Alison and Wolfgang Palaver, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of Mimetic Theory and Religion* [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017], 1.) Burkert's theory is less useful since it is dependent upon examples from Classical Greece. In a related point, mimetic theory, as James G. Williams argues, “offers a genuine Judeo-Christian alternative to dominant intellectual doctrine”, which he identifies specifically as “anti-Christian thinking” but could more broadly be termed as a secular suspicion of religious thought and language. (See James G. Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred* [San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991], 6.) Again, Szondi has similar sympathies which are evident in his approach to his theory of human aggression. Finally, like Szondi's articulation of the Cain complex, the origins of both Burkert's and Girard's theories lie in a 'psychological' reading of ancient literary texts.

<sup>150</sup> Burkert, *Homo Necans*. Ref. especially to “1. Sacrifice as an Act of Killing” and his parallel with Islamic rituals, 1-12.

<sup>151</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 155-7.

Szondi, by contrast, asserts that in *Schicksalsanalyse* good and evil are the same substance, both of which need to be accounted for and incorporated in order to form an expression of personal wholeness. Hughes cites Martin Buber's concept of the Hasidic sense of *kavana* to further illumine Szondi's approach.<sup>152</sup> Buber's notion of *kavana* is expressed as follows:

The Hasidic demand that we discover and perform our own created task, that we channel the passion of the "evil" urge into the realization of our personal uniqueness, that we act and love with *kavana*, or inner intention, implies the strongest possible rejection of all those ways whereby we divide our lives into airtight compartments and escape becoming whole.<sup>153</sup>

For Szondi, evil is therefore not simply something that must be atoned for – this is only one aspect of his framework. Theories modelled around sacrificial rituals, such as Burkert's and Girard's, only offer a mechanistic approach to communal guilt, and are thus insufficient in dealing with the broader expressions of evil, especially the myriad expressions of individual evil. According to Szondi's articulation of *Schicksalsanalyse* the universal inclination to evil is something that must be assimilated and understood if it is ever to be overcome rather than simply expiated.<sup>154</sup>

Girard's mimetic theory seeks to answer the question of reciprocity and its fundamental place in human existence.<sup>155</sup> By way of illustration, the ubiquity of the query, "What's in it for me?" in our everyday interactions points to what James Williams describes as "the fundamental principle of *retribution* that underlies much of human wisdom."<sup>156</sup> In the biblical text at the centre of this current study, for instance, it is understood that Cain sees there is nothing to be gained for himself in following YHWH's exhortation and 'doing good' (Gen 4:6-7). Girard's response to the question of reciprocity is mimetic theory – the inevitable movement from mimesis to rivalry to collective violence, which is then controlled through 'scapegoat' mechanisms, such as sacrifice, that reach back to the earliest stages of human culture.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Hughes, 157.

<sup>153</sup> Maurice Friedman, "Martin Buber and Asia," *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 4 (1976): 411–26.

<sup>154</sup> Although Szondi is, ultimately, not optimistic about the ability for humanity to actually overcome evil as his conclusion to *Kain* and his explication of Moses in *Moses* make clear.

<sup>155</sup> Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred*, 6.

<sup>156</sup> Williams, 6. Original italics.

<sup>157</sup> Alison and Palaver, *The Palgrave Handbook of Mimetic Theory and Religion*, 2-3.



The theory begins with the concept of mimetic desire. Desire is not an instinctive emotion but is something born out of contemplation. Mimetic desire is triangular in nature and thus bears similarities to the triangular paradigms evident in the Oedipus and Cain complexes (see §7.2). Specifically, mimetic desire is comprised of the subject, the object of desire and the mediator or model.<sup>158</sup> The model induces in the subject the desirability of certain objects. However, this process of imitation of the model by the subject becomes one of rivalry as the identity of the model becomes appropriated, and each becomes the imitator of his/her own imitator.<sup>159</sup> The process escalates and, eventually, in order to acquire the object of desire it becomes necessary to displace or eliminate the rival. Genesis 4 appears to illustrate this aspect of the theory. The object of the subject's (i.e. Cain's) desire is the regard of YHWH for his sacrifice of grains and cereals. However, YHWH has no regard for Cain's offering, and is only pleased with Abel's sacrifice which necessitated the killing of an animal. In a Girardian reading, Abel is presented as the model. In order for the subject to acquire the object of his desire, he kills his model thereby simultaneously mimicking and eliminating his rival. A parallel with a Szondi reading of the same text can be drawn here. As is discussed in §3.4, Szondi's preferred etymology for קַיִן, the verbal root from which the name "Cain" is derived, is "to possess." Furthermore, Girard identifies both good and bad mimetic desire, in which an exemplar is the key, and this idea resembles Szondi's own concept of the Moses and Cain polarity.

The second element of the mimetic theory is the scapegoat mechanism, which seeks to find a resolution of conflict through victimisation. As the conflict that results from mimetic desire escalates into a crisis of violence of all against all, objects of desire are replaced by reciprocal violence and rivalry.<sup>160</sup> Such a situation tends towards, and is only resolved through, the violence of all against one. Hence, two or more parties are only reconciled at the expense of a third. The victim is either killed or exiled, which would, most likely, result in his or her death.<sup>161</sup> Girard argues that this phenomenon is imitated repeatedly giving rise to rituals, such as prohibition, sacrifice and, eventually, myth, thereby camouflaging the original primeval conflict. He states: "If there is a normal order in societies, it must be the result of a prior crisis."<sup>162</sup> In other words, there must be a historical event

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<sup>158</sup> René Girard, *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1996), 33-44. Girard initially used the term "mediator" but would later use "model" to describe this aspect of the triangle of desire.

<sup>159</sup> Girard, *The Girard Reader*, 9.

<sup>160</sup> Wolfgang Palaver, *René Girard's Mimetic Theory*, trans. Gabriel Borrud (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 150-1.

<sup>161</sup> Palaver, *René Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 151. Cf. §3.5 'Wandering in the land of Nod' and §7.3 'Ishmael/Hagar and Isaac/Sarah.'

<sup>162</sup> René Girard and Michel Treguer, *When These Things Begin Conversations with Michel Treguer*, trans. Trevor Cribben Merrill, *Studies in Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 13.

which lies behind the scapegoat mechanism. People polarise around objects of desire and their models (whom they trust); however, while they are united by the same desire they are also separated by the shortage of the desired object. The conflict is only resolved by the elimination of the victim. Importantly, this is an unconscious process, only becoming conscious in the controlled environment of, for example, a religious ritual such as that described in Lev 16. Though the term scapegoat is derived from that text, Girard uses it in accordance with its modern understanding.<sup>163</sup> Ultimately, in the scapegoating mechanism Girard claims that:

We're talking about order being born from disorder, which in current epistemology is really the highlight of the whole process, the showstopping act. There's no more enemy, there's no more vengeance, because the absolute enemy has been put to death in the person of the scapegoat.<sup>164</sup>

It could be argued that this element of the mimetic theory is evident in Gen 4. In fact, it seems to operate on a number of levels – both literal and metaphorical. Abel sacrifices his firstlings to please and receive the favour of YHWH – these are the first scapegoats. Cain, who is not able to use the violent outlet of animal sacrifice,<sup>165</sup> kills Abel, his blood spilling out onto the ground – perhaps as an allusion to the cultic ritual of pouring blood (cf. Lev 17:13) – and thereby becomes Cain's scapegoat. Cain is banished by YHWH as a consequence, thus becoming the third scapegoat. Yet, fearing being murdered in retribution, Cain is then protected by YHWH. The mark placed on Cain by YHWH (Gen 4:15) effectively makes him sacrosanct;<sup>166</sup> accordingly, he moves on to establish a city and his descendants will create the foundations of civilisation. Order is thus born from disorder. There is, however, one significant caveat that is presented in Gen 4 which brings into question a Girardian interpretation of the fratricide.

The song of Lamech (Gen 4:23-24) indicates that violence is still prevalent and, what is more, has grown exponentially. The so-called 'order' represented by the establishment of a city and the beginnings of civilisation have, in fact, resulted in further disorder. As is discussed in more detail below (§3.3), the genealogy of Cain (Gen 4:17-24), of which the song of Lamech is a significant element, is inexorably linked to the fratricide which precedes it (i.e. vv. 2-16). The relationship between fratricide and genealogy is critical for the coherence on Gen 4 as a literary unit. This aspect of the narrative is clarified by Szondi's concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* which provides a possible

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<sup>163</sup> Palaver, *René Girard's Mimetic Theory*, 152.

<sup>164</sup> Girard and Treguer, *When These Things Begin Conversations with Michel Treguer*, 20.

<sup>165</sup> René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (New York: Continuum, 2005), 4.

<sup>166</sup> Williams, 36.

explanation for the exponential growth of evil perpetuated through Cain's family line. Although many aspects of Girard's mimetic theory initially seem helpful in interpreting Gen 4, I suggest that Szondi's theory of the Cain complex is a more apt framework through which that chapter can be interpreted as a single, coherent literary unit.

In addition, the parallel that Girard makes between Lev 16 and Gen 4 is problematic. The motivations behind the 'scapegoat' mechanism as expressed in Lev 16 appear to account for the atonement of collective wrongdoing (Lev 16:20-22).<sup>167</sup> There is nothing in the mechanism to account for personal iniquities and sins, such as the one depicted in Gen 4:8. As Hughes suggests, the Cain and Abel narrative itself "culminates in a pardon [Gen 4:15] which foreshadows atonement in the Mosaic Law and Temple religion."<sup>168</sup> As is discussed throughout, Szondi's theoretical framework emphasises the function and importance of individual choice in confronting the realities of violence and evil and the role of personal responsibility to seek restitution and resolution. Nevertheless, the similarity between the two descriptions of all the iniquities of Israel being placed upon the "live" goat's head before it is sent off into the wilderness (Lev 16:21-22) and the mark being placed upon Cain before he is sent into the land of Nod (Gen 4:15-16) is curious and should be noted.<sup>169</sup>

Is it possible, however, to see the scapegoat mechanism at play in the contemporary expressions of violence such as, for instance, terrorism? By way of example, the modern phenomenon of Islamist terrorism could be argued to be mimetic in nature. Girard claims that "[t]errorism is the vanguard of a general revenge against the West's wealth."<sup>170</sup> It is a difficult point with which to disagree. For instance, the use of the idea and concept of 'caliphate' by groups such as Islamic State would appear to be an exhortation to history and the restoration of supposed cultural advances that Islam once held over the West. Returning to the catalyst for my undertaking of this study, from a Girardian perspective Lee Rigby was used as a scapegoat by his two attackers as is revealed in the statement one of them made immediately after the attack:

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<sup>167</sup> Hughes argues that Lev 16 only accounts for "unwitting sins" (*The Return of the Ancestor*, 155). However, this is a misreading of the biblical text which clearly refers to "all the iniquities" of Israel, so presumably the witting and unwitting sins are included in this. The inadequacy of Lev 16 in accounting for the transgression in Gen 4 is not because it refers to "unwitting sins", but rather because it functions of behalf of the collective rather than the individual.

<sup>168</sup> Hughes, 155.

<sup>169</sup> Also, the echo of Lev 16 in the episode where Joseph's older half-brothers present his bloodied coat to Jacob as evidence of his 'death' (Gen 37:31-33).

<sup>170</sup> René Girard, *Battling to the End: Conversations with Benoît Chantre* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2009), 211.

The only reason we have killed this man today is because Muslims are dying daily by British soldiers. And this British soldier is one. It is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.<sup>171</sup>

Hence, from the perspective mimesis and as indicated by the murderer's recourse to *lex talionis*,<sup>172</sup> Rigby, an individual, was 'sacrificed' both as atonement and as revenge for perceived crimes committed by one collective (the British army) against another collective (Muslims).

Conversely, it would perhaps be overly charitable to also suggest that Rigby's attackers hoped that by their actions they would necessarily bring about an end to violence – that does not seem to have been their motivation. Rather, revenge seems to be forefront, as per the statement of the killers (and indeed Girard's own observation above concerning the motivations for Islamist terrorism). There is no sense that the killers' actions are seeking to reconcile the two groups they have identified in conflict contra the tenet of Girard's mimetic theory which brings about an end to said conflict. It would seem then, that in this particular instance, Girard's mimetic theory is inadequate in explaining the actions of these particular killers. I argue that Szondi's theory of violence rooted in the biology of the paroxysmal drive, that is in the coarse 'Cainitic' affects of anger, rage, envy, jealousy, hatred, and vengeance, is potentially a more appropriate, all-encompassing lens through which to examine expressions of violence, the myth of Cain and Abel, and the other stories of sibling rivalry in Genesis.

### 2.3 Summary

This chapter began with a presentation of two of the key methodologies for this study: psychological biblical criticism, shaped by Szondi's theory of the Cain complex, and biography. Gadamer's concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte* and Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* provide the theoretical expression to both the aims of this study and the process towards achieving them. Scholarship pertinent to Léopold Szondi's life and work was discussed, and I advanced arguments advocating for the designation of Szondi as a *superstes* and suggesting why he may have been, for the most part, overlooked by the anglophone academy. This was followed by a detailed overview of scholarship related to Szondi's theory of the Cain complex. The legacy of Freudian psychoanalysis evident in the complex was discussed, and the biological foundations of the theory were introduced. Finally, while Szondi's theory bears some similarities with those espoused by Burkett and Girard, there are important differences, and these differences were explained. I provided a rationale for why Szondi's framework might be a more

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<sup>171</sup> "Woolwich attack: the terrorist's rant", *The Telegraph*, 23 May 2013.

<sup>172</sup> Cf. Exod 21:24; Lev 24:19-21; Qur'an 5:45

appropriate vehicle to interpret the expressions of violence within Genesis' sibling stories beginning with Gen 4 than Burkett's theory of aggression and Girard's mimetic desire.

In the following chapter I turn my attention to the literature concerning the exegetical questions germane to Gen 4. Scholarship on Gen 4 and its broader context within Genesis is thus given a dedicated exposition. This is appropriate and reflects the status of this study, which, while multidisciplinary in its outlook, nevertheless has at its core a psychological approach to the biblical text(s).

## CHAPTER 3 EXEGETICAL OBSERVATIONS: SELECTED STUDIES ON GENESIS 4

### 3.1 Introduction

Having explored the scholarship relevant to Szondi and his theories, I turn now to consider scholarship on Gen 4 and its function within the so-called Primeval History (Gen 1-11) and Genesis more broadly. That there is a vast amount of literature and scholarship devoted to the first eleven chapters of Genesis is a statement approaching the status of a truism. In the interests of both coherence and conciseness, the following review of exegesis and biblical scholarship on Gen 4 is limited to that which concerns two central, interrelated pillars. First, that the Primeval History is a later addition to materials already present and compiled, and thus forms a prologue to the rest of Genesis. This assumption is informed by various intertextual allusions and the low recurrence of names from Gen 1-11 in the remainder of the HB, save for those of later traditions, that in turn suggests a later date for the compilation of the Primeval History. The second pillar is that the intertextual and linguistic features of Gen 4 point to it being composed in a post-exilic context. These pillars suggest a background of religious tensions and conflicts against which the text was composed and that the ‘final form’ of Genesis, in part, constitutes a commentary on these tensions and conflicts. Although this chapter largely adopts the framework of a traditional exegetical treatment, it is not intended to present a comprehensive text-critical exegesis of Gen 4.<sup>1</sup> Rather, my discussion of textual features has been shaped by the following three points of focus: those aspects of the text that Szondi himself is most interested in; the elements of the text that point to a date for composition no earlier than the Persian period; and the intertextual allusions in Gen 4 to other sibling stories in Genesis.

The discussion begins with an overview of scholarship that argues for a late dating for the composition of the Primeval History. Beginning with Van Seters’s contention that the Primeval History is part of a larger ‘prologue’ to the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), and examining arguments in favour of dating its formation to both the Persian and Hellenised periods, I suggest that

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<sup>1</sup> To provide a comprehensive exegesis of Gen 4 would be following a very well-worn path and does not assist in contributing anything particularly novel to scholarship. (I do not, for example, provide my own translation of the text because an exegesis of Gen 4 is not the focus of this thesis; rather my emphasis is the presentation of a Szondian reading of Gen 4 and the subsequent sibling stories of Genesis.) Nevertheless, it is my intention that the overview presented in this chapter will demonstrate the necessary familiarity with scholarship on Gen 4 that is sufficient to establish the credibility of the Szondian interpretation of that text and the other sibling stories in Genesis that follows. That this chapter follows the structure of a traditional exegesis is largely due to convenience and that such a structure assists in unfolding the logic and coherence of the argument.

a date of composition for Gen 4 is likely to be sometime in a period spanning the late sixth century to the fourth century BCE.

Following a discussion on the likely dating of the Primeval History, a brief summary of the structure of Gen 4 and its relationship with the Eden narratives (Gen 2-3) is introduced. The literary coherence of the chapter is emphasised, and its literary and thematic connections to the Eden story are explored. These are important considerations for a Szondian reading of the Cain and Abel which seeks to establish the primordial origins of violence and reinforces the connection between the act of the fratricide and heritability and genealogy.

The focus of the discussion then narrows to an examination of the textual features on Gen 4 guided by the three factors mentioned above. Intertextual and linguistic connections evident in the text, such as links to prophetic and Wisdom literature and the motif of exile, reinforce the previously proposed late dating for the Primeval History, with the milieu of Achaemenid imperial pluralism as the likely earliest period for its composition. Determining an Achaemenian, or later, context for Gen 4 is important because the period between the edict of Cyrus the Great and the Hasmonean dynasty witnessed a number of tensions and conflicts with religious dimensions, one or more of which could be reflected in the composition of Gen 4 and its arrangement within Genesis.<sup>2</sup> If such an hypothesis is credible, it lends a degree of validity to the psychoanalytical reading of the text to which Szondi's Cain complex herein gives expression and further assists in establishing it, in the words of D. Andrew Kille, as "an adequate interpretation" (see §2.1 'Psychological Criticism').<sup>3</sup>

Finally, attention is given to scholarship that seeks to situate Gen 4 within the received 'final form' of the broader book of Genesis apropos the narratives dealing with siblings in conflict. This is a critical consideration given that the context of Gen 4 within the wider Genesis narrative is the vehicle through which Szondi's extended metaphor for the resolution of the Cain complex will be evaluated. It will also help to establish the validity of the complex's triangular paradigm as a lens through which the stories of sibling conflict in Genesis can be read and interpreted. Such an approach carries with it the ancillary objective of emphasising Genesis' narrative and theological coherence.

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<sup>2</sup> Among these hypothetical religiously motivated conflicts and tensions is a possible conflict between priestly clans. Central to such a premise are the apparent tensions between these clans evident in texts from Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Ezekiel; the motif of sacrifice that is evident in Gen 4; and the supposed Kenite links to the figure of Cain. Further possibilities include tensions between returning exiles and those who remained in Judah, as evident in Ezra and Nehemiah, or frictions concerning the new Temple program (regarding the latter cf. Hag 2:3-9 and YHWH's admonition of Cain's offering in Gen 4:5). Alternatively, Gen 4 might suggest a backdrop of anti-Edomite sentiment as evidenced in its intertextual parallels with the Esau and Jacob rivalry (Gen 25:19-34; 27-28).

<sup>3</sup> Kille, *Psychological Biblical Criticism: Genesis 3 as a Test Case*, 53.

### 3.2 Authorship and Dating of the Primeval History

There are two basic assumptions that have informed the framework for my initial approach to Gen 4. The first relates to nomenclature surrounding the authorship of Gen 4 and Genesis more broadly. In order to distinguish the Gen 4 narrative from its wider context, I refer to the author of the Cain narrative (Gen 4) as ‘author’ and the *author* of Genesis as ‘compiler.’ I avoid referring to the author of Gen 4 as the Yahwist (or J as both convention and convenience has it)<sup>4</sup> in acknowledgement of the current complexity within Pentateuchal studies. I therefore hope to avoid any confusion on the part of the reader by using the term ‘author’ rather than Yahwist (J), which should more accurately now be designated as the non-Priestly writer as per the general scholarly consensus.<sup>5</sup>

The second assumption is that the Primeval History (Gen 1-11) functions as a prologue to the rest of Genesis.<sup>6</sup> Although this assumption is informed by evidence such as various intertextual allusions, in the main it is the low recurrence of names from Gen 1-11 in the remainder of the HB, except for later traditions, which point to a later date for the compilation of the Primeval History.

The two-source hypothesis for the Primeval History (as opposed to the four-source hypotheses of the wider Pentateuch) was first articulated by Henning Bernhard Witter (1683-1715), and has, for the

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<sup>4</sup> Following the German *Jahwist*.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Louis Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 145. See also David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis* (Louisville KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996), 51.

The accepted veracity of the various sources of the so-called Documentary Hypothesis for the formation of the Pentateuch, particularly the J and Elohist (E) sources, has been subject to a number of challenges since the 1970s. These challenges were initiated with the work of Rolf Rendtorff (See Rolf Rendtorff “The ‘Yahwist’ as Theologian? The Dilemma of Pentateuchal Criticism” in *JSOT* 3 (1977)) and John Van Seters’s *Abraham in History and Tradition* (1975). Consequently, contemporary scholarship on the sources of the Pentateuch represents diverse explanatory models ranging from the defence of the classic DH model (W.H. Schmidt *et al*), to a model comprising two sources, namely the Deuteronomist (D) and the Priestly (P) sources (Rendtorff *et al*), to a post-Deuteronomic Yahwist compiler operating during the exile (Van Seters), to a hypothesis of fragments and narrative cycles added to the DH which has served to introduce a very complex and intricate portrait of redactional activity.

However, in terms of the composition of the Primeval History, current historical-critical scholarship differentiates and classifies two groups of texts into a Priestly layer and a non-Priestly stratum, with Gen 4 belonging to the latter corpus. See Jan Christian Gertz, “The Formation of the Primeval History” in Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, eds., *The Book of Genesis : Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 113.

<sup>6</sup> On the uniqueness of Gen 1-11 see Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible*, 1st ed., ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 24, 58-63, 91, 93-4. See also Iain Provan, *Discovering Genesis: Content, Interpretation, Reception* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 6-8, 49-58.



most part, maintained a level of orthodoxy and agreement amongst scholars since that time.<sup>7</sup> While the nature of the Priestly (P) source has remained largely undisputed, the scope and nature of the non-P source of Gen 1-11 – what was traditionally called the J corpus – has proven to be more controversial. While the so-called Yahwist source was initially considered to pre-date that of the P source, more recent scholarship has situated the non-P source in later periods such as the exile, or the Achaemenian period and even as late as the Hellenistic period. What follows is a brief overview of some of the pertinent scholarship which has posited a later date for the non-P materials in the Primeval History.

One of the more influential studies is John Van Seters's hypothesis for the composition and development of the non-P material in the Pentateuch, particularly Genesis.<sup>8</sup> Van Seters's new supplementary model of the Documentary Hypothesis (DH) posits three sources of the Pentateuch, thus maintaining elements of the classical DH. Van Seters argues that Deuteronomy (D) is the oldest of these, dated to the seventh century BCE. He contends that the D source was used as an introduction to the DtrH, itself compiled during the early exilic period. This was followed by the so-called J (i.e. non-P) corpus late in the exilic period, then the P material in the postexilic period.<sup>9</sup> Importantly, neither the non-P nor the P sources represent independent documents but additions to the earlier corpora.<sup>10</sup>

Van Seters's hypothesis could be described as an amalgam of the classical documentary model and more recent fragmentary models.<sup>11</sup> His model has the advantage of accounting for developments in Pentateuchal studies that are problematic for the proponents of the classical position, such as the increasingly untenable evidence for an extensive Elohist (E) source, and avoiding the excesses of a

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<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the history of scholarship see Jan Christian Gertz, "The Formation of the Primeval History," in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 107–36. Also Thomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid, *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation*, vol. 34, SymS (SBL) (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2006); and Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch*, 127-164.

<sup>8</sup> Van Seters's dating of the so-called J corpus represented a radical departure from previous scholarly orthodoxy which dated this material to early in the period of the monarchy.

<sup>9</sup> I maintain Van Seters's designation for Pentateuchal authors throughout my discussion of his specific contributions.

<sup>10</sup> John Van Seters, *The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 55-6. While Van Seters dates the Primeval History to the exilic period, I believe Gen 4, in particular, contains evidence that points to a date either very late in the exilic period but more likely the Yehud of the Achaemenian period.

<sup>11</sup> Modern proponents of the classic model in some form include W.H. Schmidt, Antony Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, while the so-called 'hypothesis of fragments,' initiated by Rolf Rendtorff, is advocated by scholars such as Erich Zenger.

purely fragmentary position which, as Jean Louis Ska points out, “increase(s) the number of levels [of the Pentateuch] and redactional insertions to the point of exceptional complexity.”<sup>12</sup>

Van Seters presents a form-critical analysis of what he calls the J corpus in Genesis. Within the Primeval History, Van Seters maintains that J has shaped a central thematic unity from traditional materials to form five stories of crime and punishment. Of these, Gen 4 is the second.<sup>13</sup> This theme of crime and punishment points to an exilic context as suggested by the emphasis on the curse of humanity, exile and banishment from the land, wandering, and dispersal. According to Van Seters, the human condition in Genesis appears to be one of exile and enduring hardship. Furthermore, he suggests that there is a universalistic emphasis in the J corpus.<sup>14</sup> Van Seters correlates this emphasis with Deutero-Isaiah, which he dates to the late exilic or early post-exilic period.<sup>15</sup>

Van Seters contends that early Greek historiography, which employed older legends as source material and folk motifs as a basis for new stories, is an appropriate analogue to understand the J writing for two main reasons. First, historiography in Israel (i.e. as represented by the J corpus) shares the same mixture of genres as early Greek literature, including traditional materials of myth and legend with an emphasis on aetiology and national origins. Accordingly, primeval origin accounts such as Gen 1-11 have two aspects: *arché* (beginning) and *aitia* (cause); and both play a prominent role in history and myth. Second, the classical period of Greek literature (i.e. the fifth century BCE) occurred several centuries after the introduction of writing, and Van Seters sees the same situation in Israel. He bases his argument on the pattern of epigraphic finds which responds closely to that of Greece, with what he terms “document consciousness” in Israel occurring from the seventh century BCE onwards.<sup>16</sup>

Ska, conversely, argues against what he says is Van Seters’s “posited affinity between the Yahwist and Greek historians,” asserting that the Pentateuch, as a religious work with a legal character, has

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<sup>12</sup> Ska, 140.

<sup>13</sup> Van Seters, *The Pentateuch*, 106. The five stories are: 1. Disobedience of a divine command (Gen 2-3); 2. Murder of a brother (Gen 4); 3. Widespread violence and corruption (Gen 6-8); 4. Violation of a sexual taboo – Noah’s drunkenness (Gen 9:20-27); and 5. Hubris – tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gen 4:17-24.

<sup>15</sup> Van Seters, 107.

<sup>16</sup> John Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 28-41.

no comparable work from Classical Greece.<sup>17</sup> Notwithstanding the various merits and deficiencies in arguments such as Van Seters's, it seems counter-intuitive to view the development in Israel of the document consciousness necessary for the creation of the Pentateuch as a unique case with no correlatives in either the ancient Near East (ANE) or eastern Mediterranean of antiquity, regardless of whether the Pentateuch is exceptional in terms of its genre or otherwise.

Van Seters is not alone in seeing connections to ancient Greek literature. Richard Moyer, for example, asserts that Genesis is “the merging of myth and history and the interweaving of myth and genealogy” in a move towards constructing a “mythicized history.”<sup>18</sup> Making comparisons to Hesiod's *Theogony* and other examples from the ANE, Moyer suggests that in Genesis “genealogies [such as Gen 4:17-26] are informed by the mythical narratives they surround.”<sup>19</sup>

Others have taken the correlations between the non-P material in Genesis and classical Greek literature even further, postulating a dating for much of the material in Genesis through to Kings to the period following the conquest of Alexander in 333 BCE.<sup>20</sup> While Van Seters merely contends that the development of writing in ancient Greece is analogous to that in Israel, others have maintained the biblical writers were directly inspired and influenced by classical Greek literature. One of the foremost among these is Niels Peter Lemche, who advances four main arguments for dating the HB to the Hellenistic period.<sup>21</sup> First, the HB cannot be relied upon as a historical document and it is a poor source of historical information. Second, much of the literature reflects the objectives of the authors rather than historical memory. Third, the history of Israel seems to be modelled on a Greek pattern of historiography, thereby demonstrating that the authors had a knowledge of Greek

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<sup>17</sup> Ska, 139. However, such a position which would no doubt be disputed by some scholars of Classical Greece. See Pietro Pucci, “Theology and Poetics in the Iliad.” *Arethusa* 35, no. 1 (2002): 17-34, for one such example.

<sup>18</sup> Richard H. Moyer, “In the Beginning: Myth and History in Genesis and Exodus,” *JBL* 109, no. 4 (1990), 580.

<sup>19</sup> Moyer, “In the Beginning: Myth and History in Genesis and Exodus,” 582.

<sup>20</sup> See Philippe Wajdenbaum, “From Plato to Moses: Genesis-Kings as a Platonic Epic,” in *Biblical Interpretation Beyond Historicity*, ed. Ingrid Hjelm Hjelm and Thomas L. Thompson, vol. 7, Changing Perspectives (New York: Routledge, 2016), 76–90.

<sup>21</sup> Niels Peter Lemche, “The Old Testament - A Hellenistic Book?,” in *Did Moses Speak Attic?: Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period.*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, vol. 317, JSOTSup (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 287–318. The article was first published in 1993. Also prominent is Thomas L. Thompson. Thompson disagrees with the argument of Van Seters *et al* that the non-P materials in Genesis constitute historiography, rather he asserts they must be understood as theology. (See Thomas L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources*, vol. 4, SHANE [Leiden, New York: Brill, 1992], 372-83.) As such, this points to a late composition of the HB reflecting the coalescence of the conditions necessary for theological coherence, which, in his estimation, is to be situated in the Persian period. However, in a subsequent work he argues that much of the HB should be dated to the Hasmonean period, particularly the Joshua and David materials which reflect the reign of the Hasmonean king John Hyrcanus in the latter half of the second century BCE. As far as Gen 4 goes, it is part of what Thompson calls “surviving fragments” of the pre-Hellenistic literary traditions. (See Thomas L. Thompson, *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past* [London: Jonathan Cape, 1999].)

literature.<sup>22</sup> For example, Lemche asserts that the author of Gen 1 was familiar with the ideas of Thales of Miletus (c. 624–c. 548 BCE), providing a *terminus a quo* for that text meaning that the author cannot predate the exilic period (which is not a controversial dating for that text).<sup>23</sup> Fourth, against arguments dating the formation of the HB to the Persian period, Lemche claims there is too little known about the Jewish population during this period, arguing that while there is comparatively scant archaeological data about this period, what little is known indicates that Jerusalem was small and not conducive to the production of literature. Thus, by dating materials to this period, Lemche argues that an unfalsifiable hypothesis is established.<sup>24</sup>

Lemche's argument that much of the HB was modelled on Greek literature has proven influential among scholars suggesting late dates for the formation of the HB. Thomas L. Brodie, for example, argues that Homer's *Odyssey* was a model for Gen 11-50.<sup>25</sup> Russell Gmirkin asserts that the Pentateuch was not composed before the early third century BCE and that the authors were influenced by the Hellenised writers Berossus of Babylonia and Manetho of Egypt.<sup>26</sup> More recently, Philippe Wajdenbaum has argued that Plato's *Laws* were the inspiration behind the structure of the Pentateuch and Joshua, and *Republic* and *Critias* were the sources used by the authors of the Primary History (i.e. Genesis-Kings).<sup>27</sup>

Wajdenbaum's study complements an earlier one by Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò who claimed that there is evidence that Plato's writing, specifically *Timaeus*, *Phaedrus* and *Phaedo*, is threaded throughout the Primeval History.<sup>28</sup> As such, the Primeval History should be regarded "as a text

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

<sup>23</sup> Lemche, "The Old Testament - A Hellenistic Book?", 296. Lemche bases his argument on the congruity between the Gen 1 account of creation from light, darkness, water and earth and the classical Greek cosmology's four basic elements: "the hot and the cold and the dry and the wet." Lester Grabbe argues that scholars have identified that Thales was drawing on extant traditions in the ANE and that his cosmology has a Babylonian origin. Hence, Thales as the *terminus a quo* for Gen 1 is hardly conclusive. (See Lester L. Grabbe, "Reflections on the Discussion," in *Did Moses Speak Attic?: Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, vol. 317, JSOTSup [Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001], 320–40.)

<sup>24</sup> For a concise summary of Lemche's argument see Grabbe, "Reflections on the Discussion," 321-5.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue: A Literary, Historical, & Theological Commentary* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 447-94.

<sup>26</sup> Russell E. Gmirkin, *Berosus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus: Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch* (Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Wajdenbaum, "From Plato to Moses: Genesis-Kings as a Platonic Epic." Genesis-Kings representing the so-called Primary History. Similarly, another recent contribution by Robert Gnuse has asserted that the authors of the Primeval History were familiar with the works of Hesiod, though that does not necessarily indicate a late date, or even one during the Hellenistic period. (Robert K. Gnuse, "Greek Connections: Genesis 1–11 and the Poetry of Hesiod," *BTB* 47, no. 3 [2017]: 131–43.)

<sup>28</sup> Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò, "Primeval History in the Persian Period?", *SJOT* 21, no. 1 (2007): 106–26.

written in the Hellenistic period, in the environment of the Jewish elite, open to the influence of Greek philosophy.”<sup>29</sup> In support of his claims, Niesiołowski-Spanò cites the low recurrence of the names in Gen 1-11 in the rest of the Old Testament.<sup>30</sup> This is one of the more curious intertextual aspects of Gen 4, and represents a particularly convincing element of Niesiołowski-Spanò’s argument. Both Cain and Abel are only mentioned in 4 Macc 18:11 and in the NT. By way of comparison, Adam is mentioned 1 Chron 1:1; Tobit 8:6 (which is also the only mention of Eve outside the Eden story); twice in Ben Sira, eleven times in 4 Esdras and nine times in the NT – all of which are late texts.<sup>31</sup> Besides the single mention of Adam and Seth in 1 Chron 1, a text the origins of which are uncertain, no name from Gen 2–4 otherwise occurs outside the Apocrypha.<sup>32</sup> Hence, “the idea that these four figures, at least, only existed in late traditions seems attractive.”<sup>33</sup>

Although ‘Cain’ is only used as a personal name in Gen 4 in the HB (and possibly ch. 5), it should be noted, that the name ‘Cain’ appears to have been quite common in a number of central Semitic languages, as detailed in Aramaic, Nabatean, Safaitic, and Thamudic inscriptions.<sup>34</sup> One particularly relevant example is a silver libation bowl with the Aramaic inscription: “That which Qainu [*qynw*] son of Geshem, King of Qedar brought in offering to Han-Ilat.” The phiale is of Persian origin though discovered in Tell el-Maskhuta (i.e. Pithom), Egypt, and has been dated to the late fifth century BCE.<sup>35</sup> Qainu’s father, Geshem, may conceivably be “Geshem the Arab” the enemy of Nehemiah in his wall rebuilding project (Neh 2:19; 6:1-6).<sup>36</sup> However, of most relevance for this current study is that the phiale, along with other inscriptions, demonstrates a possible northern Arabian linguistic origin of the name ‘Cain.’ While by no means definitive, it is nevertheless curious and might suggest that ‘Cain’ may have found its way into the author’s account as a result of a *Sitz im Leben* in a pluralistic Achaemenid Yehud.

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<sup>29</sup> Niesiołowski-Spanò, “Primeval History in the Persian Period?”, 122.

<sup>30</sup> Niesiołowski-Spanò, 110-1, 125.

<sup>31</sup> Ben Sira 40:1; 49:16; 4 Esdras 3:5,10,21,21; 4:30; 6:54,56; 7:11,70,116,118. Niesiołowski-Spanò excludes the reference to אדם in Hos 6:7 arguing it should be considered ‘humankind’ viz. ἄνθρωπος in LXX.

<sup>32</sup> In contrast, Noah and Ham occur more frequently in the Old Testament. Aside from references in 1 Chron, Noah was also known to the authors of Ezek 14 and Isa 54, and Ham was known to the authors of Pss 78, 105, 106.

<sup>33</sup> Niesiołowski-Spanò, 111.

<sup>34</sup> Kenan קנן (Gen 5:9-14) is from the same verbal root as Cain. It is also the name of a south Arabian god (ref. Isaac Kalimi, “Three Assumptions About the Kenites,” *ZAW* 100, no. 3 [1988]: 391-2).

<sup>35</sup> “Inscribed Phiale.” *Brooklyn Museum*. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/67986>. Accessed 21 July 2018.

<sup>36</sup> Isaac Rabinowitz, “Aramaic Inscriptions of the Fifth Century B.C.E. from a North-Arab Shrine in Egypt,” *JNES* 15, no. 1 (1956): 1–9.

Although not used elsewhere in the HB as a personal name, the word *הבל* establishes a number of intertextual connections to Wisdom literature. Of the sixty-four occurrences of the word outside Gen 4, all but four come from prophetic or Wisdom books, and more than half of these are in Qohelet. Recent scholarship on the authorship and date of Qohelet suggests that its language and style reflect a post-exilic origin, with most scholars advocating a third century BCE date for composition.<sup>37</sup> Others, however, advocate the fifth century BCE as the earliest possible origin. C.L. Seow cites Persian loan words in Qoh 2:5 and 8:11 along with a number of Aramaisms as evidence of a date of composition no earlier than the second half of the fifth century BCE.<sup>38</sup> J.P. Weinberg, on the other hand, goes so far as to suggest the identity of the author of Qohelet as the priestly leader and restorer of the Temple, Zerubbabel, indicating a date of composition early in the post-exilic period.<sup>39</sup> The recurrence of the term *הבל* in later biblical texts combined with the lack of intertextual biblical references to Abel, save for the Apocrypha and the NT, do seem to point to a later date for the composition of Gen 4.

The Chronicler's reference to Adam is worth further consideration. First Chronicles 1:1-4 details the descendants of Adam to Noah and his three sons; however, the genealogy omits both Cain and Abel and only mentions Seth. The omission of the genealogy of Cain from 1 Chron 1 is curious. While the emphasis of the genealogical lists seems to be on the concept of 'election,' the genealogies of other rejected sons are presented before the elected dynasty throughout the chapter. There have been two explanations for the fact that Cain's genealogy has been ignored. The first is expediency, while the second is because Cain's line did not lead past the flood.<sup>40</sup> A third possibility, however, as per Niesiołowski-Spanò's argument is that the Cain and Abel story was simply unknown to the author of

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<sup>37</sup> Craig G. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 51-4. Also Grabbe, "Reflections on the Discussion," 329.

<sup>38</sup> C. L. Seow, "Linguistic Evidence and the Dating of Qohelet," *JBL* 115, no. 4 (1996): 643-66.

<sup>39</sup> J.P. Weinberg, "Authorship and Author in the Ancient Near East and in the Hebrew Bible," *Hebrew Studies* 44 (2003): 157-69.

<sup>40</sup> For the former see Elie Assis, "From Adam to Esau and Israel: An Anti-Edomite Ideology in 1 Chronicles 1," *VT* 56, no. 3 (2006). For the latter see James T. Sparks, *Chronicler's Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles, 1-9* (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 296. The latter explanation is problematic, however, given the Chronicler depicts the Kenites as "constituent elements of Judah" by virtue of their connection to Qayin. See Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9*, AB, (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 316. 1 Chron 2:55 describes "the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Sucathites" as Kenites, for whom Cain was the tribal patriarchy according to one theory. According to Knoppers, in the tribal inheritances (Josh 15:57) Qayin, around which the Kenites dwelt, is assigned to Judah. See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah," *JSOT* 33, no. 2 (2008): 131-53, esp 140-1.

1 Chron 1. Thus, it may suggest that Gen 4 was a later addition to the Primeval History, which itself was added to Gen 12-50 to form a prologue to that material.<sup>41</sup>

This hypothesis, however, does not necessarily imply a late date for the formation of the Primeval History, or at least not one *as late* as the Hellenised period. Arguments such as Lemche's *et al* are not without their controversies.<sup>42</sup> For example, the claim that there is little archaeological evidence that the necessary conditions for literary production were extant in the Persian period can no longer be substantiated.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the theory of 'Persian imperial authorisation' which was purportedly behind the collation and formation of the Pentateuch has garnered many advocates since the mid-1980s.<sup>44</sup> Rainer Albertz, for example, has put forward a number of arguments in support of the formation of the Pentateuch in the Persian period. He asserts that evidence for this dating includes the similarities between Deuteronomic and Priestly materials in the Pentateuch and Nehemiah's mission (444-432 BCE).<sup>45</sup> In addition, Artaxerxes' address to Ezra as "scribe of the law of the God of heaven" (Ezra 7:12) suggests that the canonical process of the Pentateuch had ended by the seventh year of Artaxerxes reign (i.e. 398 BCE).<sup>46</sup> One of the more interesting arguments that Albertz has advanced relates to a report on the Jews dated to c. 300 BCE made by the Greek historian Hecataeus of Abdera and transmitted by Diodorus Siculus, which presupposes much of the Pentateuch.<sup>47</sup> According to Albertz, Hecataeus's report stands as testimony to the existence of the Pentateuch and thus "attests a kind of Judaism which is already based on and shaped by the Torah."<sup>48</sup> Taken together, these are persuasive arguments that the formation of the Pentateuch was at least at an advanced stage toward the end of the Persian period.

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<sup>41</sup> Granted that providing a date for Chronicles has not been without its difficulties. For a brief overview of some of these see R. Christopher Heard, *Dynamics of Dissection: Ambiguity in Genesis 12-36 and Ethnic Boundaries in Post-Exilic Judah* (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2001), 15.

<sup>42</sup> For a brief but convincing refutation of Lemche's four key arguments for a Hellenistic date for the HB see Heard, *Dynamics of Dissection*, 10-14. For a more detailed rebuttal see Rainer Albertz, "An End to the Confusion? Why the Old Testament Cannot Be a Hellenistic Book!," in *Did Moses Speak Attic?: Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, vol. 317, JSOTSup (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 30-46.

<sup>43</sup> Charles E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study*, vol. 294, JSOTSup (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 286-8.

<sup>44</sup> For a concise overview and evaluation of the theory ref. Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch*, 217-26.

<sup>45</sup> Rainer Albertz, *A History of the Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: From the Exile to the Maccabees*, trans. John Bowden, vol. 2 (London: SCM Press, 1994), 503-4. Neh 13:25-27 refers to the prohibition of mixed marriages cf. Deut 7.3, and Neh 13:4-13 contains details re. priests and Levites apropos P (cf. Num 18:25-32).

<sup>46</sup> Albertz, "An End to the Confusion? Why the Old Testament Cannot Be a Hellenistic Book!," 40.

<sup>47</sup> Albertz, 40-6.

<sup>48</sup> Albertz, 46. A summary of the scholarly significance afforded to Hecataeus's report is in Grabbe, "Reflections on the Discussion," 327.

It can be seen then that providing a more precise date for the non-P components of the Primeval History, in particular Gen 4, involves complexities which prevent a high degree of certainty.<sup>49</sup> The intertextual connections lend themselves to a post-exilic context and a date anywhere from the late sixth to the late third centuries BCE. Explored in more detail below (§3.4) are the links to prophetic literature, Wisdom literature, and linguistic connections to fifth century BCE Aramaic, all of which are evident in Gen 4. These elements coalesce to provide a likely *terminus a quo* of the Persian period.

### 3.3 Structure and Context of Genesis 4

As mentioned in Chapter 1, in cultures with Judeo-Christian and Islamic legacies there can barely be a first reading of Gen 4 due to its familiarity and ubiquity. While there is a wealth of scholarship on the story of Cain, many of the text's ambiguities remain opaque sphinx-like riddles. There is still much that can be said about Gen 4. In the interests of conciseness, however, the following overview of Gen 4 is limited to the structure of the narrative and the chapter's connections to the Eden narrative which precedes it and the Flood narrative that follows, the latter of which is implicit in the genealogies which comprise the second half of the chapter (i.e. vv. 17-26).<sup>50</sup> These are critical considerations for Szondi's approach to the text and will provide the framework for the more detailed examination of the intertextual and linguistic connections that follows in §3.4.

According to Herman Gunkel, Gen 4 appears to present the reader with an initial problem of unity. Gunkel's commentary on Genesis, an influential work in the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, notes "a wealth of inner contradictions" within the chapter, such as the description of Cain alternately as nomad then as a supposedly sedentary founder of cities.<sup>51</sup> Gunkel consequently sees in the chapter the work of "two hands" responsible for two distinct source materials which he delineates as the Cain and Abel narrative – Gen 4:(1)2-16 – and Cain's genealogy (Gen 4:1, 17-24). He argues vv. 25-26 of

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<sup>49</sup> The aforementioned overview also highlights the need for caution in advocating anything approaching definitiveness in dating some of the constituent elements of the Pentateuch. Advocates and opponents for many prominent theories abound making this an area of biblical studies where consensus appears difficult to reach. As such, the incorporation of pre-exilic elements within the Primeval History should, of course, not be discounted. Thus, Jan Christian Gertz's identification of "Mesopotamian traditions of the flood...absorbed in the light of the prophecy of doom" in the non-P elements of the Primeval History, all of which leads him to the somewhat broad conclusion that it "points to a dating not earlier than the seventh century." (Gertz, "The Formation of the Primeval History", 133.)

<sup>50</sup> The relationship between Gen 4 and Gen 2-3 is examined further in §4.5, while the connections between Gen 4 and Gen 5-11 is discussed in detail in §5.2.

<sup>51</sup> Herman Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 40. Gunkel apparently ignores the fact that Cain's occupation as a cropper is by nature sedentary – his nomadism is part of his punishment.



the chapter form part of the genealogy of Seth narrative unit which concludes at Gen 5:29 and was a modified version of Cain's genealogy.<sup>52</sup>

Gunkel's designation of the source material of the chapter has proven enduring since it continues to inform contemporary source criticism. For example, the composite nature of the chapter is noted by Van Seters, who sees three distinct pericopes in the chapter: the story of Cain and Abel (vv. 1-16); the genealogy of Cain (vv. 17-24); and the genealogy of Seth (vv. 25-26).<sup>53</sup> C. John Collins concurs that Gen 4 is a coherent literary unit comprised of three episodes. Each of these episodes begins with a man 'knowing' (יָדָע) his wife, who then gives birth (לָדָת) to a son (vv. 1, 17, and 25).<sup>54</sup> Additionally, the chapter is framed by Eve's naming of her sons (vv. 1 and 25).<sup>55</sup>

Van Seters claims, however, that it is not clear how Gen 4 fits into the larger context of the Primeval History for three key reasons: the narrative concerns the second generation of humanity, but the earth seems already populated; the son's occupations are treated as characteristic; and the sense of primeval origins is absent when compared with Gen 2-3.<sup>56</sup> He identifies two overarching concerns in the narrative. The first is sibling and occupational rivalry (as per Jacob and Esau [Gen 25-33] etc.). The second is the aetiology of ethnography of the Kenites – a nomadic group of YHWH worshippers separate from the Israelites. However, these are simply the traditional elements from which the author composed the story. The disparate elements are integrated into a literary unity as part of what Van Seters argues is a form of historiography, as has been discussed above.<sup>57</sup>

Gordon Wenham sees in Gen 4 a motif which is often repeated through the HB – that of the younger son receiving God's favour – and this motif forms a unified whole across Gen 4. Cain's offer is found by YHWH to be unacceptable in favour of the younger brother Abel (vv. 4-5), and though Abel is killed (v. 8), the genealogies demonstrate that Seth will be the recipient of YHWH's favour and become the progenitor of the line from Adam to Noah (vv. 17-22 cf. vv. 25-26). Furthermore,

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<sup>52</sup> Gunkel, 41-54.

<sup>53</sup> Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, 42.

<sup>54</sup> See also Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 76.

<sup>55</sup> C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 191.

<sup>56</sup> John Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, 136. Van Seters does appear to overlook that Gen 4 is the account of the primeval origin of violence and killing.

<sup>57</sup> Van Seters, 146.

throughout the final form of Genesis the genealogies of the unfavoured sons are always recorded before the elect line, and this is established in the arrangement of Gen 4.<sup>58</sup>

Wenham also notes the significance of the number seven in the chapter (which forms the latter section of a larger unit beginning with Gen 2:4) given that the repetition of certain words and motifs across the chapter appear as a multiple of seven.<sup>59</sup> For example, “Abel” and “brother” occur seven times, “Cain” is mentioned fourteen times, and Lamech (vv. 18-24) is the seventh generation of humanity from the creation of Adam.<sup>60</sup> Wenham references several other examples of this device which further emphasise the literary coherence across the chapter. Ultimately, this brief overview of a small sample of modern scholarship suggests that it is more appropriate to read Gen 4 as a single literary unit comprised of three distinct ‘acts’ or ‘episodes,’ the result of what Robert Alter calls “composite artistry”, rather than the work of two or more “hands”, as per Gunkel.<sup>61</sup>

As is examined in greater detail in §4.5, the connections between Gen 2-3 and Gen 4 are crucial considerations for Szondi and his exposition of the Cain complex. Scholarship has noted some correlations between the arrangement of material in the Eden story and the Cain and Abel narrative. Wenham, for example, presents a five-scene structure across the first part of Gen 4 which he argues reflects the structure evident in Gen 2-3. In this proposed structure, two narrative elements form an *inclusio* around three sets of dialogue, at the centre of which is the fratricide. The structure could be arranged in a chiasm, as follows:

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Gen 10; 25:12-34; 36–37. Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, vol. 1, WBC (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 96.

<sup>59</sup> The number seven being highly symbolic in the Bible as indicative of a sense of completeness.

<sup>60</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 96.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 131-33.

A: Narrative – Cain and Abel active, YHWH passive	vv. 2b-5
B: Dialogue – YHWH questions Cain	vv. 6-7
C: Dialogue/narrative – Cain and Abel	v. 8
B <sup>1</sup> : Dialogue – YHWH and Cain	vv. 9-14
A <sup>1</sup> : Narrative – YHWH active, Cain passive	vv. 15-16 <sup>62</sup>

Wenham sees parallels between the description of sin in both the Eden (Gen 3:6-8) and fratricide narratives (4:8), which contrast markedly with the sections of dialogue that surround them.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the parallels are carried through into YHWH's responses to the sins (cf. 3:9 with 4:9; 3:13 with 4:10; 3:14 with 4:11 etc). One of the more convincing of these connections is the closing words of YHWH's warning to Cain in 4:7 (תשוקתו ואתה תמשל־בו) that echo the closing words of YHWH's curse of Cain's mother in Gen 3:16b (תשוקתך והוא ימשל־בך); hence what was initially a curse *ex post facto* is modified to function as a warning in the subsequent narrative.<sup>64</sup> Wenham also sees a connection between the mark of Cain (4:15) and the clothing of the man and Eve as analogous protective measures initiated by YHWH.<sup>65</sup>

The mark of Cain features in two acts of trial and punishment (vv. 9-16) that YHWH conducts following the fratricide. Claus Westermann asserts that the same structure is in place in Gen 3:9-24; moreover, the details are also the same in each narrative. He details the following structure in Gen 4: trial (vv. 9-10); pronouncement of punishment (vv. 11-12); mitigation of punishment (vv. 13-15); and expulsion (v. 16).<sup>66</sup> In response to YHWH's cross-examination, Cain is superficially blithe, even offering a pun. His reply, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (v. 9), could be rephrased "Am I my brother's shepherd?" or "Am I the shepherd's shepherd" since the Hebrew for keeper (שמר) is also the term for

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<sup>62</sup> Wenham, 99. On one level, the arrangement appears convincing; however, upon further consideration the designation of the central element of the structure is problematic because the Masoretic text (MT) reflects no dialogue taking place between the brothers. This this gap and its significance, not just for understanding Gen 4 but also for the relationship between Szondi's biography and his theories, is discussed further in §7.3. It is sufficient at this point to note that differing scholarly perspectives on the MT's ambiguity in v. 8, particularly between historical critical and redactional approaches, which stress the gap is a result of textual corruption or omission, and more psychologically oriented approaches, which see a level of deliberation behind the gap, represent an interesting tension. E.g. for the former see Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, trans. John J. Scullion (London, UK: SPCK, 1984), 301-2; and for the latter see LaCocque, *Onslaught Against Innocence*, 52-5; and Eugen Drewermann, *Strukturen Des Bösen: Die Jahwistische Urgeschichte in Exegetischer Sicht*, vol. 1 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1988), 132.

<sup>63</sup> Wenham, 100.

<sup>64</sup> The linguistic and other connections between Cain and his mother Eve are examined further in §4.5.

<sup>65</sup> Wenham, 100.

<sup>66</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 303. For an overview of the legal aspects of vv. 9-16 see 303-312.

shepherd.<sup>67</sup> Upon pronouncement of his punishment (vv. 11-12),<sup>68</sup> however, Cain's whimsical demeanour turns to despair and he laments that his punishment of being driven from the land, being hidden from YHWH, and made to be a wandering itinerant is too great (v. 12). In response to his lament (vv. 13-14), YHWH mitigates the sentence previously pronounced through the application of a mark on Cain.

Van Seters also sees similarities between Gen 4:1-16 and Gen 2-3. Although he asserts that the two stories bear little resemblance until the commission of the crime (i.e. 3:6-7 and 4:8), he does note that a divine command or warning that precedes the crime establishes the framework for each (cf. 2:17; 3:1-15 with 4:6-7).<sup>69</sup> Van Seters then proposes a five-part structure that is common to each as follows: the act/crime (3:6-7 and 4:8); discovery and interrogation (3:8-13 and 4:9-10); pronouncement of punishment (3:14-19 and 4:11-12); mitigation of sentence (3:14-19, 21 and 4:13-15); and, finally, expulsion (3:23-24 and 4:16). He further sees evidence of similarities in language (e.g. 3:16b and 4:7b as mentioned above).

The motif of sin forms another point of connection between Gen 2-3 and Gen 4. This connection is evidenced in the scholarship of Westermann and Gerhard von Rad as interpreted by the German theologian Eugen Drewermann. Westermann and von Rad have loomed large over subsequent exegetical treatments of Genesis,<sup>70</sup> and an apposite example of their influence on a generation of exegetes is substantiated in Drewermann's approach to Gen 4 (which forms part of a multivolume exegetical, psychoanalytical, and philosophical reading of the non-P corpus). Written a generation after Westermann and von Rad, Drewermann's thesis is in some respects a dialogue with both scholars.<sup>71</sup> Privileging their scholarship above others, at several points he compares and contrasts the argument of one of these two exegetes against the arguments of the other. For example, Drewermann disputes a number of Westermann's conclusions concerning the relationship of the chapter with the preceding one, preferring von Rad's depiction of the growth of sin from the initial sins of Adam and Eve through Cain and onto Lamech as an "avalanche."<sup>72</sup> Westermann, however, disagrees with such

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<sup>67</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 15. See also Robert Paine, "'Am I My Brother's Keeper?' (Genesis IV:9): Violence and the Making of Society," *Qualitative Sociology* 24, no. 2 (2001): 169-89.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Gen 3:14-15.

<sup>69</sup> Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis*, 139-40.

<sup>70</sup> See Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. John H. Marks, 3rd ed., Old Testament Library (London: SCM Press, 1972); and Westermann, *Genesis* (3 vols.).

<sup>71</sup> Denominational differences between the formerly Catholic Drewermann and his protestant dialogue partners should perhaps not be underestimated.

<sup>72</sup> von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 148.

a depiction claiming it is, in Drewermann's words, "Christian eisegesis."<sup>73</sup> Drewermann suggests that the difference between Westermann's and von Rad's understanding of sin is one of quantity versus quality. While Westermann is correct that there is no increase "if one understands the idea of the increase of sin purely quantitatively", von Rad is concerned with something "qualitative and dynamic."<sup>74</sup> Drewermann, accordingly, disputes several elements of Westermann's interpretation particularly the significances within the parallelisation of Gen 2-3 and 4 and the implication of the genealogical sequence.<sup>75</sup> Drewermann asserts; "What Cain does to Abel... arises from what Adam and Eve did; Cain is Adam and Eve's child not only genealogically, but theologically."<sup>76</sup>

Drewermann's statement neatly summarises the relationship between Gen 2-3 and Gen 4 vis-à-vis a Szondi reading which is analysed in more depth in the following chapter (see §4.5 'Cain's Inheritance'). Szondi called his concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* an "'ancestor'-theory" to which the concept of heritability is central.<sup>77</sup> In terms of Gen 4, this concept is further emphasised in the second major element of the literary unit, the genealogy of Cain (Gen 4:17-24). While the first part of the literary unit looks back to the events of Eden, the second serves to anticipate what will follow in the Flood narrative. Genesis 4 thereby functions as a fulcrum, represented in the figure of Cain, between ancestors (creation, Adam and Eve) and descendants (the genealogies of Cain and Seth).

The genealogy of Cain is comprised of three distinct elements: a linear genealogy (vv. 17-18); a segmented genealogy (vv. 19-22);<sup>78</sup> and the song of Lamech (vv. 23-24). Among the earlier commentators, Wellhausen sees in the genealogy the origin of the Kenites juxtaposed over two stories: an older nomadic aetiology and a newer narrative concerning the opposition of arable land and the desert.<sup>79</sup> This hypothesis was popular around the end of the nineteenth century with its foundations having first been established by Bernhard Stade in 1894.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, the hypothesis has had its adherents through the twentieth century even to the present day. Henning Heyde viewed

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<sup>73</sup> Drewermann, *Strukturen Des Bösen*, 144.

<sup>74</sup> Drewermann, 145.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Arnold, *Genesis*, 79-80.

<sup>76</sup> Drewermann, 146.

<sup>77</sup> Szondi, "Contributions to 'Fate Analysis': An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love."

<sup>78</sup> The sub-genres of linear and segmented genealogies were first defined by Robert R. Wilson. See Wilson, "The Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research," *JBL* 94, no. 2 (June 1975): 179-86. The function of these sub-genres in Gen 4 is discussed in more detail in §5.2 'Genealogy and the Structure of Genesis.'

<sup>79</sup> Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, trans. J.S. Black and A. Menzies, Cambridge Library Collection - Biblical Studies (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 343-4.

<sup>80</sup> Bernhard Stade, "Beiträge zur Pentateuchkritik. 1. Das Kainszeichen," *ZAW* 14, no. 1 (1894): 250-318.

Cain as the ancient story of YHWH worship through which the Kenite tribe living in Midian traced their religion and culture.<sup>81</sup> Von Rad argued that the Kenites presented a “difficult riddle for Israelites”: they were worshippers of YHWH, but did they predate Israel in this regard?<sup>82</sup> He draws possible links to the Rechabites and suggests that they may even have been zealots.<sup>83</sup> The Cain narrative served the purpose of demonstrating that, as nomads, they were not heirs of the promised land. More recently Joseph Blenkinsopp has revisited the Midianite-Kenite hypothesis, summarising that the Cain narrative is one of four premises for the hypothesis (see §3.4 ‘A Kenite Connection to Cain’s Ancestry [vv. 17-22]’ below).<sup>84</sup> Blenkinsopp contends that the long-standing hypothesis is the “best explanation currently available” for the origins of Yahwism, representing not just “mere possibility” but “serious probability.”<sup>85</sup> However, of most relevance is the connection he makes between the Cain and Abel narrative and the relationship between Esau and Jacob (Gen 25:19-28:9; 32-33). He argues that Egyptian records show that the descendants of Cain are linked to the Kenites who in turn were closely linked to Edom. The connections between Gen 4 and the Esau and Jacob narratives are discussed further in §3.4.

Westermann, however, disagrees that the story portrays Cain as ancestor of the tribe of Kenites. Though he does not discount it, he argues that it is not the only way of interpreting the narrative and that there are other more valid approaches. One of these focuses on the function of the genealogy. The genealogy represents the movement from the primeval to the establishment of agriculture (farmer and shepherd) to both the foundation of a city and the life of a nomad.<sup>86</sup> It is the story of the origin of civilisation. The inherent binary categorisation of the genealogy should be noted: farmer and shepherd; city-dweller and nomad. These were the necessary components of civilisation in antiquity.

Verses 19-22 are related to primeval artisanal trades and the work of a smith, and Westermann links the arts and shepherding to nomadic life and metallurgy to sedentary existence.<sup>87</sup> The author of the

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<sup>81</sup> Cited in Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 283.

<sup>82</sup> Von Rad, *Genesis*, 107.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. 1 Chron 2:55.

<sup>84</sup> The others being interpretations of the texts dealing with the Midianite connections of Moses, allusions in ancient poetry to the original residence of YHWH, and Egyptian topographical texts from the fourteenth to the twelfth centuries BCE. Ref. Blenkinsopp, “The Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah.”

Szondi deals with the Midianite-Kenite hypothesis at length in *Moses*, in particular Martin Buber’s response to its claims; however, he does not make a substantial link between the figures of Moses and Cain which the hypothesis invites. Szondi, *Moses*, 30-35. See also Martin Buber, *Moses: The Revelation and the Covenant* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958).

<sup>85</sup> Blenkinsopp, “The Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah,” 151.

<sup>86</sup> Westermann, 323-4.

<sup>87</sup> Westermann, 330-2.

genealogy makes it clear that the inventions belong to the primeval period and, therefore, all humankind. Furthermore, the author gives this text significance as a bridge between the creation of humanity and the Flood narrative (Gen 6:5–8:22). The story of civilisation is therefore a necessary part of the author’s understanding of the history of humankind.<sup>88</sup> However, prior to this, the intention of Gen 2-4 is to describe the very essence of human existence before the advent of civilisation and what it means to be both created and limited.

Drewermann reads the genealogy of Cain and the development of human inventions and techniques as an attempt to overcome the homelessness of ‘Nod’ (v. 16) and to settle down as exiles and displaced persons in a now hostile world.<sup>89</sup> Consequently, the further expansion of this distance from God (i.e. from Eden to the land of Nod and onwards to cities and civilisation) leads to increasing antisocial behaviour and fragmentation, and to an escalation in aggressive potential, which is now used for self-protection and mutual deterrence. This becomes manifest in the so-called song of Lamech (vv. 23-24). While Drewermann describes Lamech as a “right-wing ‘thug,’”<sup>90</sup> it is his total confidence in the assertion that he will be avenged ‘seventy-sevenfold’ if his ancestor, Cain, was to be avenged sevenfold that reveals the exponential growth of violence through Cain’s line. Hughes argues that Lamech’s boast revels in “an unconsciously driven reign of killing and lasting... a virtually unlimited span of time”, as the reference to seventy-seven suggests.<sup>91</sup>

It is no coincidence either that Lamech’s song of his murderous revenge for the offence(s) he received occurs after the description of his son Tubal-Cain’s invention of bronze and iron tools, which would, one assumes, have included weapons. An astute reader may also be reminded of the *lex talionis* (Exod 21:25), which stands in complete contrast to the disproportionate scale of Lamech’s vengeance. Lamech’s boast reveals that trust in the protection of life through God has been replaced by self-assertion. The fear of death becomes fear of the other and, as such, a tool for one’s own safety. The surpassing of God by arrogant heroic strength and murderous power over other hostile men that is embodied in Lamech’s song (and as the distinction between it and the references to God and YHWH in the transitional material in vv. 25-26 also imply) is combined with a wilful address to the female sex to complete the picture of primeval ‘toxic masculinity.’<sup>92</sup> According to Drewermann, the

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<sup>88</sup> Westermann, 326.

<sup>89</sup> Perhaps further reflecting a post-exilic *Sitz im Leben* for the text.

<sup>90</sup> Drewermann, *Strukturen Des Bösen*, 161.

<sup>91</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 114. On the significance of seventy-seven see Westermann, 335.

<sup>92</sup> Drewermann, 161.

possibilities of technological progress serve this structure and, in turn, improve the methods of threatening and deterring.

For Szondi the unity and coherence of the chapter is critical to his *Schicksalsanalytisch* approach to it. The author's intent in Gen 4, according to Szondi, is show how evil manifests and spreads throughout the Cainite line into the very origins of civilisation.<sup>93</sup> Szondi interprets the tribal genealogy of Cain (vv. 17-22) as the bearer of ancestral memories, the most crucial of which is Cain's murder of his brother (v. 8). This is the crux of Szondi's concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* and the familial unconscious, as Hughes affirms; "There are ancestral traces, lying dormant in the familial unconscious that erupt in times of crisis."<sup>94</sup> Consequently, the full significance of Lamech's murderous rage (vv. 23-24) and the role of his offspring as the progenitors of civilisation cannot be understood without the fratricide narrative which proceeds it.

### 3.4 Linguistic and Intertextual Connections in Genesis 4

Having discussed the broad structure of Gen 4 and its immediate context within the Primeval History, I now turn to examine some of the textual features of the chapter in more detail. This review is not intended to be an exhaustive catalogue of scholarship, but rather to highlight some of the connections that scholarship has made which are germane to the current study. It is evident that there are numerous links to prophetic literature, Wisdom literature, and linguistic connections in the text. These reinforce a milieu of Achaemenid imperial pluralism as the earliest period for its composition, which was discussed above (§3.2). In addition to these connections, I also propose intertextual links to several of the other sibling stories in Genesis within the text. Taken together, these two factors lend credence to the hypothesis that Gen 4 was arranged by the compiler to establish a framework for the subsequent, and possibly extant, sibling stories in Genesis. Moreover, in order to emphasise the relationship to psychological readings with a particular emphasis on Szondi's theories, I further highlight the connections that Szondi himself makes to textual elements in Gen 4.

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<sup>93</sup> Szondi is careful to distinguish between Cainites and Kenites: "We must strictly distinguish these Kenites from the so-called Cainites. The Kenites are a biblical nomadic tribe. The Cainites, on the other hand, are, psychologically, people who carry the instinctive nature and evil spirit of Cain." (Léopold Szondi, *Kain: Gestalten des Bösen*. Bern: Verlag Hans Huber, 1969, 38.)

<sup>94</sup> Hughes, 115.



### *Charactonyms and Occupations (vv. 1-2)*

Walter Brueggemann argues that the etymology of the names of the two brothers suggests two charactonyms: Cain derives from קנה “to get, create” while Abel is הבל “vapour/nothingness.”<sup>95</sup> Szondi cites several etymologies for Cain, including to establish, create, or acquire, as per Brueggemann, but also a connection to weaponry and smithing, and Tertullian’s correlation of the root קנה to zealousness.<sup>96</sup> However, the meaning he most seems to favour is “possession.”<sup>97</sup> For Szondi, one of the traits of the ‘Cainitic’ nature is the “urge, drive to have everything, know everything, and be everything”,<sup>98</sup> hence his preferred translation of קנה as “possession.”

The dichotomy between the occupations of the two brothers is established immediately after their names (v. 2b). The nomadic nature of Abel’s occupation of רעה צאן (keeper of sheep) contrasts with the sedentary nature of Cain’s עבד אדמה (worker of the soil). Von Rad sees “grave consequences” in the brothers’ occupations which reflect “different attitudes towards life,” thereby insinuating that this was the origin of their conflict.<sup>99</sup> Westermann, on the other hand, sees in this the division of labour and relates it to the commission to work that YHWH gave to the human (Gen 2:15), emphasising that this division is not the cause of the conflict between the brothers.<sup>100</sup>

Cain’s and Abel’s occupations also represent an intertextual allusion to the sibling stories in Genesis. The contrast between Cain and Abel is echoed in a similar distinction between those of the twin brothers Esau and Jacob (Gen 25:27). Esau is a hunter, and thus leads a nomadic existence like Abel the shepherd, while Jacob, who lives in tents, represents a more sedentary existence comparable with Cain the farmer. Abel’s occupation represents a further intertextual relationship with story of Joseph. In Gen 37:2 the narrator discloses that Joseph was “shepherding” (רעה) the flock alongside his half-brothers.<sup>101</sup> Hence the intertextual connections to the broader body of Genesis’ sibling stories is established very early in Gen 4.

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<sup>95</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, IBC, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 54-5.

<sup>96</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 22-23. Previously von Rad argued that Cain derived from an early Arabic etymology for ‘spear’ (קין) cf. 2 Sam 21:16). (*Genesis*, 103). This view is reinforced by Alter. (See Robert Alter, *Genesis* [New York: W.W. Norton, 1996], 16). Cotter has suggested that Cain is derived from ‘smith.’ (See David W. Cotter, *Genesis*. Berit Olam. [Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003].) It should be noted, however, the Hebrew צרף (cf. Prov 25:4) and חרש (cf. Isa 54:16) are more common usages for ‘smith’ across the HB.

<sup>97</sup> Szondi, 23.

<sup>98</sup> Szondi, 16.

<sup>99</sup> von Rad, 100.

<sup>100</sup> Westermann, 293.

<sup>101</sup> The allusion between Joseph and Abel is given further credibility when the author of Gen 37 discloses that Joseph was the favourite child of his father, which recalls the favour YHWH showed for Abel and his sacrifice.

The dichotomy in the brothers' occupations and lifestyles also establishes the binary nature of the siblings in conflict motif that, as is discussed at length in chapters 7 and 8, is repeated throughout the relevant narratives in Genesis. Moreover, this was a feature of similar myths that is evidenced in other antiquarian traditions.<sup>102</sup> LaCocque suggests the preponderance of the sibling rivalry motif in world literature and folklore would seem to echo “a deep universal psychological drive.”<sup>103</sup> Drewermann also notes the binary elements, and, since his central concern is the relationship between the motifs of fratricide and religious sacrifice, he observes them within the narrative as ironic contradictions. Consequently, he declares; “what binds people becomes what kills them, what blesses them becomes their curse, what they give birth to becomes the material of mutual annihilation.”<sup>104</sup> Szondi, on the other hand, moderates such conclusions by asserting that the binary elements within such myths and legends express a psychic reality that should not be read as inherently adversarial. He argues: “Good and evil, holiness and impurity together do not form mutually exclusive contradictions, but supplementary, complementary opposites.”<sup>105</sup> This is an important aspect of Szondi's identification of the Cain complex and its role in *Schicksalsanalyse*. Szondi uses the biblical figures of Cain and Moses as symbolic of specific destinies, who “comprise a complementarity because they also represent polar potentialities in human nature.”<sup>106</sup> In *Kain*, Szondi lists the characteristics of the Cainite personality along with their corresponding “Mosaic” character traits.<sup>107</sup> The task for humanity is “to unite the Cain and Moses impulses, to lay down a bridge between them, so that evil may be atoned.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Within the history of religions framework Gunkel identified in the Cain and Abel myth echoes of Osiris and Seth (Egypt); Eteocles and Polyneices (Greece); and Romulus and Remus (Rome). See also the myth of Hypsouranios and Ousoos (Phoenicia) (ref. Harold W. Attridge and Robert A. Jr Oden, *Philo of Byblos: The Phoenician History* [Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981]). Gunkel argues that the legend motif, that is the ironic and destructive struggle between siblings, “excited the imagination”, which seemed to account for both the endurance and universal nature of the myth. (Gunkel, *Genesis*, 44). Similarly, the anthropologist Joseph Campbell draws a parallel between Cain and Abel and the Sumerian myth “Inanna prefers the farmer”, in which Enkimdu, the god of farming, and Dumuzi, the god of food and vegetation, both wish to marry Inanna. (Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology* [New York: Penguin, 1964], 104-6.) The Mesopotamian origin and context of this particular version of the fratricide motif is interesting. It might be possible that the author of Gen 4 came across this mythic tale by virtue of the probable Babylonian or, more likely, Achaemenid social environment of the author. Counting against such a line of thought, however, is the relative gap in time between the Sumerian story – the late third millennium BCE – and the author of Gen 4. While Westermann sees no direct parallel with other myths, he does acknowledge the prevalence of the fratricide motif across traditions. Ultimately, he sees Cain and Abel as a narrative type in which sons (and binary opposites) of the first couple in the primeval period come into conflict. Furthermore, the narratives that respond to Gen 4 most closely are from primitive cultures, whereas the narratives from the so-called “higher cultures” (such as Egypt and Greece) adapt the myth. (*Genesis 1-11*, 316.)

<sup>103</sup> LaCocque, 43.

<sup>104</sup> Drewermann, 133.

<sup>105</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 11.

<sup>106</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 142.

<sup>107</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 17-18.

<sup>108</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 143.

### *Sacrifice (vv. 3-5)*

Westermann argues that though vv. 3-5 presume the institution of sacrifice, it does not follow that the motif is attached to cultic practice or places. Rather it is born as a result of the brothers' agrarian occupations. He further emphasises that *וּבָא* (bring) has both cultic and non-cultic contexts.<sup>109</sup> Wenham, on the other hand, emphasises the cultic aspects of *וּבָא* (cf. Lev 2:2,8).<sup>110</sup> Blenkinsopp asserts that while there is no explicit description of the brothers' offerings as sacrificial materials in the text, he compares Cain's offer with sacrificial prescriptions, such as Shavuot (the Feast of Weeks) which required an offering of the "first fruits" (cf. Exod 23:19; 34:26; Lev 23:9-14; Deut 26:2,10) thus suggesting that Cain was less than diligent in his approach.<sup>111</sup>

Although scholarship has reached no consensus for the reasons behind YHWH's rejection of Cain's sacrifice, the narrative gap in the description of Cain's offering vis-à-vis Abel's may afford one insight (v. 3 cf. v. 4).<sup>112</sup> Blenkinsopp connects Cain's implied lackadaisical approach to sacrifice to the exclamation his mother, Eve, makes at his birth (v. 1). As such, Cain's oversight in neglecting to offer the first fruits is "a particularly offensive omission in view of his status as first born," which "could also be interpreted as implying a refusal to accept the relationship with Yahweh [sic]... proclaimed by Eve at the moment of Cain's birth."<sup>113</sup> Further, Wenham notes the irony of the second born son of Adam offering the first-born of his flock in what only becomes more pointed in light of Cain's oversight.<sup>114</sup> Although a contested idea, this brief sample of scholarship suggests that the cultic inferences of Cain and Abel's offerings would likely have been understood by an audience familiar with more definitive cultic proscriptions and instructions contained in other parts of the HB, such as those noted above. Furthermore, although by no means definitive, the cultic implications of the description of the brothers' offerings provides one plausible rationale for YHWH rejection of Cain.

Regarding intertextual allusions to Genesis, the connection between the description in Gen 4:2-3 of Cain's occupation as a worker of the ground and his offering of fruit of the ground (*מִפְרֵי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה*) and Eve's taking of the fruit (*מִפְרֵי*) of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen 3:6) is one that

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<sup>109</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 295.

<sup>110</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 103.

<sup>111</sup> Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1-11* (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2011), 92.

<sup>112</sup> Wenham, 103.

<sup>113</sup> Blenkinsopp, *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1-11*, 92.

<sup>114</sup> Wenham, 103.

some rabbinic commentators made.<sup>115</sup> However, the recurrence of מנחה (offering) in Gen 4:3-5 is of most interest due to its connection to chs. 32 and 43. Following Gen 4, the next appearance of מנחה is in Gen 32, where it occurs four times in the account of the gift Jacob prepares for his older brother.<sup>116</sup> As is discussed in more detail in §7.3 ‘Esau and Jacob,’ both brothers assume the role of aggressor (i.e. Cain) and victim (i.e. Abel) at various stages in their struggle with one another. The recurrence of מנחה in both texts may therefore function as a pointed linguistic intertextual connection. Similarly, the lexeme מנחה occurs four times in Gen 43, the account of the present for Joseph that is prepared by his father and brothers.<sup>117</sup> The occupational connection between Joseph and Abel has been discussed above (and is examined further in §8.3 ‘Cain and Abel’s Antitheses’), and the recurrence of מנחה in this text serves to emphasise this point of connection. The gift the brothers prepare for Joseph provides an inverse counterpoint to Abel’s מנחה.<sup>118</sup> As Abel offered up the best of his flock, i.e. the firstlings and their fat portions (v. 4), to YHWH, Joseph, in the role of lord and provider to his older brothers, responds with his own generosity and kindness.

Ultimately, as has been discussed, no obvious explanation is given in the narrative for YHWH’s favouring Abel’s offering over Cain’s. According to Brueggemann, the narrative makes no excuses for portraying YHWH as capricious, and this seems to suggest a viewpoint similar to that which can be evidenced in Job: that life *is* unfair, but God is free (examined in more detail below).<sup>119</sup> Karl Barth sees evidence in YHWH’s disregard for Cain’s offering as the first biblical instance of the motif of the elect and rejected.<sup>120</sup> This motif is reproduced to varying degrees in each of the sibling stories that is examined in this study: Abraham rejects Ishmael in favour of Isaac (Gen 21:11-21); Isaac rejects Esau in favour of Jacob (27:18-40); Jacob rejects Leah in favour of Rachel (29:16-30); and

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<sup>115</sup> E.g. *Yalqut Ruebeni*, cited in Szondi, *Kain*, 10-11.

<sup>116</sup> Gen 32:13,18, 20,21; 33:10.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Gen 4:3,4,5 and 43:11,15, 25, and 26.

<sup>118</sup> Westermann asserts that the use of מנחה to refer to animal offerings (e.g. Gen 4:4) was obsolete when the text received its final form. (See *Genesis 1-11*, 296.) Certainly, most cultic references to מנחה related to grain offerings (e.g. Exod 29:41; 30:9; Lev 2:1 etc). Wenham, however, notes that it was used in the DtrH in reference to animal offerings (e.g. 1 Sam 2:17, 29). (See *Genesis 1-15*, 103.) Against this reading is the presence of זבחה (sacrifice) alongside מנחה in those texts which appears to modify and differentiate the two terms; furthermore, throughout Judges, מנחה is also used to refer to grain offerings. The broader biblical context of מנחה suggests that it was not used for animal offerings; therefore, this could suggest a deliberate choice on the part of the author of Gen 4 in order to make allusions to the conflicts between Esau and Jacob and Joseph and his brothers.

<sup>119</sup> Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 56.

<sup>120</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics, Vol II, Part 2: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Garrett Green (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2006).

Jacob favours Joseph (37:3) and subsequently Benjamin (42:38) over their older half-brothers.<sup>121</sup> Hence the presence of this motif serves to emphasise Gen 4's role as a framing text within Genesis.

### ***Wisdom and YHWH's Response to Cain (vv. 6-7)***

Possible intertextual links to Qohelet have been discussed above (§3.2). Further links to Wisdom literature, in particular Job, can also be evidenced in Gen 4. Warren Malcolm Clark has drawn parallels with the description of sin in Gen 4:7 and Job 11:13-15 and 22:21-30. However, he asserts that this is more the result of a "poetic collage of images and allusions... than a systematic theological assertion."<sup>122</sup>

Van Seters observes that diverse literary traditions may be behind Gen 4, but any attempt to reconstruct separate traditions is, he concludes, speculative. Nevertheless, Van Seters does concur that Gen 4 has been influenced by Wisdom and prophetic *traditions*.<sup>123</sup> For example, Gen 4:7a contains a strong prophetic note in עָשֵׂה ("doing good") and links to sacrifice (cf. Amos).<sup>124</sup> Though he agrees with Brueggemann that the role of YHWH to Cain is similar to Wisdom literature, particularly evidenced in Job, he is, however, careful to point out that the lateness implied does not necessitate it is not part of the non-P corpus.<sup>125</sup>

However, if Gen 4 along with the rest of the non-P corpus is to be dated to the exilic period, as Van Seters contends, it becomes difficult to see how it may have been influenced by Wisdom literature since the earliest date for the emergence of Wisdom literature is from the middle of the fifth century BCE. Job, for example, has been dated to a period during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.<sup>126</sup> This point might be further emphasised with closer study of the linguistic parallels in Qohelet, which could

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<sup>121</sup> Moreover, in these instances this motif is juxtaposed with the motif of the younger sibling receiving the blessing and birthright contra the rules of primogeniture. In Gen 4 this motif only becomes clear with the birth of Seth and the subsequent establishment of the Sethite line, which will include Noah and his sons.

<sup>122</sup> Warren Malcolm Clark, "The Flood and the Structure of the Pre-Patriarchal History," *ZAW* 83, no. 2 (1971): 184–211.

<sup>123</sup> Van Seters. *Prologue to History*, 146. Author's italics.

<sup>124</sup> Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, 138; and *The Pentateuch*, 107.

<sup>125</sup> Which he places late in the exilic period. (Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, 139.)

<sup>126</sup> Ref. Adele Berlin, "Job," in *NIB: One Volume Commentary*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010). Alternatively, Marvin H. Pope dates the Dialogue to the seventh century as a "best guess." See *Job*, 3rd ed., vol. 15, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973), xxxii-xl.

date as late as the third century BCE. If it has been influenced by Wisdom, then it suggests a possible late redaction of the non-P pericope, something to which Van Seters has previously been opposed.<sup>127</sup>

For Brueggemann, the key verses of the text are 6 and 7. In v. 6 YHWH tells Cain that his situation is not without hope: “If you do well...” suggests he is not fallen. Indeed, the situation here is different to Gen 3. Cain is free and capable of doing well or not doing well, but in v.7 sin has a lethal character. It is described metaphorically as an animal crouching at the door waiting to pounce on an unsuspecting victim. The use of the word תְּשׁוּקָה (desire) alludes to its exploitative nature and that sin has now taken on a power of its own. It is an “animal yearning for destructiveness,” willing to destroy both victim and offender.<sup>128</sup> This, Brueggemann concludes, is Freud's ‘id,’ evidenced in Cain’s inability to resist the allure of the animal crouching at his door and instead “do well.” Freud, it should be noted, remained puzzled by the empirical human compulsion to repeat psychopathological patterns despite therapeutic intervention.<sup>129</sup> Szondi, however, offers an explanation for this condition in genotropism, in which genes are the fundamental source of the biological compulsion to repeat patterns, including its psychic counterpart in the familial unconscious.<sup>130</sup>

### ***The Field (v. 8)***

The use of the word שָׂדֵה (“field”) in v. 8 has aroused some interest from scholars. Wenham, for example, asserts that in accordance with the Torah a crime committed in a field (that is, out of the range of help) is proof of premeditation.<sup>131</sup> Richard Elliott Friedman argues that the use of שָׂדֵה was a deliberate means of connecting the many instances of brother killing brother to Gen 4.<sup>132</sup> According to Friedman, the instance of שָׂדֵה across a number of narratives involving fratricide in the HB indicates that sibling rivalry is a universal experience. It further warns us to be sensitive, to keep our hostile feelings in check, and to be sensitive to the feelings of those closest to us. The connection between Gen 4 and Gen 25:27-34 has been sketched above. The further instances of fratricide/sibling rivalry

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<sup>127</sup> See John Van Seters, *The Edited Bible: The Curious History of the “Editor” in Biblical Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006).

<sup>128</sup> Brueggemann, 58.

<sup>129</sup> Jens De Vleminck, “Tragic Choices: Fate, Oedipus, and Beyond,” in *The Locus of Tragedy*, ed. Arthur Cools and et al (Brill, 2008), 197–214.

<sup>130</sup> Susan Deri, “Great Representatives of Hungarian Psychiatry: Balint, Ferenczi, Hermann, and Szondi,” *Psychoanalytic Review* 77, no. 4 (1990): 491–501. Verses 6-7 should be keys to Szondi’s understanding of the literary unit; however, puzzlingly, he pays little attention to them in *Kain* (see §4.5).

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Deut 22:25-27. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 106.

<sup>132</sup> Richard Elliott Friedman, “Genesis 4:8,” in *Commentary on the Torah* (San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 2001), 27.

that reference אָדָם are: Joseph and his brothers (Gen 37:5-7; 19-20); Abimelech's killing of his 70 brothers (Judg 9); Israel and Judah (2 Sam 2:26-27); Absalom and Amnon (2 Sam 14:6); Solomon and Adonijah (1 Kgs 2:25); and the Israelites versus the Benjaminites (Judg 20:13; 23; 28; 21:6). David W. Cotter agrees with Friedman, further asserting that all these crimes have their precedence set in the primeval crime via the link made by אָדָם.<sup>133</sup>

However, it is the link to the story of Jacob and Esau (Gen 25-33) that is established through the presence of אָדָם that is most distinct. The dichotomy in the two sets of brothers' occupations has been discussed above. Genesis 25:27 describes Esau as "a man of the field" and a hunter, contrasting him with his brother, Jacob, who dwells in tents. Esau is connected to Cain because both are the first-born sons who will be rejected in a reversal of the customary rules of primogeniture and through their connection to אָדָם.<sup>134</sup> Alluding to possible connections between Cain and the Kenites, Blenkinsopp asserts that "both narratives fit the pattern of a widespread myth of ethnic origins according to which two brothers quarrel."<sup>135</sup> The correlation between Gen 4 and Gen 25-33 raises the possibility that it also reflects an anti-Edomite subtext. Esau is the progenitor of Edom, while Jacob, the younger of the twin brothers, will establish the 'elect' nation of Israel. Conversely, a number of exilic and post-exilic texts point to the notion that Edom had become Israel's substitute as the elect during the exilic period.<sup>136</sup> Furthermore, Israel's hostility towards Edom continued long into the Persian period if, as asserted by Ellie Assis, the genealogies in 1 Chronicles (i.e. those based on the genealogies in Genesis) comprise an anti-Edomite polemic.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Cotter, *Genesis*, 42-3. Of course, this does not necessitate that the other stories were written post Gen 4. A later date for Gen 4 (i.e. after the composition of the DtrH as per Van Seters's contention) could also be implied since the author would have been aware of these stories and inserted the story of Cain and Abel into the Primeval History using אָדָם as a proleptic thematic marker.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Gen 43:33; Deut 21:15-17.

<sup>135</sup> Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah." Jacob being the patriarch of the nation of Israel and Esau that of Edom, Judah/Israel's problematic neighbour.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Isa 34, 63; Ezek 35; Joel 4:19-21; Amos 9:13-15, Obad; Lam 4:21-22; and Ps 137.

<sup>137</sup> Ellie Assis, "From Adam to Esau and Israel: An Anti-Edomite Ideology in 1 Chronicles 1", 290. Assis claims that the purpose of 1 Chron 1 is an anti-Edomite polemic reinforced by a common belief in the election of Edom and rejection of Israel which can be evidenced in texts such as Mal 1:2-5. Chapters one to nine of 1 Chron are a collection of genealogical lists, and the lists in 1 Chron 1 are based on parallel lists in Genesis.

### *The Mark of Cain (v. 15)*

There is no scholarly consensus of the meaning or significance of the mark (אֹת) of Cain, which represents YHWH's mitigation of Cain's punishment (v. 15).<sup>138</sup> Consequently, the enigmatic nature of the mark of Cain has attracted the interest of more philosophical and psychological approaches to the text. Previously mentioned was Girard's interest in the sign or mark of Cain. The mark functions as a prohibition in effect making Cain 'sacrosanct,' and thus becomes a clear illustration of the one of the central tenets of mimetic theory: the scapegoat mechanism. James Williams deconstructs this observation, making the link to mimetic theory concrete. He notes that behind the prohibition (the mark) is the curse (the wandering East of Eden), behind the curse is the murder, and behind the murder is mimetic rivalry and desire.<sup>139</sup> Thus the mark of Cain serves at once to both identify and protect him from those who recognise him.<sup>140</sup> A possible intertextual allusion to Lev 16:20-22 has already been discussed (see §2.2 'The Origins of Violent Aggression'). An association between Cain being forced to wander east of Eden and the live goat sent into the wilderness is perhaps given further weight by connections to the figure of Joseph evident in both texts. The episode in which Joseph's older half-brothers present his bloodied coat to Jacob as evidence of his 'death' (Gen 37:31-33) bears the distinct echo of Lev 16. A further intertextual contrast with the mark of Cain can be seen in Joseph, who, contrary to Cain, deliberately avows no markers that make him identifiable to his brothers (e.g. Gen 42:8, 23).<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Joel N. Lohr, "'So YHWH Established a Sign for Cain': Rethinking Gen 4,15," *ZAW* 121, no. 1 (2009): 101-3. James George Frazer examined the 'mark of Cain' through comparative ethnography and concluded that the mark may have been "a mode of protecting a homicide against his victim's ghost." (James George Frazer, *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament: Studies in Comparative Religion, Legend and Law*, Abridged [London: Macmillan, 1923], 99.) Westermann notes that scholarship on this question falls into one of four broad categories: text critical understanding; whether the mark was meant for an individual or collectively; whether the mark was a sign of protection or authentication (function); and what the mark consisted of (form). Somewhat helpfully, he asserts that the mark was placed upon Cain, the individual, as a clear sign that he was both cursed and protected by YHWH. Westermann further agrees with those scholars who choose not to offer an answer to the final question concerning form. (*Genesis 1-11*, 312-3.) R.W.L. Moberly, contra Westermann, argues that the text implies a plurality of possible killers. Consequently, he suggests that YHWH's statement concerning the "sign" placed on Cain is presented idiomatically and therefore directed at the collective, as he declares, "YHWH introduces a saying that will pass into general use." Moberly further asserts that the sign is non-corporeal and that Cain himself is the sign, a kind of cautionary warning, that protects him. (R.W.L. Moberly, "The Mark Of Cain-Revealed At Last?," *HTR* 100, no. 1 [2007], 15.) Moberly's is an interesting and imaginative approach to the debate. Another almost equally imaginative contribution has come from Joel Lohr who suggests that the sign is in fact the city that Cain establishes through which he is able to protect and shelter himself not just from those who would do harm but also from constant wandering. (Lohr, "'So YHWH Established a Sign for Cain': Rethinking Gen 4,15," 102-3.)

<sup>139</sup> James G. Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred*, 36.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Williams, 100; LaCocque, 86.

<sup>141</sup> Joseph as Cain's antithesis is examined in §8.3.



Williams maintains that the mark of Cain is also “the sign of civilisation” for it is under its protection that Cain builds the first city and civilisation begins.<sup>142</sup> This is an idea that is picked up by LaCocque who further suggests that the mark on Cain is ambivalent since it distinguishes him from others in a manner that makes him vulnerable while simultaneously protecting him.<sup>143</sup> This ambivalence and ambiguity is continued in the author’s “open-ended story of Cain” who in turn “becomes the prototype of human ambiguity.”<sup>144</sup> As the first human born of a woman, LaCocque declares, “we are all mythically the descendants of Cain, his violent drive is also our drive.”<sup>145</sup>

One final reflection on the significance of the mark of Cain comes from the art historian Ruth Mellinkoff, and it is particularly apt given Szondi’s own familial history and his interest in early Jewish and Christian commentators on Gen 4. Mellinkoff draws the connection between the mark of Cain, the scapegoat mechanism, and the badge laws of Nazi Germany requiring Jews to wear the yellow Star of David, such as those Szondi and his family were forced to wear in the Budapest ghetto. She asserts that these badges have their antecedents in the thirteenth century during the papacy of Innocent III who in turn was inspired by Augustine and his allegorical identification of the Jews with Cain, specifically the ‘sign’ of the Jews and the mark of Cain.<sup>146</sup>

The immutability of violence and conflict within the human condition is the central concern for Szondi. As such, in his overview of early Jewish and Christian commentators on Gen 4 in *Kain*, Szondi’s favoured interpretation of the mark comes from Philo of Alexandria who emphasises that the mark was placed upon Cain so that he would not be killed, and hence the “immortality” of “wickedness”: “wickedness is an evil which can never end, but which is kindled and is never able to be extinguished.”<sup>147</sup> Szondi is intrigued by this particular interpretation’s assumption that Cain is immortal and the implications this has for *Schicksalanalyse*, asserting that in reality “Cain acts as an instinctual need for all eternity.”<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Williams, 185.

<sup>143</sup> LaCocque, 86.

<sup>144</sup> LaCocque, 89.

<sup>145</sup> LaCocque, 89.

<sup>146</sup> Ruth Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 98. Cf. Augustine *Contra Faustum* XII.13.

<sup>147</sup> Philo, *De Fuga et Inventione*, XI cited by Victor Apotwitzer, *Kain und Abel in der Agada*, 1922, in Szondi, *Kain*, 36.

<sup>148</sup> Szondi, 37.

### *Wandering in the land of Nod (v. 16)*

In punishment for his crime Cain is banished to dwell in the land of Nod (נֹד literally ‘wandering’) east of Eden. Cain thus lives out his days in a state of alienation “outside,” as noted by Westermann.<sup>149</sup> Cain’s banishment also echoes the punishment meted out to his parents, representing further estrangement from the presence of YHWH and the Edenic ideal (cf. Gen 3:23-24). The paradigmatic nature of this motif encompasses the fate of other ‘rejected’ siblings in Genesis: Ishmael (Gen 21:11-21), Esau (27:39-40)<sup>150</sup> and, as the inverse to this model, Joseph (37:28) (see §8.3).

The motif of wandering and alienation is also connected to the idea, and possibly the lived experience, of exile. Moreover, exile as a metaphor for or functioning as a form of death is made explicit at several points in the HB.<sup>151</sup> The motif of exile is most keenly evident in the narratives concerning Hagar and Ishmael (Gen 21:11-21) and Joseph’s experiences in Egypt (Gen 39–46). The motif of exile within this text and its connection to wandering in ‘Nod’ would also have been apparent for a post-exilic audience.

### *A Kenite Connection to Cain’s Genealogy? (vv. 17-22)*

As was mentioned in §3.3, the connection between the genealogy of Cain and the aetiology of the Kenites was first noted by Wellhausen. Frank Moore Cross presents a more fully articulated version of the hypothesis which was first posited by Wellhausen.<sup>152</sup> More recently it has been revisited by Blenkinsopp, as discussed, and Mark Leuchter.<sup>153</sup> Regarding the Kenites, Cross has suggested a possible connection between the tribe and rivalries between priestly clans which can be evidenced in the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Ezekiel as well as Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>154</sup> The Kenite connection arises via Hobab, Moses’s father-in-law, who is described alternatively as a Midianite (Num 10:29) or a Kenite (Judg 1:16; 4:11).<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 314.

<sup>150</sup> Also Jacob, cf. 27:41-28:5.

<sup>151</sup> E.g. Lev 2, 26; Ezek 37; Jer 31:15-17; Isa 51:12-16. See also Martien Halvorson-Taylor, *Enduring Exile: The Metaphorization of Exile in the Hebrew Bible*. Vol. 141. Brill, 2011, esp. 11-42.

<sup>152</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, 344.

<sup>153</sup> Mark Leuchter, “The Fightin’ Mushites,” *VT* 62, no. 4 (2012): 479–500.

<sup>154</sup> Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1973), 200.

<sup>155</sup> See also Szondi, *Moses*, 30.

Accounts of rivalries between the priestly clans are framed around cultic practices, for example the ritual of incense burners in sanctuary. In various accounts, fire from YHWH is described as consuming the sinners. In Lev 10:1-7 two clans of Aaronide priests are repudiated; while Num 16 is the account of a rival Levite clan who is rejected. Cross posits that such accounts reflect an ancient and prolonged strife between priestly houses.<sup>156</sup> This conflict involved Mushites from cultic centres of Shiloh and Dan, aligned with the Mushite/Kenite priesthood centred on Arad and Kadesh, versus the Aaronide priesthood of Bethel and Jerusalem.<sup>157</sup> These distinctions and tensions between priests and Levites, along with proto-apocalyptic trends, were developed in the books of Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, both of which are dated to the sixth century BCE, late in the exile or early in the post-exilic period.<sup>158</sup> Given the links to both the Kenites and prophetic literature which might be evidenced in Gen 4, together with the text's motif of sacrifice, a date of composition roughly contemporaneous with Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah could be implied. Thus, it may further indicate that Gen 4 was composed against a backdrop of priestly rivalry and that, therefore, a form of religious sectarian conflict is imbued in the text. However, against this is the still contentious nature of the Midianite-Kenite hypothesis<sup>159</sup> and the intertextual and linguistic links explored above, which, on balance, point to a date later than the exilic or immediate post-exilic periods.

### ***Section Summary***

The 400-year period spanning the end of the Babylonian exile through to the rise of the Hasmonean dynasty witnessed numerous tensions and outright conflicts one or more of which could be reflected in the composition of Gen 4, including tensions that point to religious contexts. Supporting this hypothesis are the apparent tensions between priestly clans evident in texts from Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Ezekiel; the motif of sacrifice that is evident in Gen 4; and the supposed Kenite links to the figure of Cain. Dating Gen 4 to the Persian period could also suggest a *Sitz im Leben* of possible conflicts between returning exiles and those who remained, as evident in Ezra and Nehemiah, or tensions concerning the new Temple program (cf. Hag 2:3-9 with YHWH's admonition of Cain's offering in Gen 4:5).<sup>160</sup> Thomas L. Thompson believes these tensions and conflicts are the inevitable

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<sup>156</sup> Those descended from Mushi – מושי – one of the sons of Merari ben Levi (Exod 6:16-19).

<sup>157</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 207.

<sup>158</sup> Cross, 324.

<sup>159</sup> As Blenkinsopp alludes to in his concluding remarks in "The Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah."

<sup>160</sup> The connection between Gen 4 and the Temple is made in several instances in second Temple and rabbinic literature. Cf. Szondi, *Kain*. 31-2; John Byron, *Cain and Abel in Text and Tradition: Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the First Sibling Rivalry* (Brill, 2011), 70.

consequences of the ‘theology of the way’ motif, which is vested in a philosophical dichotomy frequently expressed, for example, in the way of God versus the way of man (sic) (cf. Ps 1).<sup>161</sup> He contends that this tradition permeates the bulk of biblical literature and provides the “ideological basis that is fundamental to sectarianism” and the “virulent strains of hatred” evident in texts from Ezra to Maccabees to Matthew.<sup>162</sup> Alternatively, Gen 4 might suggest a backdrop of anti-Edomite sentiment as evidenced in parallels and connections between the figures of Cain and Esau, and the prevailing idea that Edom had become the replacement for Israel’s election.<sup>163</sup>

The validity of a possible date(s) for Gen 4 is significant. It highlights a likely background of religiously inflected conflict imbued in and behind the composition of the text.<sup>164</sup> Given the arrangement of material throughout Genesis vis-à-vis the nature of the sibling story narratives (see §3.5 below), the final form of Genesis constitutes a commentary on the reality and nature of violence, its primordial origins and its link to civilisation, community, and human interactions. As Brueggemann identifies in his commentary on Gen 4, the sibling problem is emblematic of the crucial human agenda, that is how to live with other humans.<sup>165</sup> Assuming such readings are valid, it lends weight to an exegesis and psychoanalytical reading of the text to which Szondi’s Cain complex herein gives expression.

### 3.5 Genesis 4 and its Context among the Sibling Narratives of Genesis

While the motif of siblings in conflict has long been noted as a feature in Genesis, the question concerning the relevant narratives’ function and possible contribution to an overarching narrative

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<sup>161</sup> Thompson, *The Bible in History: How Writers Create a Past*, 292-8. This is not to be confused with what might be a particularly Christian understanding of ‘the way’ (although elements of John’s gospel, for example, may represent a legacy of Thompson’s observation of the sectarian motivations behind his so-called ‘theology of the way’).

<sup>162</sup> Thomas L. Thompson, “The Bible and Hellenism: A Response,” in *Did Moses Speak Attic? : Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period.*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, vol. 317, JSOTSup (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 286.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Isa 34, 63; Ezek 35; Joel 4:19-21; Amos 9:13-15, Obad; Lam 4:21-22; and Ps 137.

<sup>164</sup> It should be noted, however, that it is not critical to this study to prove any such hypothesis definitively, merely to note that such readings are possible.

<sup>165</sup> Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 54-5.

structure is less well advanced.<sup>166</sup> Two notable exceptions, however, are particularly germane to this study given their emphasis on a psychological approach to the narratives in question. The first is a paper published in 1991 by anthropologist Dan W. Forsyth, which analyses nine of the narratives dealing with male sibling rivalry in Genesis through the lens of Freudian psychoanalysis.<sup>167</sup> Forsyth integrates psychoanalytic anthropology, biblical hermeneutics, and literary criticism to present an impressive overview of what he thinks are “fairly self-evident patterns” of narrative cohesiveness created by the sibling rivalry accounts.<sup>168</sup> Borrowing a term from literary theorists, Forsyth asserts that these stories of male sibling rivalry constitute a ‘fabula’ within Genesis, which he defines as “a layer of autonomous meaning that unites them into a progressive structural statement.”<sup>169</sup> This fabula is itself comprised of four motifs: the main one of sibling rivalry and three ancillary motifs being non-erotically derived aggression, dispensationalism, and ontogeny consisting of oedipal and pre-oedipal processes. The climactic episode of the fabula is the Joseph and Benjamin rivalry (Gen 42–45), which cathartically resolves all motifs. This is then followed by an ‘epilogue’ that describes the rivalry between Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen 48:1-20), performing a recapitulating function in summarising the structural messages of the fabula.

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<sup>166</sup> Among some of the more well-known literary approaches, Robert Alter does examine many of the sibling stories in Genesis in some detail, particularly the so-called Joseph novella. However, he does not approach these stories systematically or thematically in their own terms. He also largely ignores the role Gen 4 plays in framing these stories. (Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*.)

Jan Fokkelman illustrates the artfulness of the authors and compiler of Genesis through three examples, the largest of which is the Jacob cycle (Gen 25-35). A comprehensive examination of the sibling stories is not the focus of his literary approach to Genesis, an approach best captured in the subtitle to his seminal examination of Genesis: “Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis.” (Jan P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991].)

A less prominent work is that of R. Christopher Heard who has examined some of the stories of sibling rivalry in Gen 12-36 from the standpoint of ethnicity. His study concentrates on the relationships between Abraham and Lot, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, and Laban and Jacob. He posits that the corollary to the concept of ‘election’ is that of ‘diselection’ or exclusion; accordingly, his study focusses on the ambiguous characterisations of those who are unfavoured. He presents both literary-aesthetic and socio-historical readings of the relevant narratives to posit that these stories reflect the socio-political context of Achaemenid Yehud in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. According to Heard, the structure of Gen 12-36 evidences a high correspondence with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah and reflects the concerns of Yehud’s immigrant elite. The ambiguities in the text enable the characters and the dynamics of their pairings to be given positive or negative interpretations thereby serving as “quasi-typological (in a normative, not descriptive-historical, sense) representations of relationships between Yehud's immigrant elite and their neighbours.” (Heard, *Dynamics of Diselection*, 172.)

<sup>167</sup> Forsyth, “Sibling Rivalry, Aesthetic Sensibility, and Social Structure in Genesis.” Forsyth eschews dealing with the account of Noah’s sons (Gen 9:22-27) because its meaning is “obscure.” For an additional Oedipal approach to Genesis see Devora Steinmetz, *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict, and Continuity in Genesis*, 1st ed. (Louisville KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991).

<sup>168</sup> Forsyth, 503.

<sup>169</sup> Forsyth, 465.

Building on the work of the folklorist Susan Niditch, Forsyth stipulates that the accounts of sibling rivalry in Genesis reflect a shift from the normative governing principle in the ANE represented by primogeniture, which he equates with social justice concerns.<sup>170</sup> While this is a reasonable conclusion, and no doubt reflects one of the concerns of these narratives, it also lacks a degree of nuance. As is discussed in Chapter 5 (see §5.2), the displaced or rejected older sibling is often dealt with in a segmented genealogy following the main narrative, the purpose of which is to preserve secondary family traditions while simultaneously contributing to situating the eventual election of Israel in the land over and above its neighbours. In terms of fabula, the motif of sibling rivalry thereby contributes to Genesis's broader concern for establishing Israel's claim to the land and its place among its ANE neighbours.

A later article by Kalman J. Kaplan and Matthew B. Schwartz, explicating the distinction between the accounts of sibling rivalry in Genesis and Greek mythology, explores the problems of drawing an equivalence between stories of familial conflict in classical Greek literature and the HB.<sup>171</sup> Kaplan and Schwartz argue that the familial relationships in the HB and Greek mythology are not comparable because the relevant stories in the Bible in the main concern children competing for their father's favour, while the Greek myths portray fathers in conflict with their sons.<sup>172</sup> Thus the paradigms are inverse. Kaplan and Schwartz are persuasive in demonstrating that the patterns of sibling rivalry in Genesis are fundamentally different to the patterns of sibling rivalry evident in the Greek myths. This therefore has implications for psychological frameworks like the Oedipus complex, which may not be suitable for the interpretation of each of the familial stories in Genesis.

Two comparatively recent treatments of some of these family-centred conflicts that are found in Genesis are also of relevance. The first of these has been published by OT scholar, Matthew Schlimm.<sup>173</sup> Schlimm analyses many of the stories of siblings in conflict in Genesis as part of a rhetorical-literary approach to the significance of the emotion of anger within Genesis as an organising motif. As such, his examination of these stories is couched in the broader context of narratives which deal with anger. The crux of his thesis does not centre around the narratives of

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<sup>170</sup> Forsyth, 461-2. Cf. Susan Niditch, *A Prelude to Biblical Folklore: Underdogs and Tricksters* (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 149-50.

<sup>171</sup> Kalman J. Kaplan and Matthew B. Schwartz, "Jacob's Blessing and the Curse of Oedipus: Sibling Rivalry and Its Resolution," 71-84.

<sup>172</sup> See also Samuel H. Dresner, "Rachel and Leah," *Judaism* 38, no. 2 (1989): 151.

<sup>173</sup> Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness: The Ethics of Anger in Genesis*.

sibling rivalry *per se*, but rather the recurrence of the motif of anger within Genesis and includes several narratives that are not centred around intrafamilial conflict and tension.

Nevertheless, Schlimm's study does presage one of the tenets of this study, namely that the sibling stories in Genesis reflect an overarching narrative movement from murderous anger to forgiveness and reconciliation. He contends that Gen 4 and the conclusion of the so-called Joseph novella constitute the post-Edenic framework for Genesis, which constitutes this movement.<sup>174</sup> The motifs of forgiveness and reconciliation are vested in the figure of Joseph who is thereby recognised as the antithesis to Cain, "an anti-Cain" in Schlimm's words.<sup>175</sup> This current study asserts a similar position regarding the composition of Genesis, although the mechanism through which this will be explicated is different. Schlimm's thesis is a scholarly reorientation to the relationship between the figures of Cain and Joseph and the implications of such for approaching the organisation of Genesis.

Kyu Seop Kim examines the concept of primogeniture in the HB with a particular emphasis on Genesis.<sup>176</sup> Kim argues that the concept of the first-born reflects the theology of election in the Pentateuch and other Jewish literature and is linked with Israel's own self-perception as the first-born son. Like previous studies, Kim's thesis centres around the Jacob cycle apropos his examination of Genesis.<sup>177</sup> Importantly, however, he also explicates the role of Gen 4 as a framing text that situates the Jewish cultic setting of the concept of first born.<sup>178</sup> Thus, what is common among these four analyses is the role played by Gen 4 in establishing a framework around which other sibling stories in Genesis are structured.

### 3.6 Conclusion

Beginning with the contention that the Primeval History is part of a larger 'prologue' to pre-existing components of Genesis, and examining arguments in favour of dating its formation to both the Persian and Hellenised periods, I have suggested that a date of composition for Gen 4 is likely to be sometime in a period spanning the late sixth century to the fourth century BCE. Such a date is suggested by the

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<sup>174</sup> Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness: The Ethics of Anger in Genesis*, 4-6.

<sup>175</sup> Schlimm, 6.

<sup>176</sup> Kyu Seop Kim, *The Firstborn Son in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Study of Primogeniture and Christology*, vol. 171, BibInt (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis*.

<sup>178</sup> Kim, *The Firstborn Son in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 49-50.

links to prophetic literature, Wisdom literature, and linguistic connections suggesting a milieu of Achaemenid imperial pluralism that are evident in the text. The motif of exile which is evident in the text may also imply the lived experience of exile or the fresh corporate memory of that period.

The implication of such a date for the text is that it suggests a background of a range of religious tensions and conflicts against which the text was composed. The period between the edict of Cyrus the Great and the rise of the Hasmonean dynasty saw a number of tensions and outright conflicts of which one or more could be reflected in the composition of Gen 4.<sup>179</sup> As Thompson has asserted “virulent strains of hatred” are evident in texts from Ezra to the NT.<sup>180</sup> Among these is a possible conflict between priestly clans. Central to such a hypothesis are the apparent tensions between these clans evident in texts from Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Ezekiel, the motif of sacrifice that is evident in Gen 4, and the supposed Kenite links to the figure of Cain. Dating Gen 4 to the Persian period could also suggest a background of possible conflicts between returning exiles and those who remained, as is evident in Ezra and Nehemiah, or tensions concerning the new Temple program (cf. Hag 2:3-9 with Gen 4:5).<sup>181</sup> Alternatively, Gen 4 might suggest a backdrop of anti-Edomite sentiment as evidenced in parallels with Gen 25, and the prevailing idea that Edom had become the replacement for Israel’s election.

Of these hypotheses, it is my contention that Gen 4 reflects post-exilic anti-Edomite sentiments that has the most potential credibility. This is due to the parallels between Cain and Esau, the linguistic and intertextual connections within the text which point to a time of composition either late in the exilic period but more likely sometime during the Persian period, and the continuing antipathy of Israel for Edom which was exacerbated during the exile (cf. Obad 8-14) and continued long into the Persian period.<sup>182</sup> On the other hand, the motif of sacrifice in Gen 4 and its attendant cultic inflections cannot be ignored, which could represent one factor against the anti-Edomite hypothesis, or at least against it as the only conflict imbued in the text.

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<sup>179</sup> Mark Leuchter, *The Levites and the Boundaries of Israelite Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 218.

<sup>180</sup> Thompson, “The Bible and Hellenism: A Response,” 286.

<sup>181</sup> The connection between Gen 4 and the Temple is made in several instances in second Temple and rabbinic literature. Cf. Szondi, *Kain*. 31-2; John Byron, *Cain and Abel in Text and Tradition*, 70.

<sup>182</sup> One further possible and potentially interesting parallel is to Ishmael ben Nethaniah’s murder of eighty Samaritan pilgrims from sanctuaries in Schechem and Shiloh on their way to the Temple which follows from his assassination of Gedaliah ben Ahikam (Jer 41:1-8; 2 Kgs 25:25-26). This passage has distinct connections to Gen 4 regarding motifs of internecine rivalry, sacrificial offering, and the use of שָׁחַט. Moreover, Gedaliah may have become a venerated figure beyond the exilic period as indicated by the so-called ‘Fast of Gedaliah’ (Zech 7:5; 8:19). Josephus also deals with the incident in some detail (*Ant.*, 10.9).



However, to provide comprehensive evidence for one or more of these hypotheses is not the purpose of this study; rather, I merely suggest that such a reading of Gen 4 is valid. What is important to consider in this overview is that the narrative's author and the compiler of Genesis is/are proposing that violence and conflict have primeval origins and have, thus, always been part of human interaction. Moreover, the fratricidal paradigm of this primeval violence suggests that it is internecine in nature, a feature which is shared with all of the above-mentioned potential instances of conflict.

The paradigmatic character of Gen 4 is further emphasised by the presence of several intertextual allusions to the other narratives in Genesis that deal with siblings in conflict. Most prominent among these are those that link the story of Cain and Abel to the stories of Esau and Jacob and Joseph, his older half-brothers, and Benjamin. If Gen 4 is a later addition to the bulk of materials already collated, a hypothesis attested by the low recurrence of names from the Primeval History in the OT (or total absence outside the Apocrypha in the case of Cain and Abel), then it appears that it has been situated with careful deliberation. That Genesis begins with bloodshed and fratricide and ends with violence obviated through the intervention of forgiveness and reconciliation is no mere coincidence. Through the lens of Szondi's Cain complex, this study establishes that a gradual attenuation of violence is evident across the narratives dealing with siblings in conflict in Genesis.

In effect, the author of Gen 4 is in part offering a critique of the nature of violence and conflict which is informed by the events of the author's time – whether that is conflict between priestly clans (Aaronides against Zadokites, for instance); between the returning exilic community and those who remained in Jerusalem; between Israel and Edom; or even between Hellenised and non-Hellenised Jewish elements during the Maccabean period, should one wish to assert a very late date for composition. That is, that violence and conflict have their origins not in an adversarial conflict between disparate cultures or a clash of civilisations but between those who should be closest to one another. This is the reality of violence for the author of Gen 4, and this is the reality of violence to which Szondi gives expression.

# CHAPTER 4 *SCHICKSAL*: FATE IN A SZONDIAN READING OF GENESIS 4

*Destiny is consciousness of oneself, but  
consciousness of oneself as an enemy*

G.W.F. Hegel, *The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate*

## 4.1 Introduction

Anybody who has ever visited Zürich soon realises that it is a sophisticated, efficient, refined city and priced accordingly. In July 2019, I visited the Szondi-Institut, located in the genteel Zürich suburb of Fluntern, to conduct research in support of this study. After spending daylight hours reading through the thousands of letters written and received by Léopold Szondi that are held in the Institut's archive, in the evenings I would look for diversions that were congruous with both my refined surroundings and – after two weeks travelling through Europe during high season – my increasingly precarious financial position. Serendipitously, on one particular evening the Zürich Opera House, of all places, was to offer me a solution.

Throughout the year the Opera House presents a series of 'people's performances' of various operas and ballets permitting those more fiscally constrained (of whom there seemed to be few in Zürich) to enjoy a performance. My visit, as fate would seemingly have it, coincided with one such performance. Though not an opera aficionado, I nevertheless felt that I had no choice but to buy a ticket when I saw the title of the opera being performed: Giuseppe Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*.

Though Verdi's music is superb, the plot of the opera is something of an uneven muddle. Changes of identity are a recurrent plot device – the main protagonist changes his identity twice – and there are jarring attempts at comedy amongst a largely bleak story concerning an accidental death, misplaced revenge, and sorricide. The opera, also known in English as *The Force of Destiny* and in German as *Die Macht des Schicksals*, was first performed in 1862. Aside from representing an opportune if not slightly eerie coincidence while I was researching the founder of fate analysis, the opera also embodies some of the preoccupations with concepts of race and class but especially the role of fate in human affairs which were prevalent at the time it was composed.

This chapter presents an overview of the German concept ‘*das Schicksal*’ and its function within Szondi’s reading of Gen 4. Szondi was initially interested in the role that *Schicksal* seemed to play in the choice of marriage partner. However, the advent of World War II and his persecution and imprisonment by the Nazis appear to have become a catalyst for his reorientation toward the role *Schicksal* played in the phenomenon of human aggression. Consequently, he would later identify the ‘Cain complex,’ examining the paroxysmal instinct within the context of the Cain and Abel myth. The biblical figure of Cain, presented as *the metaphor par excellence* for human aggression and violence, eventually came to stand at the centre of Szondi’s concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* (fate analysis).

An examination of the German concept of *Schicksal* is therefore critical to understanding Szondi’s conceptualisation of the ‘Cain complex.’ I first provide a background of *Schicksal* within the broader tradition in German-speaking Europe of that term. I then move to situate Szondi’s understanding of *Schicksal* within this tradition. I demonstrate that definitions of *Schicksal* have been influenced by the movement of the concept from the philosophical and into sociological and psychoanalytical circles that occurred from the end of the nineteenth and into the early part of the twentieth centuries. Following, I discuss how this has influenced Szondi’s reading of Gen 4. I then interrogate Szondi’s reading of Gen 4 and his understanding of *Schicksal* by returning to the biblical text to analyse the author’s synthesis of the concepts of fate and destiny in that narrative.

## 4.2 An Outline of *das Schicksal* in German Thought

*Das Schicksal* is usually translated into English as ‘fate’ or ‘destiny,’ but it can also mean, and only marginally less commonly so, ‘fortune,’ ‘lot,’ and even ‘karma.’ As is the case with its English cognates, its current usage in German also reveals a somewhat negative connotation given it frequently appears alongside adjectives such as *bitteres* (bitter, hard), and *böses* (to signify doom). It also suggests a somewhat implacably deterministic view of the future. However, this was not always the case. As I intend to demonstrate, Szondi’s use of the term, and the tradition from which it emerges, underlines a more nuanced understanding of *Schicksal* rather than one that implies a strict fatalism.

An *n*-gram search of Google Books’ German language corpus for ‘*Schicksal*’ suggests that it first appears in the early seventeenth century and experiences minor peaks of usage in the 1730s and the turn of the nineteenth century, with a major peak occurring in the period around World War II (see Fig. 4-1 below). Etymologically, *Schicksal* came into German from the Dutch word *schicksel* (arrangement) sometime during the latter part of the sixteenth century. It is worth noting that the

move of *schicksel* from the Dutch to the German lexicon coincides with a period of significant upheaval in the German-speaking lands. This period had witnessed a century of violence across the German-speaking lands, which perhaps suggests that a concept such as *Schicksal* became necessary.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 4-1. Indicative frequency of the use of ‘das Schicksal’ from 1600 to 2008<sup>2</sup>

*Schicksal* was initially associated with the mythological figure of *Fatum*.<sup>3</sup> According to Franziska Rehlinghaus, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries *Fatum* began to eclipse *Fortuna* – the Roman image of the Greek goddess *Tyche* (luck) – as a personification of the chief super-personal forces at play in shaping the course of the world and the rules for governing human life.<sup>4</sup> As early as the sixth century, Boethius had attempted to integrate both *Fortuna* and *Fatum* into a Christian world-view, seeing them as intermediaries of providential influence in God’s plan for salvation.<sup>5</sup> By the end of the sixteenth century, however, *Fortuna*, which since the Renaissance had gone from being perceived as the handmaiden of God to a self-governing force in its own right, was increasingly banished from

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the so-called wars of religion; the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and its decree of *cuius regio, eius religio* (Whose realm, his religion), that resulted in the migration of religious refugees; and the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).

<sup>2</sup> <https://books.google.com/ngrams>. See also Jean-Baptiste Michel, et al. “Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books.” *Science* 331, no. 6014 (2011): 176-182. Google Books’ German language library partners are the Austrian National Library and the Bavarian State Library.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the classical Greek figures of destiny, the Moirai – Clotho (spinner); Lachesis (allotter); and Atropos (inflexible).

<sup>4</sup> Franziska Rehlinghaus, “Farewell to Fortuna – Turning towards Fatum,” in *The End of Fortuna and the Rise of Modernity: Contingency and Certainty in Early Modern History*, ed. Arndt Brendecke and Peter Vogt (Berlin/München/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2017), 151–74. It is interesting to note that modern uses of *Schicksal*, according to the German dictionary Duden, in some instances conflate the term with ‘fortune.’

<sup>5</sup> Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*. Trans. H.R. James (eBooks@Adelaide, 2007), <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/b/boethius/consolation/index.html> accessed 18 Mar 2019.

Rehlinghaus asserts that Boethius’s influence was still very much evident in the German-speaking world some ten centuries later given the near universal association of *Fatum* with divine providence in lexicons, dictionaries and articles which translate the Latin *fatum* as *Schicksal* or one its linguistic antecedents. (Rehlinghaus, “Farewell to Fortuna – Turning towards Fatum,” 154.)

the theological order previously asserted by Boethius.<sup>6</sup> In 1584 the Flemish philosopher Justus Lipsius would write enthusiastically about the Stoics and their attitude to Fortuna:

I believe it occasioned, by a good and praise-worthy desire; to recall blind Mortalls from their blind goddess; I mean Fortune, not only whose Deity, but Name too, was by them very manfully exploded.<sup>7</sup>

With the onset of the Enlightenment and the movement toward deterministic and mechanistic ideas about the cosmos, *Fatum* was further elevated as *the* representation of the causal structure shaping the course of the world and human life. In such a system, however, the question arises as to the possibility and extent that human beings could influence their own destiny.

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz would attempt to reconcile the Enlightenment perspective with a Christian worldview. He would do so at the further expense of Fortuna, whose status hitherto as a super-personal force shaping human affairs he viewed as merely the result of widespread ignorance of real causes. For Leibniz the concept of *fatum* implied contingency and a purpose-oriented world. In the preface to *Theodicy* he outlines what he describes as *Fatum Christianum*:

It is as if one said to men [sic]: Do your duty and be content with that which shall come of it, not only because you cannot resist divine providence, or the nature of things (which may suffice for tranquillity, but not for contentment), but also because you have to do with a good master. And that is what may be called *Fatum Christianum*.<sup>8</sup>

Such an understanding of fate freed people from concerns about the future because God would guide everything to its best conclusion. By the 1730s, the view of *Fatum* (now predominantly translated as *Schicksal*) as a divine agent had become increasingly popular.<sup>9</sup> In 1748 the poet Christian Fürchtegott Gellert would write in his poem “Das Schicksal”: “*Daß das, was Gott verhängt, aus weisen Gründen fließt, / Und, wenn dirs grausam scheint, gerechtes Schicksal ist.*”<sup>10</sup> Thus, while *Schicksal* may not

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<sup>6</sup> Rehlinghaus, 155.

<sup>7</sup> Justus Lipsius, *De Constantia*, ch. XVIII, trans. Nathaniel Wanley, 1670.

<sup>8</sup> G.W. Leibniz, *Theodicy*, §303, trans. E.M. Huggard.

<sup>9</sup> Rehlinghaus, 170.

<sup>10</sup> “That what God decrees flows for wise reasons, / And if that seems cruel to you, destiny is just.”

have always seemed fair or comprehensible, it was a force, as per the Leibnizian construct, in accordance with divine will and action.<sup>11</sup>

Among nineteenth century philosophers, however, it would be Arthur Schopenhauer whose work on fate would have most direct influence on the Szondiian understanding of *Schicksal*.<sup>12</sup> In an essay titled “Transcendent Speculation on the Apparent Deliberateness in the Fate of the Individual,” Schopenhauer argues that when an individual reaches sufficient maturity it is possible to look back on the events of one’s life and see at work a kind of plan or plot, as if one were the central character in a novel.<sup>13</sup> Events which may have seemed at the time of their occurrence to be random or the result of chance now, from the perspective of old age, take on a significance in the unfolding of one’s life plot. In other words, what might appear to be chance or coincidence will in fact be revealed as *Schicksal* at work with the perspective of time.

In his work on *Schicksal* and love choice, Szondi alludes to this idea directly, referring to the coherent whole that is produced through Schopenhauer’s concept of transcendental Fatalism. In Szondi’s opinion it is the role of *Schicksalanalyse* “to find, in the fate of an individual, the plan making his [or her] life appear a *globally coherent whole*.”<sup>14</sup>

### ***Schicksal and Modernity***

In a 1913 paper titled “Das Problem des Schicksals” the sociologist and philosopher Georg Simmel asserted that *Schicksal* was a persisting existential reality and a gripping force on the totality and

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<sup>11</sup> It should not be assumed, however, that *Fatum/Schicksal* was not the subject to much the same previous philosophical rejections of *Fortuna*. Just as Leibniz disregarded the legitimacy of *Fortuna*, Immanuel Kant had little regard for *Schicksal* declaring it, like fortune, a “usurped” concept “because one can adduce no clear legal ground for an entitlement to their use either from experience or from reason” (Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A84, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood). Nonetheless, despite Kant’s dismissal, *Schicksal* would prove an enduring concept that was difficult to dislodge.

<sup>12</sup> Though not a German speaker, Søren Kierkegaard may arguably also have had some influence on Szondi’s psychoanalytical understanding of fate. Kierkegaard attempted to absorb a psychological perspective on *Schicksal* into a philosophical (existential) framework. Kierkegaard is less interested in examining the idea of fate than in the existential consequences surrounding it. He describes the despair, both conscious and unconscious, that human beings fall into when they neglect their true self. According to Kierkegaard, the self is not an object, but a task. Human beings are supposed to create a synthesis between their limitedness and the infinite; however, they continually fail in this task. A person is simultaneously neither a being that can be reduced to material limitations, nor a being who is its own creator. Kierkegaard considers fate to be an excuse for the person who suddenly becomes aware of her or his finiteness or evades the reality of this finitude. Fate thus stands in opposition to existential anxiety, which in turn occurs to remind oneself of one’s life task and true self. See Søren Kierkegaard, “The Sickness Unto Death,” in *The Essential Kierkegaard*, ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, “Transcendent Speculation on the Apparent Deliberateness in the Fate of the Individual,” in *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays, Volume 1*, ed. E.F.J. Payne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Szondi, “Contributions to ‘Fate Analysis’: An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love,” 2. Szondi’s italics.

depth of life, as manifest in human affairs as abstractions like love and experience.<sup>15</sup> Simmel's understanding of fate as the confrontation with the problems deriving from the metaphysics of life, was integrated into sociology from drama and philosophy.<sup>16</sup> His interest was vested in the manner in which the routine and commonplace can at certain times take on significance and meaning as 'events.'<sup>17</sup> Simmel describes fate as the intersection and synthesis of the subjective and the objective forces at play on an individual. He further defines these forces as the "inner tendency" of an individual's life, i.e. one's perceived life trajectory, onto which "genetically unrelated" factors come into play "nevertheless advancing and retarding it, disrupting its progress or binding [it] together."<sup>18</sup> In other words, *Schicksal* is the computation of the decision points or the crossroads which are created by the interplay of extrinsic forces on one's perceived life trajectory thereby resulting in a reconfigured life path. The critical factor for Simmel is the human mind's capacity to integrate and assimilate these causal events. He argues that what are essentially "merely causal events can take on *a meaning*, a kind of retrospective teleology" for the subject.<sup>19</sup> Thus, *Schicksal* has the capacity to render tragic suffering meaningful and enable the capacity to synthesise the tension and conflict of the subjective and extrinsic forces in modern life. Hence Simmel's understanding of *Schicksal* is akin to Schopenhauer's (and Szondi's). *Schicksal* is the interweaving of one's personal life and extrinsic forces in order to create coherence.

For Simmel, *Schicksal* also implied 'calling' in the sense of a vocation; therefore, it can be understood not merely as the effect of external forces but also something driving oneself from within. Moments when this calling works, however, are rare.<sup>20</sup> Important for this aspect of Simmel's understanding was the concept of *Vornehmheit* – the ideal of distinction or exaltedness – which he drew from and saw as the central value in Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy.<sup>21</sup> This was a formal attitude in which a

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<sup>15</sup> Georg Simmel, "The Problem of Fate," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7–8 (2007): 78–84.

<sup>16</sup> Robert William Button, "Fate, Experience and Tragedy in Simmel's Dialogue with Modernity," *Theory, Culture & Society* 29, no. 7–8 (December 7, 2012): 53–77.

<sup>17</sup> Button, "Fate, Experience and Tragedy in Simmel's Dialogue with Modernity," 69.

<sup>18</sup> Simmel, "The Problem of Fate," 80.

<sup>19</sup> Simmel, 80. Original italics.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. n.11 above and Kierkegaard's idea that existential anxiety is a person's 'calling' to engage in the task of becoming one's true self.

<sup>21</sup> Harry Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology, 1870-1923* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988), 141-2.

decisive individual and a decisive objectivity come together. When a person's inner tendency is in harmony with the objective order of society a condition of freedom is realised.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, when it does not, Szondi argues that those are the times when the Cainitic nature in humanity will often be to the fore. Szondi writes that *Schicksalspsychologie* refers to ancestral memories or latent ancestral traits in the familial unconscious of the individual. In times of danger or threat, these can suddenly become conscious in an attempt to lead one along a remedial approach.<sup>23</sup> History is littered with examples of the destructive Cainitic inner tendency of a decisive individual, to use language of *Vornehmheit*, resulting in war, conflict, and violence. Szondi, rather pessimistically, argues that civilisation and culture force the Cainitic individual to sublimate his/her familial unconscious – the stronger individuals channel this unconscious into what we call politics and diplomacy, while the weaker individuals become neurotic or psychotic.

In summary, from its etymological origins in the sixteenth century, *das Schicksal* moves from being one of the two main anthropomorphised *famulae dei*, i.e. Fatum and Fortuna, who were active in the unfolding of human and world affairs as tools of divine providence, to more considered philosophical positions which elevate the concept of fate at the expense of chance. In the latter half of the nineteenth century *Schicksal* moves from discussions in the philosophical realm into the emerging social sciences of psychology and sociology. The following sections will examine the use and understanding of *Schicksal* in German-speaking sociological and psychoanalytical circles in more detail.

### 4.3 Fate, Love, and *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*

As has been mentioned, a renewed interest in *Schicksal* in German thought arrived with the onset of the modern era in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the emergence of sociology as a discipline.<sup>24</sup> Max Weber was one of the first to draw *Schicksal* into sociological frameworks. Crucially, he sees *Schicksal* not as a preordained inevitability, which in some parts of the German-

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<sup>22</sup> As a Jewish Hungarian and German speaker, Simmel's student, the philosopher Georg Lukács (also known as György Lukács), is an appropriate analogue for Szondi. Both came from similar backgrounds and were active over a similar period of history. Lukács exemplifies the reach of Simmel's ideas concerning *Schicksal* among educated German-speaking Hungarian Jews, à la Szondi. Lukács equated *Schicksal* with culture, as per his teacher, but viewed it as the impersonal entrapment of humanity in sociological laws of society. The only meaningful culture was one manifest in the objective world. In what seems to be an apparent paradox, however, Lukács argues that the submission to these objective forces create the conditions necessary for control of one's destiny. (See Liebersohn, 168.)

<sup>23</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 12.

<sup>24</sup> See Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology, 1870-1923*.



speaking lands, particularly some regions of Germany and Switzerland, had perhaps been a legacy of particular interpretations of Calvinist and other Protestant theologies regarding the predestination of the elect and the sovereignty of God, but as a choice.<sup>25</sup> He juxtaposes this with distinctions of fate along more traditional lines as an interruption of the expected course of events for which he revitalises the Greek term *moira*.<sup>26</sup>

For current purposes, however, it is the integration of *Schicksal* into socio-political dialogue concerning the concept of *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (community of fate) that is most pertinent. Weber's understanding of *Schicksal* reaches its apotheosis in *Economy and Society* (1921) in which two distinct definitions of *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* can be discerned. First, he defines national belonging as a type of community of political destiny involved in a "common political struggle of life and death" (in a situation of war, for example) that is bound together by joint memories, and which is decisive in the development of national consciousness.<sup>27</sup> Second, an "external and spiritual 'community of fate'" can also be evidenced in the domesticated familial situations that are embedded in notions of what Weber calls "filial piety" that is, in effect, a patriarchal structure in which all members of a family are dependent on the dominant male.<sup>28</sup>

Previously, the Austro-Marxist, Otto Bauer, had suggested *Schicksal* implied a range of resources and possibilities for a community and is, therefore, not deterministic. For Bauer, *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* was the third and final stage in the development of the nation.<sup>29</sup> In effect this was, according to historian Nicholas Stargardt, the "creation of political sentiment, of belief in the nation as a 'community of fate.'"<sup>30</sup> Social theorist, Peter Baehr further defines this sense of community as one that was facilitated by a kind of relationship, for example joint suffering, which elicits bonds of familiarity and is reinforced by rituals, festivals and, especially, language.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, the term *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* had been used in Jewish circles against a backdrop of fragmenting German-speaking Jewish identity in the face of external pressures. By looking to a

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<sup>25</sup> See Ch VI "Religious Groups", section xi.3 in Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Gunther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 572-5. It should also be noted that Weber was descended from French Huguenot immigrants on his mother's side.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Baehr, *Caesarism, Charisma, and Fate: Historical Sources and Modern Resonances in the Work of Max Weber* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 119.

<sup>27</sup> See Ch IX "Political Communities" in Weber, *Economy and Society*, 903.

<sup>28</sup> See Ch XII "Patriarchalism and Patrimonialism" in Weber, 1007.

<sup>29</sup> Otto Bauer, *Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

<sup>30</sup> Nicholas Stargardt, "Beyond the Liberal Idea of the Nation," in *Imagining Nations*, ed. Geoffrey Cubitt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 22-37.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Baehr, *Caesarism, Charisma, and Fate*, 131.

shared past, these communities viewed the concept of *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* as a means of combating anti-Semitism at a time when eugenics and anti-Semitism was in the ascendancy. Ominously, however, the term would later be claimed by the National Socialists.<sup>32</sup>

Several points here are critical to understanding Szondi's use of *Schicksal*. First, like Weber, Szondi understands fate not as a predetermined inevitability but as an invitation to make a choice. For Szondi, choice is inherent in any understanding of fate, as becomes evident in his definition of *das Schicksal* "as the totality of all possibilities of existence, among which a person is able to choose."<sup>33</sup> Second the legacy of a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* within German-speaking Jewish groups is arguably also evident in Szondi's self-identification as a Jewish believer to which he gives expression in *Kain* and *Moses*. In both texts he devotes considerable energy to discussing the Jewish myths and legends which have shaped perceptions of the figures of Cain and Moses throughout history, particularly those collected by Mikhah Yosef Bin-Gorion.<sup>34</sup> Szondi's rationale for this is to make it easier for his readers to understand the central thesis of his concept of *Schicksalspsychologie*, which is:

The living Cain among us and within us is at all times the same Cain that folklore had transposed into the Bible and legends.

The figure of Cain was constructed in the Bible and in the legends through projection of the ubiquitous, innate Cain nature of humanity.<sup>35</sup>

This excerpt from *Kain* also marks a final dramatic transformation in Szondi's own research interests concerning the effect of *Schicksal* on human affairs, both individual and corporate.

### ***The Evolution of Szondi's Concern for Schicksal***

Szondi's initial interest in *Schicksal* was in the role it might play in love or choice of marriage partner.<sup>36</sup> In his clinical practise he became intrigued by the patterns that seemed to repeat in the familial histories of his patients often with tragic results – patterns that confirmed for him the truths he had read in the novels of Dostoyevsky as a youth and which shaped his initial forays into the study

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<sup>32</sup> Adolf Hitler uses the term in a 1932 speech to refer to the building of a unified German nation. Baehr argues that the contemporary phenomenon of Islamism is the inheritor of *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* in the same sense (*Caesarism, Charisma, and Fate* 129).

<sup>33</sup> Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

<sup>34</sup> Mikhah Yosef bin Gorion, *Die Sagen der Juden* (Frankfurt: Rütten and Loening, 1919).

<sup>35</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 48.

<sup>36</sup> Szondi, "Contributions to 'Fate Analysis': An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love."

of *Schicksal*. This led to what he called “recessive gene theory,” which he argued was a significant factor in the choice of partner.<sup>37</sup> A personal anecdote that Szondi recalled in a 1970s television interview with Jacques Schotte is illustrative of his concept and his own experience of this apparent phenomenon. In 1916 he was a junior medical officer in the Austrian army. While convalescing in a hospital in Vienna after a bout of cholecystitis, he fell in love with a blonde Christian language teacher of Saxon descent. Some weeks later he had a dream in which his parents related to him a story about his half-brother, who was also training to be physician and lived in Vienna and fell in love with a blonde Christian lady from Saxony who was also a language teacher – only this occurred 30 years earlier, before Szondi was even born.<sup>38</sup> His older brother left his medical studies to marry his fiancée, but the marriage was a difficult and unhappy one. This revelation had a profound existential effect on the young Szondi, who began to question the nature of his own individuality: was he a facsimile of his brother? Would he repeat his brother’s fate? It also brought an end to the relationship with the blonde language teacher. Soon after, he checked out of hospital and reported back to his unit ready for duty.

This dream was to become central in a period of self-analysis which Szondi conducted in Budapest between 1934 and 1936. From this period of deep introspection, he concluded that ancestral figures in the unconscious influence the behaviour of descendants unconsciously, and that these figures can become manifest in dreams. Through the undertaking of ancestor analyses, subjects can achieve a ‘controllable fatalism’ (*lenkbarer Fatalismus*) an idea which would inform his work on the familial unconscious and initial work on *Schicksalsanalyse*.<sup>39</sup> In 1937 he published an article entitled “Contributions to ‘Fate Analysis’: An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love” which would introduce these concepts.

However, shortly after the publication of this work, Szondi’s progress in developing *Schicksalsanalyse* was curtailed by the enactment of anti-Semitic laws by the pro-Nazi Hungarian

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<sup>37</sup> Szondi, 25-31.

<sup>38</sup> Maebe, “BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi.”

<sup>39</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*. 13-14

regime and the subsequent closure of his laboratory.<sup>40</sup> It is the accumulation of his intimate experiences of violence, such as combat in World War I and, most notably, his persecution under the Nazi regime, that would eventually be the catalyst for Szondi's turn from the effects of *Schicksal* in love choice to a more all-encompassing and comprehensive examination of the role played by *Schicksal* in human aggression and violence.

After the publication of his fifth and final volume on *Schicksalsanalyse* in the mid-1960s, all of these events seem to coalesce for Szondi. He had been so busy researching and writing on the analysis of fate that he was largely unaware of what had been going on in the wider world, a time of great social and political change and, of course, violence:

I was in a tunnel. And when I came out of this tunnel, I tried to recognise the world, evaluate it and what did I see? The world... was completely different.

The women were men and the men became women. They wear furs, big hair, and so on. But not that. That, that's bearable, this inversion. The terrible things were the wars everywhere. One picked up a newspaper and everywhere war, war, war.

And then I remembered Cain. The killing mindset of Cain. Then I got more involved with Cain, especially the legends about Cain...

And then it turned out that Cain was a genius. He discovered capitalism, for example. That was a very big achievement at the time, because he built fences and, in this way, emphasised, "This is mine!" and such. Similarly, he brought about a lot of related ideas. Homicidal thoughts too, of course.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, Szondi arrives at Cain. Objectively, this was the culmination of years of work on the role of *Schicksal* in the lives of individuals, brought about by, in his opinion, the familial unconscious that is at play in all of our lives through our genetic inheritance. Subjectively, however, his own personal experiences of war and violence triggered by the events taking place through the latter half of the 1960s – wars, riots, invasions, and assassinations, coupled with a breakdown in what were hitherto societal norms in the areas of sex, gender, and class – were also of central importance. In order to

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<sup>40</sup> Jacques Schotte, "Szondi, Léopold (1893-1986)," in *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Alain de Mijolla (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 1721–1722. Szondi became the head of the Laboratory of Pathology and Therapy which had been established in 1927 by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and was part of the Training College for Teachers of Children with Special Needs. The laboratory employed special education teachers, psychologists, biologists, and other medical professionals, and the work produced by Szondi and his colleagues during this time piqued the interest of psychologists, special education teachers and, interestingly, theologians. (See Enikő Kiss, "A Memoir on Leopold [Lipót] Szondi," researchgate.net, 2014, [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Eniko\\_Kiss/publication/263314607\\_A\\_memoir\\_on\\_Leopold\\_Lipot\\_Szondi/links/0f31753a88c6b03685000000.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Eniko_Kiss/publication/263314607_A_memoir_on_Leopold_Lipot_Szondi/links/0f31753a88c6b03685000000.pdf).)

<sup>41</sup> Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

give meaning and expression to what he had experienced and was witnessing he returned to his *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* and the stories and traditions of his Jewish heritage and identity. The figure of Cain would help to explain the problem, while Moses would later provide the resolution.

#### 4.4 *Schicksal* and Psychoanalysis

In this section I examine the influence of the two central German-speaking thinkers in the field of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, on Szondi's concept of *Schicksal*. Since neither Freud nor Jung mention Cain and Abel in any significant way, the central nexus connecting Freud and Jung with Szondi is the relationship between dream and myth.<sup>42</sup> For Freud, myth embodies the same relationship between what is manifest on one level and the real meaning which lies below this – a meaning which can be readily revealed in dreams.<sup>43</sup> For Jung, myths are the reflection of the primeval encoding of ideas and concepts into human beings and are therefore universal in their orientation. Szondi calls legends and myths the dreams of the people.<sup>44</sup> As I shall demonstrate, such an idea is very similar to some aspects of the Jungian collective unconscious and understanding of archetype.

##### *Freud, Szondi and Schicksal*

It is difficult to overestimate the influence that Freud had on the work of Szondi. As mentioned previously, Szondi's Cain and Moses polarity is in direct dialogue with Freud's Oedipus complex, his aim being to make the figures of Cain and Moses central to *Schicksalsanalyse* in the same way Oedipus is central to psychoanalysis.<sup>45</sup> Szondi would later go on to claim that his drive system (*Triebsystem*) had been "one hundred percent adopted from Freudian psychoanalysis."<sup>46</sup>

Szondi even credited Freud with literally saving his life. Already mentioned has been the influence that the novels of Dostoevsky had on the young Szondi. Similarly, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* was a work of deep fascination for him, so much so it "became his *vade mecum*" during his time on

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<sup>42</sup> Freud does mention a "Cain' phantasy" in *Interpretation of Dreams*, but it is only a passing reference in a much broader case study. Ref. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. James Strachey (London: Allen & Unwin, 1954), 458. Jung refers to the myth on several occasions particularly in his essay "Answer to Job."

<sup>43</sup> Jules Brody, "Fate, Philology, Freud," *Philosophy and Literature* 38, no. 1 (2014): 1–29.

<sup>44</sup> In the introduction to *Kain* Szondi asserts that "legends can be interpreted as the dreams of the people." (*Kain*, 11.)

<sup>45</sup> Szondi, 8.

<sup>46</sup> Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

the frontlines of World War I.<sup>47</sup> Carrying his constant companion in his backpack, on one occasion it stopped shrapnel penetrating his body when he was hit by a fragmentation grenade while serving on the Carpathian front.<sup>48</sup> The *Interpretation of Dreams* was one of two of Freud's works, the other being *Totem and Taboo*, that were particularly influential in the unfolding of Szondi's own understanding of the unconscious.

### "Gene Incest"

Szondi's initial explorations centred upon questions concerning choice, in particular, what constitutes the basis of choice? For Szondi, this was the question that had intrigued and occupied poets, philosophers, and, indeed, Freudian psychoanalysis. Szondi's self-declared aim in his 1937 paper is to present a general theory of choice. In *Totem and Taboo*, Freud claims of the concept of choice in love that: "The path of object selection has normally led [a man] to his love object through the image of his mother and perhaps of his sister."<sup>49</sup> In "Theory of Choice in Love" Szondi stresses that his "'ancestor'-theory" makes the very same claim as Freud.<sup>50</sup> In this embryonic paper by Szondi two things become clear. First is the level to which he has been, in his own words, "influenced and encouraged" by *Totem and Taboo* and Freud. This is especially evident in his reference to the anthropological data Freud presents from the "*totem-organisation* of several primitive tribes."<sup>51</sup> Szondi is particularly interested in Freud's citing of an example of totemic use by one group of indigenous Australians (viz. the Gamilaraay people).<sup>52</sup> Consequently, he synthesises and interprets Freud's concept of totem as an ancestral figure. Totemism thereby parallels his 'ancestor'-theory, succinctly expressing it thus: "totem = ancestor = gene."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Schotte, "Szondi, Léopold (1893-1986)," 1721.

<sup>48</sup> This was one of three occasions in which Szondi narrowly avoided death during the war.

<sup>49</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics.*, trans. A.A. Brill, Pelican Books (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1938), 37.

<sup>50</sup> Szondi, "Contributions to 'Fate Analysis': An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love," 25-6.

<sup>51</sup> Szondi, 61.

<sup>52</sup> Szondi, 63. Szondi ostensibly cites the first chapter of Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, but, interestingly, also refers to Freud's source material, namely vol. I of James George Frazer's *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910). Freud makes no mention of the Gamilaraay people in his chapter, and only references the Dadi Dadi (or Tatitati) people of the lower Murray region thereby conflating the two groups (perhaps he sees them as somehow representative of *all* Indigenous Australian peoples). Szondi, in referring to the section of *Totem and Taboo* in which he is most interested, also clearly attributes the behaviour discussed to the Gamilaraay people as per the reference in Frazer that is cited by Freud. Although he was tremendously influenced by Freud, this highlights an insight into his scientific predisposition towards verification.

<sup>53</sup> Szondi, 64.

Freud's assertion that what is taboo is desirable, therefore incest is only taboo since there must be a desire for it, leads Szondi to a surprising and creative conclusion. Szondi suggests that although in a modern Western context marriage of blood relatives is considered unacceptable, in actuality marriage between 'gene' relatives is quite common. Szondi explains that because a person is denied the capacity to satiate their desires through incest, and because they do not wish to live in exogamy (i.e. "marriage without love"), they are instinctively attracted to those who are "gene-related." In so-called "civilised society" he argues, "blood-incest is substituted by gene-incest."<sup>54</sup> Some form of compromise is thus established. Szondi thereby concludes that there is no other kind of love than the love of gene-relatives, and that, therefore, in a broader sense, there is no other form of love than incestuous love.

As provocative and, frankly, odd a conclusion as this first appears, it is clear that Szondi has sought to adapt Freud's psychoanalytical approach alongside his own clinical interests and experiences. However, it is also possible to detect the echoes of Georg Simmel's understanding of *Schicksal* in Szondi's conclusion. Szondi stresses that the compromise solution of gene-incest only becomes a clinical problem when and if one's "gene-milieu" is unable to cope with the compromise. According to Szondi, this gene-milieu is comprised of one's genotype and external setting, which he calls "peristasis" – i.e. the environment, phase of life, and situation in which one finds oneself.<sup>55</sup> This idea is very similar to Simmel's contention that a condition of freedom is realised when a person's inner tendency is in harmony with the objective order of society that was discussed previously.

The second observation that can be made concerning "Theory of Choice in Love" is that the work bends more towards what might be called the *logos* than it does the *mythos*.<sup>56</sup> The paper espouses more medical and clinical ideas and concepts than it does those more exclusively psychoanalytical, theological, or mytho-poetical ideas that are further developed and articulated in *Kain* and even more so in *Moses*. It is in this way that I suggest the paper is embryonic.

From the standpoint of modern clinical psychology and biology, however, much of Szondi's underlying assumptions in "Theory of Choice in Love" might very well be challenged, as indeed most

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<sup>54</sup> Szondi, 71.

<sup>55</sup> Szondi, 71-2.

<sup>56</sup> Marion Grau, *Refiguring Theological Hermeneutics: Hermes, Trickster, Fool* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 59-73.

if not all of Freud's theories have been.<sup>57</sup> This is to be expected given the evolving nature of science and systems of knowledge. No scientific framework remains uncontested.<sup>58</sup> Despite this, psychoanalytical frameworks and theories of the unconscious such as Freud's and Jung's continue to have an enduring legacy in the creative arts, theology, literature, and philosophy.<sup>59</sup> They could in fact be said to be works of literary art in their own right, and that these works belong more to the realm of the *mythos* than they do – indeed, perhaps ever did – to the *logos*, with a quest for meaning rather than the practicalities and pragmatism that are the concerns of scientific knowledge. Given the reliance of such theories of the unconscious on dreams and myths, this is unsurprising. As De Vleminck rightly affirms: “Myths are the royal way into an intrapsychic world.”<sup>60</sup>

### ***Oedipus and Cain***

Freud's use of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* is arguably the most well-known reference to mythology in psychoanalysis. Reading the Greek play literarily and metaphorically, Freud developed his theory of the Oedipus complex in evolutionary stages over a period of approximately forty years. Using the metaphor of Oedipus, who was unwittingly fated to kill his father, Laius, and marry his mother, Jocasta, Freud articulates a theory of emotional ambivalence which is formed during childhood and directed against all important figures in the child's life.

It is important to recognise that Freud's Oedipus complex is also a theory of fate. In *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud likens the unfolding of the dramatic action in Sophocles' play to the work of a psychoanalyst, but it is, above all, “a tragedy of destiny” (*Schicksalstragödie*).<sup>61</sup> Moreover, Freud claims that:

If *Oedipus Rex* moves a modern audience no less than it did the contemporary Greek one, the explanation can only be that its effect does not lie in the contrast between destiny [*Schicksal*] and human will, but is to be looked for in the particular nature of the material on which that

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<sup>57</sup> Although I also contend that modern behavioural genetics *may* prove some of Szondi's observations concerning heritability are valid, though this is not a concern for this study.

<sup>58</sup> Consider, for example, the changes in the understanding of subatomic physics which have taken place since the discovery of the electron in the late nineteenth century.

<sup>59</sup> Sigmund Freud is the subject of his own volume in the Routledge Philosophers series of introductory texts to the great Western philosophers (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Published in 2015).

<sup>60</sup> Jens De Vleminck, “Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms,” 172

<sup>61</sup> Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 262.



contrast is exemplified. There must be something which makes a voice within us ready to recognise the compelling force of destiny [*Schicksal*] in the *Oedipus*.

There is, therefore, something innately compelling about Sophocles' tragedy that differentiates it from other modern so-called *Schicksalstragödien*, which continues to speak to audiences throughout time. However, contra literary theorists and dramatists, Freud suggests that it is not questions concerning the nature of destiny and its relationship with human free will *per se* that has intrigued audiences for 2,500 years, but rather the magnetic pull that the drama exercises on the unconscious. Literature scholar, Cynthia Chase, argues that Freud refers to "an inner 'voice which is ready' ... to perform the act of recognition" when watching the play.<sup>62</sup> What is recognised is the repression and the revelation of the audience's own destiny reflected in Oedipus' destiny, which is established and driven by the oracles received in turn by Laius, Jocasta and then Oedipus. Freud declares; "His destiny [*Schicksal*] moves us only because it might have been ours – because the oracle laid the same curse upon us before our birth as upon him."<sup>63</sup> As Freud asserts, we all share the same *Schicksal*, that being our initial sexual impulse toward our opposite-sex parent and our "first hatred and our first murderous wish" against our same-sex parent. Thus, *Schicksal* stands at the very centre of one of the foundational theories of the unconscious and psychoanalysis.

Freud's appeal to Classical drama and mythology in the framing of the Oedipus complex reveals three important and interrelated points. First, his use of myth is in keeping with the *Zeitgeist*. A reawakening of interest in pagan mythology occurred in Europe during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This interest can be evidenced, for instance, in the arrival of the *avant-garde* in art, the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* of biblical exegesis, and the thought and work of Nietzsche, Frazer, and, of course, Jung among others. Furthermore, this renewed interest in pagan myth occurs alongside a simultaneous disregard, assimilation (through mythologization), and at times outright denigration of Judeo-Christian myths and stories. Even as a self-described atheist Jew, it is nonetheless interesting that Freud is largely blind to the Bible in unfolding his theory of the unconscious. Conversely, Szondi strides into this breach actively flying the flag of his Jewish heritage.

Second, Freud's use of the Oedipus myth inspired Szondi in his use of the Cain and Abel myth and later the figure of Moses. Their respective approaches to their chosen texts, however, reflect differences in their roles as readers. Freud, as Chase convincingly argues, is an active and engaged

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<sup>62</sup> Cynthia Chase, "Oedipal Textuality: Reading Freud's Reading of Oedipus," *Diacritics* 9, no. 1 (1979): 54–68.

<sup>63</sup> Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 262.

reader of *Oedipus Rex* throughout the unfolding of his theory of the Oedipus complex – that in many ways his quest mirrors the pursuits of Sophocles’ protagonist both consciously and unconsciously: “Freud’s own most manifest ‘Oedipus complex’ is the drive to interpretation and ‘self-analysis’ dramatized in Sophocles’ hero.”<sup>64</sup> On the other hand, Szondi’s analyses of Cain and Moses are as reliant, perhaps even more so, on secondary sources, in particular rabbinic literature and Jewish legends, but also early Christian and Islamic writing, as they are on the biblical texts. If Szondi was offering up a historical critical, source, or form analysis such an approach would be problematic, but that is not what he is offering the reader of *Kain*. His reliance upon midrashic elements is entirely appropriate because that is in effect what he is creating. In *Kain*, Szondi is keeping with the midrash tradition of his rabbinic ancestry and retelling the story of Cain and Abel with an eye to edification and to address present concerns.

Third, Szondi’s use of Cain as metaphor attempts to fill a gap in Freudian psychoanalytic understanding concerning the problem of human aggression. Psychoanalysts agree that Freud was never able to fully articulate a solution to human aggression and violence.<sup>65</sup> While the Oedipus complex does express aggression in the form of jealousy, hate, and death wishes towards the same-sex parent, it is ultimately an unsatisfactory framework for approaching the phenomenon because it casts all aggression and violence in the sexual drive.<sup>66</sup>

Moreover, the apparent vertical nature of aggression and violence as expressed by Freud is also problematic. There is no notion of vertically oriented aggression in the treatments of rivalry throughout Genesis.<sup>67</sup> All aggression and violence is horizontal: Cain against Abel; Ishmael against Isaac through the proxy conflict of their respective mothers Hagar and Sarah (Gen 16, 21); Jacob against Esau (Gen 25, 27, 32, 35-6); and Joseph against his brothers (Gen 37, 42-45).<sup>68</sup> Though undoubtedly greatly influenced by Freud, Szondi thus departs from the master in the human aggression aspect of their theories of the unconscious. Freud’s theory is vertical and directed at same-sex parent figures (though aggression between siblings exists, it is nonetheless peripheral) and consigned to the sexual drive, while Szondi’s is horizontal, directed between siblings, and vested in the paroxysmal drive.

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<sup>64</sup> Chase, “Oedipal Textuality: Reading Freud’s Reading of Oedipus.” 55

<sup>65</sup> See Lear, *Freud*, 162; De Vleminck, “Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms.”

<sup>66</sup> De Vleminck, “Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms.”

<sup>67</sup> See Kaplan and Schwartz, “Jacob’s Blessing and the Curse of Oedipus: Sibling Rivalry and Its Resolution.”

<sup>68</sup> Unless one counts aggression of YHWH toward humanity, which is in any event unidirectional! The account of Jacob wrestling with God at Penu’el (Gen 32:22-32) could be one exception, however.

## *Jung and Schicksal*

In a 1909 essay “The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual,”<sup>69</sup> Jung claims, as Schopenhauer did earlier, that *Schicksal* is an important psychological fact. It gives expression to the unconscious’s determination that the power that shapes our psyches “has the character of an autonomous personality”, which even today many call God or the devil.<sup>70</sup> As per Freud, Jung attributes this personification of destiny to the role of the father-*imago*.

Jung would, however, later critique Schopenhauer’s observation that the coincidences in one’s life have a tendency with the perspective of time to form events which open up and guide one’s life. He argues that this means that it is necessary that every point on a given meridian stands in relation to a meaningful coincidence. This, he asserts, is simply going too far. If it were empirically possible, meaningful coincidences would occur so regularly and systematically that their verification as such would be redundant.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, this father-*imago*, Jung asserts, is also the result of evolution over millions of years. It is an inherited system which corresponds to human situations that have existed since primeval times. This congenital and pre-existent instinctual model is what Jung previously defined as the archetype. The power of the archetype is not controlled by humanity – human beings are at its mercy to a degree which cannot be readily understood. In a sense, Jung’s concept of *Schicksal* was similar to Simmel’s and Nietzsche’s (and, as I have demonstrated above, Szondi’s) in that the power of fate (“*Schicksalszwang*”) makes itself known only when it is not in harmony with the self. He further connects *Schicksal* to the “compulsion of libido” (“*Libidozwang*”), which is, in his estimation, the modern understanding of the ancients’ attribution of the course of human affairs to the effect of “evil stars” or anthropomorphised figures such as Heimarmene, the Greek goddess of fate.<sup>72</sup>

In a 1947 essay titled “On the Nature of the Psyche,” Jung explicitly references Szondi, specifically Szondi’s model of instinct as it was espoused in *Experimentelle Triebdiagnostik* and

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<sup>69</sup> “Die Bedeutung des Vaters für das Schicksal des Einzelnen.”

<sup>70</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, vol. 4, CW (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), 314-5.

<sup>71</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, vol. 8, CW (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), 429.

<sup>72</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, vol. 5, CW (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 67n.

*Triebpathologie*.<sup>73</sup> Jung cautions that theories such as Szondi's are tenuous because instincts are challenging to define conceptually and it is difficult to establish their number and the extent of their influence. While contemporary psychology may concur with Jung's assessment of instinct, Hughes argues that the underpinning meaning of the term remains unchanged. The philosophical equivalent of the instinctual drive is the act, in which the "relational, motivational and rhythmic" aspects of the latter are similar to the "needs and tendencies" of the former.<sup>74</sup>

For his part, Szondi does not refer to Jung in *Kain* anywhere near as frequently as he does Freud. Szondi's only explicit reference to Jung in *Kain* is to acknowledge the possibility of a Cain "archetype." Szondi cites a footnote in Jung's 1942 essay "A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity" in which the psychoanalyst reduces Gen 4 to an archetype of the two brothers in conflict and a prototype for the struggle between Christ and Satan, who he asserts are both sons of God and, by implication, brothers.<sup>75</sup> This interpretation not only of the biblical text but also Christology is unconvincing and perhaps due to Jung's apparent predisposition against covenantal religion and his revulsion of sacrifice.<sup>76</sup> Channelling Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Jung claims Cain's "Luciferian nature" is due to his "rebellious progressiveness" compared with his brother Abel "the pious shepherd."<sup>77</sup> His view appears much closer to Persian dualism in which "good and evil more or less balance each other, like night and day" than is what is being conveyed in the text.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, it may also reflect some of the Jewish legends and the thoughts of earlier Christian patristic writers concerning the narrative, as I shall demonstrate below (see §4.5).

### ***Familial Unconscious: A Bridge Between Freudian and Jungian Psychoanalysis.***

One of the most famous aphorisms attributed to Jung concerns *Schicksal*: "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." The problem is that it is unclear if Jung actually ever stated this, at least in these terms. Nevertheless, the maxim does capture

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<sup>73</sup> Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, 180. This is the only reference to Szondi's work among Jung's *Collected Works*. Interestingly, in what seems a very apt, albeit coincidental allusion to Szondi's initial interest in the role fate plays in love, Jung, in his essay "The Father in the Destiny of the Individual", quotes Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's poem "Warum gabst du uns die tiefen Blicke?": "You were in bygone times my wife or sister." (See Jung, *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, 315). The actual lines from the poem are: "Ach, du warst in abgelebten Zeiten / meine Schwester oder meine Frau."

<sup>74</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 41-2.

<sup>75</sup> See Carl Gustav Jung, *Symbolik Des Geistes* (Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1948), 407.

<sup>76</sup> Hughes, 154.

<sup>77</sup> Jung, *Symbolik Des Geistes*, 407.

<sup>78</sup> Jung, 407.

the essence of the relationship between Freudian and Jungian psychoanalyses and *Schicksal*. Both approaches negate any sense of fatalism or determinism in *Schicksal*. For Freud these are established in the particularities of every individual's childhood, while for Jung they have evolved from primeval times and are shared by all human beings, though they are shaped and given context by the idiosyncrasies of history and culture. Thus, in one sense, it could be argued that *Schicksal* does not even exist, it is merely a label that is attached to unexamined aspects of the unconscious.

Szondi nuances these approaches, seeking to differentiate his concept from those of Freud, Jung, and others (but in the main Freud and Jung), hence eschewing the classification 'psychoanalysis' for *Schicksalsanalyse*. Although he was at times criticised for espousing a strict determinism, Szondi also denies any sense of this in his concept of *Schicksal*. However, as the name of his approach suggests, a person's *Schicksal* must be identified, examined, and embraced before the range of possibilities of an individual's situation can be explored. Because of its origins in one's ancestry and genetic inheritance, established in some cases many years before a person is even born, there can be no avoiding the effects of one's *Schicksal*.

Does it not follow then that since Szondi's *Schicksalsanalyse*, like psychoanalysis, is a therapeutic technique, one is likely to only begin examining the unconscious when a health issue is present and thereby focus on negative elements therein? In Freudian psychoanalysis, for example, this might be only those repressed traumatic childhood memories that come to the surface during therapy. In the case of *Schicksalsanalyse*, is it only latent ancestors influencing our affairs and always for the worst? Not so, says Szondi! *Schicksalsanalyse* has a liberating effect in therapy, because "*Schicksalspsychologie* always asks about becoming and not about being."<sup>79</sup>

Szondi defines six elements comprising *Schicksal*. The first of these centres upon the family tree (see Fig. 4-2 below) in order to identify the patterns and genetic influences that have shaped one's fate. These inherited traits will thereby inform the combination of drives which are at play. These two aspects are the heart of what Szondi calls the familial unconscious (*Das familiäre Unbewusste*). According to Szondi, the familial unconscious expresses itself not only in an individual's genetic inheritance but also in shaping their life choices, the most pivotal of these being the choices in partner, friendship, profession, illnesses and form of death.<sup>80</sup> The familial unconscious will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter; for current purposes, however, it is important to note that the

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<sup>79</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 14.

<sup>80</sup> Szondi, *Schicksalsanalyse*, 33.

manifestation of one’s genetic inheritance does not imply a strict determinism or uniformity. These aspects are in constant interaction with both one’s internal and external environments thereby resulting in a dynamic, somewhat indeterminate system. In other words, although an individual’s ancestors govern her or his genetic make-up, the differing historical, societal, and, perhaps, geographical conditions in which the ancestor and descendant find themselves, will necessarily result in distinctive variances.

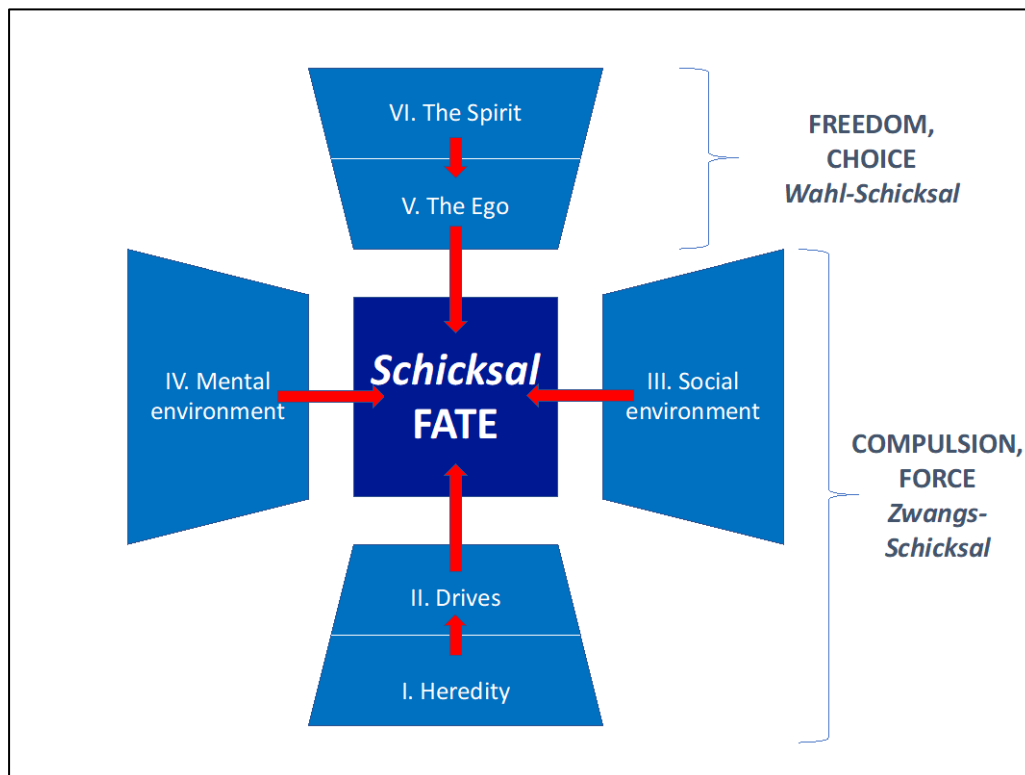


Figure 4-2. The six forces that influence an individual’s Schicksal. <sup>81</sup>

Hence, as psychologist Enikő Kiss asserts, “although the various manifestations are closely related to the ancestors, the role they play in life may be highly diverse because of the individual and societal aspects.”<sup>82</sup> Since the genetic inheritances and the external and internal environments are still somewhat beyond the control of the individual, Szondi sees them as the compelling, or forced aspects of fate (*Zwangs-Schicksal*). However, for Szondi, *Schicksal* does not, by necessity, imply an ultimate determinism. This is because the interaction between the ego and the spirit has the potential to exercise a degree of freedom and choice on fate (*Wahl-Schicksal*) and thus influence *Schicksal* in positive ways. Figure 4-2 (above) explains the interaction of the six aspects of *Schicksalsanalyse*.

<sup>81</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Freiheit und Zwang im Schicksal dDes Einzelnen* (Bern and Stuttgart: Verlag Hans Huber, 1968), 22. Also adapted by Friedjung Jüttner (2009) and Enikő Kiss (2010) from Léopold Szondi “Mensch und Schicksal: Elemente einer dialektischen Schicksalswissenschaft (Anankologie)”, *Wissenschaft und Weltbild* 7 (1954), Wien: Verlag Harold, 15-34.

<sup>82</sup> Kiss, “Personality and the Familial Unconscious in Szondi’s Fate-Analysis”, 72

By way of further illustration, Szondi speaks of a case wherein he treated a wholesale fruit merchant who left Germany for Switzerland because of a number of lawsuits arising from his poor business practices. He went into analysis because a doctor identified his angina symptoms, which occurred only at night, as Pseudo-Angina. Through analysing one of the man's dreams in particular, Szondi determined that his symptoms were the result of a repressed traumatic childhood memory in which he drowned a cat in response to his mother abandoning him. This standard psychoanalytical process was further enhanced by a *Schicksalsanalytisch* process some months following in which the patient discussed with Szondi dreams in which he was with two uncles both of whom were doctors:

And after four months, he asks me, "What if I could become a doctor?"

So I said, you can, but you have to graduate first. The man was then 38 years old. He graduated, then moved to Innsbruck, and studied medicine for seven years. Then he became a psychoanalyst in a Jesuit hospital, and today he is a very good psychoanalyst.<sup>83</sup>

This case study embodies all of the key aspects of *Schicksal* hitherto discussed: its relationship to psychoanalysis, particularly the interpretations of dreams, its implications for vocation or 'calling,' and, therefore, choice.

According to Szondi's articulation of *Schicksalsanalyse*, one cannot successfully choose a possibility that is not within one's ancestry. The freedom to choose is therefore necessarily restricted, but, as Georg Friedrich Hegel and later Martin Heidegger understood, human beings become free when they understand their limitations and their contingency upon time and space – their *Geworfenheit* ('thrownness') as Heidegger would call it.<sup>84</sup> It is in understanding this that a human being uncovers the union of freedom and necessary restriction. In Szondian terms, *Schicksalsanalyse* takes place at this insight into necessity. As Hegel states: "To be aware of limitations is already to be beyond them."<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> "Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

<sup>84</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1962), 174, 219-24.

<sup>85</sup> Cited in Walter Albert Davis, *Inwardness and Existence: Subjectivity In/and Hegel, Heidegger, Marx, and Freud* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 18.

## 4.5 *Schicksal* and Genesis 4

I now turn to examine the role *Schicksal* plays in the story of Cain and Abel. As was discussed above, from a Szondian perspective *Schicksal* comprises two fundamental aspects: the first is the ancestry of an individual which will then greatly inform the second, the choices available to that individual. Given the genealogy which permeates the chapter (esp. vv. 17-26), the ancestral component of *Schicksal* is clearly embedded in the chapter, but what of choice? Referring to the counsel YHWH gives to him (v. 7), it seems that Cain is indeed presented with a choice. I will thus present a Szondian reading in which the choice Cain makes is informed unconsciously by his genetic inheritance and that its consequences will go on to reverberate throughout his descendants.

### *Cain's choice (Gen 4:7)*

As has been discussed, *Schicksal* tends to reveal itself in human affairs as a result of the decision points each individual arrives at throughout their life. In Gen 4, Cain is presented with just such a decision point. The reader is told that the two brothers sacrifice (vv. 3-4), and YHWH favours the sacrifice of the younger brother, Abel (v. 4). The narrator provides no explicit reason for this, and though commentators have attempted to fill in the gaps and ambiguities in the narrative, there is no established consensus. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Brueggemann's assertion that the narrative, first, makes no apology for portraying YHWH as capricious and, second, alludes to themes which become evident in Wisdom literature seem reasonable – that the cards dealt by life often do not correspond as closely to people's moral conduct as one would like.<sup>86</sup> Through no fault of one's own, life can take turns for the worse; therefore, there is no reason to believe that Cain's conduct or sacrifice were inferior to Abel's (contra Heb 11:4). YHWH is ultimately free to do as YHWH pleases, as Exod 33:19 makes clear: "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."<sup>87</sup>

What is unambiguous, however, is that Cain was deeply distressed by the favour YHWH showed for Abel's sacrifice (v. 5). The narrator tells the reader that Cain became hot with anger (חרה) and adds the adverb "very" (מאד) for emphasis before indicating that "his face fell" (ויפל פניו). This combination of חרה and מאד is used as a prelude to a homicide at other times in the HB (e.g. Gen 34:7;

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<sup>86</sup> Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 56.

<sup>87</sup> Alternatively, and somewhat more prosaically, the favour shown to the younger son by YHWH may simply be a literary device to foreshadow and frame the various instances of the reversal of the normative rules of primogeniture and the ensuing cases of sibling rivalry that follow in Genesis.



1 Sam 18:8; Neh 4:1).<sup>88</sup> YHWH sees the effect on Cain and proceeds to present him with a choice couched with a warning: “If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must master it” (v. 7). The choice that YHWH presents Cain seems simple enough – do well or do not do well. Moreover, it is possible that even if Cain is to choose poorly and not do well, all is still not lost. Though sin lies in wait like a wild animal at his door, he can still master it if he is strong enough.

### *Szondi’s curious silence on vv. 6-7*

The word תמשל (to rule) from Gen 4:7 plays a pivotal role in the unfolding of John Steinbeck’s epic novel *East of Eden*. Such artistic concerns are also reflected in scholarship. Westermann, for instance, states that vv. 6-7 are the heart of the story of Cain and Abel since it demonstrates the increasing effect of evil in that Cain murders his brother despite YHWH’s warning.<sup>89</sup> It is very curious then that in *Kain* Szondi pays scant attention to the significance of v. 7 in favour of discussing traditions concerning Cain’s parentage. Given the emphasis he places on the importance of choice in the therapeutic aspect of *Schicksalsanalyse* this appears to be a curious oversight on the part of Szondi. Why might this be so?

There is one possible explanation for Szondi’s disregard of vv. 6-7: that Cain’s extreme paroxysm negates any ability he may have to make a choice. In support of this, the myths and legends of the extra-biblical literature concerning Gen 4 that Szondi cites detail that Cain’s demonic origin and sexual jealousy are possible rationales for his paroxysm.

### Cain’s Demonic Origin?

As discussed previously, Szondi is more interested in the extra-biblical traditions surrounding Gen 4 rather than the biblical text itself (§2.2). This is evident, for instance, in his preoccupation with stories and legends concerning Cain’s parentage. Of particular interest is one reproduced by Bin-Gorion, which combines the aggadic-midrashic Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer (Pirqe R. El.) with Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (Tg.Ps.-J.), that reveals Cain was fathered by the angel Samael rather than Adam.<sup>90</sup> In the Pirqe R. El. account, Samael, “riding on the serpent came to [Eve], and she conceived.”<sup>91</sup> Targum

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<sup>88</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 104.

<sup>89</sup> Claus Westermann, *Handbook to the Old Testament*, trans. Robert H. Boyd (London: SPCK, 1969), 22.

<sup>90</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 20 n17.

<sup>91</sup> Pirqe R. El., 21.2

Pseudo-Jonathan asserts that “Adam knew Hava his wife, who had desired the Angel [i.e. Samael]; and she conceived, and bare Kain; and she said, I have acquired a man, the Angel of the Lord.”<sup>92</sup> Szondi offers two interpretations of these legends.

First, the legends might indicate that there is uncertainty over the paternity of Cain, as Szondi asks; “Was it Samael, the evil angel? Was it the Lord's messenger, as Eve claimed?”<sup>93</sup> It initially appears that Szondi does not realise that Bin-Gorion's source material reveals that the serpent and Samael are one and the same; however, this proves not to be the case. Szondi merely suggests that this is only one interpretation and an example of Freud's claim that *pater semper incertus est*, demonstrating that doubts about one's own paternity have existed since ancient times.<sup>94</sup>

More interesting, however, is Szondi's second assertion that Eve is projecting the responsibility for bringing evil into the world through Cain onto God via his proxy Samael rather than humanity. This thread will be picked up and explored in more detail below (see ‘YHWH's place in Cain's Ancestry’). Nevertheless, a demonic origin for Cain is also attested to in early Christian writing such as 1 Jn 3:11-15, possibly as a result of Samael's identification as the angel of death and with the role of *ha šāṭān* as reflected in the Talmud.<sup>95</sup>

### Sexual Rivalry and Jealousy

Szondi juxtaposes accounts detailing the demonic origins of Cain with stories which indicate that the catalyst for conflict between the two brothers was due to sexual rivalry. The Aggadah refers to a number of other children born to Adam and Eve besides Cain, Abel, and Seth, most notably twin sisters of both Cain and Abel.<sup>96</sup> Both Pirque R. El. and the *Book of Jubilees* identify sexual jealousy as the reason for Cain's murder of his brother. Pirque Rabbi Eliezer states Cain began to hate his brother not only because of his offering “but also because Abel's twin-sister was the most beautiful

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<sup>92</sup> Tg.Ps.-J. 4.1. It is clear from the previous chapter of Tg.Ps.-J. that the angel Eve refers to is Samael who engages her in the garden (see Tg.Ps.-J. 3.6). Furthermore, Pirque R. El. 13.2 identifies the serpent with Samael. Samael rides the serpent, which at this point has the appearance of a camel.

<sup>93</sup> Szondi, 20.

<sup>94</sup> Ref. to Sigmund Freud, “Family romances” in *Jensen's 'Gradiva'; and other works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 9, SE. (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 235-241.

<sup>95</sup> E.g. Avodah Zarah 20b.

<sup>96</sup> Ref. to Genesis Rabah 22.2 and to the translation of Tg.Ps.-J. 4.2 presented in J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature: An Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 132, cited in Angela Y.A.Y. Kim, “Cain and Abel in the Light of Envy: A Study in the History of the Interpretation of Envy in Gen 4.1-16,” *JSP* 12, no. 1 (2001): 65–84. The tradition of a twin sister for either or both Cain and Abel is also preserved in Josephus (*Ant.* 1.52) and the sixth century *Cave of Treasures* (Fol. 8a, col. 1).

of women, and he desired her in his heart. Moreover, he said: I will slay my brother and I will take his twin-sister from him.”<sup>97</sup> The author of Jubilees, on the other hand, contends that Adam and Eve only gave birth to one daughter, named Awan, prior to Abel’s murder, and therefore assumes that the struggle between the brothers took place over the only possible mate available.<sup>98</sup>

Szondi’s references to these stories of sexual jealousy reveal four things. First, as he details in some of his case studies in *Kain*, sexual jealousy is one aspect of the hatred and envy that, according to him, “are the leading traits of all Cainites.”<sup>99</sup> Second, it is further evidence for Szondi of ‘possession’ as his preferred etymology for קנא, as he states: “In the legend Cain seems to indulge in the desire for possession in general, to which he owes his name, to a great extent.”<sup>100</sup> Third, it reflects his initial interest in the role of *Schicksal* in his theory of love and marriage partner, particularly the incestual aspects of these legends (recall Szondi’s claim that there is no other form of love than incestuous love). The extra-biblical literature surrounding Gen 4 is mythological proof of this claim. Finally, it is possible to read into Szondi’s interest in a sexual locus for envy and hatred the hints of a Freudian interpretation of the drives for human aggression and violence. Thus, it could be argued that Szondi finds it difficult to break out of the Freudian paradigm for explaining the origins of human aggression and violence.

In Chapter 2, I briefly detailed Szondi’s thanatotropic drive system to explain the phenomena of human aggression and violence, which is comprised of four different thanatotropic factors: sexual, ego, contactual, and paroxysmal (§2.2). According to Szondi, these four factors interact with one another to manifest aggression and violence.<sup>101</sup> Hence, a sexual factor does play *a* role (but not *the* role) in explicating the reality of aggression and violence within the Szondian framework.

Nevertheless, Szondi theorizes that the Cain factor (i.e. the paroxysmal factor) is *the* factor which ignites the homicidal process. According to Szondi, an individual will move through a spectrum of affects from detachment to the demolition of human values and onto the accumulation of ‘Cain’ emotions. It is in this phase that Cain awakens: “The homicidal intent of Cain gradually attains an almost unbearable level of accumulations and, consequently, an intolerably high internal tension.

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<sup>97</sup> Pirke R. El., 21.7

<sup>98</sup> See Jub 4.1.

<sup>99</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 27.

<sup>100</sup> Szondi, 27.

<sup>101</sup> Szondi, “Thanatos and Cain”, 58.

Then suddenly Cain ignites the fuse.”<sup>102</sup> Cain’s rage forms a major concern for Szondi’s articulation of his drive system and the theory of human aggression originating in the paroxysmal factor. Given the sense of shame, envy, and hatred that Cain experiences, his ability to make a rational choice and elect to “do well” (תִּישֵׁב) is severely compromised. In other words, for Cain the concept of choice becomes immaterial. In his emotional state Cain is, in effect, incapable of understanding that he in fact has a choice.

### ***Cain’s Inheritance***

Despite this, it does seem to be an oversight on the part of Szondi that v. 7 does not hold more prominence for him. As I have shown (see §3.3), the narrator of Gen 4 makes a clear link between Cain’s situation and Eve’s in Gen 3 through תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאֵתָהּ תִּמְשַׁלְיָבּוּ (v. 7) that echoes YHWH’s curse of Eve (3:16b). The difference between the two chapters is that YHWH’s words form a warning in ch. 4 rather than a curse. This in turn implies that Cain still has a choice, but for Cain the compulsion (i.e. *Zwangs-Schicksal*) to “not do well” (הֲלוֹא תִישֵׁב) is irresistible.

In a Szondian reading of Gen 4 the reasons for this are apparent. After all, he is a child of his parents. As previously discussed, in Szondi’s concept of *Schicksalsanalyse* heritability is central. In Szondi’s own words it is an “‘ancestor’-theory.”<sup>103</sup> Just as his mother and father could not resist the desire to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 3:6), so too Cain cannot resist the urge (or ‘drive’ to use the language of *Schicksalspsychologie*) to “not do well.”<sup>104</sup>

Moreover, it would appear that Cain’s sin is greater than that of his parents, and the narrator of Gen 3–4 validates such a reading. After Adam and Eve’s transgression, YHWH expels them from Eden. Outside Eden, Cain’s violence results in his further expulsion “away from the presence of the LORD... in the land of Nod, east of Eden” (Gen 4:16);<sup>105</sup> therefore, with each transgression the offender is further removed from the Edenic ideal. The implication here, however, is that even after their offence, YHWH is still present with Adam and Eve, but will not be so with Cain after his. In YHWH’s eyes it seems that Cain’s sin is the greater. This perspective is further substantiated with

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<sup>102</sup> Szondi, 59.

<sup>103</sup> Szondi, “Contributions to ‘Fate Analysis’: An Attempt at a Theory of Choice in Love.”

<sup>104</sup> This in turn creates the space for interesting interpretations concerning Abel’s lineage, which in one sense rabbinic literature and the NT writers who make reference to Gen 4 recognise.

<sup>105</sup> Note the similar language used to describe Cain’s punishment and the initial reactions of his parents to the knowledge they were naked after eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. While his parents hide themselves from the presence מִפְּנֵי (Gen 3:8) of the LORD God out of a sense of shame, Cain shows no sense of shame and is rather forced from the presence מִלִּפְנֵי (Gen 4:16) of the LORD, further emphasising the position that Cain’s sin is greater.

the author's description of the exponential growth of violence that will follow through Cain's genetic line. Cain's sin is greater than his parents, just as Cain's descendent Lamech's sin is exponentially greater than Cain's (4:23-24), which is the crux of Szondi's concept of the familial unconscious vis-à-vis *Schicksalsanalyse* and the Cain complex. It is interesting to note that while Cain seems unconscious of his ancestral legacy when he transgresses, Lamech most certainly is not – in fact he revels in his link to the first murderer (v. 24). According to *Schicksalsanalyse*, it is possible to conclude that while Cain may have been able to choose an alternative action following therapeutic intervention in which his familial unconscious could be made conscious, Lamech, on the other hand, is a psychopath and most likely beyond any benefit that might be afforded by *Schicksalsanalyse*. Finally, then, the reader is left to contemplate the implications of this for civilisation that will be instituted by Lamech's progeny.

### *Cain's Ancestry*

It was previously suggested that some of the legends and myths cited by Szondi imply that Eve projects onto God the responsibility for bringing evil into the world through Cain via his proxy Samael (§4.5 'Cain's Demonic Origin?'). Since Samael was the messenger of God, on one level the responsibility for Cain's birth lies not with humankind but with God. Szondi further refers to a homily in the sixteenth century Midrash Tanhuma in which Cain attributes ultimate responsibility for Abel's death to YHWH:

So Cain retorted: 'True, I slew him, but You created the evil inclination within me. Since You are the guardian of all, why did You permit me to slay him? You who are called the I killed him, for if You had accepted my sacrifice as You accepted his, I would not have been envious of him.'<sup>106</sup>

One can take the notion of YHWH's culpability even further than this, however. On one literary level, the implications of a Szondian reading suggest that YHWH holds a place within Cain's 'genealogy' as his 'grandfather.' Such a reading is supported by the biblical text since the P account of creation in Gen 1:26 states that humankind has been made in God's image.<sup>107</sup> The non-P material states that the human was formed from the dust of the ground (עפר מן־האדמה) by YHWH, who then "breathed" the breath of life into the human's nostrils (Gen 2:7). Human life is therefore a direct result of and

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<sup>106</sup> Tanh., Bereshit 9 cited by Szondi, *Kain*, 21.

<sup>107</sup> Contemporary biblical scholarship suggests that this should be interpreted as indicating a particular role for humankind as God's representative on earth.

dependent upon the divine creative action, and both the P and non-P creation accounts emphasise this connection. Moreover, both accounts are linked by the presence of the so-called *toledot* (תולדות) formula (Gen 2:4), which, as will be discussed in detail in the following chapter (§5.2), connects the creation of heaven and earth to their ‘descendant’ האדם (the human). The connection between human life and the ground is made clear throughout these chapters of Genesis. After Abel is killed his blood returns to the ground and subsequently is “crying out” (צעקים) for justice (4:10). The ground is thus anthropomorphised on two levels: literarily through the metaphorical language of צעקים and literally through האדם.<sup>108</sup> Genesis 2–3 has established that humanity is so intimately connected to the soil/ground, that the ground itself becomes a character in the narrative of Gen 4 – a witness for the prosecution in the case against its descendant Cain.<sup>109</sup>

From a Szondian perspective these connections also suggest a heritability passed from God onto God’s creation. In effect, YHWH is the human’s ‘parent,’ a reading that is not without some foundation as the narrative itself suggests. By way of illustration, following Adam and Eve’s transgression and YHWH’s punishment of them, the narrator tells the reader that “YHWH made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them” (Gen 3:21). It would be difficult to find a tableau in the HB more redolent of the relationship between parent and child than this.

Ultimately, however, Szondi is more concerned with the connections between Eve and Cain than in the questions concerning YHWH’s role in Cain’s lineage that his theory, Gen 2–4,<sup>110</sup> and midrash imply. Some rabbinic commentators made the connection between the description in Gen 4:2-3 of Cain’s occupation as a worker of the ground (עבד אדמה) (v. 2), his offering of fruit of the ground (מפרי האדמה מנחה) (v. 3) and Eve’s taking of the fruit (מפרי) of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen 3:6). Szondi refers to Bin Gurion’s citation of an account from the seventeenth century midrash Yalqut Ruebeni that makes the claim that:

Cain succeeded his mother, but Abel was Adam’s son. Cain took from the fruits of the earth and thus followed the path of his mother, because so did Eve; she reached for the fruit. Abel, however, followed his father’s words, his victim was a thank-offering.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The personification of the land is a feature of the HB. Cf. with the description of a land (הארץ) “that devours its inhabitants” in Num 13:32, or the land which “vomits” in Lev 18:25; 28.

<sup>109</sup> For an overview of the legal character in Gen 4, especially vv. 9-16, see Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 303-312.

<sup>110</sup> See §3.3. For a further overview of the relationship between Gen 2-3 and 4 see Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 285-6. Martin Buber also makes important connections between Gen 2-3 and 4. See Martin Buber, *Images of Good and Evil*, trans. Michael Bullock (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1952), 26-30; 32-35.

<sup>111</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 10-11.

Cain therefore follows in the genetic inheritance from his mother; however, unlike his mother he transgresses not only against YHWH, but his brother also. Cain has brought death into the world and thus, his sin is greater than his parents. YHWH's presentation of a choice, the ground's cry for justice, and the punishment that will see him removed from the presence of YHWH all attest to and emphasise the severity of Cain's crime.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter began with the assertion that an examination of the German concept of *das Schicksal* is critical to understanding Szondi's conceptualisation of the 'Cain complex,' which is central to his major contribution to the field of psychoanalysis: his monumental explication of *Schicksalsanalyse*. His understanding of *Schicksal* must be understood in the historical context of its use within the German-speaking lands and by the social sciences of sociology and psychotherapy that emerged in the first half of the twentieth century. Common among these was a rejection that *Schicksal* necessarily implied a kind of fatalistic determinism. Szondi too rejects the idea that *Schicksal* was deterministic, emphasising the central role of choice in his framework. *Schicksalsanalyse*, according to Szondi, is designed to make visible the existential possibilities of an individual. When one sees the possibilities of existence, then one can choose. Although the choice is free, the range of possibilities are not limitless, however.

It seems to be an oversight on the part of Szondi then that when he turns to the text of Gen 4, he appears to overlook the role of choice in the narrative. I have attempted to demonstrate that what appears to have been a curious omission may be explained by his interest in and reliance upon the midrash on Gen 4 in expounding his metaphor for the origin of human violence. These sources reveal that the effect of *Zwangs-Schicksal* on Cain renders him incapable of realising that he in fact has a choice.

Though the circumlocution necessary to rationalise Szondi's indifference to interrogating the choice that YHWH presents Cain in the narrative may ultimately be unpersuasive, it is also somewhat redundant. As far as Szondi is concerned, Cain is the incomparable metaphor for his explanation of the homicidal process which is initiated in volatile circumstances following an "unbearable level of accumulations."<sup>112</sup> The matter of choice is thus somewhat immaterial to Szondi's *ex post facto* hypothesis of why killers kill.

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<sup>112</sup> Szondi, 59.

Nonetheless, this should not detract from the validity of a Szondian reading of the account of Cain's murder of his brother. There is a symbiotic reciprocity at play: the text provides the metaphor for Szondi's psychological framework which is used in turn as a lens through which the text can be cross-examined and interpreted. A Szondian reading thus reveals further the role of Cain's familial inheritance, including questions concerning the role of YHWH. These are explanations, if not somewhat exculpatory evidence in the prosecution against him, for why Cain was not capable of seeing the *Wahl-Schicksal* in the face of the *Zwangs-Schickal* that confronted him.



## CHAPTER 5 THE FAMILIAL UNCONSCIOUS AND THE GENIUS OF GENESIS

*In the Bible Cain slew Abel,  
And east of Eden, mama, he was cast.  
You're born into this life paying  
For the sins of somebody else's past.*

Bruce Springsteen, "Adam Raised a Cain"

### 5.1 Introduction

Located on top of a hill to the east of the centre of Zürich, not far from the city's zoo, Friedhof Fluntern is a beautiful cemetery, more reminiscent of an idyllic sculpture park than its necropolitan main purpose might suggest. It attracts tourists who come to visit the graves of James Joyce and a handful of Swiss Nobel Prize winners and other artists and intellectuals. It is also here, a short walk from the Szondi-Institut located in what was once his family home, that Léopold Szondi is buried in a family plot along with his wife, Lili, and their two children, Peter and Vera. The single elegant granite headstone for all four people suggests the central importance of family to Szondi. On closer inspection, the dates for each member of the family also tell of the sadness and tragedy that continued to befall Szondi into the latter stages of his life. Both Peter (1929-1971) and Vera (1928-1978) died in tragic circumstances before either of the parents, the son by suicide and the daughter from adrenal function failure due to tuberculosis. The deaths of their adult children had a devastating effect on their parents. After Vera's death, Lili Szondi wrote to her cousin that "not only did Peter and Vera perish, but they also destroyed us. My husband always mourns the no longer existing family."<sup>1</sup>

The origins of Szondi's fascination with the role that family plays in the life of the unconscious mind begins with his father, Abraham Sonnenschein, and his siblings, twelve in all, from the father's two marriages. Léopold was the second youngest of Abraham's thirteen children, and the sixth of his seven sons, yet he would outlive all his siblings by several decades and many of his nephews and nieces. Szondi was born into impoverished conditions, and he owed his education to his older brothers and sisters who supported the family after they moved to Budapest in 1898 when he was five years of age. Abraham exercised a strong influence on the young Szondi even after his death in 1911, when Szondi was aged eighteen. His family background served to nourish Szondi's interest in

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<sup>1</sup> Bürgi-Meyer, *Léopold Szondi*, 109.

*Schicksalsanalyse* and the central role the familial unconscious plays in it, a fact Szondi himself indicated: “Where could one have come to such thoughts more easily than in a family, where one had to witness the fate of the happy and unhappy life, the career choices, the diseases and deaths of twelve siblings?”<sup>2</sup>

Szondi’s theory of the familial unconscious is central to his concept of *Schicksalsanalyse*. In the previous chapter I examined how *Schicksalsanalyse* came to be influenced by both Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis and the integral role Szondi’s notion of the familial unconscious plays in it. Although Szondi himself appeared to have been more heavily influenced by Freud, in many respects his theory does bear more similarities to Jungian ideas regarding the collective. Nevertheless, aside also from his clinical experiences, the third influence on Szondi’s theory would be his own religious tradition and familial inheritances, particularly from his father.

In the first part of this chapter, I present a reading of Genesis with an emphasis on the concept of תולדת (*toledot*). This will provide the foundations upon which I examine Szondi’s theory of the familial unconscious. I then move on to examine the milieu of Judaism within Hungary during the second half of the nineteenth century and consider the influence it may have had on Szondi and his family. In the final part of the chapter, I explore Szondi’s own familial history. I suggest that the interest in genealogy that is evident in both Genesis and nineteenth century Hungarian Judaism also becomes manifest in Szondi’s *Kain*, thereby demonstrating that Szondi’s interest in the saga of familial generations is also reflected in and was cultivated by his family and his Jewish heritage. Nowhere is the issue of family and genealogy more pronounced than in the first book of the Torah, *Bereshit* (Genesis), from which Szondi would be inspired to explicate the central idea of his theory of *Schicksalsanalyse*, that being the Cain complex, through one of its foundational narratives.

## 5.2 Genesis: *toledot* and the Familial Unconscious

The first two elements of Szondi’s theory of *Schicksalsanalyse* concern genetic heredity and the interaction of the drives which it largely determines. The elements form what he called the familial unconscious (see §4.4 ‘Familial Unconscious: A Bridge between Freudian and Jungian Psychoanalysis’). In the previous chapter I began to demonstrate some of the religious influences behind Szondi’s articulation of the Cain complex, in particular his interest in rabbinic and midrashic

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<sup>2</sup> Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – eine Selbstdarstellung”, 16.

sources. In the first part of this chapter, I explore some of the implications of Szondi's religious background in more depth. I will first examine the function of the so-called *toledot* formulae within the book of Genesis and more broadly in other books of the HB. I will then move on to evaluate the form and function of genealogies within Genesis with an emphasis on the genealogies of Gen 4. I argue that these form the cultural foundations of the theory that Szondi would articulate as the familial unconscious.

### ***The toledot Formulae***

Deriving from the verb יָלַד (to beget), תּוֹלְדוֹת (descendants or generations) appears as a regular motif within the HB. Of the thirty-nine occurrences of the word, all but ten of them are within the Torah, with Genesis and Numbers each containing thirteen and Exodus the remaining three.<sup>3</sup> So prevalent is תּוֹלְדוֹת as both literary and thematic marker within Genesis that scholars have hypothesised the existence of a separate and distinct source for this material. The so-called 'book of generations' was first proposed by J.S. Vater and revived in modern scholarship by von Rad who interpreted the phrase סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדוֹת in Gen 5:1 as a reference to an actual book of genealogical lists. The title of this book was preserved in this verse and provided both the source material and oldest foundation of the P corpus.<sup>4</sup> This idea was rejected by Westermann, citing Otto Eissfeldt *et al*, who suggests that סֵפֶר simply refers to the genealogy (תּוֹלְדוֹת) of Adam (i.e. the 'list') where in other instances תּוֹלְדוֹת refers to the narrative that follows.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the hypothesis of a book of generations as a source for the P corpus within Genesis has proven to be an enduring one. It was taken up by Cross who argued that the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 originated from the same supposed *toledot* book.<sup>6</sup> David M. Carr later suggested that the wider genealogical material in Genesis 11–50 originates from the same P layer or strand as Gen 5, although there is also some dependence upon non-P material such as Gen 10:24-25.<sup>7</sup> It is not my intention to enter into the debate concerning the redactional implications of the presence of the term תּוֹלְדוֹת, nor to assess the relative strengths of these arguments or otherwise, rather I merely want to demonstrate that scholarship has for some time noted that the term תּוֹלְדוֹת is significant in Genesis. It is sufficient to note that one of the distinguishing features of Genesis concerns the so-called *toledot*

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<sup>3</sup> Gen 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 13, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2; Exod 6:16, 19; 28:10; Num 1:20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42; 3:1. Nine of the ten non-Pentateuchal instances of the term are in 1 Chron, the other being Ruth 4:18.

<sup>4</sup> von Rad, *Genesis*, 68. See also Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis*, 72 n.47.

<sup>5</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 355.

<sup>6</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 301.

<sup>7</sup> Carr, 93.

formulae, in which the phrase אלה תולדת (“these are the generations”) provides a literary framework for the book.<sup>8</sup>

The *toledot* formulae have traditionally been interpreted as either functioning as colophons or headings, that is as subscriptions referring backwards or superscriptions pointing forwards to the narratives surrounding them.<sup>9</sup> The rationale for the argument that the *toledot* formulae within Genesis function as colophons, as posited by a number of early source critics, stems from reading Gen 2:4a as a subscription to the P material which precedes it and applying this rule to similar material across the book.<sup>10</sup> Such critics maintained that the source material for much of Genesis were tablets in which אלה תולדת marked the conclusion of each unit.<sup>11</sup> However, while both the תולדת of Adam (5:1) and Jacob (37:2) *could* be read as colophons referring to material immediately preceding the formulae (since תולדת is also a cognate for ‘history’),<sup>12</sup> it is difficult to read other instances of the formulae as subscriptions. As Wenham points out, in all other instances of the אלה תולדת formulae the phrase refers to the descendants that figure *X* produces rather than the ancestors of *X*.<sup>13</sup> The question remains, however, whether it is possible to read Gen 2:4a (אלה תולדות) as a heading which is thereby consistent with the manner in which אלה תולדת functions in the rest of Genesis.<sup>14</sup>

It is indeed possible, and, given the function of the *toledot* formulae as it appears in the ‘final form’ of Genesis, such a reading should be preferred. While various macrostructural analyses of Genesis have long been advanced – the most time-honoured being the traditional three-part segmentation of Primeval History (chs 1-11); Patriarchal History (12-36); and Joseph Novella (37-50) – scholars have for some time also noted that Genesis is structured around ten distinct sections demarcated by the phrase אלה תולדת (excluding repetitions of the formulae in the account of Esau’s תולדת in Gen 36:1

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<sup>8</sup> Num 3:1 also employs the phrase אלה תולדת in a manner and purpose which is connected to the uses of the phrase in Genesis (as does Ruth 4:18, for that matter). The connections between Num 3:1 and the use of the phrase in Genesis will be explored further in Chapter 7.

<sup>9</sup> See Jason Derouchie, “The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis,” *JETS* 56, no. 2 (2013): 219–47.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 543–53, cited in Derouchie, “The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis,” 223.

<sup>11</sup> Derouchie, 222-3.

<sup>12</sup> As is the case in the NRSV’s translation of Gen 37:2.

<sup>13</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 55-6.

<sup>14</sup> This is a possibility that, for example, scholars such as von Rad and Westermann do not appear to consider. See Westermann, 81; von Rad, 61; 68-9.

and 9).<sup>15</sup> It has further been proposed that these ten sections fall somewhat neatly into two groups of five.<sup>16</sup> The first five of these sections deal with the primeval ancestors (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; and 11:10), while the second relates to the patriarchs of Israel and neighbouring nations (11:27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; and 37:2).<sup>17</sup>

More recently, however, a variation of this broad structure has been proposed which considers the presence of the *waw* conjunction in five of the aforementioned instances (i.e. 10:1; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; and 36:1). Scholarship has tended to overlook the significance of the *waw*, or at least view it as relatively insignificant.<sup>18</sup> Researchers Matthew Thomas and Jason Derouchie have built on the work of earlier scholars to re-emphasise the significance of the *waw* conjunction so as to refine the legacy of a ten-segment macrostructural division of Genesis into a division of five segments.<sup>19</sup> The presence of the *waw* conjunction in the *toledot* formulae thus serves to form a kind of sub-heading which links to the preceding material. The ten-division macrostructure and the five-division approach advocated by Thomas and Derouchie are compared below:

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<sup>15</sup> E.g. Karl Budde, “Ellätoledoth,” *ZAW* 34 (1914): 241–53; and von Rad, *Genesis*, 68, citing his earlier work *Die Priesterschrift im Hexateuch: Literarisch Untersucht und Theologisch Gewertet* (BZWANT; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1934) 33–40.

<sup>16</sup> Naomi A. Steinberg, “The World of the Family in Genesis,” in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 279–300.

<sup>17</sup> Alternative divisions have been posited by B.S. Childs et al, in which the formula is categorised as either the opening to a genealogy of the father *X* (5:1; 10:1; 11:10; 25:12; 36:1 [and 9]), or the opening of a narrative (2:4; 6:9; 11:27; 25:19; 37:2). See Sarah Schwartz, “Narrative Toledot Formulae in Genesis: The Case of Heaven and Earth, Noah, and Isaac,” *JHS* 16 (2016), n7.

<sup>18</sup> E.A. Speiser, for example, declared; “At the beginning of a sentence, and particularly of a paragraph, section, or book, the translation equivalent of *wa* is zero.” E.A. Speiser, *Genesis*, 3rd ed., vol. 1, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1986), lxvii.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew A. Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the “toledot” Formula* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2011); Derouchie, “The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis.” They cite Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (2 vols., trans. Israel Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961, 1964); Peter Weimar, “Die Toledot-Formel in der priesterschriftlichen Geschichtsdarstellung,” *BZ* 18 (1974) 73–75; J. Severino Croatto, “De la creation al Sinai: Periodization de la historia en el Pentateuco,” *RevistaBAL* (1985): 43–51; and Klaus Koch, “Die Toledot-Formeln als Strukturprinzip des Buches Genesis,” in *Recht und Ethos im Alten Testament—Gestalt und Wirkung: Festschrift für Horst Seebass zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Stefan Beyerle, Gunter Mayer, and Hans Strauß; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999).

Table 5-1. Comparison between the Ten and Five Macrostructural Divisions of Genesis based upon the *toledot* formulae adapted from the work of Thomas and Derouchie.

The Ten <i>toledot</i> Divisions of Genesis		The Five <i>toledot</i> Divisions of Genesis	
1	The תולדות of Heaven and Earth (2:4a–4:26)	1	These are the תולדות of Heaven and Earth (2:4a–4:26)
2	The תולדות of Adam (5:1–6:8)	2	This is the list of the תולדות of Adam (5:1–6:8)
3	The תולדות of Noah (6:9–9:29)	3	These are the תולדות of Noah (6:9–9:29)
4	The תולדות of Noah's sons (10:1–11:9)		<i>waw</i> And these are the תולדות of Noah's sons (10:1–11:9)
5	The תולדות of Shem (11:10-26)	4	These are the תולדות of Shem (11:10-26)
6	The תולדות of Terah (11:27–25:11)		<i>waw</i> And these are the תולדות of Terah (11:27–25:11)
7	The תולדות of Ishmael (25:12-18)		<i>waw</i> And these are the תולדות of Ishmael (25:12-18)
8	The תולדות of Isaac (25:19–35:29)		<i>waw</i> And these are the תולדות of Isaac (25:19–35:29)
9	The תולדות of Esau (36:1–37:1)		<i>waw</i> And these are the תולדות of Esau (36:1–37:1)
10	The תולדות of Jacob (37:2–50:26)	5	These are the תולדות of Jacob (37:2–50:26)

The purpose behind this structure is to emphasise the themes of promise (Thomas) or blessing (Derouchie), with the key events being the Noahide and Abrahamic covenants.<sup>20</sup> The *toledot* formulae is the mechanism through which the compiler of Genesis narrows the focus of who will receive the divine promise/blessing in a history which stretches from the creation of heaven and earth and their 'descendant' האדם, through to the calling of Abra(ha)m and on to the establishment of the nation of Israel.<sup>21</sup> The *toledot* formulae, therefore, point forward, calling the reader's attention to the 'progeny' of the proper noun with which it is associated.<sup>22</sup> Hence, reading Gen 2:4a as a reference to the material which follows it serves to emphasise the narrowing of focus throughout Genesis from the universal to the establishment of the nation of Israel. Such a reading is further enhanced by an additional intertextual link between creation and תולדות that is made in the תולדות of Adam (Gen 5) through the use of the terms דמות (likeness) and צלם (image) (vv. 1 and 3) which are the same as those used in Gen 1:26. Furthermore, and as David Clines has asserted, the divine pronouncements in Gen 1:26-28 consist of the commands to 'be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth' (v. 28), which the

<sup>20</sup> Thomas also emphasises the Sinai covenant due to the occurrence of תולדות אלה in Num 3:1. In fact, the same argument could be extended to the Davidic covenant due to the formula's presence in Ruth 4:18. These are important points and will be given further consideration later in this study.

<sup>21</sup> It is interesting, if not odd, that Abra(ha)m does not receive his own תולדות heading considering his place as the most important patriarch in Genesis. For an overview of the various theories and explanations for this, see Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the "toledot" Formula*, 49-51.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas, 123-4.

genealogies that follow in Genesis subsequently depict.<sup>23</sup> It therefore makes more sense to read the תולדת אלה in Gen 2:4a as a heading rather than a subscription.<sup>24</sup>

### The *toledot* Formulae and Plot

One further recent and creative division of Genesis based around the *toledot* formulae that has been proposed by Todd Patterson is worth considering. Patterson argues that the formulae create six main narrative sections in the book – a prologue (Gen 1:1–2:3) and five *toledot* groupings. He labels these groupings “plexuses”, from the Latin word *plectere* meaning ‘to braid,’ which are composed of between one and three *toledot* “strands.”<sup>25</sup>

Table 5-2. Six Macrostructural Divisions of Genesis proposed by Patterson.

The Six Divisions of Genesis		
1	Prologue	Genesis 1:1–2:3
2	The Heaven and Earth Plexus	The תולדות of Heaven and Earth strand (2:4a–4:26)
3	The Noah Plexus	The תולדת of Adam strand (5:1–6:8)
		The תולדת of Noah strand (6:9–9:29)
		The תולדת of Noah’s sons strand (10:1–11:9)
4	The Terah Plexus	The תולדת of Shem strand (11:10–26)
		The תולדת of Terah strand (11:27–25:11)
		The תולדת of Ishmael strand (25:12–18)
5	The Isaac Plexus	The תולדת of Isaac strand (25:19–35:29)
		The תולדת of Esau strand (36:1–37:1)
6	The Jacob Plexus	The תולדת of Jacob strand (37:2–50:26)

According to Patterson, these plexuses function as a plot device, similar to the way an act functions in a play. Although Patterson eschews paradigmatic analyses of plot structure, he nevertheless argues that in Genesis it is possible to discern a beginning, middle and end, to use the traditional Aristotelian

<sup>23</sup> David J.A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, 2nd ed., vol. 10, JSOTSup (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 71–4. Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 17.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Wenham, 56; Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis*, 74–5; Derouchie, 224.

<sup>25</sup> Todd L. Patterson, *The Plot-Structure of Genesis: ‘Will the Righteous Seed Survive?’ In the Muthos-Logical Movement from Complication to Dénouement*, vol. 160, BibInt Series (Leiden: BRILL, 2018), 13.

framework, in the work's final form. To summarise this structure broadly, after an introduction, the narrative tension is established with the expulsion from Eden and the question of how humanity may return to God's presence. Patterson suggests that the solution is hinted at early in Genesis through the agency of offspring (Gen 3:15). The initial complication in the resolution of the plot occurs, however, when Cain kills Abel and threatens this agency. Further variations of this complication occur in the plexuses related to Noah, Terah, and Isaac before the climax and dénouement of the plot takes place in the Joseph plexus.<sup>26</sup>

Considering an overarching plot-structure of Genesis is useful for two interrelated reasons. First, it takes into account the final form of the text. By considering the structure of Genesis holistically, it is possible to discern the literary features that the compiler has employed throughout the text, such as the pattern of *toledot* formulae, and, possibly, the compiler's purpose in structuring the materials in such a way. For Patterson, the purpose is shaped around the theme of survival and its dependence upon righteousness. While Patterson's interpretation of Genesis has much to commend, I find that it is his organising principle, in his case the 'strands' created by the *toledot* formulae, which is most useful for approaching the final form of Genesis. I intend to follow a similar approach in chapters 7 and 8 of this study, although my organising principle will be the recurrence of the theme of sibling rivalry.

The second reason that Patterson's approach is useful is that it draws attention to the fact that Genesis can be viewed as a single literary work which has been skilfully and, importantly, artfully created. This is by no means to deny the composite elements of its character, but rather to emphasise the genius of Genesis as literary and theological artwork. Such genius is only reinforced when one considers the *אלה תולדת* motif within Genesis and what it also signifies intertextually in the Torah (Num 3:1) and beyond (e.g. Ruth 4:18).

In so doing, it is possible to perceive the purpose of the compiler of Genesis in their arrangement of the material. As has been discussed, the *אלה תולדת* formulae represents a narrowing of focus throughout Genesis from the creation of heaven and earth and their 'descendant' *האדם*, who is formed from the earth in the likeness of God, through to the families of Adam, Noah, Terah and his son Abra(ha)m, to Isaac, Jacob, and the establishment of the nation of Israel as the sole legitimate claimant to the promise that was given to Abraham.

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<sup>26</sup> Patterson, *The Plot-Structure of Genesis*, 10-11.



## *Genealogy and the Structure of Genesis*

Naomi Steinberg, a specialist on the family in ANE contexts, states that “Genesis is a book whose plot is genealogy.”<sup>27</sup> While the HB is replete with genealogical lists, the genealogies within Genesis have long attracted the interest of scholars.<sup>28</sup> A working definition of the genre of genealogy, following Robert R. Wilson’s seminal work, is “a written or oral expression of the descent of a person or persons from an ancestor or ancestors.”<sup>29</sup> A more thorough definition has been suggested by Richard Hess who stipulates that a genealogy, vis-à-vis Genesis in particular, comprises “those texts where proper names are found and kinship relationships are noted between the name bearers... which occur more than once in a predictable pattern.”<sup>30</sup>

One of Wilson’s major contributions to the study of biblical genealogies has been the identification of two sub-genres of genealogy: the linear genealogy and the segmented genealogy.<sup>31</sup> Put briefly, linear genealogies function as a link to a person or group from an earlier ancestor or group and indicate one line of descent. The genealogies contained in the תולדת of Adam (Gen 5) and Shem (Gen 11) are examples of linear genealogy and focus on a single descendent in each following generation linked by the repetition of the Hiphil verb ויולד (‘and he fathered’). After ten generations in Gen 5, or nine in the case of Gen 11, the lists branch out and note three sons. One of these sons represents the line of promise/election, while the treatments of the remaining sons’ genealogies become segmented. This pattern is repeated in the accounts of Abraham’s sons and grandsons. Taken together the linear genealogies in Genesis thus represent an unbroken line of descendants from Adam to Jacob.

Segmented genealogies, on the other hand, express more than one single line of descent with a number of branches for each of the various siblings within a given generation. The function of the segmented genealogy is to preserve traditions associated with secondary family lines; hence, the descendants of Japheth and Ham as depicted in the Table of Nations (Gen 10:2-20); Ishmael as the ancestor of the nomadic peoples who inhabit the desert regions of the Arabian Peninsula (Gen 25:18); and Esau as the ancestor of the Edomites (Gen: 36:9). One further example of a segmented genealogy is that of Cain in Gen 4:17-22. Although some features of this genealogy follow the style of a linear genealogy (most notably v. 18), there are at least three main features which point to its segmented status. First,

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<sup>27</sup> Naomi A. Steinberg, “The Genealogical Framework of the Family Stories in Genesis,” *Semeia*, no. 46 (1989): 41–50.

<sup>28</sup> For an overview of the scholarly interest in OT genealogies, especially those in Genesis see Robert R. Wilson, “The Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research,” *JBL* 94, no. 2 (June 1975).

<sup>29</sup> Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 9.

<sup>30</sup> Richard S. Hess, “The Genealogies of Genesis 1-11 and Comparative Literature,” *Bib* 70, no. 2 (1989), 242.

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, “The Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research,” 179-86.

and most obviously, the genealogy does not constitute the line of promise/election. Second, it has been suggested that segmented genealogies serve to make claims to certain territory or skills.<sup>32</sup> Clearly, this is one of the functions of Gen 4:17-22 as the reader is told that Cain establishes the first city, named after his son Enoch (v. 17), and the children of Lamech, i.e. Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain, are the ancestors of nomadic pastoralists, musicians, and metal workers respectively (vv. 20-22).

The third feature is somewhat less transparent and relates to the narrative ‘speed’ which appears to be a feature of segmented genealogies. Thomas identifies that the pacing of the segmented genealogies is slower than that of linear genealogies so as to direct the reader’s attention to one or two generations specifically.<sup>33</sup> Using the example of the accounts of the reigns of the northern king Omri (1 Kgs 16:23-28) and his son Ahab (1 Kgs 16:29–22:40), Thomas notes that there is a distinct change of pace with the more important king in terms of ANE geopolitics, Omri, only being allocated six verses, whereas his son, a minor king by comparison, has six chapters allocated to the account of his reign. The purpose of the DtrH was obviously better served by dwelling at length on the reign of Ahab than of his father Omri who was, seemingly, more well-known outside of Israel at that time and for some time following.<sup>34</sup> Narrative pacing is thus “a key tool in assigning importance and in shaping the readers’ impression of what is important.”<sup>35</sup> Thomas applies this principle to the segmented genealogies which demonstrates evidence of the author’s interest in making the reader linger over these accounts and consider the figures in them.

It is possible to see this technique at work in Gen 4:17-22. The slowing of the narrative begins with a brief interlude in 4:17b before a more linear style is followed in the following verse. Verse 17b acts as an aside informing the reader that Cain was the first to build a city, which was named after his son

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<sup>32</sup> James K. Hoffmeier, Gordon J. Wenham, and Kenton Sparks, *Genesis: History, Fiction, or Neither?: Three Views on the Bible’s Earliest Chapters*, ed. Charles Halton (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2015), 75.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 87. Interestingly, Thomas does not view Cain’s genealogy as a segmented genealogy (ref p 92); however, given the criteria outlined above, this is an evaluation that is open to challenge. Besides which, there are alternative scholarly opinions which do view the genealogy as an example of the segmented sub-genre. Cf. Hoffmeier, Wenham, and Sparks, *Genesis: History, Fiction, or Neither?*, 106.

<sup>34</sup> The DtrH author’s purpose of highlighting the corruption of the northern kings being better served by Ahab who was not as prominent or as politically successful as his father Omri.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the “toledot” Formula*, 94.

Enoch.<sup>36</sup> With remarkable economy, v. 18 details the succession of five generations from Enoch to Lamech using the repetitive phrase *X* ילד (fathered) *Y* for four of these generations.<sup>37</sup> From v. 19 the pace once again slows so the reader can attend to the case of Lamech. This slowing of the narrative becomes immediately apparent after the reader is told the names of Lamech's two wives, Adah and Zillah, since women are usually absent from linear genealogies (though obviously an essential component to the progress of any תולדת).

It is no coincidence that Lamech is also the seventh generation from Adam. I have discussed previously the significance of the number seven in Gen 4 (see §3.3); however, it is sufficient to note that it might convey the concept of completion.<sup>38</sup> It has been noted that genealogies will at times draw specific attention to the seventh generation.<sup>39</sup> Lamech, given his violent trait, thus provides a counterpoint to Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam through the line of Seth who is described as righteous and one who walked with God (5:22 and 24). From Lamech, Cain's genealogy then segments into four children – three sons and a daughter (Lamech's family therefore comprising seven people). The significance of the occupation and role of Lamech's offspring has also been discussed (see §3.3), the traditional and commonly held scholarly opinion being that they represent the earliest elements of civilisation.<sup>40</sup> It is also significant that they are the seventh generation from Cain, the builder of the first city, since the author/compiler is, through this link, intending to make a comment

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<sup>36</sup> The ambiguity surrounding this verse is acknowledged: was it Cain or Enoch who founded the first city? Arguments for both readings have been made. On one hand, it seems to make more sense that Enoch built the first city and named it after his son, Irad creating a play on words between עיר (city) and עירד, which might match the wordplay on בנה (build) and בנו (his son). For an overview of the arguments in support of Enoch refer to Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 111. On the other hand, the presence of Enoch as the final word in the objective clause of the verse in the MT also presents a challenge to such a reading. Szondi seems to make it clear that he believed the description of the first city builder referred to Cain since he credits Cain as the inventor of “‘property’ and thus ‘capitalism’” (see *Kain*, 42-3) which would be implied by his status as the first city builder. He also cites Josephus in support of this position. However, he also notes that Enoch as the builder of a city (“Erbauer einer Stadt”) in the accompanying genealogical table.

<sup>37</sup> Following the initial imperfect Niphal form, ויילד (hence, “To Enoch was born Irad”).

<sup>38</sup> See §3.3 Composition. For further information on the significance of seven in Gen 4 refer to Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 96. On the idea that seven refers to completion, see Richard S. Hess, “Lamech in the Genealogies of Genesis,” *BBR* 1 (1991): 21–25.

<sup>39</sup> J.M. Sasson, “A Genealogical ‘Convention’ in Biblical Chronography?,” *ZAW* 90 (1978): 171–85.

<sup>40</sup> For an alternative perspective see Nissim Amzallag, “Why Is the Cain Genealogy (Gen.4:17-24) Integrated into the Book of Genesis?,” *ANES* 55 (2018): 23–50. Amzallag sees both the origin of metallurgy and an early form of Yahwism which can be dated from the fifth to the fourth millennia BCE, in the genealogy.

about the nature of human progress and the role of violence within it.<sup>41</sup> This perspective becomes more apparent in the following chapters of Genesis as a distinction is drawn between the Cainite and Sethite lines of Adam's genealogy, the latter of whom will produce the last righteous man, Noah, while the former produces a world of increasing depravity and corruption. Before this, however, the suggestion that the inability to master sin is linked to progress is also intimated by the song of Lamech (4:23-24).

To summarise briefly, the reader of Gen 4:17-14 is being asked to pause and consider the genealogy of Cain. Though it contains some of the attributes of a linear genealogy, it functions more like a segmented genealogy and should be considered as such. The pace of the narrative slows so that the reader may focus on the role of Lamech and his immediate family, who embody both the progress of technology and civilisation, from the establishment of the first city, and the exponential growth of violence. The author/compiler is herein laying the groundwork for a binary comparison between two branches of the same family, one of which will represent evil, the other righteousness.

The broader question remains, however, as to why the compiler of Genesis was so interested in genealogies. E.A. Speiser provides a succinct answer when he concludes that "to dedicated guardians of cherished traditions, unbroken lineage meant a secure link with the remote past, and hence also a firm basis from which to face the future."<sup>42</sup> The function of the genealogies in Genesis is therefore both literary and theological, performing not just as a structural device for the author/compiler, but links the establishment of the twelve tribes of Israel to the beginning of all things in the creation of the cosmos, along the way situating the election of Israel over its unfavoured, though not forsaken, neighbours.

### 5.3 Neolog Judaism

The preoccupation with national origins and genealogical lineage that is evident in the arrangement of material in Genesis was shared by and reflected in the emergence of Neolog Judaism, one of the

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<sup>41</sup> Such a concern is also shared by modernity's preoccupation with advancing civilisation. Modernity's claim is in part that the greatest achievement of humanity was the establishment of civilisation, of which the city is emblematic. However, as both the creator of the Primeval History and modernist thinkers were aware, civilisation and modernity contain the seeds of its own destruction. The Primeval History ends with the destruction of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11) and the diffusion of humanity. Consequently, its thesis bears some similarity to modernist works such as H.G. Wells's 1895 novel *The Time Machine*, and T.S. Eliot's 1922 poem *The Waste Land*. The preoccupation of such writers and thinkers was the potential for culture and civilisation to either progress or regress, through either evolution to a technocratic utopia or devolution to a barbaric dystopia.

<sup>42</sup> Speiser, *Genesis*, 41.

two main Jewish denominations in Hungary in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The term Neolog (from the Greek νέος λόγος) emerges in German-language literature in Hungary after 1850 and came to be associated with reform-minded Jews. In 1867 the Law of Emancipation gave Hungarian Jews the same rights as Christians, and this in turn became the catalyst for a gathering of Hungarian Jewry in Budapest in December the following year. The purpose of the meeting was to elect a commission that would represent the community in its dealings with the state and also engage in disputes over religion, education, and other aspects of community life.<sup>43</sup> What became known as the Jewish Congress took place in Budapest between December 1868 and February 1869, but rather than resulting in a unified voice for Hungarian Jews, it led to a schism within the Jewish community. By 1870, Hungarian Jewry was divided into two state-sanctioned denominations: Orthodoxy and the Neologs. However, a third group emerged shortly after in recognition that many Jews did not wish to choose between the two denominations. This group adopted the moniker Status Quo Ante, in reference to the pre-Congress situation.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, following the Congress the two largest groups would remain Orthodoxy, representing the majority of Hungarian Jews, and the Neologs who would constitute a substantial one-third minority of the Jewish population during the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Neolog Judaism was, however, most successful in the larger urban centres of Hungary and amongst the burgeoning Jewish middle and upper-middle classes. Outside these large urban centres, in the rural and regional areas, Orthodoxy was the more dominant denomination.<sup>46</sup>

According to the American Jewish studies scholar, Mari Réthelyi, there has been a tendency within scholarship to portray the Neolog movement's origins as an extension of progressive movements spreading from Germany into Central Europe.<sup>47</sup> The influential Bohemian-German rabbi, Zacharias

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<sup>43</sup> Mari Réthelyi, "Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism," *Nova Religio* 18, no. 2 (2014): 67–82.

<sup>44</sup> Howard N. Lupovitch, *Jews at the Crossroads* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2007), 254.

<sup>45</sup> Réthelyi, "Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism," 71.

<sup>46</sup> Demographic and statistical data concerning the Jewish populations in both Budapest and Nyitra following World War I are illustrative of some of the key differences in two main denominations. In 1920 the largest Jewish community in Hungary was the Neolog Israelite Congregation of Pest, which included only those Jews living on the left bank of the Danube, numbering approximately 200,000 people. It included 42 synagogues and supported a number of community organisations such as the National Rabbinical Seminary, Talmud Torah schools, hospitals, secondary schools and a museum. By contrast the Orthodox Congregation of Budapest (i.e. both sides of the Danube) numbered approximately 40,000 people.

These figures are based on estimates by Raphael Patai which in turn were informed by different statistics provided in the 1929 *Hungarian Jewish Lexicon* and the 1920 official census, which some Jews would have avoided participating in. The actual raw data from the census is based on the number of taxpayers, of which the Israelite Congregation of Pest reported 57,000 while the Orthodox Congregation of Budapest reported 7,000. (Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary: History, Culture, Psychology* [Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1996], 440-1.)

<sup>47</sup> Réthelyi, "Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism," 68. For one such example, see Patai, *The Jews of Hungary*.

Frankel, instituted the positive-historical approach to Judaism, which sought to understand Judaism within its historical context, and would later become known as Conservative Judaism.<sup>48</sup> This movement became popular among Central European Jews, eventually spreading to North America in the late nineteenth century with the migration of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. However, Réthelyi and others suggest that the German influence on the Neolog movement in Hungary as its main distinguishing feature has been somewhat overstated.<sup>49</sup> German Jewish migrants to Hungary did bring with them new ideas such as Frankel's and *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (science of Judaism), as well as German as the language of both teaching and research, all of which contributed to the reformist and progressive origins of the Neolog Jewish movement. However, Réthelyi asserts that particular aspects of Neolog Judaism made it unique to Hungary, and foremost among these was their assertion of a common national identity with non-Jewish Hungarians.<sup>50</sup> Neologs embraced Hungarian nationalism, even going so far as to claim to have common ethnic origins with Hungarians. They avowed a number of convoluted, and at times contradictory claims, which sought to trace their ethnic origins "not back to ancient Israel but to Central Asia and the conquest of Hungary through a common Judeo-Hungarian past."<sup>51</sup> The theories that were put forward by Neolog intellectuals in claiming their Hungarian identity reflected nineteenth century preoccupations with race and nationalism. I will deal with the details of several of these theories later in this chapter.<sup>52</sup>

For now, however, it should be noted that the Neolog assertion of a Judeo-Magyar common heritage in Hungary was not only oriented to claims regarding ethnicity and history, but also the third pillar of late nineteenth century assumptions concerning the formation of national identity: race. The pursuit of 'Oriental studies' by Hungarian scholarship and an Asian explanation for the origin of 'Hungarians' resulted in a romanticised 'Orientalist' infused nationalism.<sup>53</sup> In addition, Hungarian intellectuals' declaration of an Asian racial origin made them distinct amongst other Central European

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<sup>48</sup> The nomenclature can be confusing because although Neolog Judaism was influenced by the German positive-historical school, which would eventually lead to Conservative Judaism, they cannot be considered conservative, especially when compared with Orthodox Judaism. Of the two 'denominations' in Hungary, excluding the much smaller and less influential Status Quo Ante, Neology represented a more reform-minded and progressive Judaism centred around urban areas, while Orthodoxy very much represented conservative Judaic perspectives.

<sup>49</sup> Along with Réthelyi see Ferenc Laczó, "Jewish Questions and the Contested Nation: On Major Hungarian Debates of the Nineteenth Century," *JModJewStud* 13, no. 3 (2014): 422–41, who also cites others such as Jakob Katz, "A magyar zsidóság kivételessége," in *Zsidóság a dualizmus kori Magyarországon. Siker és válság*, edited by László Varga, (Budapest: Pannonica Kiadó – Habsburg Történeti Intézet, 2005), 31–39.

<sup>50</sup> Réthelyi, "Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism," 68.

<sup>51</sup> Réthelyi, 78.

<sup>52</sup> See §5.5.

<sup>53</sup> Perhaps also the idealisation of Turkish and other eastern connections was a reaction on the part of Hungarian intellectuals to the nationalism and militarism of the Hapsburgs.

nations that declared ‘Aryan’ theories for their racial and national origins. This distinction also provided Neolog scholars with the opportunity to advance a common racial heritage with Magyars. This in turn was compounded with the affirmation maintained by Neolog leaders such as Rabbi Leopold Löw that the Jews lacked the basic characteristics to be classified as distinct race or nation, and merely constituted a religious denomination.<sup>54</sup> In short, Neologs emphasised that Jews in Hungary should simply be regarded as “Magyars of the Mosaic faith.”<sup>55</sup>

Réthelyi claims that Neolog theories of race were both multivalent and nuanced; however, one thing that all the theories stressed was that the Jews and Hungarians were originally the same race and, therefore, that there should be no impediment to peaceful coexistence.<sup>56</sup> The concept reveals much, in my opinion, as to the motivation for the Neologs’ assertion of common racial, ethnic and national heritage with Magyar Hungarians (see below).

First, however, the eschewing of Aryan racial theories by Neolog intellectuals in favour of an Asian racial origin was the primary reason for the distinctiveness of Hungarian Neolog Judaism vis-à-vis Judaism as expressed in other Central or Eastern European nations, or indeed by Orthodox Jews in Hungary. By situating Hungarian racial, ethnic, and national origins in the east, Hungarian scholarship opened the path for the Neolog scholars to correlate their own similar geographical origins into theories proclaiming a common origin with the majority population.<sup>57</sup> This phenomenon could not be replicated in other European countries where different racial theories, namely the ‘Aryan’ theory, were being promoted, which was why, according to Réthelyi, the Judaism that was expressed and promoted by the Neologs was unique.

Réthelyi further maintains that in order to prove their theories, Neolog scholars “privileged the authority of Hungarian nationalism over biblical history and Rabbinic Judaism.”<sup>58</sup> This is a curious and provocative statement that bears further interrogation. For one, this picture does not readily accord with the portrayal of Abraham Sonnenschein, Szondi’s father and a Neolog, as is summarised in §5.4. From what is known of Abraham’s religiosity, his study of the HB and other Jewish texts

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<sup>54</sup> Laczó, “Jewish Questions and the Contested Nation”, 425.

<sup>55</sup> Patai, *The Jews of Hungary*, 374.

<sup>56</sup> Mari Réthelyi, “The Racial Option in Modern Jewish Thought: The Case of the Hungarian Jews,” *JModJewStud* 12, no. 1 (2013).

<sup>57</sup> N.B. the demography of Hungary was ethnically diverse at that time. I use ‘Hungarians’ as shorthand for Magyar Hungarians.

<sup>58</sup> Réthelyi, “The Racial Option in Modern Jewish Thought”, 28.

conveys a sense of primacy for biblical history and rabbinic interpretation above any other corporeal concerns. (Nor for that matter does this statement accord with Szondi's own exegetical exploration of Gen 4 in *Kain* which is, as has been discussed, heavily reliant on Jewish myths and legends from rabbinic literature.) Furthermore, statistical data also casts some doubt on the validity of such a claim. The period between 1890 and 1910 saw a substantial increase in the number of rabbis, with Jewish congregations employing twice as many clergy as any other religious faith, a development, according to the historian of Hungarian Judaism, Raphael Patai, "that indicates the gradual formalisation of Jewish religious observance."<sup>59</sup> Given that Neolog Judaism was the more dynamic of the three denominations, it is reasonable to speculate that a substantial proportion of these rabbis were employed in Neolog communities. Neology around the turn of the twentieth century represented, therefore, a far more nuanced approach to faithful Judaism than the simple binary choice between religiosity and secular nationalism would appear to suggest.

It should be noted, however, that the pursuit of Magyarisation by some elements within Hungarian Judaism preceded the formal establishment of Neolog Judaism. For example, from the early 1840s the Hungarianisation Circle was formed among progressive and reform-minded Jews to build closer ties between Hungarians and Jews.<sup>60</sup> It would also be incorrect to view the revolution of 1848 as monolithically or strongly anti-Jewish, since Hungarian Jews also participated in and broadly supported it, some quite enthusiastically (although, as is discussed in §5.4, it did occasion some anti-Jewish violence in cities across Hungary).<sup>61</sup> From 1861, the Israelite Hungarian Society was founded and took on the mantle of its predecessor the Hungarianisation Circle. It conducted public lectures which served not only educational purposes but also to propagate the Hungarian language. To that end, the Society also published *Magyar Israelita*, the first regular Jewish journal in Hungarian. Hence not merely the roots but more full-bodied expressions of a Magyarised Judaism were in existence well before the schism following the Jewish Congress in Budapest in late 1868 and early 1869. Nevertheless, the question remains as to why some Jews embraced Magyarisation. I suggest that there are two main explanations.

First, Magyarisation was rooted in an elitist understanding of ethnicity which initially seems incongruent and ironic given the marginalised place that Jews had held within Hungarian society. Up to the emancipation edict in 1867, the idea of the 'Magyar nation' was considered to refer only to

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<sup>59</sup> Patai, 438.

<sup>60</sup> Ferenc Laczó refers to the 'Hungarianization Circle' in "Jewish Questions and the Contested Nation", 422–41. Patai, however, refers to the 'Magyarizing Society' in *The Jews of Hungary*, 308.

<sup>61</sup> Patai, 278.



members of the exclusively Christian nobility, representing 5% of the population.<sup>62</sup> Patai claims that herein lies one of the motivations behind the Jewish preoccupation with ‘Magyardom.’ During the second half of the nineteenth century, although the Hungarian nobility had lost some of their previously held economic and industrial heft, they nevertheless maintained a certain élan and aura “that made them a group apart from, and also high above, all other inhabitants of Hungary.”<sup>63</sup> As Jews began to accrue more political and economic influence within Hungarian society, the highest achievers among them naturally aspired to get as close to this top echelon as possible, even though they could never actually enter it. Magyarisation was the process through which this was attempted. In other words, through Magyarisation members of the Jewish elite could at least feel as Hungarian as any other Hungarian outside the nobility, as Patai concludes:

their ceaseless harping on their Magyar patriotism and the great services they were rendering in all fields to the homeland. Hence also their vehement objection to being considered anything but ‘Magyars of the Mosaic faith.’<sup>64</sup>

The desire to move upwards through Hungarian social strata inevitably led to some Jews renouncing their faith and converting to Christianity. An example of this phenomenon is evidenced in Szondi’s own family. Of the four children from Abraham Sonnenschein’s first marriage, the eldest, Vilmos (1861–c.1926-30), also known by the nickname ‘Vili’ within the family, was the only one to change his surname to the Magyarised ‘Szondi.’ Vilmos initially commenced studies in medicine in Vienna only to drop out and become a high school teacher in Nagyvárad, Transleithania (i.e. present-day central Romania).<sup>65</sup> He married a Protestant woman named Agnes from Saxony which was the impetus for his conversion to Christianity. (Abraham, for his part, reacted to the news of his first-born son’s apostasy by entering a period of mourning such as was customary for the death of a loved one.<sup>66</sup>)

The second reason for the pursuit of Magyarisation, and one I alluded to earlier, was fear. Behind all the Neolog hypotheses claiming commonality with a burgeoning Hungarian national identity, particularly that which was expressed following the 1848 revolution, was the threat posed by anti-

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<sup>62</sup> Patai, 269-70; 372.

<sup>63</sup> Patai, 373.

<sup>64</sup> Patai, 374.

<sup>65</sup> Incidentally, by 1890 the Jewish population in Nagyvárad was the highest by proportion of any city in Hungary at over 26%. Patai, 429.

<sup>66</sup> Bürgi-Meyer, *Leopold Szondi*, 20.

Semitism to the newfound gains in the social, political, and economic standing of upwardly mobile, mostly urbanised Jews. Despite a wave of comparatively liberal nationalism in Hungary which reform-minded Jews were able to ride beyond emancipation to the adoption and assimilation of Magyar ideals and characteristics, the threat posed by anti-Semitism remained ever present throughout the nineteenth century. Historian Ferenc Laczó, for example, has drawn a continuum from the expressions of Hungarian anti-Semitism in the 1890s to their ultimate culmination in the Holocaust.<sup>67</sup> Neolog Judaism's embrace of Magyarisation can thus be seen as an attempt at peaceful coexistence with the majority population in an attempt to mitigate the threat posed by anti-Semitism. It was an attempt which was largely successful given both the rise of Neolog Jews through the middle and upper-middle classes and the large number of Jewish immigrants from neighbouring lands to the north and northeast who came to Hungary in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Neology was thus one attempt to deal with questions and difficulties arising from the concepts of race, history, and nationalism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A different attempt was represented in the rejection of Hungarian nationalism by Orthodox Judaism in favour of religious coherence and what Laczó calls "an anti-modern retrenchment."<sup>68</sup> This was the milieu into which Léopold Szondi was born and the family of Abraham Sonnenschein found themselves, particularly following their move to Budapest, at the end of the nineteenth century.

#### **5.4 The Family of Léopold Szondi**

Abraham Sonnenschein was born in 1837, the only child of Josef and Leny Sonnenschein, in the village of Mecheníce in the district of Nyitra (now Nitra in present-day Slovakia).<sup>69</sup> Situated as it is in the western half of Slovakia, over the centuries Nyitra had witnessed several invasions and been subject to annexations as part of the Kingdom of Moravia, the Ottoman Empire, and the Hapsburg monarchy, finally becoming part of the Military District of Pressburg in 1850. Nyitra was also home

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<sup>67</sup> Laczó, "Jewish Questions and the Contested Nation."

<sup>68</sup> Laczó, 436.

<sup>69</sup> According to Hughes, the residents of Nitra today consider Szondi their 'Sigmund Freud.' Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 4.

to one of the largest and most significant Jewish communities of the region.<sup>70</sup> Although a Jewish settlement in Nyitra had been documented since the thirteenth century, by the beginning of the seventeenth century Jews were restricted from living in many settlements in the district. However, from the middle of the eighteenth-century Jews had begun to migrate back to the district, and by the middle of the nineteenth century they represented almost a third of the population. The Jewish community of Nyitra thrived. In 1818 a new synagogue was built, replacing one first built in 1766, and in 1836 a large yeshiva was established by Rabbi Yehezkel Baneth, becoming quite famous and attracting pupils from different parts of the region. By the time of Abraham's birth, the Jewish community was well established. The initial stages of some industry had also emerged in the early nineteenth century, although by 1837 Nyitra's economy was still in the main agrarian with some artisanal outputs. Abraham's father, Josef Sonnenschein, was a tenant farmer who died at a young age.<sup>71</sup> Abraham, however, would not follow in his father's footsteps, becoming a bootmaker instead. The occupations of the father and the son thereby reflected the main industries of their home district.

Despite the success of the Jewish community of Nyitra, or perhaps because of it, one event during Abraham's formative years may have educated the youngster about the precarious position Jewish people held throughout much of Europe at that time. The Hungarian revolution of 1848 was the longest of the so-called Spring of Nations uprisings across Europe. As mentioned above (§5.3), the revolution was not uniformly anti-Semitic; nevertheless, around this time there were violent anti-Jewish riots in Nyitra that resulted in Jewish homes and businesses being robbed and damaged with many ruined. Numerous families left the Jewish quarter for a suburb to the north of the city – it would be four months before they began to return to their homes.<sup>72</sup> Patai asserts that anti-Jewish sentiment that immediately preceded the Hungarian revolution was most febrile in Pressburg (Bratislava) which became the epicentre for a wave of anti-Jewish violence that spread to other cities in Hungary.<sup>73</sup> The

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<sup>70</sup> A different pattern to that witnessed in the main urban centres such as Budapest, can be seen in the data for the regional centre of Nyitra. Following the schism in 1869, most Jewish families, approximately 170, aligned with Orthodoxy and the remainder with Neology. By 1922 there were 3,000 Orthodox Jews and a Neolog community of 750 people in Nyitra. Accordingly, the Orthodox community, which also ran the large yeshiva, had an annual budget more than four times larger than that of the Neolog community.

Nevertheless, members of the Jewish community of Nyitra were as upwardly mobile as their co-religionists in the major urban centres. In 1921, of the 605 registered business in Nyitra, 458 were owned by Jews. Jews also represented the majority of physicians and lawyers in the town. Given the occurrence of names associated with the city's official organs and business associations, it appears that the Neolog Jewish community was disproportionately involved in these enterprises despite their smaller number. (See Francine Shapiro, Yehoshua Robert Buchler, and Ruth Shashal, eds., "Nitra," in *Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities, Slovakia*, trans. Shlomo Sné [Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2003], 351–60, [https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Pinkas\\_Slovakia/Slo351.html](https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Pinkas_Slovakia/Slo351.html).)

<sup>71</sup> Hughes, 4.

<sup>72</sup> Shapiro, Buchler, and Shashal, "Nitra."

<sup>73</sup> Patai, 277.

immediate catalyst for the outbreak of violence was that the Diet, sitting in Pressburg in February 1848, was considering motions aimed at some form of Jewish emancipation. When news of this emerged, the artisan class of Pressburg formed angry mobs and initiated violence against the Jewish population. It is likely that the Sonnenschein family was living in Mechenice on the outskirts of Nyitra when the anti-Jewish riots which took place there and in other cities occurred.<sup>74</sup> It is reasonable to speculate that news of an anti-Jewish riot in the nearby city would no doubt have reached the family, particularly if it was one of a number that began in their district.

By December 1860, however, Abraham was living in Nyitra, when he married a twenty-two-year-old woman named Betty Funovou. The marriage produced four children – two sons and two daughters – and would last until April 1877 when Betty died at the age of 39.<sup>75</sup> Four months later, in August 1877, Abraham married Therese (Rézi) Kohn from Zsámbokrét, a small village in northern Slovakia about 120 kilometres north-east of Nyitra. Born in 1853, Rézi was sixteen years Abraham's junior. Not much else is known about Rézi. In an interview with his biographer, Dino Larese, Szondi did not reveal much about his mother other than she came from a simple, poor background, and that she was illiterate, but spoke German and Slovak along with her husband. He also indicated that she was quite often ill, to the extent that one of his sisters had to run the household.<sup>76</sup>

Szondi was far more forthcoming with information about his father. As mentioned above, Szondi was the twelfth of thirteen children of his father and eighth of nine children of his mother. He was born in 1893 into poverty, the family living in a small single-storey cottage with dirt floors and no running water. The family's destitute situation may be partly explained by Abraham's lack of interest in paid work; in fact, sources suggest he had given up his trade quite early.<sup>77</sup> Instead, Abraham led the life of a contemplative Jewish scholar, studying the HB, Talmudic and Hasidic writings and the method of the Kabbalah.<sup>78</sup> Hughes suggests that Abraham's single-minded focus on religious matters is somewhat typical of the path he chose in following his faith, arguing that "[n]eglecting one's work is

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<sup>74</sup> Although there are no dates available for Josef's death, it is known that he died at a young age and Leny, Abraham's mother, carried on the lease on the farm after her husband's death. (Bürgi-Meyer, 19.)

<sup>75</sup> Karl Bürgi-Meyer states that documents from Nitra's archives indicate that this marriage possibly produced three more children – a son and two daughters – none of whom survived childhood. However, neither Léopold Szondi nor any other member of the Sonnenschein family ever mentions their names. (Bürgi-Meyer, 133, n.5.)

<sup>76</sup> Larese, *Léopold Szondi*, cited by Bürgi-Meyer, 19.

<sup>77</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*. Bürgi-Meyer.

<sup>78</sup> Szondi, "Schicksalsanalyse – eine Selbstdarstellung" cited by Bürgi-Meyer. Szondi makes a reference to the Kabbalah in a 1966 letter to Ivan Nastovic, a Serbian psychoanalyst in Belgrade. *Léopold Szondi to Ivan Nastovic, 4 April 1966*. Letter. Szondi-Institut Library.

a sign of the Hasidic way of Judaism, which strives for a total devotion to God.”<sup>79</sup> Consequently, Abraham’s children supported the family.

Out of necessity, in 1898 Abraham moved the family to Budapest where several of his older children had already moved, securing good jobs and eventually becoming quite successful. One ran a grocery store, another became a tailor, one ran a department store, and one was a teacher, later becoming a school principal. Around the time of the family’s relocation, there were more than 100,000 Jews living in Budapest, representing 20% of the city’s population.<sup>80</sup> Upon settling in the city, and with his children now better able to support the family, Abraham’s religious studies intensified. He also learned Hungarian, though the family continued to speak German and Slovak at home. He rose early every day to commence reading and studying Hebrew, only finishing late in the evening. Later, he became a self-taught assistant to the rabbi in his synagogue, even helping to lead services during the High Holidays. Szondi would later recall rabbis often visiting the family home and engaging in long discussions with his father, comparing the situation to that of a seminary.<sup>81</sup>

Although his father never divulged his own thoughts and beliefs concerning his religion to his children, Szondi maintained that in his familial environment he was raised to be religious.<sup>82</sup> Yet the religious life instilled by the father did not necessarily have the same effect on Szondi’s siblings. Of Abraham’s seven sons, Léopold was the only one who regularly attended synagogue with him. When Abraham died in 1911, Szondi was aged 18 and about to commence studies at Pázmány-Péter University, the death thus occurring at a critical juncture in young Szondi’s life. In the year that followed, every morning and every evening Szondi observed Shiva, reciting the Kaddish before the community of the synagogue. He was the only son of Abraham to perform this rite of mourning.<sup>83</sup> Szondi later wrote of this period:

This was the time when my ego had internalised my father. These deep patterns were the ones leading me in my academic works later on, even when I had already given up the dogmatic customs of the Jewish religion. I still remained a Jew, a devoted one.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 5.

<sup>80</sup> In 1850, by way of comparison, there were just under 18,000 Jews living in Buda and Pest. The urban Jewish population in Hungary grew rapidly almost doubling in size between 1870 and 1910. Patai, 429-30.

<sup>81</sup> Larese, *Leopold Szondi*, cited by Bürgi-Meyer, 19.

<sup>82</sup> Léopold Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung,” 413–57.

<sup>83</sup> Richard Hughes, “Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies.”

<sup>84</sup> Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung.”

Szondi further credited his father and the religious environment of his family life with the central role that faith and religion plays in his theory of *Schicksalsanalyse*. There is, however, a further aspect of influence that his father's faith had on Szondi and other members of his family. Of the three organisations of Jewry which emerged in Hungary during the second half of nineteenth century, Abraham Sonnenschein identified with the Neolog faction.

### ***Magyarisation and the Sonnenscheins***

Whether Abraham embraced Neolog Judaism in his hometown of Nyitra or upon his family's relocation to Budapest is not known. Today, what was the Sonnenschein residence at 24 Párovská, in the heart of what was once the Jewish quarter of Nyitra, is less than a 10-minute walk from the large Neolog synagogue which was built between 1908-11. Despite the success of the smaller Neolog community in Nyitra, it seems that Abraham had closer ties to the Orthodox community prior to the family's move to Budapest. Léopold Szondi's godfather, Rabbi Moshe Vorhand (1862-1944), was a prominent Orthodox rabbi and member of a noted rabbinic family.<sup>85</sup> This would suggest that at the time of Léopold's birth, Abraham was close to the Orthodox community in Nyitra.

However, the possibility that Abraham also became close to the progressive Judaism of the Neolog movement while living in Nyitra should not be completely discounted. Abraham's first son Vilmos was obviously capable enough academically to move to Vienna to study medicine and it should be remembered that he was the only one of Abraham's children from his first marriage to Magyarise his name. The first child of Abraham's second marriage, Sándor (1878-1956) also changed his name to Szondi in 1898, the year Abraham moved the family to Budapest. Perhaps this indicates that the Sonnenschein children were exposed to Magyarisation through Neolog Judaism in their formative years before leaving Nyitra? The Jewish school in Nyitra, which Vilmos and the other Sonnenschein children likely attended, was shared by both the Orthodox and Neolog communities, although directed by members of the former.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, despite the two communities generally being hermetically removed from one another, there was the capacity for interdenominational associations to be formed.

There seems little doubt, however, that the Sonnenschein's resettlement in Budapest in 1898 ensured that Neolog Judaism would become an influential factor in life of the family. The family established

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<sup>85</sup> The eldest of his two sons (both rabbis) was Rabbi Mordechai Vorhand (1885-1945) who wrote an influential commentary on the sixteenth century *Schulchan Aruch* (known in English as the *Code of Jewish Law*).

<sup>86</sup> Shapiro, Buchler, and Shashal, "Nitra."

itself in District VII, located in the Pest side of the Danube, where they resided with one of Szondi's older siblings who had two children around the same age as Léopold.<sup>87</sup> It was here that Szondi attended elementary school and eight years of secondary school at the Damjanich Gymnasium, where he excelled academically. District VII was the epicentre of the largest Neolog community in Hungary, the Israelite Congregation of Pest, and its centrepiece, the massive Dohány Synagogue.

The Neolog influence on the Sonnenscheins can be evidenced in behaviours that indicated the family was invested in Magyarisation. First, Abraham learned to speak and write Hungarian, and several of his sons followed the lead of the first child, Vilmos, and Magyarised their surname by adopting 'Szondi.' Between 1891 and 1918 almost 40,000 Jews changed their German name to a Hungarian name. This figure represents just 4% of the Jewish population of one million, but over 62% of all surnames Magyarised during the period. As Patai notes, this was an almost exclusively Neolog phenomenon, since Orthodox Jews objected to anything that could be seen as altering traditions.<sup>88</sup> Thus Abraham Sonnenschein's refusal to change his name may indicate a loyalty to the old ways and, possibly, his latent Orthodoxy. Alternatively, he may simply have felt that having lived the greatest part of his life as Sonnenschein it was too late to change. After all, by the time the family moved to Budapest, Abraham was aged in his 60s.

Vilmos was an influential figure in the life of his half-brother Léopold even though he was 32 years his senior. In the previous chapter I detailed a dream of Szondi's which was critical in helping to shape his theory of *Schicksalsanalyse*.<sup>89</sup> The figures in the dream were his parents, his half-brother Vilmos and Vilmos's wife, Agnes. Psychologist and former assistant to Szondi, Karl Bürgi-Meyer, suggests that Vilmos's initial interest in medicine was significant for Szondi's decision to study medicine.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, the ready acceptance of Jews in the field of medicine around the time Szondi entered university should not be discounted in Léopold's choice of profession, and perhaps may even have represented a more persuasive case for an academically capable young man.<sup>91</sup> Finally,

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<sup>87</sup> Bürgi-Meyer states that the family lived with one of Szondi's older brothers who had two children around Szondi's age, but this does not seem accurate. Vilmos only moved to Budapest following World War I. József (1871-1943) lived outside District VII and, though he had two children, they were younger than Szondi. Sándor was living in Budapest and had become very successful in his profession as a tailor, but he and his wife did not have children. Perhaps Bürgi-Meyer is confused with a brother-in-law married to either Sarolta (1872 or 3 - c. 1940) or Maria (b. 1874) the daughters from Abraham's first marriage? Both of their families lived in Budapest and had children around Szondi's age. (See *Leopold Szondi*, 17-27.)

<sup>88</sup> Patai, 607.

<sup>89</sup> See §4.3 Fate, Love, and *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*.

<sup>90</sup> Bürgi-Meyer, 21.

<sup>91</sup> In 1910, Jews represented 62% of physicians in private practice and 40% of doctors employed in the public sector. Patai, 435.

there was Vilmos's decision to change his surname from the German 'Sonnenschein' to the Hungarian 'Szondi,' which Léopold too replicated at the age of 18 shortly after his father's death. The fact that Szondi waited until his father died before changing his name suggests that he did so out of respect, but it also hints that Abraham may have received such a change negatively, as he did when he received news of Vilmos's marriage to a Christian.

Vilmos's choice of surname is revealing, however. The experience of Jews who chose Hungarian names indicates that, in the main, they either selected names that were cognates for their German names, were similar sounding, or shared the same first letter(s).<sup>92</sup> Sonnenschein ("Sunshine" in English) would have become *Napfény* in Hungarian in the case of the former. However, *napfény* is not used as a surname in Hungarian, so the Sonnenscheins had to opt for the latter options, thereby selecting 'Szondi.' While it is not a common surname in Hungary,<sup>93</sup> the choice of Szondi was an appropriate one for two reasons.

First, the name Szondi has connections to a sixteenth century Magyar hero of the Siege of Drégely Castle (July 1552) named György Szondy (but also spelled Szondi). Szondy, who had Slovak origins just like his later namesakes, died in the siege while fighting the Turks, refusing to surrender to vastly numerically superior forces. The nineteenth century poet János Arany wrote a ballad about Szondy titled "The Two Pages of Szondi" (1856) which became quite famous, and the anniversary of his death is, even today, still recognised by both Hungarians and Slovaks. A statue of György Szondy stands in Kodály körönd in Budapest's District VI, alongside three other statues of Hungarian national heroes, and he is represented in a 1947 mosaic on the street which now bears his name (formerly known as korábban Steingasse), also in District VI.

Additionally, the name Szondi is also an approximate homophone for the Hungarian word *szonda*, a medical term for a probe or an instrument for examining. Given both Vilmos's initial choice of study and career, and the supposed influence this would have on Léopold's later decision to take up medical studies, the Magyarised surname, though not a cognate of their German one, was nonetheless highly appropriate. A career dedicated to probing and searching is thus also echoed in Léopold's life, but it could also be applied to the father, Abraham, and his search for truth and God which was expressed

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<sup>92</sup> Patai, 607.

<sup>93</sup> One database has it ranked as the 936<sup>th</sup> most common name in Hungary. <https://forebears.io/surnames/szondi> (accessed 14 November 2019)



through his deep religiosity.<sup>94</sup> Hence, ‘Szondi’ reflects not only the Neolog obsession with being perceived as a Magyar of the Mosaic faith, carrying a direct connotation to a hero of the Hungarian people (one with Slovak origins no less), but also the familial influences which exert themselves on an individual over time and which are the central concern of Szondi’s theory of *Schicksalsanalyse*.

## 5.5 Genesis, Neology and Szondi

During a weekly Shabbat liturgy, a portion, or parashah, of the Torah is read aloud. The current division of the Torah into fifty-four parashioth for recitation during Shabbat was first devised by Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides) in the twelfth century in accordance with the number of weeks in the Hebrew calendar. Of the fifty-four parashioth, *Bereshit*, as the longest book of the Torah, accounts for twelve, while Exodus and Deuteronomy each account for eleven, and Numbers and Leviticus ten each. Over the course of a year every Jew who regularly attends synagogue will encounter the Torah in its entirety.<sup>95</sup> The reading of Torah is, therefore, a central feature of liturgy which serves, as Marvin Sweeney points out, “as a means of divine revelation insofar as every Jew has the opportunity to encounter and study the text of the Torah in the context of Jewish worship.”<sup>96</sup> Given Szondi’s regular attendance at synagogue alongside his father during his childhood and growth into adulthood, not to mention his father’s frequent interaction with rabbis at his house, it seems reasonable to suggest that the narratives and contents of the Torah, in particular its first and foundational text *Bereshit*, would be embedded deeply within his psyche. In this final part of the chapter, I explain briefly the interplay between the HB, particularly within the Torah, and especially its first book, *Bereshit*, and Neolog Judaism’s attempt at demonstrating a common national origin with Magyar Hungarians, both of which are reflected in Szondi’s articulation of the familial unconscious.

Szondi’s exposure to the Torah was not the only environmental influence by which the concept of genealogy became manifest in his career. Just as Genesis’ interest in genealogy can be discerned on Szondi, so too can the Neolog obsession with establishing links to Magyar national identity and mythos. As has been discussed, in Genesis genealogies are used as a means of establishing Israel’s

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<sup>94</sup> In addition, the homophonous connection between Szondi and *szonda* reflects the similar attribute of many of the names in Genesis, e.g. Isaac (Gen 21:3 cf. 18:12, 15); Jacob (25:26); and Israel (32:28).

<sup>95</sup> Although some Reform and Conservative synagogues have since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries further divided the 54 parashiyot into a triennial cycle, it would appear that the Neolog Jewish communities in Hungary followed the same long-established tradition as their Orthodox counterparts of reading each parash in an annual cycle. See Réthelyi, “Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism,” 70.

<sup>96</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, “Genesis in the Context of Jewish Thought,” in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 657–82.

claim to the land and its place among its ANE neighbours. Similarly, the Neologs advanced several theories appealing to both biblical and extra-biblical dimensions of history arguing a common origin with Magyars superimposed on Hungarian legends of national origin. Rather than privileging “the authority of Hungarian nationalism over biblical history and Rabbinic Judaism,” as claimed by Réthelyi,<sup>97</sup> Neologs gave primacy to the biblical tradition in order to demonstrate cultural congruence with Magyar identity.

For example, Neolog scholars claimed that the HB contained information relevant to the origins of the Hungarian people which were unknown to non-Hebrew speakers and thus could only be revealed by Jews. Central to this idea was the reference to Gog and Magog in Ezek 38-39. The figures of Gog and Magog were important in Hungarian legends of national origin, their offspring regarded as the ancestors of Álmos (c. 820-c. 895), the father of Hungary.<sup>98</sup> It was also claimed by Neolog scholars that ‘Magog’ had an etymological connection to ‘Magyar.’<sup>99</sup> Moreover, Gog and Magog were identified with the ten lost tribes of Israel through a common geography, as Réthelyi herself asserts:

In addition to shedding light on Hungarian pseudo-history, these deeper Jewish sources revealed that Gog and Magog literally and simultaneously meant Hungarians and Jews, further proof of their common origins in the Caucasus.<sup>100</sup>

The ‘Khazar theory’ is another example of a creative attempt by Neologs to connect their Jewish past to a common Judeo-Magyar heritage. Although not totally without credibility,<sup>101</sup> the theory asserted that there was no, or at least very little evidence of Jewish settlement in Hungary prior to the Magyar conquest in the tenth century. In fact, so the theory proposes, Jews came to Hungary from the Khazar empire (situated between the Caucasus and the Eurasian steppes during the seventh to the tenth centuries) just as the Magyars had done. The connection between Magyar and Jew was therefore much older than it would have been if Jews had already been living in the region prior to the conquest. Moreover, the theory also implied that due to their common origins in the east, the Magyars and the Jews must have conquered Hungary together. In order for this theory to be plausible, however, Neolog

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<sup>97</sup> Réthelyi, “The Racial Option in Modern Jewish Thought: The Case of the Hungarian Jews,” 54.

<sup>98</sup> A fact illuminated by the Hungarian modernist poet, Endre Ady (1877-1919) and his 1906 poem “I am the son of King Gog and Magog” (*Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én*).

<sup>99</sup> Bernat Heller, “Góg és Magóg,” *Izraelita Magyar Irodalmi Tarsulat* (1936): 31, cited by Réthelyi, “Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism.”

<sup>100</sup> Réthelyi, 75.

<sup>101</sup> Patai, for example, refers to a Khazar ring with a Hebrew inscription which was found near Pécs. (*The Jews of Hungary*, 28.)

scholars had to downplay evidence of Jews having settled in the Carpathian Basin since Roman times in favour of drawing a stronger connection to the Magyars.

Neolog intellectuals also drew a parallel between the nomadic origins of the Magyars and the Jewish peoples since the fall of the Second Temple (70 CE). Just as the Magyars had migrated from Central Asia and settled in Hungary, so too the Jews had fled other countries and arrived in Hungary after initially being scattered following the fall of Jerusalem in the first century CE. By way of illustration, the Neolog writer Adolf Silberstein linked the common origins of Magyars and Jews to the nations descended from Noah's sons (Gen 10):

The Hungarian nation celebrates its fourth millennium also. The nation of Nimrod, the Hungarians, was in Persia in the Urheimat of the Jewish patriarchs; from there they went out in their second millennium to the Caucasus where they spent the third millennium. Then the time came that God had chosen and they conquered the Carpathian Basin. The Hungarian nation has a providential purpose, for which they prepared over three millennia of fighting, because the Hungarians became the sword of God... There have been four millennia of common history between Jews and Hungarians.<sup>102</sup>

Furthermore, since the biblical account stresses the common origin of all humanity, it therefore followed that Hungarians and Jews were not different races if one were to trace their origins back far enough in time. In other words, Neolog Jews did not have to look far for inspiration to support their claims of common and close ancestry with the Magyars. Not only could Genesis provide direct evidence of the connection, as per Silberstein's allusion to Gen 10, its broad preoccupation with genealogy as a means for establishing the nation of Israel's divine election and connection to the beginning of all things provided an appropriate model for such claims.

Given the apparent preoccupation with the function and role of genealogy within Genesis, and the Torah more broadly, along with the idiosyncrasies of Szondi's own Hungarian Jewish identity, it is easy to understand why Genesis would feature prominently in Szondi's articulation of his interrelated theories of fate, the familial unconscious, and the Cain complex, alongside the influence of his clinical experiences and the depth psychologies of Freud and Jung. This is most clearly evidenced in Szondi's use of genealogies (*Stammbaum*) that accompany several of the case studies he uses in *Cain* to outline his theory of the Cain complex in light of fate analysis. *Kain* contains eight genealogies, six of which

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<sup>102</sup> Adolf Silberstein (Ötvös), "Ezer év sok szenvedés" [A Thousand years is a Lot of Suffering], cited by Réthelyi, "Hungarian Nationalism and the Origins of Neolog Judaism," 73.

relate directly to the final six case studies that make up the sub-category ‘Cain, the Working Person’ (*Kain, der Berufstätige*). In this category Szondi details how the paroxysmal pattern of the Cain complex sublimates itself in career choices (which he calls “socialisation”) and pathology, both of which can be traced through the family trees of his subjects (i.e. the case studies).<sup>103</sup> Of the two other genealogies that Szondi uses in *Kain*, the second belongs to that of a twenty-three-year-old woman who was hospitalised in a psychiatric clinic after committing several attempts of murder by strangulation. Szondi claims that the woman’s genealogy denotes paroxysmal career patterns and pathologies among her ancestors and a direct line of Cainitic behaviour from the maternal grandfather through the mother and onto the subject.<sup>104</sup> He further argues that it is paradigmatic of paroxysmally motivated murderers.

However, it is the genealogy of Adam (Gen 4 and 5) that for Szondi represents the exemplar genealogy. He uses Adam’s genealogy, combined with references to midrash and rabbinic literature, to demonstrate the paroxysmal pattern across generations, concluding:

Cain’s line of the Adam-Eve family is burdened in the sagas with the recurrent qualities of the ‘evil drive’: killing mindset, robbery and violence, possessiveness, cunning and deviousness, indulgence and lasciviousness, and “if anyone were slow to murder people, yet was he bold in his profligate behaviour, in acting unjustly and doing injuries for gain.”

The same Cain-lineage, which indulged in the evil drive, nevertheless built the first city, invented cattle breeding, musical instruments, armourers, introduced measures, weight and limits for the protection of ‘bourgeois’ property, thus laying the foundations of capitalism and of civilisation.<sup>105</sup>

I have argued that throughout his formative years, the religion of his father exercised a strong influence on Léopold Szondi. Attendant with this was a theological and scriptural literacy centred around the HB and rabbinic literature. For his bar mitzvah, for instance, Szondi chose to read two passages from Exodus: ch. 29, concerning the consecration of priests, and ch. 32, the golden calf fiasco.<sup>106</sup> The two texts signify an interesting choice as they could be said to present a diptych of

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<sup>103</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 145-56.

<sup>104</sup> Szondi, 69.

<sup>105</sup> Szondi, 45. NB Szondi cites S. Speier, “Aus dem jüdischen Schrifttum über Kain und den ‘bösen Trieb,’” in *Beiheft zur Schweizerischen Zeitschrift für Psychologie und ihre Anwendungen*, 47 *Szondiana* 5 (1963), 244, which includes a quotation from Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.2.66.

<sup>106</sup> Hughes, “Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies,” 60

sorts. On the one hand, Exod 29 emphasises the election of Israel among the nations and the conditions of their sanctification so that YHWH will meet and reveal Godself to them. On the other hand, Exod 32 presents a kind of perversion of the animal sacrifices depicted in the previous text to caution against the existential dangers posed by apostasy. Though he would later abandon some of the dogmatic and ritualistic aspects of Judaism, his Jewish faith remained important to him, and theological and scriptural literacy is evident in his work for the remainder of his life. At a lecture he delivered in Zürich after World War II, one student recalled him stating that, “when I speak of the Spirit, I mean God’s Holy Spirit, and when I say God, I understand the God of the Bible.”<sup>107</sup> Indeed, this theological and scriptural literacy reached its zenith when Szondi, aged well into his 70s, published *Kain* and a few years thereafter *Moses, Antwort auf Kain*.

## 5.6 Conclusion

Given his background, it is not surprising that when Szondi attempted to create a basis for the unification of depth psychology, he was informed by his religious heritage and its emphasis on the role of family and genealogy. Hughes puts this unification succinctly when he states that the “personal unconscious is manifest in symptoms, the collective in symbols, and the familial in existential decisions.”<sup>108</sup> The familial unconscious expresses choice in these existential decisions as a polarity. In order to communicate this, Szondi looked to his religious heritage for metaphors, thereby arriving at Cain, who I turn to in more detail in the following chapter, and Moses, who is the focus of Chapter 8.

The interest in genealogy that is evident in the Torah, especially Genesis, is also reflected in Neolog Judaism’s pursuit of mythoi espousing a common national origin with Magyar Hungarians. These were influential background factors in Szondi’s articulation of the familial unconscious. Although much of Szondi’s understanding of genes must be re-evaluated in light of modern scientific advances in genetic science, such as the discovery of DNA and the mapping of the human genome, modern behavioural genetics has nevertheless reemphasised the importance of genealogy as an inexorable influence on who we are.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, the identification of the role of genealogies in the unfolding of our lives is both the genius of Szondi and the genius of Genesis.

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<sup>107</sup> Maria Egg-Benes and Louise Rossier-Benes, “Erinnerungen an die Familie Szondi,” *Sonderheft der Szondiana: Leopold Szondi zum 100. Geburtstag* (Zürich: Szondi Verlag, 1993), 78, cited in Hughes, 62-3.

<sup>108</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 74.

<sup>109</sup> See Plomin, *Blueprint*.

## CHAPTER 6 DAS BÖSE: ‘EVIL’ AND THE CAINITIC PERSONALITY

*here in this carload  
i am eve  
with abel my son  
if you see my other son  
cain son of man  
tell him that i...*

Dan Pagis, “Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-car”<sup>1</sup>

### 6.1 Introduction

On a pleasant summer’s afternoon in suburban Zürich, not far from the airport, I meet with retired psychoanalyst Friedjung Jüttner for afternoon tea in the apartment he shares with his wife, Evelyn.<sup>2</sup> Friedjung and Evelyn are both in their 80s, and for the past six months they have lived in an aged-care complex not far from where they spent most of their married life and raised their now middle-aged daughter. They are both sharp and engaging conversationalists even if their English is not the most fluent, though it is certainly better than my limited ‘school-boy’ spoken German. Friedjung began his working life as an Augustinian monk, and that was his vocation for fifteen years before he met Evelyn. Following the renunciation of his priestly vows he trained as a psychotherapist in Zürich where, in 1970, he came into the orbit of Léopold Szondi and the Szondi-Institut.

This was my second meeting with Friedjung, having first met with him a few days earlier at the Szondi-Institut. Friedjung explained that Szondi’s ideas were best exemplified through his drive system (*Triebssystem*), which Friedjung himself later amended slightly into a “needs system” (*Bedürfnissystem*).<sup>3</sup> According to Friedjung, the drive to either *gütig* (kindness) or *böse* resides in the emotional realm of existence (one of four along with the body, the ego, and the contactual or relational). The experience of both good and evil are therefore endemic to all human beings. More specifically, the experience of *das Böse* belongs to the “coarse emotions” (*grobe Gefühle*), which

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Pagis, *Variable Directions: The Selected Poetry of Dan Pagis*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> Friedjung Jüttner (retired psychoanalyst) and Evelyn Jüttner, interview by author, 13 July 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Jüttner, *Wähle, Was Du Bist!*, 35.

form one of eight basic needs within the four realms of existence (see Table 2-1). These so-called coarse emotions include anger, rage, hatred, jealousy, and envy.

In Friedjung and Evelyn's apartment we discuss further Szondi's concept of evil, his memories of Szondi, his work in psychotherapy and at the Szondi-Institut, as well as books and art. It was a pleasant hour or so, interrupted occasionally by the noise from a low flying aircraft. Upon leaving I handed Friedjung a card with my contact details, on the back of which I had printed a small image of Cain and Abel taken from a mosaic in the Cathedral of the Assumption in Monreale, Sicily, as well as a quote from John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*:

We have only one story. All novels, all poetry, are built on the never-ending contest in ourselves of good and evil. And it occurs to me that evil must constantly respawn, while good, while virtue, is immortal.<sup>4</sup>

Friedjung read the quote and translated it for Evelyn. He told me that he was unfamiliar with the book, so I Googled the German translation of it on my phone, *Jenseits von Eden*. I thought that he would enjoy it and hoped he would find echoes of Szondi's familial unconscious within the sweeping cross-generational familial saga that weaves Gen 4 in and out of its narrative thread. He smiled at me and replied, "It's an interesting quote. But of course, Szondi would say that good must constantly respawn because evil is immortal. For Szondi, the reality is the opposite."

In this chapter I investigate Szondi's understanding of *das Böse*, which, as revealed through the above exchange, would appear to betray a certain pessimism regarding human nature. I first briefly examine two pertinent scholarly Jewish interpretations of evil, as it appears in the Primeval History. I then articulate and define Szondi's concept of *das Böse* and contrast this with other relevant and prominent theories, namely psychoanalytical and ethological concepts of the term. Unlike Szondi, who deals with the ethological before the psychoanalytical,<sup>5</sup> I treat each of these influences chronologically (i.e. the psychoanalytical before the ethological), because there is a distinct appeal to Gen 4 as a metaphor evidenced in post-Shoah thought that is lacking in Freud's and Jung's evaluations of evil. These observed allusions to Gen 4 and the figure of Cain are examined in more detail in the second part of the chapter which deals with the genre of 'violontology' and Cain. This in turn is followed by an explication of Szondi's most illuminating examples of the so-called 'Cainitic' personality, which are

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<sup>4</sup> John Steinbeck, *East of Eden* (London: Penguin, 2012), 505.

<sup>5</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 158-89.

the two case studies he uses in his treatment of ‘Cain the War Criminal.’ In so doing, I demonstrate that Szondi’s Jewish identity, his personal history, and Gen 4 shaped, influenced, and reflected his understanding of evil.

## 6.2 Theories of Evil

It is within the milieu of the German-speaking lands during the Nazi’s rise to power and the outbreak of World War II that Szondi’s understanding of *das Böse* is shaped. Szondi is one of a number of German-speaking intellectuals who grapple with the concept of *das Böse* following the events of World War II and the Shoah. Other relevant examples include Konrad Lorenz, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Hannah Arendt, Walter Burkert, and Fredric Wertham, a German-born physician and psychiatrist who emigrated to the United States in the early 1920s. It is significant that each of these figures produced works dealing with the themes of evil, violence and aggression during the 1960s. Their ideas were formed not only in the long shadows cast by Auschwitz and Hiroshima, but also more contemporaneous events such as the Soviet expansion into eastern Europe, post-colonial wars from the Middle East to Vietnam, assassinations, riots, and civil unrest.

### *Evil and the Primeval First Family*

In the previous chapter I detailed the influence of Szondi’s Jewish heritage on the formation of his theory of the familial unconscious. I argued that Szondi’s theory had several parallels with the Torah, especially Genesis’s interest in genealogy and תולדות. Prior to that, in Chapter 4, I analysed the midrashic influences on Szondi’s understanding of fate apropos its relevance to Gen 4. Judaism was a significant factor in the formation of his theories. It is for this reason that Szondi’s concept of evil should also be considered in the tradition of post-War Jewish interpretations of the HB’s presentation of evil. These are just as relevant to Szondi’s thinking as are his psychoanalytical and contemporaneous ethological influences. Though he makes few explicit references to contemporary Jewish interpretations of evil in *Kain*, at least in comparison to the scale of his psychoanalytically and ethologically oriented observations, Szondi was nonetheless influenced by Martin Buber, whose translation of Gen 4 he prefers.<sup>6</sup> In this section I briefly contextualise Szondi’s concept of evil with Buber’s examination of Cain. I also incorporate the exploration of evil in the Primeval History by Yehezkel Kaufmann, the Israeli philosopher, biblical scholar, and near contemporary of Szondi.

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<sup>6</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 9.



Adapted from his influential four-volume *History of Israelite Religion* (1937-56),<sup>7</sup> Kaufmann's observations concerning the origin of evil reveal some correlations to Szondi's use of the Cain and Abel myth.

In his 1952 book, *Bilder von Gut und Böse* (Images of Good and Evil), Martin Buber dedicates a brief chapter to the figure of Cain who, according to Buber, resorts to violence in response to what appears to be a capricious rejection. This, he asserts, is an example of the "divine temptation" motif in Genesis, comparable to humanity's first settlement near the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17) and God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son (Gen 22:2).<sup>8</sup> While Buber claims that the links between Cain's crime to the transgression of his parents are clear, it is the fratricide that is "the story of the first 'iniquity'"; hence, Cain "is the first [human] to become guilty in the exact human sense."<sup>9</sup> For Buber, it is an act which is wrong in its very nature and would have been punished as such by every known society, thus the nature of the crime is universal. Buber asserts that the parents' transgression took place in a pre-evil realm, but since they had eaten from the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil" (הדעת טוב ורע), Cain's transgression becomes an act of evil taking place in a world that is now conscious of the knowledge of evil. Hence, evil represents an existential *option* for Cain in a manner that it does not for his parents. Buber thus emphasises the notion of the choice in opting to do good or evil that confronts humanity in its post-Edenic context, which is also reflected in Szondi's articulation of *Schicksalsanalyse*. Given Szondi's preference for Buber's translation of Gen 4, it makes his disinterest for the choice presented to Cain in the text (v. 7) even more puzzling (cf. §4.5).

The meaning of "knowledge of good and evil" is contested by scholars.<sup>10</sup> However, one of the main points of consensus appears to align most closely with the views of those who interpret it as

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<sup>7</sup> Kaufmann's *History of Israelite Religion* was written in modern Hebrew. The first three volumes of it were abridged and translated into English by Moshe Greenberg in 1960. This is the text that I refer to in this study.

<sup>8</sup> Buber, *Images of Good and Evil*, 30-1. Taken together, Gen 2:17; 4:8; and 22:2 are an interesting triptych on the motifs of obedience and death. While Adam, Eve, and Cain are unable to obey God's directive, thereby leading to exile and death (cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 64), Abraham's obedience to God's command ultimately prevents the death of his son.

<sup>9</sup> Buber, 26, 29.

<sup>10</sup> For an overview of some of the current debate see James Chukwuma Okoye, *Genesis 1-11: A Narrative-Theological Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 52-9.

‘wisdom.’<sup>11</sup> Kaufmann, on the other hand, suggests that this interpretation is difficult to maintain for three reasons.<sup>12</sup> First, Genesis has already shown that the human being possessed knowledge before eating from the tree – i.e. the human was able to speak and work the soil etc. Second, he claims that throughout the Bible, knowledge is considered a gift from God and is not viewed as sinful or evil. Finally, the type of knowledge that the man and woman acquired equates to the experience of shame which differs, he argues, from a higher order knowledge such as wisdom.<sup>13</sup> The biblical narrator informs the reader that after the man and the woman ate the fruit of the tree “the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked” (Gen 3:7), which results in the experience of shame as they sought to cover their nakedness. Further, according to Kaufmann, the serpent’s role in the myth is to reveal evil to both the woman and the man and rouse their desire for it. What the man and the woman saw after eating the fruit aroused desire, a result of seeing their sexual distinctiveness for the first time. The man and the woman thus both experience a simultaneous emotional dichotomy of desire and shame. The same dichotomy is evidenced in Szondi’s drive system, where desire represents the evil inclination in the system and shame the good inclination.<sup>14</sup> According to Kaufmann, desire and shame are the two aspects of “knowledge” that humanity acquires in Gen 3.

For Kaufmann, sexual desire is the symbol for all desire, and the sign of the inclination to evil. It is only after they eat the fruit that the man and the woman experience sexual desire, and the man “knew” his wife (4:1) and a child, Cain, is born. Thus, the man and woman only become the progenitors of humankind *after* their sin and expulsion from Eden. Although humankind was created by grace it is born inclined to evil, according to Kaufmann, which is a view, he argues, that is shared by other parts of the HB.<sup>15</sup> The man and woman did not become absolutely evil creatures, but having tasted evil their impulse to sin grew ever more compelling, as Kaufmann states: the “sap of the tree of evil

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<sup>11</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 63-4. Such interpretations are likely derived from the description that the tree was “desired to make one wise” (Gen 3:6) and the use of the lexeme שכל (insight) in that verse. The Hiphil infinitive construct להשכיל is, according to BDB, “hard to classify.” (Ref. H7919 in BDB.) Holladay translates the form as “make (s.one) keen, clever.” (William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner* [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988], 352.) At any rate, the sense conveyed by שכל in this instance should not be confused with חכמה in the traditional sense of that term in Wisdom literature (cf. Josephus’ use of φρόνησις rather than σοφία suggesting the tree of knowledge represented a type of practical good judgement [*Ant.* 1.1.3]).

<sup>12</sup> Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, trans. Moshe Greenberg (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960), 293-5.

<sup>13</sup> It could be suggested that Kaufmann is equating שכל with חכמה in his reference to wisdom as a higher order type of knowledge. To give him the benefit of the doubt, it is nevertheless possible to differentiate between shame and a practical form of insight represented by שכל as a higher form of knowledge.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Table 2-1. Szondi’s Drive System (Triebssystem).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Psalm 51:7. It should be noted that the myth also simultaneously “expresses a lofty view of woman and family” (Kaufmann, 293).

seethed in their blood and the blood of their offspring.”<sup>16</sup> He therefore concludes that “envy, murder and the lie” came into the world with Cain.<sup>17</sup> Kaufmann concludes that “the tree harbors all evil, for to approach it means to sin, to violate a divine prohibition.”<sup>18</sup> The knowledge that the tree symbolises is not the source of knowledge in general “but the knowledge of, and desire for evil, without which [humankind’s] comprehension is incomplete.”<sup>19</sup>

The ideas that human beings are born in the attribute of evil and that, mythically, the growth of evil enters the world through the figure of Cain resonate strongly with Szondi’s perspective. In the introduction to this chapter I referred to my conversation with Friedjung Jüttner who said that for Szondi “good must constantly respawn because evil is immortal.” Such a view is thus consistent with the biblical perspective as interpreted by Kaufmann, a contemporaneous Jewish intellectual. That is, the proclivity towards evil is both a feature of human innateness and an essential aspect of human comprehension.<sup>20</sup> The two aspects are reflected in Szondi’s articulation of the movement from ‘Cainitic’ affects to what he terms ‘Abelitic’ affects, such as when the experience of shame and anxiety leads to a sense of remorse in which an individual can then move towards restitution.<sup>21</sup> The dualism inherent in human consciousness – i.e. the competing inclinations to evil and good – are of central importance to Szondi in the formulation of his theories, particularly the interplay between the spirit and the ego in shaping other compulsive aspects of fate. A similar outlook is articulated by Buber in his brief discourse on Cain:

From quite general opposites, embracing good and evil as well as good and ill and good and bad, we have arrived at the circumscribed area peculiar to [humanity], in which only good and evil still confront each other. It is peculiar to [humans]... because it can only be perceived introspectively, can only be recognised in the conduct of the soul towards itself: a [person] only knows factually what ‘evil’ is insofar as he [or she] knows about himself [or herself], everything else to which he [or she] gives this name is merely mirrored illusion.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Kaufmann, *History of Israelite Religion*, vol. 2, 409-11, cited by David Frankel, “Kaufmann’s Garden: Sin, Sex and the Serpent in the Eden Narrative,” paper presented at SBL International Meeting, 1-5 July 2019, Rome, Italy.

<sup>17</sup> Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, 294.

<sup>18</sup> Although Gen 4 does not refer to רע (evil), its semantic equivalence appears in v. 7: הלווא תיטיב (do not do good) which leads to חטאת (sin).

<sup>19</sup> Kaufmann, 293.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Gen 6:5; 8:21.

<sup>21</sup> Refer to §2.2 The ‘Cain complex.’

<sup>22</sup> Buber, 33.

For Szondi the human proclivity to evil manifests itself as violence, which, as Genesis makes clear, is against the moral obligations placed upon humanity by God even from the time before the Sinai Covenant and the giving of the law.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Evil – the psychoanalytical perspective***

Since Szondi is the central focus of this study, I do not present a separate and in-depth analysis of both Freud's and Jung's voluminous written work. Instead, the following discussion concerning these two figures, central to the development of psychoanalysis, and their works is advanced and informed by references cited by Szondi, specifically those in his book *Die Triebentmischten* (1980).

Two of Freud's works written during and in the immediate aftermath of World War I respectively are of particular relevance to the Szondian understanding of *das Böse*. In "Thoughts on War and Death" (1915) Freud explores the relationship between the moral conscience of the individual and the community. In a statement which now reads as unnervingly prescient in light of Auschwitz, Freud claims that:

our conscience is not the inflexible judge that ethical teachers declare it, but in its origin is 'social anxiety' and nothing else. When the community no longer raises objections, there is an end, too, to the suppression of evil passions, and men [sic] perpetrate deeds of cruelty, fraud, treachery and barbarity so incompatible with their level of civilisation that one would have thought them impossible.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, according to Freud, an individual will at times of great social upheaval (or great social apathy) be powerless to avoid engaging in evil acts when his or her community no longer objects to such acts. Hence the moral conscience is not stable or internal but the result of external stimuli: remove the constraints imposed on it from society and the moral conscience disappears. Freud's bleak perspective was perhaps shaped by the hitherto unseen scale of human destruction and misery that had been brought about by World War I. For Freud there is no point in attempting to eradicate evil because human nature consists of "instinctual impulses" directed at satisfying primal needs. "These impulses are neither good nor bad," he writes, but are classified one way or the other "according to

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Gen 4:10-12; 6:11; 9:5, 6; and 20:11.

<sup>24</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," in *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 14, SE (London: Hogarth press, 1957), 273–302.

their relation to the needs and demands of the human community.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, the moral conscience of the individual only exists in relation to that of the broader community of which she or he is a member. He argues a “human being is seldom altogether good or bad [*böse*]; he [or she] is usually ‘good’ in one relation and ‘bad’ [*böse*] in another, or ‘good’ in certain *external circumstances* and in others decidedly ‘bad’ [*böse*].”<sup>26</sup>

Writing several years after the end of World War I, Freud once again took up the concept of the individual within the collective in his chapter entitled “Le Bon’s Description of the Group Mind” in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921).<sup>27</sup> Freud argues that Le Bon’s contention that a crowd affects the behaviour of an individual, who, in isolation, may be cultivated but acts only by instinct within a group dynamic is one in which psychoanalysis cannot find fault. Moreover, Freud asserts that a group is “impulsive, changeable and irritable” being led “almost exclusively by the unconscious.”<sup>28</sup> Freud’s affirmation that within a group, the individual’s inhibitions can evaporate and “all the cruel, brutal and destructive instincts, which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch, are stirred up to find free gratification” is one that does bear some semblance with later ethological arguments.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, the crowd is also capable of great achievements such that an individual’s moral standards can be lifted by the group; however, Freud does not appear to link such occurrences to instinct or primitive origins. The difference appears to be in terms of intellect – the group’s being always lower than the capacity of an individual – and ethics, which may raise or lower an individual’s moral standards depending on the circumstances.

In light of his own experience of war, exile, the Holocaust, and the early deaths of his two children, Szondi concludes that according to Freudian psychoanalysis, the evil dimension of the unconscious, that is its proclivity towards violence, has taken over much of human nature.<sup>30</sup> As is examined in the section below (see §6.4), Szondi asserts that the Cain figure in a position of power and authority will bring their malevolent influence to bear on the masses during times of political and social turmoil:

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<sup>25</sup> Freud, “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death,” 281.

<sup>26</sup> Freud, 282. Italics are mine.

<sup>27</sup> Gustave Le Bon’s *Psychologie des Foules* (Psychology of Crowds) was first published in 1895.

<sup>28</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,” in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 18, SE (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), 67–144.

<sup>29</sup> Freud, “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego.” It will also be possible to see the origins of ideas that would become more fully developed in the ethological perspective on the prehistoric beginnings of aggression and violence explored below.

<sup>30</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischen*, 167.

A Cain who is unable to divert his background pent-up killing mindset into clinical symptoms, can – under chaotic circumstances – politically camouflaged, wipe out the lives of thousands without actually killing himself... The acts of mass murder at all times – such as those of the Crusaders and other religious wars, pogroms (against Jews, Armenians, etc.) – are most likely based on the same Cainitic basis.<sup>31</sup>

For his part, Jung wrote a great deal on evil, yet it would seem he did not do so either systematically, or with any particular consistency. One could say that his collected works stand in part as testament to his grappling with the problem of evil over the course of his career. In fact, one of the most illuminating statements Jung made concerning evil is not even to be found among his *Collected Works*. In a 1959 television interview Jung stated, “We know nothing of man [sic], far too little. His psyche should be studied, because we are the origin of all coming evil.”<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, I have been guided through Jung’s numerous observations on evil by Szondi himself, particularly his treatment of Jungian psychoanalysis in *Die Triebentmischten*.<sup>33</sup>

Szondi selects those of Jung’s arguments which seem to concur with Freud’s contention that evil cannot be overcome. However, in Jung’s case this is not because evil is the result of deep instinctual impulses within human beings. Rather, Jung argues that evil cannot be overcome because it, like good, is a “principle” which “exists long before us and extends far beyond us.”<sup>34</sup> Evil and good do not reside in the unconscious, but are more like the laws of physics as the designation ‘principle’ implies: “A principle is always a supraordinate thing, mightier than I am... they simply confront me, loom over me as sheer fact, as laws that ‘prevail.’”<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, there is also a subjective quality to both good and evil, the deepest qualities of which are unknown to human beings. What we experience as evil depends, according to Jung, on our subjective judgement.<sup>36</sup>

In *Aion* (1951) Jung examines the origins of evil. Quoting Basil the Great’s *Hexaemeron*, Jung argues that God is not the author of evil, nor does evil possess any substance of itself. He considers evil and good to be “a logically equivalent pair of opposites” and as “coexistent halves of a moral judgement,

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<sup>31</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 67.

<sup>32</sup> Hugh Burnett, “Face to Face: Carl Jung” (United Kingdom: BBC, October 22, 1959), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04qhvyj>.

<sup>33</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 167-72.

<sup>34</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, “Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology,” in *Civilization in Transition*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, vol. 10, Works (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), 456–66.

<sup>35</sup> Jung, “Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology,” 458-9.

<sup>36</sup> Jung, 456-7.

do not derive from one another but are always there together.”<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the reality of evil must be asserted. In what is likely a nod to Nietzsche’s *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (1886), Jung declares that people who think they are beyond good and evil are usually the worst tormentors of humanity.<sup>38</sup> Human nature is capable of infinite malevolence, and evil deeds are as real as good ones as far as human experience goes; however, “[o]nly unconsciousness makes no difference between good and evil.”<sup>39</sup> This is a key distinction with Freud’s understanding.

Jung’s correlative between good and evil can be evidenced in Szondi’s Cain and Moses polarity, although Szondi’s advancement of the fate analytic concept of evil differs from both Freud and Jung.<sup>40</sup> Regarding Jung, his concept assumes two substances, good and evil, that derive independently of one another, though they exist together. According to *Schicksalsanalyse*, however, both good and evil are based on an identical substance. Additionally, as Hughes suggests, Jung is inclined to mystifying evil, while “Szondi argues, in contrast, that the task is not to mystify evil but to overcome it.”<sup>41</sup>

Regarding Freud, Szondi agrees with three of his main evaluations, namely: the role of society and civilisation (i.e. the crowd) in the proliferation of evil; that evil is part of the instinctual heritage of humanity; and that good is a reaction to evil in an attempt to transform it. They differ, however, in understanding the mechanics of how this takes place. Szondi rejects Freud’s contention that violence originates from within the sexual drive. As was previously mentioned (see §2.2), Freud argues that aggression directed against another person is sadistic by nature.<sup>42</sup> Hence, by implication, all human aggression is incorporated within sexuality. Szondi, on the contrary, cites his own research in which over ten thousand drive profiles (*Triebprofile*) obtained from one thousand people with symptoms of neurosis, epilepsy, and pre-psychosis indicated that in less than one third of the profiles was there a

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<sup>37</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, ed. Carl Gustav Jung, trans. R.F.C. Hull, vol. 9, Works (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), 47.

<sup>38</sup> Jung, *Aion*, 53.

<sup>39</sup> Jung, 53.

<sup>40</sup> Ref. Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 187-9.

<sup>41</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 155. Cf. Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 162-3; 187-9.

<sup>42</sup> See Sigmund Freud, “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” in *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 14, SE (London: Hogarth press, 1915), 109–40; *The Ego and the Id*, ed. James Strachey, trans. Joan Riviere and James Strachey, vol. 12, International Psycho-Analytical Library (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1962).

Freud would admit to considering a non-erotic source of aggression which he calls the ego-instinct of thanatos, that is the death drive. Ref. ch. VI of “Civilisation and Its Discontents,” in *The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 21, SE (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961).

coincidence between aggression originating from both the sexual and paroxysmal drives, and thus had a sadistic motivation.<sup>43</sup>

As Szondi makes clear in his *Triebsystem*, there is no one unilateral drive responsible for aggression, which can be both a positive and negative force in human psychology (refer to Table 2-1 in §2.2). Therefore, it follows that aggression and what Szondi labels ‘evil’ are not synonymous. Likewise, aggression rooted in the sexual drive (i.e. sadism and masochism) is not necessarily ‘evil.’ What Szondi defines as ‘evil’ are acts of aggression that are the result of a violent outburst from repressed or ‘pent-up’ affects, specifically anger, rage, envy, jealousy, hatred, and vengeance. Such acts one might otherwise call violence, or more specifically violence that is gratuitous and unwarranted.

### ***Evil – the biological perspective***

The 1960s saw several publications concerning behavioural studies of the human animal and the role that aggression has played in the development and evolution of humanity. Foremost among these were works by the ethologists Konrad Lorenz and his student Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt.<sup>44</sup> However, it was arguably a work by Robert Ardrey, an American anthropologist, who pioneered such studies and first brought ethology to a wide audience. Building on earlier work by the Australian anthropologist Raymond Dart, Ardrey’s book *African Genesis* (1961) was a best seller (perhaps unsurprising given Ardrey’s previous career as a playwright and dramatist).<sup>45</sup> It posited the idea that *Australopithecus africanus*, the ancestor of *Homo sapiens*, used stone “weapons” (Ardrey does not refer to such implements as tools) for hunting and for killing intraspecific threats.<sup>46</sup> Ardrey’s thesis is that when early hominids moved from herbivorous to higher calorie carnivorous diets during the late Pliocene era it was coupled with “the addition of a suddenly enlarged brain to the hunting primate” and a commensurate rise in aggressive behaviour.<sup>47</sup> Ardrey contends that once the necessities of hunting met with the instinctual behaviour of the early hominids to defend territory and exert dominance an intensification of these behaviours took place, such that:

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<sup>43</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 176-80.

<sup>44</sup> Lorenz, *On Aggression*; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Love and Hate*.

<sup>45</sup> Peter M. Driver, “Toward an Ethology of Human Conflict,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 11, no. 3 (1967): 361–74.

<sup>46</sup> The term ‘intraspecific’ refers to activities between individuals of a single species, while ‘interspecific’ refers to activities occurring between different species.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Ardrey, *African Genesis: A Personal Investigation into the Animal Origins and Nature of Man* (Glasgow: Collins, 1961), 353.



Conflicts became lethal, territorial arguments minor wars... The dominant became more dominant, the subordinate more disciplined. Overshadowing all other qualitative changes, however, was the coming of the aggressive imperative. The creature who had once killed only through circumstance killed now for a living.<sup>48</sup>

Not only did aggressive behaviour among early hominids grow exponentially, aggression is, according to Ardrey, also an innate aspect of human nature thanks to our primordial ancestry. “We are Cain’s children”, Ardrey concludes, declaring that a human being “is a predator whose natural instinct is to kill with a weapon.”<sup>49</sup>

Like Ardrey, Lorenz argues that aggression is an essential and innate feature of biology and functions to preserve the species and, therefore, can be considered a force for good (or at least value-neutral). Somewhat ambivalently, however, Lorenz also argues that aggression is evil. He distinguishes a kind of intraspecific aggression which he describes as “‘evil’ in the real sense of the word.”<sup>50</sup> Using the examples of bees that attack and kill an interloper in the colony and rats that attack other individual rats or groups of rats, he defines this as a kind of “collective aggression” between intraspecific communities and individuals.<sup>51</sup> As to the purpose of this phenomenon, which he calls “group hate,” Lorenz can only conclude that there is no purpose, since it would appear that it does not seem to relate to Darwinian ideas concerning adaptation. Lorenz’s thesis seeks to link animal behaviour with the behaviour of human beings. This link becomes clear in an example he cites of groups of rats competing for territory on the North Sea island of Norderoog. He proposes that the “constant warfare between large neighbouring families of rats” must inevitably lead to the extermination of smaller clan groups which cannot maintain the level of population required to compete for resources.<sup>52</sup> Especially pointed is Lorenz’s use of military terms such as “no-man’s-land – no-rat’s-land” and smaller clans being disadvantaged by having to defend a relatively larger “front.”

Ultimately, Lorenz uses aggression ambivalently viz. its moral dimension, such that it appears somewhat confused. On the one hand he claims it is a necessary attribute for the survival and flourishing of species within a Darwinian framework. On the other hand, it is also an inherently destructive phenomenon, which in certain circumstances he also labels evil. The difference between

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<sup>48</sup> Ardrey, 354.

<sup>49</sup> Ardrey, 353.

<sup>50</sup> Lorenz, *On Aggression*, 134.

<sup>51</sup> Lorenz, 134-9.

<sup>52</sup> Lorenz, 139.

the two would appear to occur when aggression and intraspecific fighting behaviour (*die Aggression und innerartliches Kampfverhalten*) moves from being an essential component of evolution to one which is gratuitous and serves no apparent biological purpose. Lorenz suggests that in such circumstances the motivation or trigger for the aggressive behaviour is hate, and thus could, in short, be called violence, though he does not explicitly refer to it as such. Nonetheless, it is this type of aggression that Lorenz thinks is evil, and “[e]vil, by definition, is that which endangers the good, and the good is that which we perceive as a value.”<sup>53</sup>

Lorenz’s student Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt argues that examples of intraspecific and interspecific aggression each employ distinct motor sequences.<sup>54</sup> This demarcation is necessary since it is oftentimes blurred, such as in the work of Ardrey. Contra Ardrey, Eibl-Eibesfeldt asserts that intraspecific aggression has not developed from the predatory lifestyle of ancient hunting hominids, citing the fact that herbivores can be just as aggressive as omnivores and carnivores. He believes that it is unlikely that aggression is just a non-functional by-product of other expressions of life, arguing that it has a function in territorial behaviour, and thus in the distribution of habitat and food sources, and in the competition for a mate. He further provides examples of how many animals are born “pre-programmed in such a way that they react to particular signals with aggressive behaviour patterns.”<sup>55</sup> The aggressive spontaneity and fighting behaviour that is demonstrated in young and socially inexperienced animals also suggest “the existence of innate drive mechanisms.”<sup>56</sup> When transposing the traits evidenced in animals to human beings, Eibl-Eibesfeldt concludes that there is a predisposition to aggression and, thus, it is a universal phenomenon. While he acknowledges that some dispute this, suggesting that so-called peaceful peoples such as Eskimos, Zuni Indians and Kalahari Bushmen do not engage in acts of aggression, Eibl-Eibesfeldt counters that even within such outwardly peaceable groups acts of aggression within families, clans, or cooperatives are still evident.<sup>57</sup>

However, the key problems of whether aggression is in fact ‘evil’ and, if it is, when it becomes so, remain. On these questions, Eibl-Eibesfeldt, like his teacher, is ambivalent, arguably even more so since he avoids using the term ‘evil.’ While he makes it clear that it is not his intent to provide a

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<sup>53</sup> Lorenz, 247.

<sup>54</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Love and Hate*, 61-9.

<sup>55</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 69.

<sup>56</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 69.

<sup>57</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 70.

justification of aggression, he also notes that not everything necessarily retains its species-preserving adaptive qualities forever:

Thanks to changes in the environment, it is not all that uncommon for an adaptation to turn into its opposite, for it to be retained as a historical vestige, while it has become in effect a selective hindrance.<sup>58</sup>

Aggression can thus become the inverse of a life propagating phenomenon. When it does, Eibl-Eibesfeldt suggests that this is when aggression becomes violence, or what Lorenz calls ‘evil.’

The ethological perspective on aggression and evil is of some interest to Szondi as evidenced by his extended engagement in *Die Triebentmischten*. There are five key parallels between ethology and *Schicksalsanalyse*. First, the ethological approach expressed by both Lorenz and Eibl-Eibesfeldt takes into account hormonal factors for triggering aggressive behaviour. According to Szondi, ethology assumes that the energy which the animal and the person need in order to act aggressively accumulates in the nerve centres. When this energy reaches a catalysing level, it “‘explodes’ spontaneously, even when the environment does not give it specific triggering stimuli.”<sup>59</sup> This is similar to Szondi’s understanding of the Cainitic explosion which was examined previously (see §4.5); however, it differs in that the accumulation of Cainitic affects still requires a trigger in Szondi’s framework.

Second, the ethological description of instinct and innateness correlates with Szondi’s concept of a drive system. Though the terms *Instinkt* and *Trieb* are different there is a correspondence with aspects of Szondi’s *Treibsystem*, particularly the contactual and sexual drives.<sup>60</sup> Szondi argues that in the ‘higher order animals,’ ethology has established that “behaviour towards conspecifics depends more on innate, inherited factors and less on learning performance.”<sup>61</sup> Lorenz affirms something similar and extends the findings to humanity:

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<sup>58</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 72.

<sup>59</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 119.

<sup>60</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 44-46.

<sup>61</sup> Szondi, 118.

That this is, unfortunately, quite the same with humanity, expresses itself blatantly in the disproportion that exists between our monumental success in the mastery of the external world and our devastating inability to solve the intraspecific problems of humankind.<sup>62</sup>

Third, even though they at times seem ambiguous, Lorenz's and Eibl-Eibesfeldt's ethological perspectives do make distinctions between aggression and "evil," in the case of Lorenz, or "violence," in the case of Eibl-Eibesfeldt. As was demonstrated above, this too is a critical distinction between *Schicksalsanalyse* and Freudian psychoanalysis since aggression for Szondi does not have its source *only* in the sexual drive but finds its most problematic and destructive expression in the paroxysmal drive. Aggression can thus manifest as either positive or negative expressions in the human sphere.

The fourth parallel concerns the final phase of the Cainitic process which is reparation or restitution. Lorenz contends that a "compensatory function of moral responsibility" prevented Australopithecines from mutual destruction with their stone tools, and he details several examples of animals demonstrating the same instinctive "appreciation of life and death."<sup>63</sup> In support of this, Lorenz alludes to the biblical account of the first murder concluding: "It is safe to assume that the first Cain, after having stricken a fellow-member of his horde with a pebble tool, was deeply concerned about the consequences of his action."<sup>64</sup> According to Szondi, Cainitic paroxysmal behaviour will also evidence this final aspect. The three stages of the paroxysmal drive factor form a pattern which includes the accumulation of unexpressed emotion, followed by the explosive seizure, then a search for restitution or reparation.<sup>65</sup> This is a critical aspect of Szondi's understanding of the link between aggression and evil, as he states: "Without the urge to make amends for an evil act, aggression is not paroxysmal, i.e. affect-related."<sup>66</sup>

Finally, as is evident in the works of Ardrey and Lorenz, ethology makes a distinct appeal to Gen 4 as a metaphor for the earliest human origins of aggression, violence and evil. As such, they are

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<sup>62</sup> Konrad Lorenz, "Ganzheit und Teil in der tierischen und menschlichen Gemeinschaft," *Studium Generale* 3, no. 9 (1950): 455–98. Cited also by Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*.

<sup>63</sup> Lorenz, *On Aggression*, 214-215. Nor is this phenomenon restricted to intraspecific behaviour, as the examples which Lorenz provides of the elephant and the chimpanzee that inflicted wounds on their human keepers followed by behaviour which apparently demonstrated remorse demonstrate.

<sup>64</sup> Lorenz, 215. Szondi's contention that acknowledgment of guilt and the atonement for evil is the origin of conscience echoes Lorenz's hypothetical summation of the first Cain. (See *Moses*, 149.)

<sup>65</sup> Hughes, 47.

<sup>66</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 162.

representative of a type, one might even say a genre, of literature that emerges in the aftermath of World War II.

### Szondi's use of Ethology

Given his links to the Nazis, Lorenz is a peculiar dialogue partner for Szondi. The German-born American zoologist, Peter Klopfer, asserts that Lorenz's Nazi sympathies had been known by scholars in the United States prior to the 1950s.<sup>67</sup> A particular point of critique among scholars were two articles written by Lorenz in the early 1940s in which he condemned the "interbreeding of persons of different so-called races."<sup>68</sup> Contrary to Lorenz's post war claims that he had little to do with the Nazis and that the articles were a naïve attempt on his part to maintain an academic position, Klopfer demonstrates that Lorenz exhibited a pattern of anti-Semitic behaviour well before the publication of the two articles.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, although the Nazis privileged the study of biology in schools above all other sciences for the purposes of indoctrination, Klopfer asserts there is evidence that:

a significant proportion of German biologists of this period remained professionally active, their research supported, without adopting the stance of Lorenz. Such posturing was not a political necessity, even if advantageous.<sup>70</sup>

Assuming that Lorenz's links to the Nazis were known to Szondi around the time he was writing about the Cain complex, the question is then why does Szondi engage with Lorenz and his work to the extent he does? Three possible reasons can be conjectured.

First, ethology provides Szondi with the biological rationale for the Cainitic affects of rage, hatred, envy, jealousy, anger, and revenge.<sup>71</sup> The biological and environmental factors in fate constitute the *Zwangs-Schicksal*, i.e. the compulsive elements, while the psychological/spiritual factors, vested in the subject's ability to *choose* and thereby 'transcend' their biological and environmental constraints,

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<sup>67</sup> Klopfer, "Konrad Lorenz and the National Socialists: On the Politics of Ethology."

<sup>68</sup> Klopfer, 203.

<sup>69</sup> See also Theo J. Kalikow, "Konrad Lorenz's 'Brown Past': A Reply to Alec Nisbett," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 14, no. 2 (1978): 173–80. Written in response to Nisbett's somewhat hagiographic biography of Lorenz, *Konrad Lorenz: A Biography* (1977), Kalikow asserts that seven of the thirteen articles published by Lorenz between 1938 and 1943 "are expressed partly in Nazi terminology and serve the prevailing climate of thought in some way."

<sup>70</sup> Klopfer, "Konrad Lorenz and the National Socialists: On the Politics of Ethology." As a postscript to Lorenz, in 2015 the University of Salzburg posthumously stripped him of an honorary doctorate due to his embrace of Nazism.

<sup>71</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 17.

constitute the *Wahl-Schicksal*. In Szondi's framework, these biological aspects of the Cain complex are represented by Cain, while the psychological/spiritual are represented by Moses.

Second, Lorenz's post-war interest in the origins of violence and his public statements regretting his past Nazi affiliations perhaps embodied for Szondi the movement toward restitution that is a component of the Cain complex.<sup>72</sup> Lorenz's use of *das Böse*, and his and Eibl-Eibesfeldt's interest in the origins of violence and their attempt to demonstrate its innateness within all human beings can be read in light of a post-War sense of guilt and shame in Germany for the atrocities committed by the Nazis. Thus, Szondi may have seen in Lorenz the integration of the 'Abelitic' affects to compensate for his prior Cainitic tendencies.

The third and final reason, and one that is related to the second, concerns Szondi's status as a *superstes* – a witness and a survivor, to use Emilé Benveniste's term. Szondi's thesis effectively renders ethology subordinate to *Schicksalsanalyse*. By integrating ethological theories espoused by the German-speaking academy into his framework and situating them beneath his psychological and spiritual paradigm for the resolution and restitution of violence, at the apex of which sits the most important figure in Judaism, Szondi undermines the post-War hegemonic German language discourse on the origins of violence and evil.

### 6.3 'Violentology' and Cain

Having explained the influences that psychoanalysis and ethology had on shaping Szondi's concept of evil, I turn now to consider one of the more esoteric of the influences on Szondi, the German-American anti-violence campaigner, Fredric Wertham. In 1966 Wertham published *A Sign for Cain*, a book dealing with the phenomena of human violence. While it was received with a degree of negativity, particularly in the United States,<sup>73</sup> Szondi nevertheless makes as many references to it in *Kain* than any other text besides Micha Bin-Gorion's *Die Sagen der Juden* and Victor Aptowitzer's *Kain und Abel in der Agada*.

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<sup>72</sup> Ref. Lorenz's speech on accepting his 1973 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in which he expressed regret for his writings in support of Nazi ideology. (<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/1973/lorenz/biographical/>, accessed 3 April 2020)

<sup>73</sup> Eg. Harold Graser, "Wertham: A Sign for Cain." *Buffalo Law Review* 16 (1966): 523; Marjorie C. Meehan, "A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence." *JAMA* 198, no. 5 (1966): 566; Andrew S. Watson and Fredric Wertham. "A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence." *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science* 58, no. 2 (1967): 247-248. It should be noted, however, that it becomes clear on reading *A Sign for Cain* that Wertham was writing for a mass audience rather than strictly for the academy.

In 1922, Wertham, a medical doctor, emigrated to the United States from his native Bavaria at the age of 27. Just prior to his acceptance of a position at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, he had moved into the discipline of psychiatry after corresponding with Sigmund Freud. In the aftermath of World War II, Wertham became increasingly concerned about the influence of violent imagery in mass media, particularly comic books, on the behaviour of juveniles.<sup>74</sup> While he is mostly remembered for his crusade against comics, *A Sign for Cain* represents three points of interest for understanding Szondi's concept of evil.

First, Wertham claims that he was compelled to write about his subject because there is “not one scientific or scientifically oriented book in any language on the general subject of physical violence as such and its prevention.”<sup>75</sup> This is incorrect, as is attested, for example, by the aforementioned treatments of aggression and violence by Ardrey and Lorenz, both of which were published before *A Sign for Cain*.<sup>76</sup> Despite this oversight, Wertham moves on to claim that the central thesis of his work is twofold:

On the one hand, violence is becoming much more entrenched in our social life than people are willing to believe. On the other hand, it is in our power eventually *to conquer and abolish it*.<sup>77</sup>

The second part of Wertham's thesis was of some interest to Szondi since it is consistent with his stipulation that evil is something which can be overcome. This is substantiated by Szondi's direct citing of Wertham's response to the claim that violence is necessary in fiction because it is a “fact of

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<sup>74</sup> These concerns were expressed in his book *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954). Wertham became a controversial figure in the comic book community, a status that has persisted long after his death in 1981. For example, footage of Wertham on the *Mike Douglas Show* from 1967 was shown at the 2003 edition of Comic-Con International in San Diego (Randy Dotinga, “Reliving Comics' Days of Infamy,” *wired.com*, July 22, 2003, <https://www.wired.com/2003/07/reliving-comics-days-of-infamy/>, accessed 9 Sep 2019). For further information on the relationship between Wertham and comics see also Chris Bishop, “No Evil Shall Escape My Sight: Fredric Wertham & the Anti-Comics Crusade,” Library of Congress, June 20, 2013, <https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-6132/>, accessed 9 Sep 2019, and Robert A. Emmons Jr, dir. *Diagram for Delinquents* (Unites States, 2014).

<sup>75</sup> Fredric Wertham, *A Sign for Cain* (New York: Paperback Library ed., 1969), 13.

<sup>76</sup> It might be argued that ethologists are less concerned with the “prevention” of violence than Wertham. On the other hand, the pursuit of understanding the origins of human violence could be said to be the starting point for any possible eradication of violent behaviour. It is nevertheless surprising that neither Ardrey nor Lorenz feature in the bibliography of *A Sign for Cain*. That Wertham was possibly unaware of either of Ardrey's highly successful non-fiction books and Lorenz's original German language publication, given that Wertham was a native German speaker, is quite an oversight.

<sup>77</sup> Wertham, *A Sign for Cain*, 20. Author's italics.

experience.” “The necessity”, Wertham counters, “is not to depict it, but to overcome it.”<sup>78</sup> Wertham views this as a collective responsibility to be undertaken by communities and nations. Szondi, by contrast, views the challenge to confront evil as personal conflict of which every individual must become conscious and undertake.

Second, Wertham uses multiple examples from the Holocaust to illustrate his thesis concerning the ongoing entrenchment of violence in society. In particular, he highlights the active role played by German industry and the medical professions, particularly in experiments and euthanasia that were carried out on children. Writing some twenty years after the end of the war, his indignation can barely be contained as he details that some of the biggest companies in German industry in the sixties, such as Krupp, Thyssen, Siemens, AEG, I.G. Farben, BMW and Volkswagen, made wartime profits based on slave labour from concentration camps and were complicit in the deaths of prisoners.<sup>79</sup> Such examples of the industrialisation of violence by both government and industry in the pursuit of profit is one of the central themes in *A Sign for Cain*.<sup>80</sup>

Wertham’s *A Sign for Cain* also occupies a nexus between a scholar/author of the German-speaking lands, the theme of violence, the Holocaust, and the motif of Gen 4.<sup>81</sup> Lorenz’s *Das sogenannte Böse* and Szondi’s *Kain* are two further examples. Scholars have identified that the turn to Gen 4 as a metaphor in Western culture in general, and in particular Jewish and German literatures (even more so in German language Jewish literature viz. Szondi), was elicited by the events of the Holocaust.<sup>82</sup> Gabrielle Oberhänsli-Widmer, a Swiss Jewish studies scholar, asserts that such post-Shoah texts

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<sup>78</sup> Wertham, 311. Cited in Szondi, *Kain*, 164. Szondi also evidences a degree of pessimism regarding the ability of human beings to actually overcome evil. Immediately following his reference to Wertham’s claim that evil must be overcome he quotes at length from Balzac’s *Splendeurs et Misères des Courtisanes* (the English title: *A Harlot High and Low*) that the “poetry of evil” contains within it an irresistible lure. See Honoré de Balzac, *A Harlot High and Low*, trans. Rayner Heppenstall (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 432. Cf. §8.2.3 in this study.

<sup>79</sup> Wertham, 139-142.

<sup>80</sup> For example, Wertham claims the camps at Belzec, Sobibór, and Treblinka made over US\$44,500,000 in *profit* adjusted for 1966 values. Adjusted for 2019 values that profit equates to approximately US\$360,000,000. It is worth emphasising that the figure quoted is just for these three camps alone of the more than one thousand concentration camps in Germany, Austria and other territories controlled by the Nazis. (Wertham, 135.)

<sup>81</sup> That Gen 4 remains a powerful metaphor for the nexus of German-speaking scholars and post-Shoah explorations of violence can be seen, for example, in recent works such as Katharina von Kellenbach, *The Mark of Cain: Guilt and Denial in the Post-War Lives of Nazi Perpetrators* (Oxford University Press, 2013). One particularly poignant and relevant example is a book produced in conjunction with an exhibition by the Bavarian Lutheran Church on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the November 1938 Nuremberg pogrom, the title of which suggests that some Germans identified Jewish victims with Abel. (See Helmut Baier, ... *Wo Ist Dein Bruder Abel?: 50 Jahre Novemberpogrom; Christen und Juden in Bayern in Unserem Jahrhundert; Wanderausstellung.*, vol. 14, Ausstellungskataloge des Landeskirchlichen Archivs in Nürnberg [Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Landeskirchlichen Archivs in Nürnberg, 1988].)

<sup>82</sup> Gabrielle Oberhänsli-Widmer, *Bilder vom Bösen im Judentum* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013). See also Joachim Illies, ed. *Brudermord: Zum Mythos von Kain Und Abel*, (Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1975).



“leave no doubt as to Cain’s guilt and its consequences: since the days of primitive human beings, evil has been ineradicably rooted in humanity.”<sup>83</sup>

The third and final point of interest in *A Sign for Cain* is Wertham’s use of ‘violontology,’ a term he himself appears to have coined. He defines ‘violontology’ as “the [multidisciplinary] study of violence from the point of view of its prevention” which embraces all expressions of violence from the individual to the national.<sup>84</sup> Wertham maintains that human beings like to behave as if violence has already been eradicated, and are thus always surprised when a murder, riot, or massacre occurs. Without contemplating the prevention of human violence, violence is left unresolved, and, therefore, tends to be repeated. It should be remembered that at the time Wertham was writing the threat of nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Union seemed imminent, as it would at various points throughout the 1960s. As horrific as the death toll and human suffering of the Holocaust was, it would have paled by comparison to the potential death toll from nuclear war, so the threat posed by nuclear weapons always looms in the background of Wertham’s thesis. Standing in opposition to ‘violontological’ thinking is, Wertham claims, the readiness to resort to violence as a solution to any difficulties, which he calls “violence-thinking.” Violence-thinking can occur at the individual level and at the level of the state: “The atomic bomb,” he declares, “in the hands of violence-thinking statesmen is like a knife in the hands of a child.”<sup>85</sup> Violence wielded by those in positions of power was also a concern for Szondi, as shall be discussed in more detail below (§6.4).

The term ‘violontology’ is one which could be broadly applied to the works that have featured in this chapter thus far. One could conceive of Szondi’s *Kain*, Ardrey’s *African Genesis*, and Lorenz’s *Das sogenannte Böse* as belonging to the genre of ‘violontological literature.’ In addition, one could further claim that a feature of violontological literature of the 1960s and beyond was allusions to and the creative use of Gen 4, especially the figure of Cain, as a metaphor for the origins of human violence and evil.

### ***Why Cain?***

The figure of Cain has been a problematic one in the history of Jewish and Christian interactions. Augustine’s allegorical treatment of Gen 4, particularly the mark of Cain (Gen 4:15), in *Contra*

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<sup>83</sup> Oberhänsli-Widmer, *Bilder vom Bösen im Judentum*, 87.

<sup>84</sup> Wertham, 345.

<sup>85</sup> Wertham, 346.

*Faustum Manichaeum* is considered one of the points of origin for this difficult connection.<sup>86</sup> In point of fact, however, the history of such interpretations dates back one generation further to Ambrose, Augustine's mentor, and his assertion that Cain was a prototypical Jew.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, it was Augustine's ideas that would prove to be more durable since, as anti-Semitism historian Dirk van Arkel asserts, "his pre-eminence over the other Fathers of the Church made his judgment a standard for later generations."<sup>88</sup> Mellinkoff details the manner in which Augustine's allegorical treatment of Cain as representative of Judaism "reverberated through the Middle Ages" until Pope Innocent III was suitably inspired to issue a decree in 1215 requiring both Jews and Muslims to wear markers distinguishing themselves from Christians.<sup>89</sup> It is not unreasonable to see in this an antecedent of the 1941 Nazi badge laws which required all Jews to wear the yellow Star of David.

Thus, there has been a long association between Cain and the persecution of Jews. Whether they were conscious of that history or not, the reclamation of Cain by both Jewish and non-Jewish German-speaking intellectuals in post-Shoah 'violentological' literature as a metaphorical tool for both the scale of evil that was witnessed during World War II and the apparent innateness of its origins would appear to be an appropriate, if not ironic, inversion. The theme of exile which is evident in the text might also have been an influential motif, one that was particularly resonant for Jewish scholars from German-speaking Europe, such as Szondi, who were forced to leave their homelands.

#### **6.4 Cain the War Criminal: An Example of the Szondian Cain Personality**

I now return to focus on *Kain* in order to analyse the manner in which Szondi uses the figure of Cain as a metaphor for evil. I do this by examining two of the most striking examples that Szondi uses in his explication of the Cainitic personality. As previously noted, in *Kain* Szondi uses thirty-three in-depth case studies to illumine various aspects of this Cainitic personality vis-à-vis *Schicksalsanalyse*, thereby expounding the so-called Cain complex. He groups these thirty-three case studies thematically into a taxonomy of four major categories and sixteen sub-categories. One of these sub-categories, 'Cain the War Criminal' (*Kain, der Kriegsverbrecher*), provides an intriguing exposition on the manner in which Szondi articulates the 'Cainitic' personality as the explanation for the origin

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<sup>86</sup> Ref. *Contra Faustum* XII,12-13. See D. van Arkel, *The Drawing of the Mark of Cain: A Socio-Historical Analysis of the Growth of Anti-Jewish Stereotypes* (Amsterdam University Press, 2009).

<sup>87</sup> Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*. 92-3

<sup>88</sup> van Arkel, *The Drawing of the Mark of Cain*, 151

<sup>89</sup> Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*. 94-8. Innocent became aware of the potentially fatal repercussions of such a decree, later modifying it in an attempt to ensure that there would be no loss of life resulting from it.

of violence. Nowhere else in *Kain* does Szondi's personal history come to the fore quite like it does in his treatment of 'Cain, the War Criminal.' This section comprises two in-depth case studies on Márton Zöldi and Adolf Eichmann, both of whom reveal a close personal relationship to Szondi's past.

Zöldi was a captain in the Hungarian gendarmerie. A fanatical anti-Semite, he persecuted and killed Hungarian Jewry and played a leading role in their deportation. Eichmann, whom Szondi avoids referring to by name using the initials A.E. instead, was the instigator of some deeply personal and traumatic events in Szondi's life. Not only was Eichmann a significant and malevolent direct influence on the fate of Szondi and his family, his psychiatric assessment prior to his war crimes trial in Israel was undertaken by István Kulcsár, a friend and former colleague of Szondi's.<sup>90</sup> Kulcsár even requested that Szondi himself interpret Eichmann's Szondi Test results, one of seven psychological tests given to the subject in what would prove to be critical evidence in his trial.<sup>91</sup> Szondi maintains that through these two examples the effect of the 'Cainite' with power and authority can be evidenced:

If a Cainite is possessed of hypernational delusions and gains political power, it will not only lead to the hell of tyranny and the mobilisation of the hidden Cainitic sentiment among the masses, which is then called "*Volk*," but to mass murder and war. That's the way it always was, and it will remain so into the future.<sup>92</sup>

### ***Márton Zöldi***

In January 1943, Márton Zöldi, along with a number of high-ranking Hungarian military officials, engaged in several massacres of Serbs and Jews in the Hungarian occupied regions of Yugoslavia, the so-called Délvidék region. In the city of Novi Sad (Ujvidék) alone, he was responsible for killing 879 people, including women, children, and the elderly. 550 of the victims were Jews. The rationale for the massacre was as retaliation for an apparent attack on the gendarmes commanded by Zöldi. In fact, Zöldi had staged the 'attack' on his own troops, even wounding several, so as to serve as a

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<sup>90</sup> Szondi's preference for referring to Eichmann by his initials is also reflected in the psychological report delivered by István Kulcsár, Eichmann's examining psychiatrist, who refers to him only by the initial E. (See I.S. Kulcsár, Shoshanna Kulcsár, and Lipot Szondi, "Adolf Eichmann and the Third Reich," in *Crime, Law and Corrections*, ed. Ralph Slovenko [Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1966], 16–52.) This technique was used because the Kulcsárs did not consider Eichmann worthy of being referred to by name. (Ref. José Brunner, "Eichmann's Mind: Psychological, Philosophical, and Legal Perspectives," *Theoretical Enquiries in Law* 1, no. 429–63 [2000].)

<sup>91</sup> Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, "Adolf Eichmann and the Third Reich."

<sup>92</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 61.

pretext for the killing of the civilian population in retaliation.<sup>93</sup> Randolph Braham, an historian of the Holocaust in Hungary, claims that when details of the massacre reached other parts of Hungary there was outrage, particularly among the Jewish parts of the population, and both houses of the Hungarian Parliament dealt at length with the atrocity.<sup>94</sup> As an eminent and educated Hungarian Jew, it can be assumed that Szondi was aware of this particular incident around the time of its occurrence.

Zöldi and the other officers responsible for the atrocity were brought to trial in December 1943, where they were found guilty and given long prison sentences. However, in the following January, Zöldi and three of the other leading offenders managed to escape into the Third Reich. He eventually joined the SS, participating in the Nazi invasion of Hungary in March 1944, and was an active participant in Hitler's 'Final Solution.'<sup>95</sup> To that end, he worked within the 'dejewification unit,' headquartered in Hatvan, 50 kilometres from Budapest, coordinating the deportation of Jews from surrounding ghettos to Auschwitz, which began in June 1944.

After the overthrow of the Nazi-backed government in Hungary, Zöldi fled back to Germany where he joined a Hungarian SS unit and was eventually captured in Austria by American forces in March 1945. He was repatriated to Hungary in October 1945, and in January 1946 he was tried by a Hungarian court and sentenced to death. Zöldi, along with the three other leading figures in the war crimes committed in the Délvidék, were then handed over to Yugoslavian courts for a retrial which began in October 1946. All four were condemned to death and were executed in November 1946. During his imprisonment, Zöldi was examined by a psychologist named László Noszlopi who later gave Szondi permission to use the results of these interviews.

Szondi's depiction of Zöldi conveys a sarcastic tone that is not evident in other parts of *Kain*. This is perhaps due to the personally distressing nature of this case study.<sup>96</sup> Szondi refers to Zöldi as "our

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<sup>93</sup> Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2000), 35-7. The accounts of the reprisals are gruesome. Children were begging to be killed because of the severe cold, and the bodies of the victims were dumped into the frozen Danube, artillery having blasted holes in the ice for the bodies to fall through.

<sup>94</sup> Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, 36.

<sup>95</sup> Operation Margarethe was the Nazi occupation of Hungary which began in March 1944.

<sup>96</sup> Szondi nevertheless gets some of Zöldi's personal details wrong. He notes that he was 53 years old, when in fact he was only 34 years old when he was executed. He also refers to him as a colonel in the gendarmes; however, he only held the rank of captain.

‘patriot’” and the deportation of Jews to Auschwitz as his “‘heroic’ duty” (“*heldenhafte*” *Aufgabe*). More importantly, however, Zöldi is further described by Szondi as a “religious fanatic” (*Religionswahnsinniger*) who saw no contradiction in “his meek as a lamb ‘religious-political’ humility, and desire for self-sacrifice” with the “bestiality” of the “Fatherland.”<sup>97</sup> This is the first link that Szondi makes between the Cain complex and its expression as religious-political zealotry, and at this juncture several points are worth noting.<sup>98</sup>

According to the psychological report, Zöldi evidenced a range of what is now referred to as paraphilic disorders.<sup>99</sup> Although the precise details of these disorders are not of critical interest, it should nonetheless be noted that Zöldi’s patriotic fervour for serving the “Fatherland” was considered to be a sublimation of said paraphilia; hence Szondi’s claim: “Out of his masochism, he made a pathological self-sacrifice in service of the Fatherland.”<sup>100</sup> While such behaviour is suggestive of the Freudian understanding of aggression emanating from within the sadomasochistic drive, Szondi also reveals that Zöldi suffered epileptic seizures as a child. According to Szondi, epilepsy can function as a pathological signifier of the paroxysmal-epileptiform drive behind the Cain complex.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, Zöldi also felt personally persecuted, which he, according to the psychology report, sublimated into his role as a captain of the gendarmes and his subsequent persecution of minorities who he perceived as a threat to the country. The political environment created by fascism then provided the opportunity for Zöldi’s Cainitic killing mindset to reach its final manifestation as a mass murderer and war criminal.

In addition, Szondi asserts that before his execution Zöldi was bursting with religious delusions. This, according to Szondi, is evidence of the religious-political zealotry that frequently manifests in ‘Cainites’ and is constantly present either in the forefront or in the background:

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<sup>97</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 62.

<sup>98</sup> Zöldi is also one of the case studies in Szondi’s explication of the religious delusions that are often attendant with the Cain complex in *Moses, Antwort auf Cain*. *Moses* explores this dimension more fully.

<sup>99</sup> Szondi refers to Zöldi as being “sexually ill” in that he was fixated on a number of “sadomasochistic, anal-sadistic, exhibitionistic, and bisexual” behaviours (*Kain*, 61). Although bisexuality is now widely accepted as a variant of sexuality, the other behaviours listed, combined with Zöldi’s apparent intense and persistent interest in them, do qualify as paraphilic disorders according to the *DSM-5*. (Ref. American Psychiatric Association, “Paraphilic Disorders” in *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-5*. Fifth ed. 2013.)

<sup>100</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 61.

<sup>101</sup> For an overview of some of the literature concerning the connection between epilepsy and aggression, including the comparatively high rates of suicide among epileptics, see Hughes, *Cain’s Lament*, 67-72. The supposed connection between epilepsy and violence is not a line of argument that I follow in the current study, but I include it here in order to provide an insight into Szondi’s theories and the medical and psychiatric data he based them on, some or all of which may no longer be current.

If religiosity lingers in the background, then the Cainitic one and the depraved sadist switch on and prevail on the front stage of history, and he exhibits as a hero and a patriot as at the massacre. But if the Cainitic one is put into the background, he exhibits in the foreground as a humble ascetic, who now sacrifices himself to the Fatherland, or – as before his execution – as God’s fool.<sup>102</sup>

Hughes argues that, for Szondi, both “delusion and ideology arose from the same source of religious faith, namely, the need for spiritual participation beyond the threat of death.”<sup>103</sup> If the social conditions and environment permit, then the Cainitic personality can become evident as delusion and ideology. Zöldi’s delusions of persecution as revealed in his psychological examination is paralleled in the anger that Cain felt when YHWH rejected his sacrifice in favour of his brother’s. YHWH’s question to Cain asking him why he was angry and his countenance fallen (Gen 4:6), indicates that from YHWH’s perspective Cain’s reaction is irrational and unjustified,<sup>104</sup> and might thus also be deluded. Cain’s delusion is then sublimated into his attack on his brother once the environmental conditions become favourable, that is when they are alone in the field, not unlike Zöldi’s sublimation of his persecution complex into his persecution of Serbs and Jews.

It is curious, however, that Szondi does not give significant consideration to Zöldi’s childhood or his familial history. He links Zöldi’s paroxysmal-epileptiform personality to his choice of profession, which, combined with his paraphilic disorders, enabled him to express a type of “hyper-patriotism” that found its ultimate manifestation as a Nazi and mass murderer. Nevertheless, given the emphasis that Szondi places on familial histories and genealogies for *Schicksalsanalyse*, the lack of attention given to this case study’s family background does appear as an oversight at best or a weakness in his argument at worst. Perhaps this data was not available to Szondi since he was reliant on a psychological report written by a third party.

Alternatively, the inclusion of this case study, without the necessary information for a more complete fate analytic evaluation might be further evidence that it reflects a deeply personal connection on the part of Szondi. It should be remembered that at one time Szondi saw himself as a patriot, having ‘Magyarised’ his family name and fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire on the front lines in World War I, even being wounded at one point. To then be persecuted in his own country must have

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<sup>102</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 62.

<sup>103</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 118.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 299.

seemed a perplexing and cruel turn of events. Moreover, several members of Szondi's own family, including one of his own siblings were murdered by the Nazis.<sup>105</sup> Using Zöldi, the hyper-patriot, so-called "national hero," and war criminal as an example of the Cainitic archetype could be argued to be an ironic, paradoxical, possibly even subliminal projection on the part of Szondi himself, since he compromises his own methodology by paying scant attention to the subject's familial history. As is discussed below, the methodology used in the presentation of the second case study in Szondi's examination of Cain the War Criminal is perhaps similarly compromised.

### ***Adolf Eichmann***

Given the level of awareness and infamy that continues to surround Adolf Eichmann (and other high-profile actors and officials of the Third Reich), it is not necessary to review his biography in detail.<sup>106</sup> Eichmann's notoriety is due in no small part to Hannah Arendt's well-known and influential profile *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963).<sup>107</sup> It is necessary, however, to explore the interconnected aspects of the histories of Szondi and Eichmann. Eichmann was the apotheosis of what Szondi calls a "desk Cain" – somebody who, without actually killing directly with a weapon, was able to wipe out millions of lives "effectively with a fountain pen."<sup>108</sup> This distant separation between killer and victims is reflected in the relationship between Szondi and Eichmann. In the discussion that follows, I suggest that the fate of these two men were so intertwined they appear to perform a kind of *danse macabre* at critical points in each other's lives, albeit from a distance.

*SS-Obersturmbannführer* Eichmann arrived in Budapest in March 1944. As the chief architect for implementing the 'Final Solution' in Hungary, Eichmann oversaw the deportation of Hungarian Jews to concentration camps.<sup>109</sup> In June 1944, following negotiations between Eichmann and Reszö

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<sup>105</sup> Berta Sonnenschein, the wife of József, Szondi's second oldest half-brother from his father's first marriage, was murdered at Auschwitz in 1944. Berta was also the niece of Szondi's mother, Rézi Kohn. The wife and child of Szondi's cousin Géza (Berta and József's son) were also murdered at Auschwitz while Géza was imprisoned in a labour camp (Géza survived the war). Szondi's sister Magdolna was murdered at Auschwitz in 1944. Three of Szondi's nephews were also killed by the Nazi's: Leo Sonnenschein (son of Szondi's brother Zsigmond) was kidnapped by the Nazis in Yugoslavia and never heard from again; Sanyi Szondi (son of Szondi's brother Henrik) died from malnutrition shortly after being liberated from a labour camp in 1945; and Andor Holländer (son of Szondi's sister Berta Sonnenschein) died in a labour camp. (Bürgi-Meyer, *Leopold Szondi*, 20-5; and "The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names," Yad Vashem - The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre, accessed 19 October 2020, <https://yvng.yadvashem.org/>.)

<sup>106</sup> See Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, "Adolf Eichmann and the Third Reich", 21-24, for a concise biographical summary of Eichmann. Also Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Group, 1963), 27-35 provides biographical details.

<sup>107</sup> Arendt's treatment of Eichmann and her consequent definition of evil juxtaposed against Szondi's understanding of *das Böse* and assessment of Eichmann forms a critical component of this section.

<sup>108</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 63.

<sup>109</sup> Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, 18, 62-4, 132.

Kasztner, a Hungarian Zionist, political ‘fixer,’ and leader of the Rescue and Relief Committee of Budapest (or *Vaad*), 1,684 Jews were evacuated out of Hungary to safety onboard the so-called ‘Kasztner train’ as part of what Eichmann identified as a Reich secret.<sup>110</sup> Szondi and his family were among the passengers that Kasztner had identified as “most prominent Jews.”<sup>111</sup> Places on the train were secured after payment of a ransom to SS leader Heinrich Himmler’s envoy, an SS officer named Kurt Becher, who had taken over the negotiations with Kasztner from Eichmann in late June.<sup>112</sup> The ransom thus became known as the ‘Becher Deposit.’<sup>113</sup> Prior to the intervention of Kasztner, Szondi and his family lived with the threat of deportation to Auschwitz, where between mid-May and August 1944 half of Hungary’s Jewish population, over 430,000 people, were deported.<sup>114</sup> (Just over 90% of the 1.1 million Jews deported to Auschwitz died there.<sup>115</sup>)

Across his various writings, Szondi is mostly silent about his family’s evacuation from the ghetto in Budapest. However, in a letter he wrote to a former colleague named Peter Balázs in June 1946, he details that he knew little about the machinations behind the ‘Kasztner train’ and that he was invited to go on it, suggesting he did not proactively seek a place on it for himself and his family:

I knew nothing about the whole initiative and a few days before leaving I was asked if I would be willing to go with them. (They also wished to save some renowned Hungarian scholars and artists in this way.)<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Randolph L. Braham, “Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities,” *East European Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2004): 173–203.

<sup>111</sup> Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 118.

<sup>112</sup> Braham, “Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities”, 181.

<sup>113</sup> Gábor Kádár and Zoltán Vági, *Self-Financing Genocide: The Gold Train, the Becher Case and the Wealth of Hungarian Jews*. (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2004), 252-5.

<sup>114</sup> Kádár and Vági, *Self-Financing Genocide*, 125.

The question of how much the Jewish leaders in Hungary knew about what was happening in the Nazi concentration camps is an important one and has, historically, been contentious. For instance, this concern formed the basis of Arendt’s accusations against the *Judenräte* in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Braham contends that the Jewish leadership in Hungary were aware of the realities of the ‘Final Solution’ prior to the Nazi occupation. In addition, details of the Vrba-Wetzler Report, compiled from the eyewitness accounts of two escapees from Auschwitz, had been forwarded to Jewish leaders in Hungary, including Kasztner, sometime around the end of April 1944. (Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, 73-98.) Moreover, outside Nazi-occupied Europe, events such as the signing of the St James Declaration by nine governments-in-exile in January 1942 and the Allied Declaration signed by Britain, Russia, and the United States in December of that year, indicate that the broader international community was aware of the mass murder of Jews well before the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe.

<sup>115</sup> According to Braham, of the 260,500 Hungarian Jews who survived the Holocaust, approximately half were from Budapest. Prior to the occupation, of the 762,000 Hungarian Jews, only 30% lived in Budapest. (Braham, “Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities,” 174.)

<sup>116</sup> *Léopold Szondi to Peter Balázs, 16 June 1946*. Letter. Cited in Bürgi-Meyer, 63.



Szondi's status as a "prominent Jew," or in his words "renowned Hungarian scholar," was based on his very successful career up to the advent of anti-Jewish legislation in 1941.<sup>117</sup> Szondi does not mention the payment of any ransom, however, or any further details about his place on the 'Kasztner train.' Szondi's relative silence about this particular life event might imply a case of 'survivor guilt.'<sup>118</sup> Alternatively, it may reflect the morally ambiguous nature of the arrangements between Kasztner, Becher, and Eichmann. (The latter of these possibilities is discussed further in the section 'Eichmann's Szondi Test' below.)

Rather than arriving in a neutral country as originally promised by Eichmann, the 'Kasztner train' was diverted, on Eichmann's orders, to the camp at Bergen-Belsen where the prisoners were held in a special section known as the *Ungarmlager* (Hungarian camp). Braham claims that the intent of Eichmann's deceitful change of plan was to use the Jews in Bergen-Belsen as hostages as part of the so-called "blood for trucks" scheme.<sup>119</sup> Having hoped to escape the situation in Hungary, Szondi and his family were instead imprisoned and in peril.

In his 1946 letter to Balázs, Szondi described some aspects of life in the camp.<sup>120</sup> All members of the family lost a considerable amount of weight, but Szondi was apparently quite calm and accepting of their fate. He acted as a counsellor to other men in his barracks and even introduced some of them to *Schicksalsanalyse*. A letter that Lili Szondi wrote to a friend after the family arrived in Switzerland is also revealing, not only of camp life but an almost patrician paternalism the Szondis had for their fellow inmates.<sup>121</sup> In December 1944, after being imprisoned for six months, the Szondis were released from Bergen-Belsen following the payment of a further ransom by a group of 1,700 American intellectuals.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> From 1927 Szondi had assumed the dual roles of Professor of Psychopathology at his alma mater, Pázmány-Péter University Medical School, and director of the medical staff at Royal Hungarian Institute for Psychopathology and Psychotherapy. According to Hughes, "belonging to the 'Szondi circle' was considered a matter of prestige." (*Return of the Ancestor*, 7.) Following the anti-Jewish legislation in 1941, Szondi kept up an income through private teaching and the reproduction of his lectures on the experimental diagnostic of drives in print. (Bürgi-Meyer, 58.)

<sup>118</sup> Cf. the essays of Italian Holocaust survivor, Primo Levi, in *I sommersi e I salvati* (1986), especially "Shame." Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved* (London: Abacus, 1989).

<sup>119</sup> Braham, "Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities," 190.

<sup>120</sup> *Léopold Szondi to Peter Balázs*, cited in Bürgi-Meyer, 63-4.

<sup>121</sup> Cited in Louise O. Vasvári, "Identity and Intergenerational Remembrance Through Traumatic Culinary Nostalgia: Three Generations of Hungarians of Jewish Origin," *Hungarian Cultural Studies* 11 (2018). For her part, Lili removed herself from the preoccupations of other women in the *Ungarmlager*, such as collecting recipes, a practice she considered almost a "psychic illness." Lili nevertheless understood that for the other women it was a chance "to satisfy their housewifely needs" and reflected the desire "to try and imagine, for example, a Russian cream torte at least in writing."

<sup>122</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 9.

Eichmann thus exercised a grim influence on the life of Szondi and his family over several critical life events throughout 1944: the initial threat of deportation, then the promise of rescue and safety, only for that promise to be capriciously rescinded with imprisonment in Bergen-Belsen, and finally the payment of a ransom and the family's release. For the man who had established *Schicksalsanalyse* to have had the potential to control his own destiny taken away by nefarious external elements fairly removed but nevertheless perceptible could only have added to the cruelty of his and his family's situation.

In 1961, however, the roles were reversed as Szondi played an influential role in the fate of Eichmann during his infamous war crimes trial. The Israeli psychiatrist István Kulcsár was assigned to interview and test Eichmann prior to the trial and was the only psychiatrist to interview him.<sup>123</sup> Together with his wife Shoshanna Kulcsár, a prominent psychologist, he administered seven psychological tests, including the Szondi Test, over a period from 20 January to 1 March 1961 (though only István would interview the subject).<sup>124</sup> Kulcsár was an old friend of Szondi's. The pair had first met in Budapest in the early 1930s, and various letters between the two men that are held in the library of the Szondi-Institut in Zürich attest to the relationship.<sup>125</sup> Kulcsár invited his friend to undertake an interpretation of the results of a Szondi Test that was actually Eichmann's. So as to maintain the integrity of the test, the interpretation was intended to be a blind analysis of the results.<sup>126</sup> Szondi initially refused to conduct the interpretation, but he reconsidered after glimpsing the material which apparently indicated he was dealing with a unique case among the approximately six thousand tests that he had seen up to that point.

The Kulcsárs' report on Eichmann is detailed in a chapter they contributed to a compendium dealing with criminology published in the US in 1966,<sup>127</sup> which underpins Szondi's discussion of Eichmann in *Kain*. Although not without some internal tensions, the report concluded that the subject was morally weak and aggressive.<sup>128</sup> They found that the Nazi regime gave him both the opportunity to

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<sup>123</sup> Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, 48. Brunner, "Eichmann's Mind: Psychological, Philosophical, and Legal Perspectives."

<sup>124</sup> Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, 18-9.

<sup>125</sup> Szondi confirms his relationship with Kulcsár in a reference he wrote on behalf of his friend to Prof André De Vries, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Tel Aviv, in support of Kulcsár's application for a position at the University. Léopold Szondi, *Léopold Szondi to André De Vries, Reference in support of István Kulcsár, 22 May 1967*. Letter. Szondi-Institut Library.

<sup>126</sup> The fact that it was a blind analysis would seem to, once again, highlight the somewhat distant nature of the relationship between Szondi and Eichmann; however, the question of just how far distant and removed this aspect of the connection between the two men really was is examined below.

<sup>127</sup> See Ralph Slovenko, ed. *Crime, Law and Corrections*, (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1966).

<sup>128</sup> Brunner, 433.

vent his limitless aggression and the capacity to deny any personal responsibility under the cloak of bureaucracy. According to the Kulcsàrs:

By choosing his role of punctuality, lifeless chilliness, cynicism and superficial adaptivity, he could gratify his own destructive instincts while executing the destructive task bestowed on him. For Hitler, this was the ideal case of the right man in the right place.<sup>129</sup>

He was thus driven to play a critical role in the Nazi state's machinery of mass killing while simultaneously claiming to be merely a cog in that machine.<sup>130</sup> Central to the Kulcsàrs' report was Szondi's blind analysis. Indeed the Kulcsàrs seem to give far more weight to it than any of the other six tests administered to Eichmann, referring to it as "so awe-inspiring that it is almost unbelievable."<sup>131</sup> Eichmann himself seemed most intrigued by the test, asking a number of questions about it during its administration: "By his reaction," the Kulcsàrs claimed, "we felt that the test had a special provocative effect on him."<sup>132</sup> In his analysis, Szondi determined that Eichmann possessed a violent, homicidal impulse. His conclusion states: "This man is a criminal with an insatiable killing intention," and that no other test he had conducted before this evidenced the same level of the "Cain-figure with homicidal intention" in what was therefore "an almost unique case."<sup>133</sup>

The constructed self-image Eichmann chose to project during his trial – the hapless bureaucratic 'everyman' – designed to diminish his personal responsibility in the deaths of hundreds of thousands, recalls Cain's answer to YHWH's investigation into his brother's whereabouts in Gen 4:9: "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" Cain's attempt at obfuscating his personal guilt before his 'judge' is paralleled in Eichmann's claim that he was only performing his duty.<sup>134</sup> Both responses were intended to hide personal responsibility for the crimes committed. According to Szondi, such responses are examples of concealment. In the Cain complex this can be a typical response to a violent act when the move towards restitution has not been fully integrated with the 'Abelitic' affects.

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<sup>129</sup> Kulcsàr, Kulcsàr, and Szondi, "Adolf Eichmann and the Third Reich," 51.

<sup>130</sup> See Adolf Eichmann and Israel, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Trust for the Publication of the Proceedings of the Eichmann Trial, in co-operation with the Israel State Archives and Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, 1992).

<sup>131</sup> Kulcsàr, Kulcsàr, and Szondi, 17. So prominent is Szondi's interpretation of Eichmann's Szondi Test results, that he is credited as an author in both the Kulcsàr's report and the chapter they contributed to the 1966 criminology publication.

<sup>132</sup> Kulcsàr, Kulcsàr, and Szondi, 20.

<sup>133</sup> Kulcsàr, Kulcsàr, and Szondi, 47.

<sup>134</sup> Gen 4:9-16 is presented as "two acts of trial and punishment." See Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 303.

## Eichmann's Szondi Test

Szondi's analysis and the central part it played in Eichmann's psychological assessment contrasts markedly with Arendt's assessment of Eichmann as a banal and perfectly sane everyman. In Arendt's assessment, evil is not the result of an individual's violently aggressive impulses or extreme mental disorder, rather its origins were surreptitiously dark and communal. She would later famously describe evil like a "fungus on the surface" because it had no root.<sup>135</sup> According to her, Eichmann was the embodiment of this ordinary, superficial evil which has its origins in the collective, thereby eschewing, or at least diminishing, personal responsibility or indeed a radical or diabolical nature and origin. "Everybody could see that this man [Eichmann] was not a 'monster,'" she claims at one point.<sup>136</sup>

However, her portrayal of Eichmann is undermined by the fact that she disregards the Kulcsàrs' psychological report. In fact, she actively dismisses the views of the Kulcsàrs and Szondi, quoting their findings derisively but not mentioning them by name.<sup>137</sup> She claims that "half a dozen psychiatrists had certified him as 'normal'" and that one had even suggested Eichmann's view of his family and friends was "desirable."<sup>138</sup> As was mentioned above, Eichmann was only interviewed by one psychiatrist: István Kulcsár. José Brunner goes so far as to claim that "Arendt conjured up a team of experts that made an imaginary visit to Eichmann, while deprecating psychology in general."<sup>139</sup> It seems Arendt's assessment of Eichmann as the banal bureaucratic everyman was formed in the main from her observations of him during the trial and does not sufficiently take into account his psychological profile and its relation to his biography.<sup>140</sup> Rather than a passive, obsequious bureaucrat who was merely following orders, i.e. the portrayal that his legal defence presented, the

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<sup>135</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age* (New York: Grove Press, 1978), 251.

<sup>136</sup> Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 54.

<sup>137</sup> Arendt, 26.

<sup>138</sup> Arendt, 25-6.

<sup>139</sup> Brunner, "Eichmann's Mind : Psychological, Philosophical, and Legal Perspectives," 454.

<sup>140</sup> Before she published *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt had previously emphasised the concept of radical evil as per a Kantian framework. Her assertion of the banality of evil would thus seem to represent a turn from her earlier concepts of radical evil – although some scholars have attempted to reconcile the two perspectives (See Manja Kisner, "Zu Hannah Arendts philosophischer Neudeutung des Bösen durch die Willensanalyse." *HannahArendt.net* 8, no. 1 [2016] for one such example). However, in a letter from Arendt to Gerhard Scholem following the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* she admits that she changed her mind and no longer speaks of radical evil (Hannah Arendt. *Hannah Arendt to Gerhard Scholem, – 1963-1964, n.d.* Series: Adolf Eichmann File, 1938-1968, n.d. Library of Congress). Yet, as has been suggested here, her concept of banal evil rests on less than solid foundations. Her portrayal of Eichmann, and hence her concept of evil, which is informed by it, is therefore incomplete since it dismisses some of the key elements of Eichmann's biography and almost all of his psychological profile.

Kulcsárs' report makes it clear that Eichmann evidenced no compulsive obedience to authority.<sup>141</sup> Hughes, arguing from a Szondian perspective, dismisses Arendt's report, concluding that "[h]er opinion splits object from subject."<sup>142</sup>

There has been considerable debate regarding Arendt's account of the Eichmann trial and the conclusions that she reached, evidenced, in particular, in the reception of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* in Israel.<sup>143</sup> Aside from her perceived diminution of Eichmann's responsibility for his part in Nazi war crimes, one of the prominent points of controversy centred upon Arendt's criticism of the Jewish leadership's (the *Judenräte*) cooperation and complicity with the Nazis.<sup>144</sup> "To a Jew," Arendt claims "this role of the Jewish leaders in the destruction of their own people is undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story."<sup>145</sup> One of the Jewish leaders who earned Arendt's opprobrium was Reszö Kasztner.<sup>146</sup>

Just as Arendt's account of the Eichmann trial is controversial, so too is the figure of Kasztner, who was the subject of two high-profile trials in Israel in the 1950s.<sup>147</sup> The first of which, a 1955 libel trial, found he collaborated with Nazis, while the second, a 1958 majority ruling of the Israeli supreme court, overturned the earlier finding and posthumously exonerated Kasztner.<sup>148</sup> Of most interest for current purposes, however, is that shortly before and immediately following the end of the war, and prior to his settling in Palestine in 1946, Kasztner was hailed as a hero in Switzerland for his efforts to rescue Jews in Budapest.<sup>149</sup> He was therefore held in high esteem around the time Szondi and his

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<sup>141</sup> Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, 34-7.

<sup>142</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 3.

<sup>143</sup> For two divergent perspectives see Elhanan Yakira, *Post-Holocaust Post-Zionism: Three Essays on Denial, Forgetting, and the Delegitimation of Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Michal Ben-Naftali, *The Visitation of Hannah Arendt* (Berlin; Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2020).

<sup>144</sup> Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 10-11; and Anita Shapira, "The Eichmann Trial: Changing Perspectives," *The Journal of Israeli History* 23, no. 1 (2004): 18-39, esp. 24.

<sup>145</sup> Arendt, 117.

<sup>146</sup> Arendt, 118-9.

<sup>147</sup> For two contrasting perspectives see Anna Porter, *Kasztner's Train: The True Story of an Unknown Hero of the Holocaust* (New York: Walker, 2008); and Paul Bogdanor, *Kasztner's Crime*, 1st ed. (Somerset: Taylor and Francis Group, 2016).

<sup>148</sup> Kasztner was assassinated in Tel Aviv in March 1957. It should be noted that the Supreme Court did not exonerate Kasztner for his post-war petitioning on behalf of Becher in the latter's Nuremberg trial. For overviews of the two Kasztner trials ref. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, 211-13; and Braham, "Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities," 191-2. A further point of connection between the trial of Kasztner and Eichmann is Judge Benjamin Halevi, one of the three judges in the Eichmann trial, who had also been presiding judge in the Kasztner trial.

<sup>149</sup> Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, 212.

family settled in Switzerland. Nevertheless, Kasztner remains a morally ambiguous figure, though survivors were undoubtedly thankful for his rescue efforts.<sup>150</sup>

Szondi's relative silence about his family's escape from Budapest and the role that Kasztner played in it has been mentioned above. The ambiguity surrounding Kasztner might be, in part, reflected in Szondi's silence. Alternatively, in much the same way that I contend his theory of the Cain complex seeks to undermine the hegemony of German language academic discourse, I suggest that, in light of his status as both *superstes* and Kasztner train survivor, Szondi's inclusion of Eichmann as a case study in *Kain* embodies a challenge to Arendt's thesis on evil. Szondi's portrayal of Eichmann stands in contrast to Arendt's perceived attempt to attenuate the responsibility of Nazis, such as Eichmann, while apportioning blame to elements of the Jewish elite – a group to which Szondi was most certainly connected – for the mass murder of Jews. Though he may be silent regarding his biographical connections, his portrayal of Eichmann, as is presented in *Kain*, is also the testimony of a witness.

Despite all of this, questions surround the reliability of Szondi's assessment. Consider the timeline of events associated with Kulcsár's request. In May 1960, Eichmann's capture in Argentina by Mossad agents and his 'rendition' to Israel, to use modern parlance, to stand trial for war crimes made headlines around the world. In the following year, sometime between January and April 1961, Szondi was asked by an old friend from his Budapest days, but now an Israeli psychiatrist married to a prominent psychologist in Tel Aviv, to examine *a single subject's* results in a somewhat idiosyncratic psychological test he had designed and that was named after him. While all details of the subject, *except for the subject's sex and age*, were to be hidden from Szondi, there is no mention that the test results were sent to him along with others as a control measure.

Given the context in which it was delivered, it is difficult to conceive that Szondi would not have suspected that there was more to Kulcsár's request. After all, he readily admitted that when the request came through, he was initially not interested as he no longer undertook blind assessments. But something intrigued him from the glimpse he took at the results. Is it really conceivable that Szondi, a man who had had his perceived trajectory of his life torn apart in a malign irruption of fate

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<sup>150</sup> See Paul Sanders, "The 'Strange Mr Kastner' – Leadership Ethics in Holocaust-Era Hungary, in the Light of Grey Zones and Dirty Hands," *Leadership* 12, no. 1 (2016): 4–33; and Tibor Krausz, "A Traitor in Budapest," *The Jerusalem Report* (Jerusalem, February 6, 2017).

Braham claims that "there is general agreement that, in the absence of the operation, many of the 1,684 passengers would have perished." He further contends that the "original combatants" in the debate surrounding Kasztner were the relatives and friends of the survivors among the pro-Kasztner camp, while the families of those murdered comprised the anti-Kasztner elements. (Barham, "Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths and Realities," 191.)

orchestrated by a man famously captured and extradited to Israel and about to stand trial on behalf of the “whole Nazi movement and anti-Semitism at large,”<sup>151</sup> did not consider the possibility that he held in his hand Eichmann’s test results? Szondi must have at least suspected, if not known, who he was being asked to assess, and I find it difficult to conclude otherwise. Was it therefore really a blind analysis? Or did Szondi’s personal history, in fact, ‘blind’ him?

I return to my conversation partner from the beginning of the chapter. When we met, I asked Friedjung Jüttner about Szondi’s impartiality in his interpretation of Eichmann’s Szondi Test results. Friedjung told me that he saw the original copy of the test results:

Friedjung: With that test of Eichmann I never could say what he said. And his normal method to analyse those pictures he didn’t use. He would tell his pupils, “No! Do it another way!” had they done the same thing. But because he was so intuitive, he could go outside the normal method to see what he saw. He had so much experience you see. I saw the Eichmann tests – it’s not so bad.

Author: You have seen the Eichmann test?

Friedjung: Oh yes. I saw the original.

Author: And when you read it you think it’s within the normal bounds...

Friedjung: Yes.

Author: That’s interesting. But doesn’t it undermine the reliability?

Friedjung: For Szondi it was another situation. If somebody sends me a test, I think, well there must be something there. And if you know that you start analysing at another level and pay more attention to look for things. And he found it.<sup>152</sup>

It would seem then that there are significant questions concerning the objectivity of Szondi’s psychological assessment. Quite apart from the arcane nature of the instrument itself, Szondi went beyond the bounds of his own stipulated method for interpreting results in order to reach the conclusion he did. In addition, another trained psychoanalyst saw the same paper and came to a different conclusion about the subject. It is understandable, indeed completely human, to imagine that Szondi suspected the identity of the subject of the test he was being asked to interpret and allowed his own personal history with that subject to influence his conclusion. It must be remembered that the deaths of members of his extended family at the hands of the Nazis, and his experiences of persecution, the threat of extermination, and imprisonment, and all occur as shock events. They

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<sup>151</sup> The words of Gideon Hausner, Attorney General of Israel cited in Kulcsár, Kulcsár, and Szondi, 16.

<sup>152</sup> Friedjung Jüttner (retired psychoanalyst) and Evelyn Jüttner, interview by author, 13 July 2019.

represent a profound irruption of fate for a man who had previously defined himself as a Hungarian patriot and had accumulated considerable prestige and eminence over the course of his career.

Yet in making a choice between Arendt's depiction of Eichmann as hapless mediocrity and Szondi's portrayal of him as the homicidal Cain-figure, that is between passive obedience to or an active instigator within the Nazi regime, I lean towards the latter. Perhaps this conclusion simply affords me more comfort than the implications that Arendt's assessment carries with it: that given different circumstances of history or geography – a different *Geworfenheit* – I too, indeed any one of us, could have been an Eichmann. On the other hand, if one considers, for example, Eichmann's order that changed the final destination of the 'Kasztner train' from freedom in a neutral country to imprisonment in Bergen-Belsen, and the level of sophisticated deliberation, planning, cunning, and deceit required to put it into effect, Szondi's portrayal, objectively compromised but subjectively compelling, appears to provide a more suitable range of explanations.

## 6.5 Conclusion

The inclusion of Zöldi and Eichmann as case studies reveals much about the tension between the specific and the universal and the philosophical applicability of Szondi's Cain complex, far more than any other case study in *Kain*. In these two war criminals it is possible to see what results when individuals with a proclivity to "violence thinking," to use Wertham's terminology, gain political power and authority and use the state to achieve murderous and violent ends. In short, in these two case studies it is possible to see the Cainitic elements that can become manifest in civilisation.

This concern is also reflected in Gen 4, particularly in the portrayal of Lamech and his role as both the 'father' of civilisation and the embodiment of the exponential growth of his ancestor Cain's murderous inclination. It is an idea that is emphasised over the course of the Primeval History. The compiler accentuates the link between civilisation and violence through the distinction between the Cainite and Sethite lines of Adam's genealogy; the associated assertion that humankind's "every inclination... was only evil continually" (Gen 6:5); and Gen 11's account of the divine dispersal of humanity and the frustration of humankind's plan to build the city. When Szondi writes in *Kain* that "the greater part of the history of the world is the eternal story of Cain," nowhere is this statement illumined more distinctly than in the cases of Zöldi and Eichmann.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 7.



Yet Szondi's presentations of Zöldi and Eichmann differ from the thirty-one other examples in *Kain*. In comparison to other case studies, there is a sense that Szondi has compromised objectivity by including these examples, both of which constitute the subcategory of 'Cain, the War Criminal.' For one, since they are the only case studies who are named, they are not afforded the provision of anonymity that is given to the other cases. In addition, Szondi does not include extensive details regarding either subject's familial history, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, is a central component of *Schicksalsanalyse*. He further disregards mentioning other aspects that are included in his more clinically oriented case studies in *Kain*, such as family trees and the associated pathologies and career choices of either subject's ancestors that might reveal the paroxysmal pattern. In addition, besides religious delusion (Zöldi) and concealment and obfuscation (Eichmann), there is little evidence in either subject of the move towards restitution and an integration of the 'Abelitic' affects that Szondi argues in other areas is a feature of the Cain complex.<sup>154</sup> Hughes suggests that examples such as these represent an unresolved Cain complex; the resolution being prevented by the depth of the subjects' paranoia and sadism.<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, it would seem that neither Zöldi nor Eichmann, for all their depravity, are a precise fit for the mould of the Cain complex that Szondi himself establishes. The inclusion of these two case studies therefore appears somewhat subjective: a sublimation, perhaps, of the pain and anguish of Szondi's own personal history.

Paradoxically, however, by using the two Nazi war criminals as exemplars within his taxonomy of Cainitic traits, Szondi's subjectivity is revealed to be a unique strength of his thesis. In his function as a *superstes* to epoch defining evil, Szondi's hypothesis is also the testimony of a victim, a survivor, and a witness. As a result, he seems more certain in his account of the psychological aspects of *das Böse* than either Freud or Jung are in their treatments.

Perhaps more importantly though, Szondi's account subverts other perspectives on the nature of human evil that were articulated against a backdrop of post-Shoah German guilt for the atrocities of the death camps and a subsequent yearning for absolution. Behind such treatises is the subliminal, tacit assertion that Auschwitz could have happened anywhere. I do not ascribe the genocide of the death camps to any German *Sonderweg*, or 'special path' in history, nor the wilful silences that distinguish perpetrators and bystanders from victims. Nonetheless, when Sonja Boos, a German language literary critic and historian, writes concerning the inaugural speech Szondi's son Peter gave

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<sup>154</sup> Szondi, *Die Triebentmischten*, 173-5; Hughes, "Letters from Szondi", 16-19.

<sup>155</sup> Hughes uses the example of Hitler as a case study for the unresolved Cain complex. (See Hughes, *Theology and the Cain complex*, 47-64.) In correspondence to Hughes, Szondi asserts that he has difficulty in seeing the presence of the complex in Hitler. (See Hughes, "Letters from Szondi", 16.)

at the University of Berlin in 1961 (see §8.2) that “his address articulates the as yet unrepresented experience of persecution and expropriation ‘from below,’” the same could be applied to the senior Szondi’s *Kain* and *Moses*.<sup>156</sup> This is revealed most distinctly in Szondi’s inclusion and treatment of the case studies of Zöldi and Eichmann.

As both Gen 4 and Szondi’s work on *Schicksalsanalyse* describe, it is only a matter of time before the environmental conditions will enable the Cain figures among us to cast off their camouflage and express their violent potential.<sup>157</sup> After all, Cain’s genealogy (Gen 4: 17-24) suggests that violence is embedded in the very foundation of civilisation. As Friedjung Jüttner observed to me, this is also why Szondi maintained, contra John Steinbeck, that evil is immortal while good must constantly respawn. Evil is innate, always present, with the capacity to grow exponentially. Good, on the other hand, requires effort – the effort that is implicit in the challenge to confront and overcome evil.

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<sup>156</sup> Sonja Boos, *Speaking the Unspeakable in Postwar Germany*, 139.

<sup>157</sup> Gen 4 reveals what becomes of the ‘everyday’ Cain if he or she is unable to maintain their camouflage. Cain’s punishment of banishment and exile (Gen 4:12, 14, 16) is the great fear of the ‘Camouflaged Cain’ during periods of peace and stability within society. These hidden Cain figures must conceal their real natures lest they be forced to live a lonely existence in exile outside the boundaries established by the mores and ethics of society.

## CHAPTER 7 CAIN AND ABEL: THE PROTO-RIVALRY

*Francis Whitman:*      *You don't love me!*  
*Peter Whitman:*      *Yes, I do!*  
*Jack Whitman:*        *I love you too, but I'm going*  
   *to mace you in the face!*

The Whitman brothers,  
*The Darjeeling Limited*, Wes Anderson, dir.

### 7.1 Introduction

Since the ninth century the Fraumünster Church has occupied its place on the western bank of Zürich's Limmat River. Established by a grandson of Charlemagne, it played a critical role in the Swiss Reformation of the sixteenth century and thus has connections to some of the pivotal moments in European history. Today, visitors and tourists come to see the stained-glass windows by renowned artists Augusto Giacometti and, especially, Marc Chagall. The Chagall windows were installed in 1970 when the artist was in his 80s and are a series of five windows in the chancel enveloping the altar, each inspired by stories from the Bible. When I visit on a summer's morning the first thing that strikes me upon entering the Church is their vivid colour contrasting against the otherwise cool, austere atmosphere of the building's medieval interior. As I move closer to take in their beauty, I am intrigued by the biblical episodes that the artist has selected for his windows.

In the centre, a predominantly green window, and largest of the five, depicts the life of Christ. Around this, however, Chagall chose episodes from the HB to accompany the central window. There is the window of the prophets Elijah and Jeremiah in red on the northern wall, directly opposite the depiction of Moses and the giving of the Law in blue. Besides the Christ window, with its prominent depiction of the crucifixion, are two smaller windows arranged in a manner that recalls the three crosses on Calvary. On the right is the Zion window in yellow portraying David and Jerusalem, and on the left, the story of Jacob dreaming of his ladder and wrestling with the stranger at the Jabbok ford in the same blue as the Moses window.

The effect of quietly sitting and contemplating the windows after a week working in Szondi's former house is moving. I wonder if he had ever visited the Church to view the windows. I supposed that he could well have, given their location only a short tram ride away, and their fame. The location of the Church is also not far from the site of Zürich's first synagogue, first ghetto, and the centre of what

became a persecution that saw Jews removed from the city from the middle of the fourteenth century until some 500 years later. Were both men aware of the awful irony of this history? Perhaps Szondi, like Chagall, perceived the work as a contribution to Jewish-Christian dialogue and reconciliation?

As I sat absorbing the light through the windows and thought about Szondi and Chagall in that place, I contemplated the prominent position that the artist had given to Jacob. Jacob, of course, was the progenitor of the nation of Israel, but his significance becomes clearer after surveying the role that he plays in the first book of the Torah, especially its sibling stories. Half of Genesis (chs. 25-50) is dedicated to the story of Jacob and his family. Viewing these narratives through the lens of the triangular paradigm of Szondi's Cain complex reveals that Jacob variously assumes the role of subject, sibling, and parent. Jacob is thereby crucial in the unfolding of the overarching plot of Genesis that is embedded within the sibling stories.

In this chapter I focus on the motif of familial conflict in Genesis, in particular the accounts dealing with sibling rivalry in chs. 4-37, and consider the broader implications of this theme, that, I argue, acts as an organisational framework and as a driver of plot in Genesis.<sup>1</sup> I then explicate this hypothesis with an examination and reading of a selection of the major accounts of sibling rivalry in Genesis through the lens of Szondi's Cain complex and Gen 4 as an establishing narrative.

As has been discussed throughout, Szondi, building on Freudian psychoanalysis of Oedipus and its emphasis on the sex drive, examined the paroxysmal drive within the context of the Cain and Abel myth in order to offer a new perspective on human aggression. In the previous chapter I argued that for a variety of intellectuals, but particularly those from within the milieu of post-war German-speaking Europe, the mythical figure of Cain became an apt metaphor for the related concepts of violence and evil. In light of the Holocaust, Cain's previous historical association with Judaism as made by the early Christian church fathers was inverted by both Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals to symbolise the innateness of evil within all human beings. Accordingly, Szondi developed the concept of the Cain complex as a metaphor for the origin of violence. As a person of faith, Szondi also argued that the Cain complex is central to monotheism, viz. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (i.e.

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<sup>1</sup> The interplay between Joseph, Benjamin, and their older brothers (Gen 42-45; 50:15-21) will not be dealt with here in this chapter since it will form an extensive element of my thesis that is developed in Chapter 8. However, it should be noted that in terms of the narrative structure of Genesis vis-à-vis sibling rivalry it is one of, if not the most significant examples. It also contributes greatly to my Szondian reading of these rivalries across Genesis in that it embodies the resolution of the Cain complex. It is my intent in the following chapter to compare Szondi's use of the Bible in constructing his resolution of the complex to one that, I contend, is evident and self-contained within Genesis. Moreover, I am confident that the thesis of this chapter can be articulated convincingly without recourse to this very significant example of sibling rivalry.

the Abrahamic faith traditions). This is because, according to Szondi, these faiths cannot be interpreted psychoanalytically through the Freudian framework of the Oedipus complex, since the parent is not the enemy in the Abrahamic religions. Instead, the “need to kill the brother, in order to vindicate oneself before ‘God the Father’... stands at the centre of monotheism.”<sup>2</sup>

## 7.2 Familial Conflicts and the Plot of Genesis

In Chapter 5 I argued that the concept of genealogy and the phrase אלה תולדה (‘These are the generations...’) can be read as organising markers in the book of Genesis around which the compiler arranged an overarching narrative structure. Similarly, I suggest that the motif of ‘sibling rivalry’ or families in conflict is a further organising marker that can be read into the overarching structure of Genesis.<sup>3</sup> In so doing I broadly follow the two essential criteria for assessing plot-structure previously established by Patterson: that all narrative episodes contribute to the overarching narrative structure, and that the proposed overarching narrative structure works with recognised features of Genesis.<sup>4</sup>

Previously, I noted that studies examining the role and function of the sibling rivalry accounts in Genesis were less advanced than other approaches to the book (see §3.5). Three studies that have examined the sibling stories are worth further consideration here. The first is an article by Dan W. Forsyth; the second, an article by Kalman J. Kaplan and Matthew B. Schwartz; and the third, a book by Matthew Schlimm.<sup>5</sup>

Forsyth’s article represents a comprehensive approach to these stories through the prism of the Oedipus complex. He maintains that, together, the stories of sibling rivalry in Genesis demonstrate a gradual diminution of violence across the book. I argue a comparable proposition in this chapter and the next. However, while Forsyth’s argument is convincing regarding the overarching narrative organisation and interconnection that is embodied in the stories of sibling rivalry, it nevertheless contains some less convincing aspects. For example, his oedipal reading of Gen 3 as the framing text

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<sup>2</sup> Hughes, “Schicksalsanalyse and Religion Studies,” 69.

<sup>3</sup> The interplay between uncles and nephews as depicted in the accounts of Abram and Lot – who actually refer to one another as ‘brothers’ (אחיים) (Gen 13:8) – and Jacob and Laban (Gens 29–31) are further examples of narratives dealing with familial conflict, but in the interests of clarity I will restrict this discussion to the accounts of conflict between brothers and sisters.

<sup>4</sup> Patterson, *The Plot-Structure of Genesis*, 6-10.

<sup>5</sup> Forsyth, “Sibling Rivalry, Aesthetic Sensibility, and Social Structure in Genesis.”; Kaplan and Schwartz, “Jacob’s Blessing and the Curse of Oedipus: Sibling Rivalry and Its Resolution”; Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness: The Ethics of Anger in Genesis*.

for the sibling rivalry motif is problematic. He claims that, as a framing story, the Garden of Eden narrative (specifically Gen 3) establishes intergenerational incest as *the crime* that is perpetrated, connecting this to the subsequent stories of familial conflict, particularly those concerning Jacob. His reading of the Garden of Eden narrative, in which YHWH is the father and the garden is the mother, owes more to Greek mythology than it does to biblical cosmology (e.g. the passing references equating YHWH to Uranus the sky god and the garden to Gaea, the personification of earth, and to elements in the narrative that evoke the mythologies of Oedipus and Electra).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, his reading is dependent on a tenuous interpretation of the role and power of the serpent which he views as equivalent to and analogous with that of YHWH, as he states:

Given the serpent's power and masculinity, and the sexual connotation of the fruit, we then have Eve being seduced by a figure who, in critical aspects, resembles Yahweh, and therein we can discern an incestuous paternal element in the story.<sup>7</sup>

This creative interpretation recalls some of the midrashim that suggest the angel Samael, disguised as the serpent, seduced Eve.<sup>8</sup> However, as YHWH's curse of the serpent in Gen 3:14-15 makes clear, YHWH holds power over the serpent as well as the man and woman, thus it is difficult to recognise the serpent as equivalent to or analogous with YHWH. Reading the interaction between Eve and the serpent in light of oedipal father/daughter 'incest' appears to stray from the text, thereby making it difficult to view Gen 3 as a framing story, such as is proposed by Forsyth, for the accounts of sibling rivalry in Genesis.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Forsyth's assertion of non-erotically derived aggression as an ancillary motif evident in the sibling rivalries of Genesis resists an interpretation through an oedipal framework. As has been discussed previously (see §§ 2.2 and 6.2), and will be further explicated below, the Oedipus complex, and Freudian psychoanalysis more broadly, tends to posit an exclusively sexual source for the issue of human aggression, which Szondi rejects. Finally, there is the somewhat ambiguous status of the sibling relationship within the oedipal paradigm. Freud paid comparatively little attention to the horizontal axis that reflects the nature of the sibling relationship.<sup>10</sup> On the infrequent occasions that Freud does deal with siblings, he suggests that the vertical axis of the parent-

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<sup>6</sup> Forsyth, 473-5.

<sup>7</sup> Forsyth, 476.

<sup>8</sup> See §4.5 'Cain's Ancestry'

<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, the Gen 3 account does frame the Primeval History (Gen 1-11) as the link between nakedness and shame that is present in the Ham story (Gen 9:22-27) would suggest; however, Forsyth largely ignores the latter account.

<sup>10</sup> Psychologists Stephen Bank and Michael Kahn go so far as to assert that the role of the sibling relationship is an oversight on the part of Freud. (Stephen P. Bank and Michael D Kahn, *The Sibling Bond* [New York: Basic Books, 1982], 163.)

child paradigm is transferred onto the sibling.<sup>11</sup> The sibling relationship paradigm is thus subsumed into the parent-child paradigm according to Freud.

Kaplan and Schwartz provide a counterpoint to Forsyth's oedipal reading of the sibling stories, arguing that the familial relationships in the HB and Greek mythology are incompatible.<sup>12</sup> This is because the stories in the Bible largely concern siblings competing for their father's affection and favour, while the Greek myths depict fathers and sons in conflict with one another. While this aspect of the biblical sibling stories is not completely unsympathetic to the paradigm expressed in the Oedipus complex, the difference is further compounded, however, with the distinction in the HB that the blessing of the father resolves the conflict between sibling, whereas in Greek mythology such motifs are absent. The horizontal axis of the relationship paradigm in the HB is thus of a different nature to the vertical axis evident in the Greek myths and, therefore, the Oedipus complex. Kaplan and Schwartz trace the evolution of the father's blessing motif across Genesis from Adam to Abraham to Isaac and finally to Jacob, arguing that there is a discernible increase in the father's involvement in resolving sibling conflicts across these generations coupled with a commensurate escalation in their efficacy.<sup>13</sup> In comparison, the Greek myths examined by Kaplan and Schwartz (i.e. Uranus and Cronos, Cronos and Zeus, Zeus and Heracles, and Oedipus and his sons) portray an increasing pathology across generations. In fact, the paradigm in the Greek myths demonstrates that as the power, authority and presence of the father decreases the "previously repressed sibling rivalry and hatred becomes free to emerge."<sup>14</sup>

Schlimm's thesis is centred around the emotion of anger; however, he eschews a psychological approach to Genesis since "it is not apparent that the Hebrew Bible's understanding of anger aligns with Western conceptions of this emotion."<sup>15</sup> This is a valid concern, and Schlimm's definition of

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<sup>11</sup> In *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, Freud states that "the feelings which are aroused in these relations between parents and children and in the resulting ones between brothers and sisters are not only of a positive or affectionate kind but also of a negative or hostile one. The complex which is thus formed is doomed to early repression; but it continues to exercise a great and lasting influence from the unconscious." (Sigmund Freud, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, trans. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 11, SE [London: Hogarth Press, 1909], 47.) Later, Freud would reinforce this idea: "The Oedipus-complex expands and becomes a family-complex when other children appear. It becomes the motive force, revived by the sense of personal injury, which causes the child to receive its brothers and sisters with aversion and to wish to remove them without more ado." (Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, trans. G. Stanley Hall [Auckland: The Floating Press, 1920], 344.)

<sup>12</sup> A similar argument is prosecuted by Yael Feldman. (See Yael S. Feldman, "'And Rebecca Loved Jacob,' But Freud Did Not," in *Freud and Forbidden Knowledge*, ed. Peter L. Rudnytsky and Ellen H. Spitz [New York: New York University Press, 1994], 7–25.)

<sup>13</sup> Kaplan and Schwartz, 73–78 esp. 74.

<sup>14</sup> Kaplan and Schwartz, 83.

<sup>15</sup> Schlimm, 14.

these psychological approaches assumes a practical dominance by hypothetical ideas “such as the Oedipus complex,” which, as outlined above, is problematic when applied to some of the biblical narratives.<sup>16</sup>

Schlimm examines anger as an organisational motif across Genesis as depicted in the familial episodes concerning Cain and Abel; Abram and Lot (Gen 13); Jacob and Laban (Gen 31); Sarai and Hagar (Gen 16, 21); Rachel and Leah (Gen 30); Dinah and her brothers Levi and Simeon (Gen 34).<sup>17</sup> He concludes his discussion with examples in which anger is resolved, namely between Jacob and Esau (Gen 33); and Joseph and his brothers (Gen 42-50). The discussion that follows covers much the same ground as Schlimm. Moreover, affects such as anger and rage also play a prominent role in the Szondi framework of the Cain complex. However, while Schlimm’s focus is explicitly on the role of the emotion of anger,<sup>18</sup> the approach taken here centres on the interpersonal dynamics and relationships depicted in the relevant episodes of siblings in conflict. The guiding framework is the triangular relational paradigm of Szondi’s Cain complex in which paroxysmal affects such as anger and rage assume a catalysing factor.

The feature of Schlimm’s thesis most relevant to this study is his assertion that Gen 4 establishes an organisational framework for the rest of the book. His contention is that Gen 4 and the conclusion of the so-called Joseph novella constitute ‘bookends’ for Genesis, and the movement from fratricide to forgiveness. The motifs of forgiveness and reconciliation are thus vested in the figure of Joseph who, Schlimm asserts, is “an anti-Cain.”<sup>19</sup> Schlimm’s study is an important scholarly reorientation to the relationship between the figures of Cain and Joseph and the implications of such for approaching the organisation of Genesis. As this chapter and the next demonstrate, this study asserts a similar position regarding the composition of Genesis, although the mechanism through which this will be explicated is different.

Taken together these three analyses are relevant here for two central arguments. First, they demonstrate that the stories concerning sibling rivalry are important elements in an overarching narrative structure in Genesis. The purpose of this structure is to portray the processes required for

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<sup>16</sup> Schlimm, 14. Schlimm’s rejection of psychologically oriented readings of anger also dismisses the therapeutic objective and dimension of psychological biblical criticism (see §2.1) and, hence, its concern for present edification.

<sup>17</sup> Schlimm also discusses the role of anger in the accounts of Isaac and the shepherds of Gerar (Gen 26:12-33) and anger towards slaves (Gen 16, 21, 39-41); however, with the exception of the Hagar narratives (16 and 21), these do not constitute sibling or familial stories.

<sup>18</sup> Hence his inclusion of narratives that are not limited to episodes of familial conflict and sibling rivalry.

<sup>19</sup> Schlimm, 4-6.



the resolution of intrafamilial conflict which are vested in an interaction between the functions of blessing and reconciliation. Second, all three demonstrate the general unsuitability of the application of the oedipal paradigm as a method for interpreting the sibling rivalry stories in the HB. Forsyth's attempt to apply an oedipal framework for all the relevant stories reveals an important departure in the HB from Greek mythology, namely that in the patriarchal accounts none of the brothers stand up to the father on their own (contra the Greek myths).<sup>20</sup> Kaplan and Schwartz, in turn, demonstrate the fundamental paradigmatic differences between the accounts of familial conflicts and sibling rivalries in the HB and Greek mythology. Schlimm's emphasis on anger in the familial stories also demonstrates the unsuitability of applying the Oedipus complex to them. Consequently, the sibling rivalry stories in the HB resist a full interpretation through the psychoanalytic lens of the Oedipus complex.

### *Szondi, Cain and Oedipus*

Neither Forsyth, Kaplan and Schwarz, nor Schlimm make any explicit reference to the work of Szondi and his identification of the Cain complex in their theses.<sup>21</sup> As has been discussed, Szondi's work is largely unknown in the anglophone academy, so such an oversight is not surprising. I suggest that Szondi's concept can offer some additional insights to the discussion of the stories of sibling rivalry in Genesis. Szondi claimed that since psychoanalysis refers exclusively to the Oedipus complex, it had a tendency to merge the portrayal of Cain with that of Oedipus.<sup>22</sup> However, this is problematic because it does not accurately reflect the paradigm evident in the biblical narratives and, by extension, the monotheism of the Abrahamic faith traditions. As I have argued, Szondi's Jewish religious heritage was a great influence in the formation of his theories. Consequently, when he looked to his own mythic and religious traditions which are embedded within the HB, he could not identify the Oedipus complex as an accurate explanatory framework. In its place he was inspired to conceive of the concept of the Cain complex, which he proposed would stand alongside the Oedipus complex in order to offer a more comprehensive understanding of human behaviour.

Prior to his systematic treatment of the Cain and Abel myth in *Kain*, references to the story were dotted throughout Szondi's writings. Perhaps most important among these was a 1964 article – one

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<sup>20</sup> Forsyth, 485.

<sup>21</sup> As was noted in §2.1 '*Wirkungsgeschichte and Rezeptionsästhetik*' Schlimm does reference two of Richard Hughes' works and therefore one assumes would have been aware of Szondi and his theories. However, he does not explicitly mention Szondi by name and only refers to him obliquely as "another psychologist." Ref. Schlimm, 14 n.49.

<sup>22</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 117. Cf. Jens De Vleminck, "Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms," 174 and 179.

of the few of his writings to be translated into English – in which the idea of the Cain complex first began to coalesce comprehensibly.<sup>23</sup> In “Thanatos and Cain,” Szondi draws the distinction between the centrality of the Oedipus complex to psychoanalysis and the insight that the figure of Cain provides to *Schicksalsanalyse*. Many of the ideas expressed by Szondi in “Thanatos and Cain” are more fully developed in *Kain* (in fact, in light of *Kain*, the article reads like a lengthy abstract for the later more complete work).

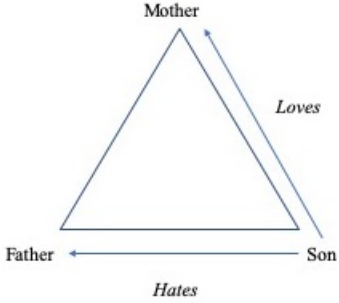
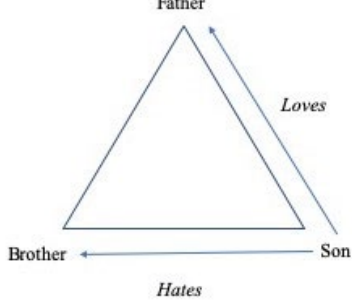
In 1967, a subsequent comparative study of the Cain and Oedipus complexes was conducted by Antoine Vergote, a Belgian Roman Catholic priest, philosopher, and pioneer in the psychoanalytical approach to the psychology of religion.<sup>24</sup> He found that both complexes exist independently, and both are important to depth psychology. According to Vergote, the Oedipus complex leads to the formation of familial society and the appreciation and recognition of the ‘father,’ while the Cain complex leads to the fraternal society, that is for the appreciation of fellow human beings (see Table 7-1 below).

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<sup>23</sup> Szondi, “Thanatos and Cain.”

<sup>24</sup> Antoine Vergote, “Ethik und Tiefenpsychologie: Vergleichende Untersuchung über den Kains- und Ödipus-Komplex,” *Szondiana* 7 (1967): 212–28. Cited by Szondi, *Kain*, 117-8; and De Vleminck, “Oedipus and Cain: Brothers in Arms,” 179.

Table 7-1. Differences between the Oedipus and Cain complexes. <sup>25</sup>

The questions are:	in the Oedipus Complex	in the Cain Complex
1. In which triangle does the conflict arise?		
2. What is being repelled?	a) The love of the opposite sex parent b) The killing mindset against the same sex parent	a) The love of the parent b) The killing mindset against the sibling
3. How are love and hatred repelled?	Through: 1. repression 2. inhibition 3. alienation	Through: The same defence types as the Oedipus complex and possibly even through: 1. projection 2. self-destruction, such as a) <i>nostalgia de la boue</i> b) work and career self-sabotage c) suicidal thoughts
4. What form of socialisation arises through regeneration?	Family community	Fraternal community, i.e. the socially conscious society
5. How does the regeneration arise?	By introjection of the opposite sex parent and identification with them in the need for possessing (i.e. 'k' factor in Szondi's drive system).  Appreciation of the same sex parent.	Through introjection of the parent and identification with the parent in the need for being (i.e. 'p' factor in Szondi's drive system).  Appreciation of the sibling.

However, rather than two separate schemes for understanding human aggression, what becomes clear from the table above is that the Cain complex builds upon the scope of the Oedipus complex to offer a more developed and far-reaching explanation of human behaviour. They should, therefore, be understood more correctly as interrelated schemata rather than discrete independent complexes. Szondi subsumes the oedipal structure into his own theoretical framework as is evident in the responses to the third and fourth 'questions' posed in Table 7-1. It becomes clear in the response to these 'questions' that the Cain complex extends those of the Oedipus complex in the emotional realm and beyond the bounds of the family situation and into broader society. Szondi's incorporation of

<sup>25</sup> Adapted from Szondi, *Kain*, 116-7.

the Oedipus complex in his own theoretical framework is also evident in other writings where he argues that the complex “should be viewed in terms of a three-generational family system.”<sup>26</sup> There seems little doubt that when he advances such an assessment, he has his concept of the familial unconscious front of mind. According to Szondi, for the Oedipus complex to become manifest, the father must recognise his mother in his daughter, while the mother sees her father in her son:

How often have we had the experience that the mother “gave birth to her own father” when she brings her son into the world, in terms of physical constitution and of character, talent and predisposition to various diseases? Likewise, the father often “calls to life” his own mother or sister in his daughter. This peculiar path of heredity makes oedipal situations in the family appear “natural.”<sup>27</sup>

### 7.3 The Cain complex and the Sibling Stories in Genesis 4–37

Having established the inherent limitations in the application of an oedipal framework to the narratives dealing with families in conflict in Genesis, I turn now to evaluate Szondi’s model of the Cain complex against these stories of sibling rivalry as a productive tool for a psychological reading of these narratives. Reading the relevant accounts through the lens of the Cain complex will also assist in establishing the existence of an overarching narrative organisation, such as a plot-structure (Patterson) or ‘fabula’ (Forsyth – see §3.5), within Genesis.

Drama and narrative tension in Genesis repeatedly centre on the interplay within families, particularly between siblings. While other books of the HB make it clear that one’s sibling is expected to be the first to render assistance in a time of trouble, or to avenge their murder,<sup>28</sup> it is ironic that in Genesis the most imminent threats to life, safety, peace, and prosperity are posed repeatedly by close family members, especially siblings. There are ten accounts of conflict between siblings in Genesis: nine of these concern male siblings while the other relates to the interplay between Leah and Rachel, the

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<sup>26</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 124.

<sup>27</sup> Szondi, *Schicksalsanalyse*, 149-50.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. Lev 25:48; Num 35:12,19-26.

daughters of Laban.<sup>29</sup> I will deal with several of the most significant examples of these accounts which are, in the order they will be presented the sons of Adam (Gen 4–5); Ishmael and Isaac (16:1–6; 21:1–20); Esau and Jacob (25:19–34; 27:1–28:9; 32:3–33:17); Leah and Rachel (29:15–30:24); and Joseph and his older brothers (Gen 37).

### ***Cain, Abel, and Seth (Gen 4–5)***

Up to this point I have dealt at length with the rivalry between Cain and Abel, and also, albeit to a lesser extent, Cain's rivalry with Seth which the compiler of Genesis establishes via a contrast between the two brothers' genealogies. Since the figure of Cain is central in the eponymously titled complex conceived by Szondi, the building blocks of the complex are readily identifiable within the narrative. As outlined above, the relationship paradigm evident within the complex is triangular and consists of the subject, the parent, and the subject's sibling. While the subject, Cain, and the sibling, Abel, are obvious in Gen 4, the identity and role of the parent in the narrative is less so. The biological father of the brothers, i.e. the man,<sup>30</sup> plays no role beyond having sexual intercourse with his wife (4:1). Instead the role of the parent is taken by YHWH, an idea which is introduced in v. 1 with Eve's exclamation upon the birth of Cain that she had given birth with the help of YHWH.<sup>31</sup> YHWH as father figure to Cain is further emphasised by vv. 6 and 7, whereupon seeing Cain's angry and dejected demeanour YHWH counsels him in the form of a question and explanation which function

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<sup>29</sup> Cain and Abel (Gen 4); Isaac and Ishmael (16:1–6; 21:1–20); Esau and Jacob (25:19–34; 27:1–28:9; 32:3–33:17); Leah and Rachel (29:15–30:24); Joseph and his older brothers (37:2–23); Judah and Reuben (37:25–30); Er and Onan (38:2–10); Perez and Zera (38:11–30); Joseph, Benjamin, and their older brothers (Gen 42–45; 50); and Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen 48).

I do not include the so-called rivalry between Noah's sons in Gen 9:22–27 since it is not a clear example of hostility between brothers. The hostility between Noah and Ham is far more distinct than that which is supposedly between the three sons, and hence would perhaps be more suited to an oedipal examination than one through the lens of the Cain complex. The meaning of this brief passage, which has long piqued the curiosity of commentators is obscure and raises more questions than it answers (E.A. Speiser, *Genesis*, 3rd ed., vol. 1, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1986), 62–3.). Why, for instance, is Ham presented as the second of Noah's three sons by virtue of the usual order of the names (i.e. Gen 5:32; 6:10; 7:13; 9:18; and 10:6) when he is also called the youngest son (בְּנוֹ הַקָּטָן) in v. 24? Why are Ham and his descendent Canaan conflated? What is the significance of the statement in v. 27 that Japhet will dwell in the tents of Shem?

Nevertheless, what should be noted about this account are, firstly, the link that is made between nakedness and shame which echo the garden narrative (Gen 3:7, 10), thus creating a symmetry for the opening and the closing of the Primeval History. Secondly, Noah's curse (vv. 25–27) serves as a polemic against Canaan, which as a motif pertaining to the nations associated with the unelected line is reflected in the genealogies of the unfavoured son, e.g. Ishmael and Esau.

<sup>30</sup> The MT still refers to him as אָדָם at this point in Genesis, the LXX refers to him as Ἀδάμ from Gen 2:16 onward.

<sup>31</sup> The difficulty surrounding this verse is acknowledged. The final phrase in the Hebrew (אֶת־יְהוָה) is peculiar, and its usual translation of "with the help of" is unparalleled (cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 101–2). The LXX's ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ is more definitive. Furthermore, Wenham suggests that "with the help of" is reasonable due to the fact that most commentators see that it is consistent with the promises to the patriarchs that God would be with them ostensibly to 'help' them.

as both a warning and an invitation to Cain to engage in reflection.<sup>32</sup> The imagery conveyed in this scene evokes that of a father counselling a wayward son, a display of parental concern that has a precedent in the tableau of Gen 3:21. Furthermore, YHWH acts in a manner akin to a *paterfamilias* in meting out Cain's punishment upon discovery of his crime; the familial parent-son relationship underscored by YHWH's threefold repetition of "your brother" (אָדָם) in vv. 9-11. Consequently, in Gen 4 the subject (Cain), sibling (Abel), and parent (YHWH) are all readily identifiable. The triangular relationship stipulated by the Cain complex thus established, I shall briefly summarise other important features of the Cain complex to demonstrate that these elements are also present.

First, the complex espouses two characteristics, one Cainitic, the other Mosaic. The first consists of two phases: the paroxysmal (stimulating) phase and the epileptic form (attack) phase. The paroxysmal phase is marked by an arousal of pent-up emotions, rage, and set-in anger, while the epileptic phase is marked by an increasingly futile struggle to hold back emotions, surprise, then attack.<sup>33</sup> Both of these phases are evident in the behaviour of Cain. The reader is told in v. 5 that in response to YHWH's preference for Abel's offering "Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell." This is the quintessence of the paroxysmal phase.

The second phase of the Cain characteristic takes place in v. 8 in the "field" (שָׂדֶה), the intertextual connotation of which was briefly discussed in Chapter 3 but will also be further explored in the sections dealing with Esau and Jacob and Joseph and his brothers below. The ambiguities and gaps in the text are most prevalent in this section of the narrative. Cain initially invites his brother into the field, perhaps in order to talk to him, although nothing further that might have been said between the two is recorded. The attack and the killing, when it comes, is abrupt and all the more shocking because of this. The gap in the MT in v. 8 following וַיֹּאמֶר ("and he said") is perplexing. Perhaps this is due, as some scholars have argued, to a corruption in the text or omission in a redaction,<sup>34</sup> but then again, perhaps it is not. LaCocque advances a reading whereby the gap is not the result of an accidental corruption but rather an example of "repression."<sup>35</sup> He argues that Cain's silence suggests "the mental din of conflicting sentiments unable to come to expression," intimating that this may have been a

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 298-9.

<sup>33</sup> Léopold Szondi, *Schicksalsanalytische Therapie*, vol. 5, Schicksalsanalyse (Bern: Verlag Hans Huber, 1963), 331.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Westermann, 301-2.

<sup>35</sup> LaCocque, *Onslaught Against Innocence*, 52-5.

conscious decision on the part of the narrator.<sup>36</sup> Drewermann also proposes a reading which is remarkably similar when he suggests that:

if the conversation was really meant to be fraternal, then in fact it is easiest to assume that the conversation ‘failed,’ not text-critically but actually: that Cain ‘spoke’ with Abel – but no conversation took place, that both had nothing (more) to say.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, according to Drewermann, what we read in v. 8 represents an extraordinary peripeteia:

the one who tries to talk to his brother, is the one who immediately murders his brother... how should one imagine a (short!) conversation that reflects so quickly the change from willingness to talk to murder?<sup>38</sup>

As is highlighted at several points, language and the ability to communicate are two of the keys to the resolution of violence. I will argue that this is evidenced most emphatically in the figure of Joseph. Equally important at times, however, are the silences which create space not only for multivalent interpretations, but also represent a therapeutic dimension as can be seen in Szondi’s presentation of his theories. For Cain, however, silence does not represent a therapeutic opportunity, but instead elicits a response that is violent and deadly.

Szondi’s Cain complex provides one insight into Cain’s response. What is evident in Cain’s behaviour is a movement from the stimulation of frustrated emotions to anger and rage. When he is no longer capable of keeping his emotions in check (i.e. as demonstrated by his silence), he attacks and kills his brother thereby initiating and completing the second ‘attack’ phase. It is a surprise event since the narrative has not precipitated any overt prior hostility between the brothers. Thus, all the elements of the two phases of the first characteristic of the Cain complex are evident in the narrative.

Yet the question remains as to why Cain chose to focus his anger on his brother, Abel, and eventually attack him? Forsyth offers one perspective, claiming that Cain’s attack arises from the displacement onto Abel of his “hostility toward [the parental] Yahweh for spurning his offering.”<sup>39</sup> However, in order to interpret the Cain and Abel rivalry through the oedipal framework, the triangular paradigm

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<sup>36</sup> LaCocque, 53.

<sup>37</sup> Drewermann, *Strukturen Des Bösen*, 132.

<sup>38</sup> Drewermann, 132.

<sup>39</sup> Forsyth, 478.

has to be altered to the point that it subverts its own integrity. This reveals both the limitations of applying an oedipal framework to this account and Szondi's contention that psychoanalysis has a tendency to merge the portrayal of Cain with that of Oedipus.

Szondi's concept of the Cain complex offers a more appropriate psychological explanation for Cain's attack because its triangular paradigm asserts that the sibling stands as an obstacle to the subject's love of the parent. In order to set the stage for a Szondian interpretation, however, the reader of Gen 4 must first step outside of the internal logic of the narrative and consider the world behind the text.<sup>40</sup> The rationale for Cain's anger against Abel only becomes clear after taking into account the status of the first-born in ancient Israel and the cultic setting that is implied by the narrative. At several points in the HB, the special status of the first-born is made explicit. For example, Exod 13:2 states that the first-born of human beings and animals alike were to be consecrated to YHWH. Numbers 3:5-13 explains that the tribe of Levi were selected to perform as priests – and therefore were privileged in that they could draw close to God (cf. Exod 19:22) – and had been selected as substitutes for all the first-born in Israel.<sup>41</sup> Kyu Seop Kim argues that the concept of the first-born reflects the theology of election in the Pentateuch and is linked with Israel's own self-perception as the first-born son (cf. Exod 13:12-15).<sup>42</sup> As first-born, Cain would thus have expected preferential treatment from his 'father,' YHWH, in the matter of the contrasting offerings. The description of the brothers' offerings, however, offers a paradoxical insight into the rationale for YHWH's rejection of Cain. Wenham observes that several linguistic elements in vv. 3-4 denote a cultic significance.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the reader is told that Abel offers the first-born (מבכרות) of his flock, whereas it is

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<sup>40</sup> At several points in the chapter the 'fourth wall' between the worlds in the text and behind the text is penetrated. For example, Cain laments his vulnerability to being killed by anyone who meets him (v. 14), but who these people might be is not clear since according to the Genesis account there is nobody else in existence apart from his parents. (Similarly, who is Cain's wife [v. 17] since there are no other women besides his mother?) Perhaps the author envisaged other descendants of Adam seeking revenge (cf. Wenham, 109); however, this does not readily account for the conundrum as no other children of the primeval couple have yet been mentioned. The internal logic of the account dictates that, besides his parents, Cain is alone. A more rational explanation therefore is that the author was writing literarily and metaphorically (i.e. mythically) rather than literally and that the author's intended audience would have understood this.

<sup>41</sup> Moreover, Genesis itself alludes to the special status of the first-born as the interplays between Esau and his younger brother, Jacob, regarding his birthright (בכורה) suggest (Gen 25:29-34; 27:36).

<sup>42</sup> Kim, *The Firstborn Son in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Wenham, 103. The phrase "In the course of time" (וייה מקץ ימים) can be used to refer to a year (cf. Lev 25:29 etc) and hence, Wenham argues, also suggests sacrifices being brought at the end of the agricultural year. Accordingly, the terms "brought" (ויבא) is used in cultic contexts (e.g. Lev 2:2) and "offering" (מנחה) has both a secular connotation (e.g. Gen 32:14) as a gift used to win favour and a cultic one in which it usually refers to a grain offering *à la* Cain's (e.g. Lev 2). In Gen 4 it is also used to refer to Abel's offering where there are occasional similar instances (e.g. 1 Sam 2:17).



implied that Cain did not bring his first fruits (contra Lev 23:9-14; Num 18:12-13; Deut 26:2).<sup>44</sup> In an ironic inversion, the offering of the first-born son is overlooked by the father in favour of the younger son who offered the best portions of the first-born of his flock. From Cain's perspective, what should have been his preferential status in the familial relationship by birthright is therefore undermined by his brother.<sup>45</sup> The brother thus becomes an obstacle in Cain's access to the father, YHWH; an obstacle which must be eliminated, from Cain's perspective, if his natural relationship with the parent figure is to be restored.

The second characteristic of the paroxysmal pattern of the Cain complex is also evident in the story of Cain and Abel. Szondi stipulates that "we may speak only then of a paroxysmal constitution, when that so-called 'evil' tries after the act to make good again for the evil."<sup>46</sup> Szondi refers to the movement towards making amends as the Moses complex,<sup>47</sup> which will be explored in more detail in the following chapter. However, for now I contend that it is possible to see in Cain a movement towards restitution. Although he initially denies any involvement in his brother's murder (v. 9), his lament following YHWH's judgment can be seen as a move towards restitution. Hughes argues that Cain's cry to God (vv. 13-14) is a "prayer of lament" which he further defines as "a plaintive cry, uttered convulsively by victims of shock events who protest their suffering, struggle for justice, and seek a deeper relationship with God."<sup>48</sup> Cain laments that his punishment is too great. The specifics of what he laments is revealed in his repetition of the divine curses (v. 12). It is being driven from the land, being hidden from YHWH, and being made a wandering itinerant. If one reads these verses in companionship with Szondi and the sources he cites,<sup>49</sup> the origin of Cain's pain and his own identification as a victim is readily distinguishable: the rejection by and banishment from his father.

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<sup>44</sup> For the significance of the first fruits in the cultic setting see Kim, 60-3. Note that this is but one possible explanation for YHWH's rejection of Cain's offering. As mentioned previously no discernibly definitive rationale is given in the narrative, an observation made by Brueggemann, for example, in emphasising the somewhat capricious nature of YHWH in this episode (see Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 56).

<sup>45</sup> Of course, it could also be read that YHWH confirms Cain's special treatment by providing him a warning and encouragement to "do well" (v. 7), in which case Cain simply fails to perceive that he remains YHWH's preferred as first-born.

<sup>46</sup> Hughes, "Letters from Szondi," 10.

<sup>47</sup> At some points he refers to two complexes and at others he indicates that the Moses complex is an ancillary aspect of the Cain complex. For example, in a later letter to Richard Hughes he states, "the Cain complex is decided by two characteristics: 1. The killing conviction, which is often completely unreal; 2. The tendency of making amends" (original underlined). (Hughes, "Letters from Szondi," 16.)

<sup>48</sup> Hughes, *Cain's Lament*, xix, 17.

<sup>49</sup> E.g. Tanh., Bereshit 9, in which Cain attributes responsibility for his brother's death to YHWH, cited by Szondi, *Kain*, 21. See also §4.5 'Cain's Ancestry.'

In summary, the presence of the Cain complex is clear in Gen 4. It is underscored by Cain's place as first born and YHWH's preference for Abel, which, in a Szondi reading, reveals the brother as an obstacle for the subject's love for and access to the father. This is the catalyst for Cain's paroxysmal movement from anger and rage leading to the epileptiform phase of the complex and his inability to control emotions and attack his brother. Together, the triangular relationship, the paroxysmal and epileptiform phases, and the movement towards some form of restitution/admittance of guilt or culpability as signified by Cain's lament represents the archetype of the Cain complex. That the Cain and Abel narrative should so closely fit Szondi's articulation of the Cain complex is unsurprising. Szondi had been contemplating the figure of Cain for over twenty years before the publication of *Kain* and drew inspiration from the biblical narrative for many of the elements of his theoretical framework.<sup>50</sup>

In terms of its relationship to the other stories of sibling rivalry in Genesis, the Cain and Abel narrative does two things. First, it depicts a level of violent aggression which is not matched – literally if not metaphorically – in the other stories. This, as I argue below, is important for establishing the purpose of the overarching structure of Genesis. Second, the narrative establishes the motif of the younger sibling overturning the normative implications of primogeniture in embodying the line of the elect. At first this may not be clear in an account depicting the older sibling murdering the younger; however, it becomes apparent with the birth of Seth, the youngest son of Adam and Eve (v. 25).<sup>51</sup> Some commentators have seen the derivation of the verb 'to place' (שׂה) as a play on words in the name Seth (שֵׁת), suggesting it means 'substitute,'<sup>52</sup> perhaps a result of reading the same type of *nomen est omen* that occurs in the naming of the two older brothers in the youngest. However, Eve's use of the 'instead' (תחת) upon the birth of Seth appears to link his birth to the death of Abel in the sense that he is a replacement for her dead son. At any rate, with one son dead and the eldest child banished to exile, the youngest son is now positioned to become the progenitor of the line of the elect. This is further emphasised by the parallel that the compiler of Genesis draws between the Cainite and Sethite lines of the genealogy of Adam, as was discussed previously.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> My aim in this section is twofold: to demonstrate the manner in which the complex functions and to highlight the validity of Szondi's own reading of the narrative.

<sup>51</sup> Gen 4:25 marks the first occurrence of Adam (אָדָם) appearing without the definite article (הָאָדָם).

<sup>52</sup> Wenham, 115. Westermann contends that meaning as spoken by Eve has been lost (Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 338).

<sup>53</sup> See §5.2 'Genealogy and the Structure of Genesis.'

### *Ishmael/Hagar and Isaac/Sarah (Gen 16:1-6; 21:1-20)*

The rivalry between Ishmael and Isaac is unique in that the two siblings do not actually confront one another. Instead, the rivalry is conducted by proxy, manifesting itself in the competition between their mothers Hagar and Sarai/Sarah. While the oedipal dynamics in this rivalry seem readily apparent,<sup>54</sup> it is also productive to view this rivalry as an example of the Cain complex. In order to do so, however, one must assimilate the characters of the mothers and the sons. The triangular paradigm of the Cain complex thus has Abra(ha)m the father,<sup>55</sup> Sarah/Isaac as the subject, and Hagar/Ishmael as the sibling. Before I explore this rivalry through the lens of the Cain complex, it will be helpful to analyse the prelude to it.

Prior to the introduction of Hagar, the reader is positioned to anticipate a potential conflict in the narrative. In Gen 15:5 YHWH promises that Abra(ha)m's descendants would be more numerous than the stars, but there is a problem in that his wife Sarai is barren (Gen 11:30; 16:1). To counter this problem, Sarai arranges for Abram to have sexual intercourse with her Egyptian slave, Hagar; it is an act for which precedent seems to have been established in the ANE.<sup>56</sup> The rivalry between the two women ignites once Hagar conceives. As per Gen 4, this conflict arises out of an unexpected shift in the power dynamic from the perspective of the subject.<sup>57</sup> Sarai envisions that she will be advanced by having Hagar become her surrogate, thereby establishing Abra(ha)m's promised line of descendants. In 16:2 she uses the verb 'to build' (אבנה) to refer to obtaining children.<sup>58</sup> There is a triple entendre at play here: not only does Sarai want children, she also wants to contribute to the 'building' of Abra(ha)m's dynasty, and, in turn, 'build' her status as a barren woman. However, once Hagar conceives the text states that she begins to treat Sarai with contempt, literally "her mistress became little in her eyes" (ותקל גברתה בעיניה) (v. 4). As a woman capable of conceiving, the concubine now sees her chance to replace the barren primary wife in the eyes of the husband. The role reversal

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<sup>54</sup> Forsyth's treatment of this particular rivalry is persuasive, not least since the pre-oedipal and oedipal dynamics in the characterisation of Isaac are compelling, e.g. Isaac's identity being subsumed by Sarah's aggression, and his conflation of his wife and mother as suggested by the location of Isaac's first sexual encounter with Rebekah, i.e. in his mother's tent (Gen 24:67), respectively. (Forsyth, esp. 479-82.)

<sup>55</sup> An allusion that is reinforced by his name, which, from his renaming in Gen 17:5, means 'father of many.'

<sup>56</sup> Eg. §146 of the Code of Hammurabi cited by Speiser, *Genesis*, 120.

<sup>57</sup> Phyllis Trible's feminist reading of Hagar constitutes the opening chapter (pages 9-35) in her seminal *Texts of Terror*. Trible emphasises the power differential between Hagar and Sarai, implicating YHWH in the oppression of the former: "From the beginning, Hagar is powerless because God supports Sarah. Kept in her place, the slave woman is the innocent victim of use, abuse and rejection." (Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*, vol. 13, *Overtures to Biblical Theology* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 28.)

<sup>58</sup> The use of בנה here also recalls YHWH's 'building' (בן) of the woman in Gen 2:22.

also represents an ironic apposition, just as there was in Gen 4. The distinction between fecundity and infertility is juxtaposed with the distinction between slave and owner.<sup>59</sup>

In response to the inversion of the power dynamic, Sarai interprets Hagar's contempt as "violence" (יָסַד), and she complains to Abra(ha)m (v. 5), who in turn reiterates the initial relational dynamic between the women by telling Sarai to do to Hagar as she pleases (v. 6). Consequently, Sarai treats Hagar with violence, so much so that the slave is compelled to flee.<sup>60</sup> These verses are evidence of the paroxysmal and epileptiform stages of the Cain complex. First is the desire to please the 'father figure' to which the 'sibling' becomes an obstacle. This results in jealousy and anger that, when it can no longer be restrained, results in a violent outburst. The initial interaction between Sarah and Hagar, infused with Cainitic affects, along with God's promise to Abraham that Sarah would bear a son who will carry the line of the covenant (Gen 17:19; 18:1-15), are the backdrops to the rivalry-by-proxy between Ishmael and Isaac.

The conflict between siblings takes place around a feast to celebrate Isaac's weaning, with the age gap between Abraham's two sons being ambiguous. On the one hand it would appear to be about 14 years (cf. Gen 16:16; 21:5). Thus, Ishmael would have been a young man and Isaac still an infant when the conflict arises in Gen 21:9. On the other hand, the age gap becomes confused when the text later refers to Abraham putting Ishmael on the shoulder of Hagar as she is being sent off into the wilderness (v. 14). There is certainly scope within the narrative to read both sons as infants and thus much closer in age to one another.<sup>61</sup> The setting of the rivalry also emphasises that the identity of Isaac and his mother Sarah are closely bound.<sup>62</sup> If Ishmael was in fact much closer in age to that of Isaac, then it is reasonable to extend the same merging of Sarah/Isaac into a single unit to Hagar/Ishmael, thereby providing continuity for the sibling rivalry motif that is played out across Genesis.<sup>63</sup>

The catalyst for the conflict is unclear. The LXX states that Ishmael was "playing with Isaac" (παίζοντα μετὰ Ἰσαακ), perhaps with the insinuation of mocking him; the MT, however, simply states

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<sup>59</sup> See Tribble, *Texts of Terror*, 10-13; and also Robert B. Coote and David Ord, *The Bible's First History* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989).

<sup>60</sup> Speiser, 118 cf. Tribble, 13. The text uses the same verb (עָנָה) that is used to describe the Egyptians' treatment of the Israelites (Exod 1:11-12).

<sup>61</sup> A reading which is reinforced by the description of Ishmael in Gen 21:14-19. Cf Larry L. Lyke, "Where Does 'the Boy' Belong? Compositional Strategy in Genesis 21:14," *CBQ* 56, no. 4 (1994): 637-48.

<sup>62</sup> Forsyth, 480

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 184.

that Ishmael was laughing or joking (מצחק) with no object present (v. 9). Perhaps a possible paronomasia between Ishmael's actions and the meaning of the name 'Isaac' (יצחק – 'he will laugh') also suggests that Sarah may have feared that Ishmael was in some way subsuming Isaac's identity and attempting to establish primogeniture. Certainly, the following verse (v. 10) reinforces the notion that Sarah was concerned that Ishmael would attempt to exercise some claim to inheritance,<sup>64</sup> and thus, in a Szondian Cainitic framework, restrict Isaac's full access to his father. In response to the threat, Sarah/Isaac seeks to eliminate Hagar/Ishmael. Once again Sarah's behaviour and language reflect the paroxysmal and epileptiform phases of the Cain complex. Her transition from jealousy to anger takes place quickly, and her demand that Hagar be sent away is inflected with a desire for violence. She does not refer to Hagar or Ishmael by name, only as "slave woman" (האמה) and "her son" (בנה), in effect denying them their identity.<sup>65</sup> Further, she asks that they be driven out, using the same verb (גרש) that is used in the accounts of Adam and Eve's and Cain's banishments, and is thus imbued with a connotation of divinely justified anger. Abraham, after consulting with God, duly obliges Sarah's wishes and sends Hagar and Ishmael off into the wilderness (vv. 12-14).

The connection between exile and death operates on both external and internal levels in the narrative. Externally, exile as a metaphor for, or functioning as a form of death is made explicit at several points in the HB as has already been discussed (see §3.5 'Wandering in the Land of Nod). On an internal level, the narrator, God, Abraham, and the reader are aware that this exile will not inevitably pose a threat to the woman and her son (v. 13); however, the same cannot be said for Hagar, who, understandably, comprehends the dire position that she and her young son are in after being sent into the wilderness with a lack of provisions (vv. 15-16). Therefore, from the perspective of at least one actor in the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex, the threat of death at the hands of the 'sibling' is imminent.<sup>66</sup> The connection between exile and death would also be apparent for a post-exilic audience.

By way of summary, in light of Gen 4, the following observations can be made concerning the sibling rivalry between Hagar/Ishmael and Sarah/Isaac. First, it is possible to read the paroxysmal and epileptiform stages of the Cain complex in the interactions between Sarah and Hagar including the move towards a violent resolution. Second, although the threat of death is real for at least one of the participants, there is nevertheless a diminution of violence with respect to the outcome of the rivalry.

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. Cornelia Horn, "Genesis 21:8-21," *Int* 68, no. 3 (2014): 308–11.

<sup>65</sup> Note that Sarah does not refer to either Ishmael or Isaac as Abraham's son(s) thereby furthering the distinction between the two. See also Tribble, 21.

<sup>66</sup> The text is silent as to whether Sarah was aware that Hagar and Ishmael would not be left to die.

Finally, there is the recurrence of the motif of the younger son prevailing over the older son, and the associated idea that the younger son will be the progenitor of the elected line.

***Esau and Jacob (Gen 25:19-34; 27:1–28:9; 32:3–33:17)***

The rivalry between twin brothers Esau and Jacob is established very early in their existence. Genesis 25:22 states that the two boys struggled with each other in their mother, Rebekah's womb. Following this comes a revelation that will prove to be a key in the unfolding of this sibling rivalry: YHWH tells Rebekah that the cause of the pains in her womb are twins who will become progenitors of two great nations (v. 23). The suggestion of intra-uterine origins of the motif of brothers in conflict is further emphasised in the description of their birth: Esau is born first then Jacob following while gripping his brother's heel, hence the meaning of his name (v. 26), עֵשָׂו being a paronomasia with heel (עֵקֶב).<sup>67</sup> The following verses (vv. 27-28) allude to the two earlier instances of sibling rivalry and establish the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex.

The narrator reveals that Esau was a man of the field (הַשָּׂדֶה) (v. 27), which as discussed previously (§3.4) resonates with the location of Cain's murder of Abel (Gen 4:8). Also, the dichotomy between the occupations of the two brothers echoes that of Cain's and Abel's – Esau is the nomadic hunter, while Jacob, who lives in tents, represents a more sedentary existence. Finally, the role of the mother, Rebekah, and the relationship with the youngest son echoes that of Sarah and Isaac. The narrator reveals that Esau was his father's favourite and Jacob the favourite of Rebekah (Gen 25:28). Applying the same merging of identity that was at play in the previous example of sibling rivalry to Rebekah/Jacob (the rationale for which is made clear in subsequent narratives), the main actors in the Cain complex paradigm become apparent: the father Isaac, Esau, and Rebekah/Jacob.

As twins, however, the relative statuses of the two sons are the closest of all the accounts of sibling rivalry in Genesis. Nevertheless, it seems from the episode (vv. 29-34) that immediately follows the birth and career/lifestyle choices of the twins, that Esau has a special status by virtue of being the first-born of the twins. Esau's special status as first-born is one that Jacob covets for himself (v. 31). The source of the conflict is thus established: the status that is to be afforded the first-born and its attendant special access to the father. Although Jacob appears quite calculating in this exchange, the

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<sup>67</sup> Also 'supplanting' or 'cheating' cf. Ps 49:5.

narrator nevertheless makes it clear in the final verse (v. 34) that the rights of the first-born should not have been treated with the contempt that Esau displayed.<sup>68</sup>

Esau's contempt for his place as first-born has dire consequences for him in the unfolding of the triangular paradigm. In Gen 27 an elderly Isaac makes it clear to Esau that he will be blessed in accordance with the concept of primogeniture (v. 4). Rebekah, after overhearing Isaac's plan, intervenes on behalf of her favoured son (vv. 5-6) and devises a plan in which Jacob will literally and metaphorically supplant his older brother (vv. 9-10). Jacob takes Esau's place first by donning a disguise designed by his mother to trick Isaac into thinking he is dealing with Esau (vv. 15-16), after which he takes on the blessing that was intended for Esau (vv. 28-29) and, it would seem, is linked to his birthright (v. 36), i.e. his place as the first-born. The link between blessing and birthright is further emphasised by the paronomasia between בכורה (birthright) and ברכה (blessing) (v. 36) and the revelation that there can be only one blessing between the two sons (v. 37), just as there can be only one who carries the birthright. In response to Esau's pleading to be given another blessing (v. 38), Isaac can only muster a 'blessing' that reads more like a curse (vv. 39-40); consequently, Esau, like Cain and Ishmael before him, is condemned to the privations of exile and wandering and the attendant metaphorical connotations with death. The connection of Esau's 'blessing' to death is also emphasised by Rebekah's response to Esau's threat to kill Jacob (v. 41) – she arranges for Jacob to go into hiding so that she does not lose both of her sons in one day (vv. 43-45). The verb she uses, שכל (to be bereaved), is also used in reference to being childless, barren, or following a miscarriage.<sup>69</sup> The connotation, therefore, is that Esau has in some manner 'died' following the removal of his birthright and blessing.

Thus Jacob, with the aid of Rebekah, eliminates his brother Esau in order to gain unobstructed access to his father Isaac, as vested in the attributions of the birthright and the blessing. Elements of the paroxysmal phase are missing from Jacob's elimination of Esau, although the interplay is consistent with the Cain complex as demonstrated by Jacob's concealment of his identity from his father. According to Szondi the *hy* radical of his drive system can manifest itself as either assertiveness or concealment within the paroxysmal drive.<sup>70</sup> Hence Jacob's concealment is a Cainitic trait. Moreover,

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<sup>68</sup> There is also an extra-biblical political dimension to the conflict between the brothers who become the progenitors of Israel and Edom, both of which were adversaries as described throughout the HB.

<sup>69</sup> *BDB*, ref. 7921.

<sup>70</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 50. See also §2.2 'The Cain complex.'

his trickery – i.e. his deceitful concealment and cheating his brother out of his birthright and blessing – is an example of what Forsyth calls “attenuated violence.”<sup>71</sup>

The paroxysmal phase of the Cain complex is more fully realised following Jacob’s usurpation of his brother when the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex is inverted as Esau seeks vengeance (27:41). Esau’s response to the removal of his birthright and his blessing by Jacob/Rebekah reveals this paroxysmal phase. When he initially learns of the removal of his blessing, Esau cries out, in a manner that emphasises his distress and bitterness (v. 34). The verb for crying out (קָרַע) is the same that is used by YHWH when addressing Cain and informing him his brother’s blood cries to him from the ground (Gen 4:10). It is therefore a lament on the part of Esau, pleading with his father for justice and to redress a grievous wrongdoing. The description of Esau’s anguish is then followed by an emotional movement on the part of Esau from distress (v. 38) to anger and hatred as revealed in v. 41, when he resolves to kill his brother but only once his father has died.<sup>72</sup> Esau’s emotional turmoil thus reveals the paroxysmal phase of the Cain complex. When Rebekah learns of Esau’s plan to kill Jacob, she sends the younger brother into hiding (concealment again!) to her brother in Haran until Esau’s anger against him dissipates (v. 43). The sending away of Jacob is an ironic parallel with Esau’s ‘exile’ (vv. 39-40) and results in an inversion of the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex that was only just established with Jacob’s elimination of Esau.

### Jacob and the Jabbok Stranger

The conflict between the two brothers reaches its climax with the episode in which Jacob wrestles with the figure at the Jabbok ford (32:22-32). The identity of the mysterious figure in Gen 32 has long intrigued scholars and commentators, many of whom have been content with the narrative’s

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<sup>71</sup> Forsyth, 482. As such, Jacob’s trickery bears some resemblance with the Cain-like Eichmann’s deceitfulness as evidenced in his decision to change the destination of the infamous ‘Kasztner train’ (see §6.4 ‘Adolf Eichmann’).

<sup>72</sup> One might assume that if Esau were to attack his brother before his father’s death it would only serve to remove him further from his father, as per the primeval example of Cain, rather than bring him closer. Alternatively, it might also demonstrate Esau’s fidelity to his father thereby providing a pointed contrast to his father’s removal of his blessing.



assignment of a divine significance to the “man.”<sup>73</sup> Connections between Gen 32 and chs. 33 and 27 have also been noted, including lexical, narrative, and structural points of reference, which appear to link the figure to Esau.<sup>74</sup> It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that there may well be, as Forsyth contends, a “multivocality” intended in the identity of the Jabbok stranger.<sup>75</sup> Regarding the polysemicity surrounding the figure’s identity, it is the connections with Esau that are of most interest to this study, which I will now endeavour to outline.

The struggle between Jacob and the stranger occurs on Jacob’s return from his exile in the land of his uncle, Laban. Although some twenty years have passed since he fled, Jacob remains terrified of the threat of his brother’s vengeance. In response to a message he sends his brother (Gen 32:4-5),<sup>76</sup> Jacob is informed that Esau is coming to meet him with a superior force of 400 men (v. 6). This news instils anxiety in Jacob as revealed in his prayer (vv. 9-11), and it is further evidenced by his subsequent decision to send a present of more than 550 head of livestock to Esau in order to appease him (vv. 13-14). Wenham describes Jacob’s gift (מנחה cf. Gen 4:3-5) as “a princely present” that might suggest he was making atonement for appropriating Esau’s blessing by symbolically returning it; alternatively, he might also be declaring himself Esau’s vassal, a reading that is perhaps further emphasised by the deferential language Jacob uses in his initial message to his brother (vv. 3-5).<sup>77</sup> At any rate when the stranger appears, the narrator makes it clear that Jacob is in fear for his life from the looming threat posed by his brother (vv. 20-23).

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<sup>73</sup> The prophet Hosea identified the figure as an angel (Hos 12:4). Gunkel, von Rad, and Westermann suggest the narrative origin of the stranger was a Canaanite god, possibly one connected to night or to rivers and streams (see von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 316; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, trans. John J. Scullion [Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985], 516; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, vol. 2, WBC [Waco, TX: Word Books, 1994], 295); also Brian Neil Peterson, *Genesis as Torah: Reading Narrative as Legal Instruction* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 115. Nahum Sarna identifies the stranger as “the celestial patron of Esau-Edom” (Nahum Sarna and Jewish Publication Society, *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*, JPS Torah Commentary [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989], 404).

The episode has also been a popular subject for psychological biblical criticism. Among the psychologically oriented interpretations of the Jabbok Stranger, Dorothy Zeligs sees the Stranger as a dream figure. (Dorothy F. Zeligs, *Psychoanalysis and the Bible: A Study in Depth of Seven Leaders* [New York: Human Sciences Press, 1988].) John Sandford views Jacob’s struggle with the Stranger as wrestling with the entirety of his unconscious. (John Sandford, *The Man Who Wrestled with God: Light from the Old Testament on the Psychology Of Individuation* [New York: Paulist Press, 1981]). Similarly, D. Andrew Kille suggests that Jacob wrestles at Jabbok with elements of his psyche. (D. Andrew Kille, “Jacob — A Study in Individuation,” in *Jung and the Interpretation of the Bible.*, ed. David L. Miller [New York: Continuum, 1995], 41–54.)

<sup>74</sup> See Erhard Blum, “The Jacob Tradition” in Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, eds., *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 181-211; Bradford A. Anderson, “Jacob, Esau, and the Constructive Possibilities of the Other,” *BTB* 49, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>75</sup> Forsyth, 486.

<sup>76</sup> I follow the NRSV verse conventions for Gen 32.

<sup>77</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 290-2.

Jacob's precarious psychological condition is also underscored by the fact that the stranger appears at night when Jacob is alone after sending his family across the Jabbok ford (vv. 22-24). The depiction of Jacob wrestling with the Jabbok stranger recalls the struggle between the two brothers in the womb of their mother (cf. 25:22-26 and 32:24-28). This is the first connection that the reader might make between the stranger and Esau; however, it is a connection that is further enhanced when considering that Jacob goes through a metaphorical 're-birth' during his encounter with the stranger as is implicit in his renaming as 'Israel' (v. 28). His renaming ascribes a new character and destiny for Jacob that is akin to his grandparents, Abraham and Sarah.<sup>78</sup> The location of the bout, the motif of the water crossing, and the sun rising "upon him" (v. 31) also emphasises this metaphor of rebirth and renewal for Jacob/Israel. That Jacob is alone on one side of the Jabbok ford and only crosses once he is renamed Israel bears comparison with the function of other biblical water crossings such as the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14:15-30) and their entry into Canaan (Josh 3-4).<sup>79</sup> In addition, the stranger's blessing of Jacob/Israel at Peniel (32:29) provides a further point of reference to Esau. The bestowal of the blessing contrasts with Jacob's first blessing (27:27-29). What was once taken from Esau by Jacob through deception, has now been earned by Jacob/Israel and honourably conferred on him.

Further connections between the Jabbok stranger and Esau are reinforced by the stranger's blessing of Jacob (v. 29) and the aetiological aspects of the narrative. Not only does the stranger reveal one aspect of his identity in renaming Jacob 'Israel' (meaning "God fights" or "God rules"), Jacob/Israel confers on the location the name 'Peniel' meaning the "face of God" (v. 30). These aetiologies are structurally enveloped by Jacob's words concerning Esau which immediately precede and follow the episode at Jabbok such that together they form a triptych. In Gen 32:20, Jacob expresses the hope that his gift to Esau may appease him and enable him to see "his face" (אַרְאֵה פָּנָיו). Following the wrestling bout, in Gen 33:10 Jacob/Israel tells Esau upon meeting him that seeing his face is "like seeing the face of God" (רְאִיתִי פָּנֶיךָ כְּרִאֵת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים).<sup>80</sup> As Jan Fokkelman notes, Esau's behaviour is thus coupled with Jacob's experience of the divine at Jabbok such that the "meeting with Esau lies in a single

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<sup>78</sup> Wenham, 296.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Antony F. Campbell, *The Study Companion to Old Testament Literature*, vol. 2, Old Testament Studies (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc, 1989), 259; Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, 105; Peterson, *Genesis as Torah*, 115. For an overview of other connections between Gen 32:22-32 and Exodus, including those made in midrash, see Shaul Bar, *A Nation Is Born: The Jacob Story* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 69-78. An NT parallel might also be drawn with the baptism of Jesus (Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23).

<sup>80</sup> Anderson also notes several other points of linguistic connection between Gen 32 and 33. See "Jacob, Esau, and the Constructive Possibilities of the Other", esp 18-20.

perspective with the meeting with God.”<sup>81</sup> Forsyth argues that Jacob’s feelings of dread for the prospect of the culmination of his sibling rivalry with Esau initiate his conjuring up “a supernatural (i.e. an unconsciously determined) and dangerous rendition of his brother” that is expressed in the form of an “hallucinatory wrestling match.”<sup>82</sup> Finally, Jacob’s defeat and renaming by the unconscious manifestation of his ‘brother’ accomplishes the fulfilment of Isaac’s prophecy to Esau that he would “break loose” from Jacob (Gen 27:40). As Forsyth observes, “the spirit breaks Jacob’s ‘yoke’ by negating his existence through renaming him.”<sup>83</sup>

Given the integration of the stranger’s identity with both God and Esau, the wrestling bout can be said to represent the first time that siblings have come into physical conflict since Cain’s attack on Abel. However, unlike the first instance which resulted in the physical death of the younger sibling, at the Jabbok ford the physical confrontation results in a debilitating injury to the younger sibling and his metaphorical death. In light of Gen 4, there is thus an attenuation of violence evident in the latter instance of sibling rivalry.

The fusion of God and Esau in the stranger at Jabbok has further significance for a Szondian reading of the episode. As is discussed in more detail in the following chapter, Szondi maintains that within the Cain and Moses paradigm consciousness is attained through an introjection of the ‘father’ (i.e. God in many of the biblical narratives) into the ego.<sup>84</sup> With respect to *Schicksalsanalyse* and the Cain complex, conscience is the atonement of Cain’s homicidal intent, which is then transformed into a new destiny.<sup>85</sup> For Szondi, this new destiny is symbolised by the figure of Moses. In a Szondian interpretation of Gen 32:20-31 there is an introjection and transcendence of the subject, Esau, with God. Although one brother metaphorically kills the other in order to fulfil the promise of the father, which the narrator makes clear in the following chapter, Jacob’s literary and metaphorical death and rebirth as Israel results in a resolution to the conflict between the two brothers. When Esau finally meets with Jacob/Israel there is no trace of the paroxysmal elements that were once present and caused Jacob to flee from him. This is because Esau has resolved his Cainitic intent through

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<sup>81</sup> Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis*, 226.

<sup>82</sup> Forsyth nuances the ‘hallucinatory’ aspect of the wrestling bout in that it rests in Jacob’s unconscious identification of the stranger as his brother. “To be sure”, he states later “the duel with the polysemic Jabbok spirit is physical, but this encounter is supernatural/imaginary.” (Forsyth, 487-8.)

<sup>83</sup> Forsyth, 488.

<sup>84</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 152-3. Cf. Freudian psychoanalysis’ assertion that conscience is an aspect of the Superego which forms an inner dialogue on what is right and moral action.

<sup>85</sup> Szondi, “Thanatos and Cain”, 60; Richard Hughes, “Szondi’s Theory of the Cain complex,” *American Imago* 36, no. 3 (1979): 260–74.

integration of, and transcendence with, the divinity. Although Jacob has taken away Esau's birthright and his blessing, Gen 33:9 indicates that Esau appears to have now transcended his previous desire to reclaim both, which was first intimated by the stranger's bestowal of a second blessing for Jacob/Israel (32:29).

In Jacob/Israel there is also a tangible sense of renewal: he strides ahead of his family to meet Esau (Gen 33:3) when previously he sent them ahead (Gen 32:22-23); he demonstrates humility, bowing down before his brother (v. 3) in what is an ironic reversal of Isaac's blessing of Jacob that was meant for Esau (Gen 27:29); and finally he attempts to return the blessing that he had cheated from Esau (Gen 33:10-11). Though Jacob/Israel ultimately refuses Esau's offer to journey together (vv. 12-14), there is nevertheless a sense of harmony as they part and go their separate ways (vv. 16-17).

Although the threat of physical violence between the two siblings is imminent at various points in their story it is ultimately never realised. In light of the accounts of sibling conflict that have preceded this one, the story of Esau and Jacob/Israel thus depicts a continuing diminution of violence in terms of the outcome of the rivalry. Although the younger son is the inheritor of the father's blessing, the motif of the younger son prevailing over the older son is far more muted in this account. The younger brother goes some way to atoning for a grievance committed against the older brother, and both depart from one another as wealthy patriarchs who will become progenitors of nations.

### ***Leah and Rachel (Gen 29:15–30:24)***

The examples of sibling rivalry examined thus far have all referred to brothers in conflict. This is a reflection of the dynamic at play in most of the other instances in the HB which focus on fraternal strife rather than the sororal. As has been demonstrated, even when women do play a significant role in these accounts, such as Sarah, Hagar, and Rebekah, they do so as proxies for male characters. Should one conclude then that the Cain complex is exclusively, or at least predominantly a masculine concern since it is based on the biblical paradigm? Szondi himself would no doubt negate such a proposition. Of the thirty-three specific case studies for the Cain complex he cites in *Kain*, a not insignificant number – just under one third (nine in total) – are women. Moreover, many of the other twenty-four male examples do reveal the paroxysmal pattern in their matrilineal genealogies and among other female ancestors. According to Szondi then, the Cain complex is a phenomenon that can be as apparent in the life choices and pathologies of women as it can be for men. Returning to the HB, is it possible then to see the Cain complex at play in an example of sororal rivalry in Genesis, namely the interplay between Leah and Rachel?

Rabbi Samuel Dresner declares that of all the examples of sibling rivalry in the HB, Leah and Rachel represent “the most tragic example of such antagonism.”<sup>86</sup> Their rivalry is rooted in mutual jealousy (Gen 30:1, 15) since, initially at least, both women desire the same man. Jacob for his part, however, prefers the younger sister, Rachel (Gen 29:30). Leah therefore becomes jealous of Jacob’s preference for her younger sister, but when YHWH sees that Leah is unloved, YHWH enables her to have children while Rachel remains barren (v. 31). Leah’s fertility in turn becomes the source of Rachel’s envy of her.<sup>87</sup> For much of the interplay between them, neither sister’s desire for the dual aspects of love and motherhood is fulfilled: though Rachel has Jacob’s love, she seeks to become a mother; while Leah is a mother, she does not have the love of Jacob. The interplay unfolds with the movement of what Dresner calls “a divine pendulum.”<sup>88</sup> Their contrasting fortunes are revealed also in the names they give their biological and surrogate sons.<sup>89</sup> Here, then, it is possible to discern one of the fundamental affects that is present in a manifestation of the Cain complex, i.e. jealousy. Furthermore, Leah and Rachel pose interchangeably as both the subject and sibling within the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex. But what of the parental figure?

The obvious answer is, of course, the sisters’ biological father, Laban. Laban, by substituting Rachel for Leah on the wedding night to Jacob (Gen 29:23), himself appears to demonstrate a preference for the older daughter, even if it is under the guise of some form of primogeniture (v. 26).<sup>90</sup> As the narrative unfolds, however, it becomes clear that the women are not rivals for access to Laban, rather

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<sup>86</sup> Dresner, “Rachel and Leah.”

<sup>87</sup> Note also the resonances of the rivalry between Hagar and Sarai.

<sup>88</sup> Dresner, 152.

<sup>89</sup> Leah names her sons as follows: Reuben, “Because the Lord has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me” (Gen 29:32). Simeon, “Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also” (29:33). Levi, “Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have borne him three sons” (29:34). Judah, “This time I will praise the Lord” (29:35). Gad (Zilpah surrogate), “Good fortune” (30:11). Asher (Zilpah surrogate), “Happy am I! For the women will call me happy” (30:13). Issachar, “God has given me hire because I gave my maid to my husband” (30:18). Zebulun, “God has endowed me with a good dowry; now my husband will honour me, because I have borne him six sons” (30:20).

Rachel’s sons are named: Dan (Bilhah surrogate), “God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son” (30:6). Naphtali (Bilhah surrogate); “With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed” (30:8). Joseph, “May the Lord add to me another son” (30:24). Ben-oni, “Son of my sorrow” (35:18).

<sup>90</sup> It is interesting that in the seven years it took to transact their bargain neither Jacob nor Laban made their respective expectations regarding it explicit to one another. In Rachel’s substitution by Leah there is an obvious parallel with Jacob’s role as younger brother deceiving his father, Isaac (Gen 27:35), and replacing the older sibling as suggested by presence of variations of the word רמה (to deceive) in both accounts (cf. Gen 29:25). Rabbinic scholars played on this connection by suggesting Leah’s and Rachel’s marriage to Jacob, in contravention of prohibitions on sororal polygamy (Lev 18:18), saved the older sister from the prospect of marrying Esau (e.g. Nahmanides, *Gur Arye* cited by Dresner, 152). Alternatively, perhaps Laban was aware of Jacob’s previous deceptive behaviour and wanted to return the favour, so to speak, or to ensure Jacob remained in his station? Certainly, deception and dishonesty become features of the interplay between Jacob and Laban (Gen 30:25-43); episodes which also assist in driving the narrative forward.

it is access to Jacob which is their goal. The triangular paradigm of the conflict is thus Leah, Rachel, and Jacob, so at first glance Szondi's Cain complex does not seem to be applicable in this instance.

However, a reading of this triangle in conjunction with midrash offers an alternative insight. There has been a tradition in Jewish interpretation of linking the source of the sibling rivalry between Leah and Rachel with piety (i.e. godliness), expressed in their desire to be close to Jacob.<sup>91</sup> Rabbinic literature has a tendency to portray Jacob as the *tzadik*, the apotheosis of virtue and righteousness, which came particularly, and frequently, at the expense of representations of Esau.<sup>92</sup> The founder of the Chabad branch of Hasidism, Rabbi Schneur Zalman, declared in his late eighteenth century philosophical treatise, *Tanya*, that a *tzadik* was "a perfectly righteous person," no less than a representative of God.<sup>93</sup> Hence, the sisters' competing desire for Jacob is, in one sense, a desire to be close to God, as is reflected in descriptions of their piety. Regarding this piety, Ginzburg recounts rabbinic interpretations which hold that the source of Leah and Rachel's resentment was the younger's jealousy of the elder's piety.<sup>94</sup> According to one source, the twelfth century aggadic text Yalqut Shimoni, Leah was a *tzadikes*.<sup>95</sup> In another tradition, Leah is depicted as so considerate of her younger sister and so pious that, knowing the prophecy that Jacob would father twelve sons, she prays for the child in her womb, her seventh and another boy, to be born a girl (i.e. Dinah) so that Rachel would have the opportunity to give birth herself to one of Jacob's sons and thus maintain her status among the maids Bilhah and Zilpah.<sup>96</sup> This is by no means to assert that Rachel's character was never lauded by rabbinic commentators, many of whom, for instance, saw a moral example in the silence she maintains at her wedding night substitution by Leah.<sup>97</sup>

In this Szondian reading of the Leah and Rachel rivalry – a reading that is albeit reliant upon, though not averse to the influence of extra-biblical Jewish myths and legends – the sisters alternatively compete for access to Jacob.<sup>98</sup> Jacob, by virtue of his role as righteous representative of God (i.e. the *tzadik*), also fulfils the role of a parental figure within the triangular model of the Cain complex.

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<sup>91</sup> Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 285-7.

<sup>92</sup> Pesach Schindler, "Esau and Jacob Revisited: Demon versus Tzadik?," *JBQ* 35, no. 3 (2007): 153–60.

<sup>93</sup> Shneur Zalman, *Tanya: Sefer shel Beinonim*, 3.

<sup>94</sup> Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 285.

<sup>95</sup> Yal. 127.

<sup>96</sup> Ginzberg, 287.

<sup>97</sup> Dresner, "Rachel and Leah."

<sup>98</sup> As discussed, Szondi's own interpretation is reliant on midrash (see §§2.2 and 4.5).

Within this paradigm it is also possible to discern the Cainitic aspects of jealousy, concealment (Gen 29:23-25), and anger (Gen 30:1, 15). Moreover, the episode in which Rachel asks Leah for some of the mandrakes that her first son Reuben has picked is evidence of some degree of hostility between the sisters (Gen 30:14-16). If the LXX is correct, then the Hebrew word מַנְדְּרָאִים refers to ‘mandrakes,’ which were reputed in the ANE to perform as both an aphrodisiac (cf. Song 7:13) and assist women to conceive.<sup>99</sup> Consequently, Leah’s reluctance to share her son’s mandrakes with Rachel signifies a passive-aggressive desire that her sister remain childless, thereby maintaining her position vis-à-vis Jacob – further emphasised by Leah’s pointed use of “my husband” (אִישִׁי) in v. 15 – and thus restricting her younger sister’s access to the parental figure. As was mentioned above both sisters swap roles as the subject and sibling within the triangular paradigm of the Cain complex; accordingly, it becomes clear that Leah’s access to Jacob has been restricted by Rachel, as the resolution to the sisters’ conflict makes apparent (v. 16). Leah has status as a mother but not Jacob’s love, yet the two sisters are able reconcile by each giving the other what are the missing elements in each of their relationships with Jacob.

Although it is possible to read elements of the Cain complex into the account of the sibling rivalry between Leah and Rachel, no other Cainitic elements in the story are present beyond those already mentioned. In particular, there is no suggestion of violence and no sense of overt physical aggression. In fact, though the source of rivalry is jealousy between the two sisters, rabbinic literature at times depicts the actions of both Leah and Rachel as motivated by love, not only for Jacob, but for each other. According to midrash, it is also possible to read the resolution of the Cain complex through the introjection and transcendence of the two subjects with God. This is consistent with the various accounts that describe the piety of the two sisters as behavioural traits. Nevertheless, though elements of the Cain complex are present in the interplay between Leah and Rachel, what their story ultimately represents within the wider context of Genesis’ sibling stories is the ongoing attenuation of violence as the outcome of sibling rivalry.

Yet the rivalry between Leah and Rachel is also the origin story for the ongoing struggle for dominance among the twelve tribes of Israel which plays out across other parts of the HB. Just as Dresner’s divine pendulum swings back and forth in the unfolding of the fortunes of the two matriarchs before apparently coming to rest with Rachel, so too a pendulum swings throughout the

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<sup>99</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 246-7. Wenham further posits connections between מַנְדְּרָאִים used here and דוּרִים (love) cf. Song 5:1, Prov 7:18 etc.

HB reflecting the changing fates and fortunes of the Leahide and Rachelite tribes.<sup>100</sup> This inter-tribal contestation begins in the final distinct block of material in Genesis that follows the accounts of the birth of Jacob's sons.<sup>101</sup> Accordingly, the interplays between Joseph and his brothers also threaten the ongoing tempering of violence witnessed thus far in the stories of sibling rivalry.

### ***Joseph and His Older Brothers: Part 1 (Gen 37)***

I shall deal with the relevant aspects of this rivalry briefly since it and the connected material concerning Joseph, Benjamin and their older brothers form a critical aspect of the argument which will be explicated more fully in the following chapter. However, what must be noted in the interests of the current argument are the Cainitic aspects inherent in the conflict, the manner in which the conflict is resolved, and its place in closing the book of Genesis.

In comparison to the accounts of other male siblings in Genesis, Joseph's familial position is unique in that he is both a younger and older brother, and, because his is what would now be referred to as a blended family, these distinctions are well defined. As a younger brother to his ten half-brothers, he is an outsider, since he is the first-born son of Jacob and his most loved wife, Rachel. As an older brother, the reader is left to ponder the possibility of any animosity he may harbour towards Benjamin after his mother died giving birth to his younger sibling.<sup>102</sup> In terms of the Cain complex, it could be said that Joseph's access to the parent was taken away by his sibling. The stage is thus set early for the Cainitic aspects of the interplays between Joseph and his brothers.

As Joseph's story and the account of his interactions with his brothers begins, there are two allusions which recall Abel and YHWH's preference for his offering. First, the narrator discloses that Joseph was "shepherding" (רעה) the flock alongside his half-brothers (Gen 37:2).<sup>103</sup> Second, the narrator reveals that he is the favourite of all Jacob/Israel's children (v. 3). Though the latter revelation is perhaps unsurprising, given he is the offspring of Jacob and Rachel, there was a previous episode

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<sup>100</sup> E.g. the first king of Israel is Saul the Benjamite, and thus a Rachelite, who is succeeded by David a descendant of Judah and, thus a Leahide. After Solomon's death, the northern kingdom is ruled by Jeroboam, an Ephraimite and, therefore, a Rachelite, while the southern kingdom remains with the Leahides through Rehoboam, the son of Solomon.

<sup>101</sup> Gen 37-50. Jacob's final words to his sons (Gen 49:1-27) is revealing of the distinctiveness of the progenitors of the tribes and, one assumes, the tribes themselves. Within this collection, the distinction between Leahide and Rachelite is drawn, since, as von Rad notes, "the two sayings about Judah and Joseph are clearly singled out from the others." (von Rad, *Genesis*, 417.)

<sup>102</sup> A reading which is perhaps given further weight upon consideration that Rachel initially named the boy Benoni (Gen 35:18) or 'son of sorrow.' In other instances, אָוִי refers to sorrow or mourning for the dead (cf. Deut 26:14; Hos 9:4)

<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, Joseph reports to his father that his older brothers were up to no good. On the nuances of the syntax in this verse see Schlimm, 171 n.15.



which points to Jacob's hierarchy of preference for his children. At Jacob's reunion with Esau (Gen 33), the atmosphere prior to their reconciliation is tense. Jacob is still unsure of Esau's motivations as his older twin approaches along with a force of 400 of his men. Before heading out to meet with his estranged brother, Jacob arranges his family in a manner which suggests that those whom he loved the most had the best chance of escape if Esau's intentions were malevolent.<sup>104</sup> As such, he places Bilhah and Zilpah with their sons, Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher, at the front, followed by Leah and her children, with Rachel and Joseph at the rear of the group (Gen 33:2).<sup>105</sup> Thus, this particular episode establishes Jacob/Israel's attitude towards Joseph vis-à-vis his other brothers early in their familial history. The foundations of the older brothers' animus toward Joseph has thus been established well before the narrator later reveals that they hated (שנא) Joseph because their father loved him more (Gen 37:4,5,8). When Joseph recounts the dreams that he had suggesting his pre-eminence among his family (vv. 5-10), his brothers' hatred of him is increased, and even his father is given cause to reprimand him. The narrator also reveals that the brothers were jealous (קנא) of Joseph (v. 11), so early in the narrative there is the presence of two of the paroxysmal affects: hate and jealousy.

These two affects soon grow into a desire to kill the brother who seemingly possesses the love of the father (v. 20). The brothers use the term הרג, the same verb that was used in Cain's killing of Abel (Gen 4:8, 14).<sup>106</sup> Earlier in the account the narrator used a different term, מות (v. 18), to describe the brothers' plan, which has connotations of judicial killing.<sup>107</sup> The use of הרג betrays a significantly violent predisposition on the part of the brothers. Wenham asserts that הרג is used in the HB to refer to particularly ruthless violence committed by private persons.<sup>108</sup> The murderous aspirations of the older brothers are prevented by the intercession of Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob/Israel, who persuades his other brothers to abandon Joseph in a well but not to shed his blood (vv. 21-22). The plan to kill Joseph is modified with a plan to symbolically kill him as is intimated by being thrown into the well (בור) in the wilderness (v. 24). However, the narrator reveals Reuben's plan to secretly return to Joseph, rescue him and deliver him to his father (v. 22). Westermann points out that in the patriarchal period the eldest son was expected to take on the role of the father when the father was

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<sup>104</sup> A precedent for this mindset was perhaps revealed earlier in Gen 32:7-8; in fact, the same verb for 'divide' (חצה) is used in both accounts.

<sup>105</sup> Note that Joseph is also the only child to be mentioned by name in the account of Jacob's meeting with Esau (vv. 2, 7).

<sup>106</sup> It is also the same verb that described what Esau planned to do to Jacob (Gen 27:41).

<sup>107</sup> *BDB* 4191.

<sup>108</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 106.

absent, hence Reuben's intercession and his secret plan to save Joseph.<sup>109</sup> From a Szondian perspective, Reuben represents the introjection of the father in the subject as a pathway to resolve sibling conflict. Consider Reuben's reaction to Joseph's disappearance from the well in which he tears his robe – a sign of mourning that will be repeated by the biological father Jacob (v. 34) – and his reference to Joseph as יללד, i.e. “the boy” (Gen 37:29-30).<sup>110</sup> A further somewhat paternal intertextual connection between Reuben and Joseph, namely his role in Rachel's fertility, serves to lend this viewpoint more credence. It was Reuben's mandrakes (Gen 30:14) that were at the centre of the bargain between Leah and Rachel which saw each fulfil their sexual and maternal desires respectively. The narrative proximity of this episode to the birth of Joseph suggests that if were not for Reuben collecting the supposed ‘fertility drug,’ Rachel may have remained barren and, hence, Joseph may never have been conceived.<sup>111</sup> Thus, consciously or unconsciously, Reuben exhibits a paternal concern towards Joseph. A Szondian explanation for Reuben's motivations is thus revealed.

Yet Reuben's scheme is foiled by Judah's plot to sell Joseph to Ishmaelite slave traders, in what is an echo of the rivalry involving their grandfather (cf. 21:8-14 and 37:26-27).<sup>112</sup> The machinations between the brothers serve to highlight smaller sibling rivalries within the larger one involving Joseph against the rest. Judah, as the middle of the seven sons of Leah and Rachel involved in this narrative, is structurally ambiguous being both younger or older, or neither.<sup>113</sup> As Judah's plan prevails over that of Reuben (vv. 27, 29), the motif of the younger dominating the elder is once again revealed. On the other hand, both Reuben and Judah independently devise plans to mitigate the violence of their other siblings' intent towards the younger brother (though their motivations for doing so may have differed). Given the earlier response of Simeon and Levi to the rape of their sister Dinah

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<sup>109</sup> Claus Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, trans. John J. Scullion (London: SPCK, 1987), 41.

<sup>110</sup> Alternatively, Reuben perhaps had an expectation of restoring the birthright that was his due as first-born, but which he had placed in jeopardy by his sexual relations with his father's concubine (Gen 35:22). Rescuing his father's most loved son may have therefore gone some way to rehabilitating his reputation in his father's eyes (cf. Gen 49:3-4).

<sup>111</sup> Obviously, a number of years would have passed between the mandrakes episode and the birth of Joseph, given the birth of three children to Leah in the meantime, but the proximity of the two episodes in the broader narrative invites the connection to be made.

<sup>112</sup> The debate among scholars concerning the designation of the Ishmaelites with the Midianites is noted (see Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 354-5). Perhaps this is the result of a weaving together of two narratives, each with a different set of names: Reuben and Judah, Ishmaelites and Midianites (ref. Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 35-6). Speiser agrees that the Midianites and Ishmaelite references come from two separate sources but disputes that the references to Reuben and Judah necessarily denote the same (*Genesis*, 289). The references to Ishmaelites and Midianites are puzzling and likely indicates the presence of different source material particularly in light v. 36 and the statement that the Midianites, rather than the Ishmaelites, sold Joseph to Potiphar (NB 39:1 refers to Potiphar having bought Joseph from Ishmaelites). However, contra Westermann, I contend that the presence of both Reuben and Judah do not necessarily point to different source materials for reasons as I have outlined below (see also Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 166-7, for a similar perspective).

<sup>113</sup> Forsyth, 490.

(Gen 34:7-29), both Reuben and Judah would have been very aware of the capacity of their brothers for violence.<sup>114</sup> In the earlier episode, upon hearing of Shechem's crime against Dinah, her brothers are said to be furious. The verb used is *הרה*, meaning to burn with rage (v. 7). It is the same verb used to describe Cain's anger (Gen 4:5-6), and also Jacob's anger at times in his interaction with Rachel (Gen 30:2) and Laban (Gen 31:36); thus, not only were the brothers capable of Cainitic rage, this particular paroxysmal attribute would appear to be a somewhat innate feature of their family line.<sup>115</sup>

Returning to the two brothers' plans to spare Joseph, the question arises, was Reuben aware of Judah's plan or not? Reuben's reaction upon discovering that Joseph is missing from the well suggests that he was not aware of the plan to sell him to traders.<sup>116</sup> In this light, Judah's behaviour reveals an additional level of cunning, in that he was prepared to leave the eldest brother, and proxy father, out of his scheme. From a Szondian perspective, his behaviour also suggests that he too wishes to moderate the fratricidal tendencies of his brothers, but he has not yet fully integrated the parent into his ego.<sup>117</sup>

Reuben's plan (or both plans?) is thwarted, however, as the narrator reveals that Joseph has already been sold to the nomadic traders (v. 28). As a cover story to conceal from their father their culpability in Joseph's fate, all the brothers then conspire to convince Jacob that Joseph has been killed by a wild animal (v. 31). The horror of the fratricidal intent of the other brothers is revealed when Jacob and, presumably, Joseph's younger and only full brother are presented with Joseph's blood-soaked robe (v. 32). This torn symbol of his father's favouritism invokes in Jacob the image of his most loved son being torn to pieces and devoured by wild animals (Gen 37:33). The episode thus reveals the full spectrum of the Cain complex with the emotional movement from jealousy, hatred, and concealment through to the determination to kill the obstacle in the path of the subjects' desire for the love of the parent. Although the physical death of the sibling is avoided, the violent intent of the subjects is

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<sup>114</sup> Note that Simeon and Levi are the second and third sons between Reuben and Judah; therefore, they too occupy a place as both younger and older siblings, though not as ambiguous as Judah who is the fourth of the seven sons of Jacob and his wives.

<sup>115</sup> Unlike Jacob, Simeon and Levi do not act in the heat of the moment, rather they carefully plan their vengeance before exacting it against the entire city, killing all the men, and taking women, children, and livestock. Their rage is calculated and therefore exponentially worse (cf. the intergenerational growth of violence seen in Lamech's homicidal tendencies in Gen 4:23-24). The planning and scale of their violence recalls that of the case studies Szondi refers to in his sub-category 'Cain, the War Criminal' (see §6.4).

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 355-6.

<sup>117</sup> On the other hand, Reuben may have been apprised of Judah's plan and simply pretended to agree with his other brothers while still backing his ability to extricate Joseph before the transaction with the Ishmaelites could be completed, finally revealing his true intent to his brothers upon discovering that Joseph was missing. The gaps and ambiguities in this particularly narrative are intriguing but do not necessarily indicate the presence of different source material as far as Reuben and Judah are concerned.

nevertheless exposed; moreover, since the sibling has been removed from the scene, he is, in a sense, metaphorically dead. This is reinforced by being spoken of *as* dead by the subjects and, crucially, being believed to *be* dead by the parent (vv. 32-25).<sup>118</sup>

The gradual tempering of violence which has been evident across the sibling conflicts of Genesis is placed under threat in the account of the interplay between Joseph and his older brothers. The implications and consequences of violence are more visceral and tangible in this example of fraternal rivalry than they have been since the primeval fratricide. In the end, violence is only narrowly averted through the introjection of the father, as observed in Reuben, and to a lesser extent Judah, and the subsequent associated realisation among the brothers that the sibling shares their same blood (v. 27).<sup>119</sup> Though violence has been averted, the conflict between Joseph and his siblings has not yet been resolved. Gen 37 is but the first act in this drama, the resolution of which will play out in the second act and denouement, that is the interplay between Joseph, Benjamin, and their older brothers.

## 7.4 Conclusion

Elements of the Cain complex are evident in the narratives concerning siblings in conflict throughout Gen 4-37. Reading these stories at the macro level through a Szondian lens reveals two things. First, these stories demonstrate that the Cainitic affects of jealousy and anger are common to all, as is a level of aggression, be that physical or psychological. Present in all the stories of fraternal conflict is also the motif of death, either physical or metaphorical, which provides an intriguing contrast to the story of sororal conflict which has the motifs of love and motherhood at its centre. Furthermore, the level of violence and the obviation of conflict tends to be inversely related to the capacity for the parent/God to intercede or be introjected into the ego of the subject. Note that this is an observed tendency and not a direct or proportional relationship.

Taking Gen 4-5 as the prototype rivalry for the model of sibling conflict in Genesis up to and including ch. 37, the movement across these accounts suggests that violence diminishes as the intercession of the parent and/or God increases (refer to Table 7-2 below). The zenith for such

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<sup>118</sup> The link to the Ishmaelites in this narrative is a reminder that in an early account of sibling rivalry one of the actors also believed that death was real and imminent though in reality it was not – cf. Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness (Gen 21:15-16).

<sup>119</sup> When Judah persuades his brothers to adopt his plan, he refers to Joseph as being of the same ‘flesh’ – בשרנו (v. 27). Previously, Reuben implored his brothers to “shed no blood” (v. 22). The shedding of the blood of the brother recalls not only the primeval fratricide (Gen 4:9-10) but the theology connecting life and blood (Lev: 17:11; Num 35: 33-34).

intercession, and the apotheosis for the resolution of the Cain complex in the Szondian framework, is the introjection of the parent (i.e. God in the biblical narratives) into the ego of the subject as symbolised in the encounter between Jacob and the mysterious figure at the Jabbok ford in Gen 32. This is coupled with an observed increase in the capacity for the siblings to negotiate among each other as a means through which aggression is mitigated.

Table 7-2. The Narrative Structure of Gen 4-37

The Cain complex and the Sibling Stories in Gen 4-37					
Cain complex triangle	Cain, Abel/Seth & YHWH	Ishmael/Hagar, Isaac/Sarah & Abraham	Esau, Jacob & Isaac	Leah, Rachel & Jacob	Older Brothers, Joseph & Jacob
Cainitic aspects	jealousy, shame, anger, physical aggression, killing intent and death	jealousy, anger, psychological aggression, exile (i.e. metaphorical death)	jealousy, anger, physical aggression (i.e. wrestling), concealment, exile, desire to kill, inflicting injury, metaphorical death and rebirth	jealousy, competition, anger	jealousy, anger, physical aggression, killing intent, exile, metaphorical (but almost physical) death
Movement to Resolution	Lament	Intercession by God and parent	Introjection of God into ego	Sororal negotiation, sororal love, piety	Introjection of the parent into the ego, fraternal negotiation
Level of violence					
Introjection of the parent					

The second element which is revealed is an overarching narrative structure embedded into the accounts of sibling rivalry. As is evident in this examination of the sibling stories in Gen 4-37, there is a logic behind, and a sequence in, the compiler's arrangement of these materials. The stories of siblings in conflict reflect a movement from murder to the analogue of death that is assigned to exile; metaphorical death and rebirth; the stigma and social 'death' of unrequited love and infertility; to,

finally, Joseph's total metaphorical and near physical death.<sup>120</sup> That a careful and deliberate mind was behind this arrangement of the sibling stories is given further weight, for example, upon consideration of the placement of the brief stories concerning the brothers Onan and Er and Perez and Zerah (Gen 38). This chapter functions not only as a kind of intermission in the Joseph story, but also serves as a condensed recapitulation of the plots and motifs of the earlier sibling stories and points ahead to the model for resolution of familial conflict. As such, it constitutes, in the words of Forsyth, "a 'mini-fabula'" that connects the "liminal world of Adam and Cain to the realistic world of Jacob."<sup>121</sup> In other words, Gen 37 represents the end of Act One in the saga of Genesis' sibling stories. The second act of the dramatic pattern will provide the climax and dénouement of the overarching narrative, which as a Szondian reading of Gen 4-37 intimates, points to the way ahead for resolving conflict.

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<sup>120</sup> Cf. Niditch, *A Prelude to Biblical Folklore: Underdogs and Tricksters*, 120.

<sup>121</sup> Forsyth, 494.

## CHAPTER 8 MORE MOSES THAN MOSES: THE ANSWER TO CAIN?

*The Joseph narrative illustrates a world in which justice prevails, but not because of the rule of law. Justice, in the Joseph story—as in the Tamar story—depends entirely on the whims of men, the fickleness of fate, and the miracles of God.*

Alan M. Dershowitz, *The Genesis of Justice*

### 8.1 Introduction

Alongside a couple of psychology practises, the Szondi-Institut also houses a small museum dedicated to Szondi. The museum is located in what was once his office, left today in much the same way it was when Szondi worked there up until his death in 1986. In his former office-cum-museum, and indeed throughout his former home, a number of Szondi's personal items have been arranged as artefacts; reminders of the inventor of fate analysis and a means for providing insights to his biography and family history. Many of these artefacts and *objets d'art* reflect his Jewish identity. In front of his bust on the fireplace mantle is some table décor from a Seder meal, with the Hebrew blessing of the matzah embroidered on it; beside this, an antique menorah. In his former office I find another antique menorah in a cabinet of curios behind his old desk along with an old edition of Bin-Gorion's *Die Sagen der Juden*. Most prominent of all, next to photographs of some of Szondi's ancestors' graves is his father's name written in Yiddish: אברהם זאנבענשיין.

Across from the office/museum is the Institut's library – once Szondi's personal library – a bright, book-lined room that opens up to a veranda from where one can see Lake Zürich and the snow-capped mountains beyond. It was here, amongst the books and assorted Jewish paraphernalia (including yet another menorah), that I first met with Szondi's former collaborator, Friedjung Jüttner.<sup>1</sup>

I wanted to get a better understanding of the man from somebody who once worked with him. “He could be very furious with his collaborators, they had problems with him,” Friedjung confided. “I had one problem with him here in this room. Once only. He threw me out!” (This vignette accorded with

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<sup>1</sup> Friedjung Jüttner (retired psychoanalyst), interview by author, 10 July 2019.

something I had previously read in Szondi's letters wherein he hinted at his proclivity towards angry outbursts: "I also belong greatly to the genealogical paroxysmal circle.")<sup>2</sup>

We talked about Szondi's drive system – "Szondi called them 'drives,' but it's not a good word", Friedjung explained, "I call them *Seinsbereiche*" (realms of being) – and, of course, his concept of evil. For Szondi, evil was manifest in the emotional drive, or realm to use Friedjung's nomenclature, who explained to me his understanding of the significance of the Szondian perspective succinctly:

Evil, *das Böse*, are the bad feelings, but they are necessary to have... In my work I was a therapist. Many people had problems with anger and jealousy. These are normal feelings. All is normal, it depends on the level or the directions between them. First, we are evil, then we try to become good. Evil is more natural than good... And the religions and education try to keep evil in the background. Or to make an equilibrium between the two parts.

The connection between Szondian depth psychology and religion is, as has been argued, profound. In many ways Friedjung, as both a former psychoanalyst and Augustinian monk, is the embodiment of this connection, so our conversation eventually turned to toward the role of religion in Szondi's work. "Sickness comes when we have only one, when we can't reconcile both sides, the good and the bad," Friedjung affirms. "We have to integrate the two of them together. For Szondi this was Moses." While Cain represents the negative traits, Moses, according to Szondi, symbolises conscientiousness, self-restraint, tolerance, goodwill, openness, and helpfulness. Friedjung goes on to describe that Moses belonged to the ego drive in Szondi's system, which is oriented more to the psychological elements of the system as opposed to the Cainitic paroxysmal drive which is biological in its orientation. He explains; "By nature Moses too is a killer, but he makes a decision and changes." I ask Friedjung why Szondi chose Moses: Was it because he was addressing Freud's characterisation in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939)? Friedjung responds:

I think it's more to do with his father who was very pious. But his option of Moses is an integration of Cain and Abel, and I think it's a very good idea for therapy and people to understand that we have two sides and we need to integrate them together. And from time to time we have to be furious to defend ourselves. Cain is necessary for survival.

At the end of our meeting I explain to Friedjung my broad thesis that in selecting Moses as his answer to Cain, Szondi appears to overlook the figure of Joseph and that Genesis itself offers a resolution to

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<sup>2</sup> Hughes, "Letters from Szondi," 7.



the Cain complex. Genesis begins with a fratricide but ends with fratricide avoided due to a change of heart. I explain that Joseph might be a more useful metaphor than Moses for resolving some types of conflict, particularly interfaith conflict. Friedjung considers this for a few moments before responding; “I see. What I understand now is Joseph is more Moses than Moses in the Szondi sense.”

In this penultimate chapter, I explicate Szondi’s answer to the problem of Cain, which for him was symbolised in Moses, and then compare his proposal with the culmination of the narrative structure that is vested in the sibling rivalry accounts of Genesis. It is my contention that the compiler of Genesis posits their own solution to the problem of Cain, and that this solution is embodied in the figure of Joseph. Finally, I will give some deliberation to the contrasts and connections between the natures and functions of Joseph and Moses in the Pentateuch as a means for illuminating Szondi’s option for Moses. As will be demonstrated, the critical consideration is the nexus between Joseph, Moses and Egypt and the attendant connotations of oppression, death, and exile which Egypt carries in the HB. These suggest that Joseph may have been a problematic figure for an eastern European Jewish refugee writing in a post-Shoah context.

## 8.2 Moses: An Answer to Cain

Published in 1973, *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* (Moses: Answer to Cain) is Szondi’s thesis for the resolution of the Cain complex as personified by the symbolic figure of Moses. Szondi divides his discussion of Moses into two parts: ‘Der Mann Moses’ and ‘Der Mensch Moses.’ In the first of these, ‘Der Mann Moses,’ Szondi engages with scholarship concerning Moses, particularly that which relates to the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, the rabbinic literature, and his own biblical exegesis. Out of this he concludes that Moses was responsible for four key achievements: instituting the national constitution of the people of Israel; the religious and social constitution of the people of Israel; the realisation of the theopolitical principle of God’s kingship; and the ethical principle in which the people of Israel were invited to make a choice between good and evil, justice and injustice, in order to maintain the God’s kingship.<sup>3</sup> The second part of the book, ‘Der Mensch Moses,’ centres upon seven case studies that, according to Szondi, evidence the relationship between the psychological metaphors of the figures of Cain and Moses, and concludes with a discussion on the origins of conscience and its relationship to *Schicksalsanalyse*.

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<sup>3</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 101.

## *Freud, Buber and Moses*

Before moving on to a detailed analysis of Szondi's Moses metaphor, it is necessary to examine the contributions of Freud and Buber to Szondi's thesis. Both Freud and Buber appear frequently in Szondi's writing, of which *Moses* is no exception. Indeed, throughout *Moses* Szondi frequently appears to be engaging in a dialogue with both of these two significant Jewish thinkers. Freud's three main treatises concerning Moses which form *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion* (published in English as *Moses and Monotheism*), and Buber's *Moseh (Moses)* provide much of the exegetical framework around which Szondi explicates his thesis.

The overarching thesis of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* is that Moses was in fact an Egyptian living around the time of the Armana period of Egypt. Consequently, Moses was influenced by the pharaoh Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV, 1353-1336 BCE) and his cult of the Aten, which Freud argued was the source of Mosaic monotheism.<sup>4</sup> It was published in 1939, a time of extreme anti-Semitism in the German-speaking lands. Freud, though, had escaped the Nazi annexation of Austria the previous year and fled to London, where he completed the work. Of most relevance here is the manner in which Freud's hypothesis shapes Szondi's. This is evident in two key areas: Moses's ethnic identity and the process behind the creation of a new religion.

By claiming Moses was Egyptian, Freud diminishes Moses's Hebrew (i.e. Jewish) identity.<sup>5</sup> This contrasts with Szondi's frequent reiteration and emphasis of Moses's Hebrew identity. Szondi rejects Freud's thesis on the basis that, in light of then contemporary historical scholarship suggesting the origin of Hebrew monotheism in Midianite Kadesh, Freud was forced to create two Moseses – a Kadesh Moses and an Egyptian Moses.<sup>6</sup> (Szondi seems apparently unaware of the irony that he too creates 'two Moseses' in order to expound his thesis.)

Nonetheless, Szondi finds a degree of commonality with Freud, particularly Freud's second essay, "If Moses was an Egyptian."<sup>7</sup> He dismisses some of the more dubious elements of Freud's hypothesis

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<sup>4</sup> In addition, Freud hypothesised that the exodus might have taken place earlier than historians had traditionally placed it (i.e. the fourteenth century BCE rather than thirteenth century BCE), and that Moses, as an Egyptian devotee of the Aten cult, banded with other like-minded Atenists and fled the religious persecution of the authorities who had returned to the orthodox Amun tradition. Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (London: Hogarth Press, 1939).

<sup>5</sup> Freud, "Moses was an Egyptian," in *Moses and Monotheism*, 11-25.

<sup>6</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 25-6. See also Gilad Sharvit and Karen S. Feldman, eds., *Freud and Monotheism: Moses and the Violent Origins of Religion*, Berkeley Forum in the Humanities (University of California: EScholarship, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 29-85.

as ancillary to his primary concern, which, for Szondi, is vested in Freud's rhetorical question: "But is it so easy for a single person to create a new religion?"<sup>8</sup> This, Szondi reveals, is similar to his primary concern and fundamental question: "How does a person create a new religion and laws for a people?"<sup>9</sup> Hence, the origin of monotheism as expressed within the tenets of Judaism is the central concern for both Szondi and Freud.

Szondi's exposition of the historical-critical reading of Moses largely follows Buber's *Moseh* (1948).<sup>10</sup> For his part, Buber gives Freud's hypothesis short shrift – a one reference note in his Preface detailing his regret that a scholar of Freud's standing "could permit himself to issue so unscientific a work, based on groundless hypotheses."<sup>11</sup> While in the main he follows Buber, Szondi nevertheless is a critical reader, diverging at important junctures from Buber's conclusion. For example, Szondi recalls attending lecture given by Buber whereupon in the discussion following he posed a question calling Moses an affect killer, to which Buber "hotly rejected the fact that Moses was a 'killer.'"<sup>12</sup>

Equally important as Buber's historical-critical reading of Moses for Szondi's treatise is the distinction he draws between myth (which Buber calls "saga") and history. Throughout his analysis, Buber separates the prophet of the saga-teller from the prophet of the historian. This dichotomy provides a model for Szondi that is reflected in his delineation of Moses *der Mann* and Moses *der Mensch*.

### ***What does Szondi mean when he uses 'Mensch'?***

In the Forward to *Moses* Szondi details the framework for his thesis stating:

Moses the man and Moses the *Mensch* were only physically identical. Although both the man and the *Mensch* together determined the fate of Moses, on several occasions they nevertheless both emerge differently in the bearer of fate.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Freud, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Szondi, 23.

<sup>10</sup> Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 140.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Buber, *Moses*, 7 n.1. Szondi also refers to Buber's curt and frank assessment of Freud's work (Szondi, 22).

<sup>12</sup> Szondi, 49. Szondi sees in this vignette the tendency to "wash the sin of 'killing' away from Moses" that extends from the legends to modern times.

<sup>13</sup> Szondi, 7. Italics are mine.

It is not readily apparent what it is exactly that Szondi means here. The nouns *Mann* and *Mensch* can at times be confusing for non-German speakers, particularly since *Mensch* has no precise cognate in English.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the two terms can potentially be distinguished as follows: *der Mensch* denotes a quality that is more broadly human and transcends the individuality inherent in the use of *der Mann*. Accordingly, Szondi's use of Moses *der Mann* connotes a specific person of history, in other words a historical, gendered, and bound individual, in this case the Moses that is revealed through scholarship, biblical exegesis and Jewish traditions. On the other hand, Moses *der Mensch* may refer, at least on one level, to the character, psychology, or a way of being human for which Moses is a metaphorical representation. One could therefore speak of the 'Mosaic' character, i.e. the Moses-type character, in an approach similar to the manner in which 'Cainitic' personality has been used in this study. Szondi suggests that scholars have tended to neglect Moses the *Mensch*, which he further clarifies as the psychological development and transformation that is behind the biblical figure.<sup>15</sup> Hence, *Mensch* refers to the psychology and character of the Mosaic human being.

Despite this, Szondi begins the second part of his thesis, 'Der Mensch Moses,' by recapitulating the five epochs of Moses's life (see 'Who was Moses?' below).<sup>16</sup> He titles this section the "Forms of the Destiny of Moses the Man" (*Die Schicksalsformen des Mannes Moses*), and it precedes the exposition of his seven case studies. While this serves to emphasise the interconnectedness of his concepts of Moses *der Mann* and Moses *der Mensch*, it also results in some lack of clarity for the reader.

Szondi explicates the seven case studies under the title "Serve God with the evil drive" (*Mit den bösen Trieben Gott dienen*).<sup>17</sup> All seven case studies have two things in common: first, the Cainitic personality or paroxysmal pattern is evident in all subjects, and second, all cases have a religious dimension to them. The effect of this religious dimension is ill-defined since it has the potential to manifest as either a positive or negative aspect in the life of the individual. For example, the negative influence is clear in three of the case studies Szondi uses which suggest a link between homicide and religious delusions.<sup>18</sup> Alternatively, the potential for using the so-called 'evil drive' to effect positive influences can also be evidenced. In four of the cases, the subject undergoes a religious conversion

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<sup>14</sup> It is for this reason I will avoid presenting an English translation of *Mensch* in this chapter.

<sup>15</sup> Two notable exceptions to this were Freud and Buber.

<sup>16</sup> Szondi, 105-116.

<sup>17</sup> Szondi, 121.

<sup>18</sup> One of which, *Ein Kriegsverbrecher wird religionswahnsinnig* (A war criminal with religious delusions), is the example of Márton Zöldi that he used previously in *Kain*. The use of Zöldi again perhaps points to the deeply personal and traumatic nature of that particular case study for Szondi.

following a homicidal act that in turn leads to the subject engaging in some form of service to the community. Hence the religious dimension is nuanced, according to Szondi, as there is a complex interplay of the Cain and Moses metaphors at work in these cases. There is certainly no unanimity across the case studies that the subjects are in fact using the ‘evil drive’ to serve God, at least in terms of what might be conventionally understood.

The possibility that Szondi is also engaging in a multivalent paronomasia through his use of *Mensch* should also not be discounted. He writes of the pain and discomfort that is involved in pointing out the Cain that is psychologically at work in Moses, the greatest Israelite and ‘real *mensch*,’ to use the American idiom derived from the Yiddish. In Yiddish, *mensch* refers to an honourable, decent person or, as the humourist and lexicographer Leo Rosten asserts, designates somebody “to admire and emulate, someone of noble character... nothing less than character, rectitude, dignity, a sense of what is right, responsible, decorous.”<sup>19</sup> Though the meanings of the German and Yiddish terms are similar they are nonetheless subtly different. For a German-speaking Jew of eastern European origin, *Mensch* indirectly suggests its homophonous and dialectal relative *mensch*.

Moreover, for a Jew with Slovakian origins such as Szondi, the Yiddish term *mensch* itself has an intrinsically homonymous character due to the fusion of its German and geographically limited Slavic components.<sup>20</sup> The Slavic-component *menschen* means ‘to struggle;’ hence, the axiomatic Yiddish pun “*A mensch heyst mensch vayl er menschet zikh*” (Man is called man for he struggles).<sup>21</sup> As shall be demonstrated below, Szondi conceivably captures the nuances and semantic implications of the Slavic-component of *mensch* in his depiction of Moses’s struggle with his own paroxysmal pattern.

### Mensch: A Contested Term

It should be noted that *Mensch* is itself a contested term in the history of the development of the German language in the twentieth century. An insight into the contestation of the term is provided by the Jewish German language-poet Paul Celan. A working title of Celan’s 1953 poem *Die Winzer* (The Winemakers) was *Die Menschen*, which, despite the seeming innocuousness of its title, also implied

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<sup>19</sup> Leo Calvin Rosten and Lawrence Bush, *The New Joys of Yiddish*, Revised (New York: Crown Publishers, 2001), 232-233.

<sup>20</sup> See Max Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language*, trans. Shlomo Noble (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 525-6; 648-51.

<sup>21</sup> Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language*, 649-50.

an ironic critique of Nazi-Deutsch in which the concept of *Mensch* did not include Jews.<sup>22</sup> According to literary critic John Felstiner, the poem's elderly subjects and its elegiac, autumnal tone, together with its working title, serve to emphasise the association of *Mensch* with both the experience of being Jewish and notions of the bounded and limited aspects of being human that Celan made elsewhere in his body of work. Felstiner concludes that the use of *Menschen* implies the subjects "are mortal, both vulnerable and redeemable – the more Jewish, the more human."<sup>23</sup>

Already mentioned is the intimate connection Celan had to the Szondi family through Szondi's son, Peter, a noted literary critic and scholar.<sup>24</sup> Aside from this connection, the fraught link between the terms 'Mensch' and 'Jew' was expounded by Peter Szondi himself. In 1961, at the age of thirty-one, Peter accepted a position as professor of comparative literature at the Freie Universität Berlin. The subject of his inaugural speech at the University was the German Jewish philosopher and critic Walter Benjamin and his 1936 anthology *Deutsche Menschen: Eine Folge von Briefen* (German Men and Women: A Sequence of Letters). According to Sonja Boos, Benjamin had intended that the publication would function "as a cryptic intervention against the mystic-irrational ideology of Fascism;" however, in what proved to be a case of 'preaching to the converted,' the anthology was largely ineffective.<sup>25</sup> Benjamin was himself a Berliner until 1933 when he emigrated to Switzerland, whence *Deutsche Menschen* was published under a pseudonym in 1936.<sup>26</sup> He subsequently relocated to France, which he in turn fled in 1940 following the Nazi invasion. While attempting to cross the Spanish-Portuguese border in a bid to emigrate to the United States, he committed suicide after Spanish police closed the border and informed him that he would be repatriated. At the time of his death, Benjamin's work had been largely overlooked by the German academy.

Titled *Die Suche nach der verlorenen Zeit bei Walter Benjamin* (In Search of Lost Time in Walter Benjamin), Peter Szondi's inaugural speech was an attempt at "rescuing Benjamin's legacy from oblivion."<sup>27</sup> The speech not only attempted a presentation of a *Wirkungsgeschichte* on behalf of an ignored intellectual, it also broke the University's unspoken shibboleth that avoided mention of the

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<sup>22</sup> John Felstiner, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1995), 85-6.

<sup>23</sup> Felstiner, *Paul Celan*, 86.

<sup>24</sup> See Chapter 2, n. 94.

<sup>25</sup> Sonja Boos, *Speaking the Unspeakable in Postwar Germany*, 138.

<sup>26</sup> It had previously been published as a series of articles in a supplemental of the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1933. In the year after Szondi's speech at the Freie Universität, the anthology was re-published.

<sup>27</sup> Boos, 141.

Holocaust, thereby initiating “a counter public sphere within academia.”<sup>28</sup> Like his father, Peter was also a witness to and survivor of the Holocaust, and thus through his academic work he was likewise able to perform the function of a *superstes*.

The last citation of Benjamin’s works that Szondi presents in his speech was taken from *Deutsche Menschen*. The transposition of a Jewish intellectual from Switzerland presenting the work of a German scholar who fled Berlin for Switzerland to an audience in Berlin cannot be overlooked. Nor can, as Boos observes, the path from Zürich to Berlin undertaken by the younger Szondi which mirrored the path taken by *Deutsche Menschen* in its initial full publication.<sup>29</sup> Peter Szondi makes specific and pointed mention of the anthology’s subtitle – *Von Ehre ohne Ruhm. Von Grösse ohne Glanz. Von Würde ohne Sold* (Of honour without fame. Of greatness without splendour. Of dignity without pay) – his intention being to highlight Benjamin’s identification of the failure of the German middle classes, some of whom would no doubt have been in his audience, to resist the rise of National Socialism.<sup>30</sup> He concludes his lecture with a reference to the dedication that Benjamin wrote in his sister’s copy of the book, found in a Zürich antique shop: “This ark, built on the Jewish model, for Dora—from Walter.”<sup>31</sup> Peter Szondi concludes: “Benjamin did not build the ark for the dead alone; he built it for the sake of the promise that he saw in their past.”<sup>32</sup> His reading of Walter Benjamin’s work and its subsequent presentation at his inaugural address at Berlin thus represents the hitherto disregarded voice of the Jewish intellectual who had faced marginalisation and persecution. Moreover, this was a polyphonic voice since it was the voice of both Benjamin and the younger Szondi.

Hence the term *Mensch* is a loaded one, particularly when used by a German-speaking Jewish intellectual and *superstes* – a witness, victim, and survivor. On one level it evokes the image of esteem and decency vis-à-vis its connection to Yiddish. Despite this, it is also a word that is both fraught and tenuous. Szondi captures something of the ambiguity inherent in *Mensch* in his own use of the term in *Moses*. It is reflected in, for example, the aforementioned seven case studies he uses to illustrate the Moses complex, which form a major component of ‘Der Mensch Moses,’ the second part of the book. Throughout his examination of Moses, Szondi frequently stresses the patriarch’s ‘Jewishness,’

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<sup>28</sup> Boos, 139.

<sup>29</sup> Boos, 139.

<sup>30</sup> Szondi and Mendelsohn, “Hope in the Past: On Walter Benjamin.”

<sup>31</sup> Szondi and Mendelsohn, 505.

<sup>32</sup> Szondi and Mendelsohn, 506.

but the portrayal is far from a hagiographic one. His treatment of Moses *der Mensch* reflects the equivocality implicit in *Mensch*. That this would produce some disquiet on the part of Szondi is unsurprising. At the conclusion of the Forward, Szondi claims that it was not easy for him to remind the Jewish people to whom he belonged that their greatest son (perhaps the greatest *mensch*!) “remained an immense Cain later in the desert and that, psychologically speaking, the Ten Commandments arose from this Cainitic background.”<sup>33</sup>

### ***Who was Moses?***

Szondi’s biography of Moses is encapsulated in five epochs that he identifies in the unfolding of Moses’s destiny. These he designates the prince, the shepherd, the miracle worker, the leader and person of God, and the politician and dictator in God’s kingship.<sup>34</sup> Three things are apparent in Szondi’s unfolding of these stages in Moses’s life. First, these stages are not exclusive to Moses, rather the accounts of Moses in the HB and Jewish legends are intended to be symbolic of a path that is open to any person who exhibits the paroxysmal pattern. Second, consequently, these stages form a taxonomy for both psychological and spiritual growth. However, as will become apparent, it would be a mistake to view this taxonomy hierarchically since the fifth presents some problematic repercussions for the concept of ‘growth,’ at least apropos a movement away from violence and Cainitic affects. Finally, Szondi’s taxonomy presupposes religious faith on the part of the subject. One of his central concerns relates to the establishment of religion and its associated laws, precepts, and dogma.

The first epoch reaches its culmination when Moses murders the Egyptian and hides his body (Exod 2:11-12). Szondi makes it clear that this is the decisive act in the life and career of Moses:

Moses would never have been the historical author of the state and person of God if he had not killed in his youth. In my opinion, the killing motive in the fate of Moses is the original, fate-forming element.<sup>35</sup>

One thing to note in this episode is the ambiguity surrounding the concept of ‘kin.’ The narrator makes it clear that the Egyptian was beating one of Moses’s kinsfolk (מֵאַחֵי) (Exod 2:11), which raises

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<sup>33</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 9.

<sup>34</sup> Szondi, 114. Szondi uses the term *Königtum Gottes* which I have chosen to translate as ‘God’s kingship’ to avoid confusion with any Christian theological connotations which may arise from translating the term, perhaps more correctly linguistically, as ‘Kingdom of God.’

<sup>35</sup> Szondi, 153.



the question of how much Moses knew about his true identity at that time. Would he not have identified more with the Egyptian having been raised as one?<sup>36</sup> Or is this evidence of the urge of the familial unconscious exciting the paroxysmal-epileptiform pattern within Moses to defend his Hebrew ‘brother’? Remarkably, Szondi overlooks the implications for the familial unconscious in this episode and does not posit it as a possible explanation, deferring to explanations proffered by Jewish legends and Martin Buber instead.<sup>37</sup>

The commissioning of Moses takes place during the second epoch of his destiny – the shepherd.<sup>38</sup> Not only does this represent an already established trope within the Pentateuch, in which the humblest is exalted (e.g. the primacy of the younger sibling over the older), according to Szondi it is significant since it demonstrates that God has chosen a person with paroxysmal-epileptiform characteristics. The characteristics are evident not only in Moses’s sudden lethal attack on the Egyptian, but also in the related pathologies of his supposed stuttering and the visions and paracuses he experiences relating to fire (e.g. Exod 3:2).<sup>39</sup>

The third epoch – the miracle worker – demonstrates the growing integration of YHWH and Moses.<sup>40</sup> Szondi discusses the miraculous works with some unease since they seem to him to portray YHWH in a cruel and negative light and not with “divine dignity and goodness.”<sup>41</sup> To resolve this he makes a distinction between the projections of the biblical narrator, which speaks to a paroxysmal-epileptiform character, and is consequently responsible for the depiction of YHWH, and the true nature and character of the Godhead.<sup>42</sup> This will be discussed further below.

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Buber, *Moses*, 36.

<sup>37</sup> Szondi does not pay much attention to the family history of Moses. Although he makes a link between Moses, the tribe of Levi and Qadesh, he does not move any earlier than Kohath, the second son of Levi (Exod 6:16), in detailing Moses’ family tree (Szondi, 54-6). This, again, is a surprising oversight for the founder of the theory of the familial unconscious. As will be discussed in more detail in the section below dealing with the second part of the so-called Joseph novella, the HB makes it clear that among the sons of Jacob/Israel the paroxysmal pattern is most evident in Simeon and Levi. Thus, Szondi neglects the opportunity to give consideration to the multigenerational heritability of the paroxysmal-epileptiform pattern in Moses as at least one factor behind his proclivity to violence.

<sup>38</sup> Szondi, 107-8.

<sup>39</sup> Szondi refers to midrash on texts such as Exod 4:10; 5:12, 30 as evidence of Moses’ stuttering affliction. (Szondi, 108.)

<sup>40</sup> Szondi, 109-10.

<sup>41</sup> Szondi, 110.

<sup>42</sup> This of course raises the question of who or what it is that Szondi believes Moses is participating with – YHWH or the biblical narrator’s idea of YHWH?

Moses's integration with YHWH is then further assimilated in the fourth and fifth epochs of his destiny; the leader and person of God and the politician and dictator in God's kingship respectively.<sup>43</sup> Both of these epochs signify the participation and integration of YHWH in Moses and vice versa. However, they can be distinguished from one another since in the former epoch YHWH's transcendence in Moses is the more pronounced aspect of the dual union, while in the latter Moses's Cainitic nature projected onto YHWH is accentuated.

In the fourth epoch, Szondi begins to use the term "believer" (*der Gläubige*).<sup>44</sup> He asserts that in this epoch the believer's ego opens up in the direction of the spiritual. In his words an *apertura ad coelum* (portal to heaven) forms in the ego, through which it is able to transcend.<sup>45</sup> The believer lives in a positive, uninterrupted security with God, to whom the subject transfers their agency and from whom the subject can be guided day and night. The image of his father's Hasidism is strongly evoked when Szondi writes of this epoch: "The believer is indeed with God when [the believer] gets up in the morning, when [the believer] walks on the street during the day and when [the believer] goes to sleep in the evening."<sup>46</sup> According to Szondi, this aspect is most evident in Moses ascent of Mt Sinai where he received the law and commandment (Exod 24:12); the first four commandments of the Decalogue (Exod 20:1-11); and the appointment of the seventy elders (Num 11:14-17) where Moses literally collapses and transfers all of his power and authority to YHWH.<sup>47</sup> Crucially, however, it is also in this fourth epoch that monotheism emerges, which Szondi asserts is the result of Moses's transcendence with God:

Now Moses was an unsurpassable hero of oneness, of participation with God in an inseparable dual union. A true man of God. For this dual union between God and Moses completely excludes a third party. Thus, if Moses had such close participation with God, then another god, one of the Ba'als or Els, no longer has a place in this dual union. Hence the monotheism of Moses. Monotheism must be seen as the immediate consequence of Moses's full participation with God.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Szondi, 110-17.

<sup>44</sup> Szondi, 113.

<sup>45</sup> Szondi, 113.

<sup>46</sup> Szondi, 113. With this statement Szondi references his previous work, *Ich-Analyse* (Bern and Stuttgart: Hans Huber, 1956), 512-3.

<sup>47</sup> Szondi, 111-12.

<sup>48</sup> Szondi, 113.

## Cain in Moses

As Szondi moves on to articulate the fifth epoch of Moses destiny, he does so under the subtitle ‘Cain in Moses.’ The central concern in his explication of this final epoch is to reconcile where the “cruelty of Yahweh [sic]” originates.<sup>49</sup> As evidence of this cruelty, Szondi cites a number of passages from the Pentateuch which, as asserted by scholars such as Eduard Meyer, supposedly demonstrate the ‘cruelty’ of YHWH.<sup>50</sup> To understand these passages from the perspective of *Schicksalspsychologie*, Szondi contends, one must apply the theory of projection.<sup>51</sup> In this instance, from the close participation between YHWH and Moses it follows that Moses not only transfers his authority and benevolence (i.e. what Szondi refers to as his ‘Abelitic’ affects) to YHWH, but also his violent and evil “Cain nature.”<sup>52</sup> Hence, it is not the essential character of YHWH that is revealed in these episodes, but rather the Cainitic violent paroxysmal traits of Moses. There are, however, several concerns that arise from this position.

### ***The Problem with Moses***

As a model for resolving the problem of violent aggression symbolised in the mythical figure of Cain, Szondi’s use of Moses is fascinating and, in some respects, problematic. He claims that Moses’s fate altering event, i.e. the killing of the Egyptian, is evidence of the paroxysmal and epileptiform phases of the Cain complex at work in Moses. However, as both the HB and Szondi make clear, this incident was by no means an isolated one since Moses continues to commit acts of violence long after the supposed integration of YHWH into his ego which first begins at Horeb (Exod 3).<sup>53</sup> The question therefore arises, does Moses demonstrate, through his continued acts of violence and killing, that he has not resolved the Cain complex through integration of the spirit of the father (i.e. YHWH) into his ego?

Szondi himself poses a variation of the same question, asking rhetorically: “Does not the Moses nature of the ‘man of God’ exclude the Cain nature of a ‘man of the devil’ *eo ipso*?”<sup>54</sup> In response to

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<sup>49</sup> Szondi, 114.

<sup>50</sup> E.g. Exod 4:24-26; 32:9-10; Lev 10:1-3; Num 11:31-33; 12:9-10; 14:20-24; 16:31-35. Szondi deliberately chooses to avoid detailing the plagues against Egypt, only mentioning them in passing. The reference to Meyer is specifically to Eduard Meyer and Bernhard Luther, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme: Alttestamentliche Untersuchungen von Eduard Meyer; mit Beiträgen von Bernhard Luther*. Halle a.S: Max Niemeyer, 1906.

<sup>51</sup> Szondi, 116.

<sup>52</sup> Szondi, 116.

<sup>53</sup> E.g. Exod 32: 26-28; Num 16: 26-35; 25:5; and 31:15-18. (Szondi, 116-17.)

<sup>54</sup> Szondi, 118.

his own question, Szondi claims that the biblical texts concerning Moses are evidence that the Cainitic traits cannot be ruled out from being present in the same person simultaneously with the Mosaic, i.e. Moses *der Mensch*, characteristics. The task of *Schicksalspsychologie* is, according to Szondi, “to build a viable bridge between these two extreme *male traits*.”<sup>55</sup> These traits are not mutually exclusive, but complement each other dialectically, which he calls the “Cain-Moses dialectic.”<sup>56</sup>

The Cain-Moses dialectic results in a taxonomy of six different potentialities, of which two can be evidenced in Moses.<sup>57</sup> The first of these Szondi calls *das Umschlagen* (the sudden change) or the either-or, which can occur unconsciously and suddenly. Szondi provides several examples of Moses suddenly changing and becoming a ‘Cain.’ Aside from his killing of the Egyptian they include the Golden Calf episode and his command to the Levites to kill (Exod 32:26-28); the killing of the devotees of Ba’al of Peor (Num 25:5); and the war against Midian and the killing of the Midianite women and male children (Num 31:15-18). He notes that in each case Moses’s sudden change was accompanied by the Cainitic affects of anger, rage, and hatred.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth fate possibilities of the Cain-Moses dialectic are not evidenced in Moses according to Szondi. Briefly, the second he calls *die Synthese* (synthesis) in which the two polarities fight violently against each other.<sup>58</sup> Though this is not evidenced in Moses, other than his constant perturbation by the unconscious tendencies of Cain, Szondi nevertheless finds this possibility among some members of the clergy who might, in the words of Hughes, “preach the love of God with intense personal hatred.”<sup>59</sup> The third is *die Entscheidung* (decision), a conscious decision of the ego to be ‘Moses’ or to be ‘Cain’ which Szondi believes is evidenced in members of the judiciary and senior military and police officers.<sup>60</sup> The fourth is probably the most common of all the fate possibilities, which Szondi calls *die Unentscheidung* (indecision). This is ‘the neither-nor’ position vis-à-vis the Cain and Moses polarity, mostly found in everyday people who might be ambivalent about their work or career and possibly even ethically ambivalent. The fifth potentiality is *die Sozialisierung* (socialisation) in which a person will try to live out the opposite tendency

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<sup>55</sup> Szondi, 118. Italics added. Szondi uses the term “*Männernaturen*.”

<sup>56</sup> Hughes refers to this as the “Cain-Moses Polarity.” See Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 142-3.

<sup>57</sup> Szondi, 118-120.

<sup>58</sup> Szondi, 118-19.

<sup>59</sup> Hughes, 143.

<sup>60</sup> Szondi, 118-19. NB as befits the binary nature of this particular potentiality, this can either manifest as a positive, socially constructive function, or an extremely damaging one as evidenced in the examples of Márton Zöldi and Adolf Eichmann that Szondi provides in *Kain*.

through their career choice. Although difficult, Szondi asserts that this can occur. The examples he provides are butchers, police officers, military personnel etc. who are able to satisfy a Cainitic tendency in a socially acceptable framework.<sup>61</sup>

In the sixth and final potentiality of fate within the Cain-Moses dialectic Szondi once more sees evidence in the Bible's presentation of Moses. In *die Sublimierung* (sublimation) the subject attempts to simultaneously satisfy the Cainitic and Mosaic natures on a spiritual level. According to Szondi, this is the most difficult and rarest potentiality of the Cain-Moses dialectic, but it can be evidenced in endeavours related to religion, art, and science. In order to achieve this potentiality, one must search for a common spiritual object and goal that synchronises both the Cainitic and the Mosaic tendencies. "And," Szondi concludes, "that is rarely possible."<sup>62</sup>

At first glance, the fact that four of the six potentialities in the Cain-Moses dialectic cannot be evidenced in the biblical presentation of Moses would appear to undermine the validity of Szondi's concept. However, when perceived as a spectrum or, preferably, a taxonomy, the cogency of his idea becomes more apparent. At one end, the base level – i.e. 'the sudden change' – stands the symbolic figure of Cain, while at the other end stands Moses *der Mensch* as the symbol of sublimation. The aim of *Schicksalspsychologie* therefore is to make the range of potentialities conscious within the subject as a driver for constructive change.<sup>63</sup>

Nevertheless, even when explaining the presence of the "the most difficult" potentiality, i.e. sublimation, in the biblical presentation of Moses, Szondi comes to a perplexing conclusion. Moses is an example of the two attitudes of law-maker and law-breaker existing within the same person. Thus, it was through Moses that the covenant was first made manifest in the Passover and then instituted at Sinai, acts performed through blood (Exod 12:6-18; 24:5-8) and thus simultaneously both symbols of Cain and sacred acts between YHWH and YHWH's people. However, the uncomfortable consequence of Szondi's thesis arises when he gives vindication to Moses's violence as necessary to maintain God's kingship and thereby undertaken, to appropriate the words of St. Ignatius, *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*:

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<sup>61</sup> Szondi, 119.

<sup>62</sup> Szondi, 120.

<sup>63</sup> Szondi asserts that the origin of conscience is also embedded within the Cain-Moses dialectic. The killing mindset represented in Cain must precede guilt. The acknowledgment of guilt and the atonement for evil is therefore the origin of conscience. When this occurred is unknowable since, according to Szondi, it was when the first murderer atoned for the act of killing. As Szondi concludes, "The leap from killing to guilt is the primal leap of conscience." (Szondi, 149.) See also Hughes, *The Return of the Ancestor*, 143-5.

When Moses gave the order to kill everyone; brothers, friends and relatives, he did it for God as a theo-politician who tried to save God's kingship in this cruel way. The same thing happened when Moses punished the participants in Ba'al of Peor's feasts or Korah's mob. He committed these atrocities as a politician and statesman to secure God's kingship.<sup>64</sup>

This is a sobering conclusion. Is this not the very justification that the leaders of all violent regimes throughout history have made to rationalise their actions? Substitute "God's kingship" in Szondi's last sentence above for 'Third Reich,' Islamic State's 'Caliphate,' or the Khmer Rouge's 'Democratic Kampuchea' and the potential for horror and catastrophe becomes apparent. It is also the same rationale two men gave in August 2013 to shocked onlookers in the aftermath of their murder of Lee Rigby – a stranger to them – in London. Despite his demarcation that the "moral humiliations" ascribed to YHWH are "purely the projections of the biblical narrator and not properties of the Godhead,"<sup>65</sup> this is nevertheless a confounding statement for Szondi, a Holocaust survivor and 'exile,' to make.

Hence, *Moses* appears to represent on the part of Szondi a move from therapeutic concerns for the identification of the sources of violent human aggression with a view to possible intervention (as seemed to be the central interest in *Kain*) to the understanding of the nature and phenomenon of violence and evil and its tacit acceptance as an inevitable reality. Ultimately then, the problem with Moses as the central figure for the resolution of the Cain complex is that he does not represent an end to violent aggression. While there is evidence of restitution and the establishment of a socially conscious society, violence nevertheless persists.

Moses *der Mann* is undoubtedly useful for exploring the dialectic within the Cain complex between the urges inside human beings to do good or to do evil; however, the integration with 'the father' supposedly evidenced in *Moses der Mensch* is problematic. Not only is this because of the multivocality inherent in his use of the term *der Mensch* or the difficulty in extricating what is the biblical narrator's projections from the objectively true nature of YHWH, but more because it does not bring about the elimination or even a diminution of violence. On the contrary, the example of Moses, as Szondi himself reveals in references to the HB, demonstrates that – like the primeval figure of Lamech – violence only becomes greater in its scale. Moreover, the assertion that Moses had

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<sup>64</sup> Szondi, 120.

<sup>65</sup> Szondi, 110.

integrated the spirit of ‘the father’ into his ego when some of these atrocities are committed is theologically fraught.

Does this mean that Szondi’s concept of the Cain complex has little to offer or is invalid? Not so! I believe that Szondi’s model can be a useful insight into the phenomenon of violent human aggression and, in turn, provide an effective psychological hermeneutic of relevant biblical texts. Though Szondi’s metaphor for its resolution, i.e. Moses, is not without some difficulties, the HB does in fact present a figure who may be a more apt symbol for the resolution of the Cain complex.

### **8.3 Joseph: Genesis’ Model for Resolution of the ‘Cain complex’ (Gen 42–45; 50)**

In the preceding chapter I argued that the stories of siblings in conflict provide an overarching narrative structure for the author/compiler of Genesis. The capstone of this structure is the culmination of the so-called ‘Joseph novella.’ In this section, I argue that the concluding elements of the Joseph story, i.e. Gen 42-45 and 50, provide not only the climax and dénouement of the overarching narrative structure of the book of Genesis, it also resolves the problem of violence that was first revealed through the primeval fratricide.

Following the intermission of ch. 38, the second ‘act’ of the Joseph story once again becomes the focus of Genesis. When the narrative left Joseph, he had just been sold into slavery in Egypt after being threatened with the fratricidal tendencies of his older brothers and thrown into a well (Gen 37:19-28). Scholars have noted that the arrangement of material in this second half of the so-called Joseph novella is organised in a number of three-part patterns.<sup>66</sup> From ch. 39, the reader is presented with a ‘three act’ narrative in which Joseph appears to turn his fortunes around in the household of Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh’s guard (Gen 39:1-6), only to then languish in prison before once again prevailing to become first the leader of the royal prisoners (39:21-23), then Pharaoh’s vizier and governor (Gen 41:43-44). Thus, after navigating yet another narrative confrontation following a promising set-up, this series of episodes is resolved with Joseph’s power and authority ascendant. Throughout, both Joseph and the narrator make it clear that his success has a divine provenance.<sup>67</sup> It

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<sup>66</sup> E.g. George Coats notes that the Joseph’s story is comprised of the initial episode with his brother, the digression of his rise to power, and the second set of interplays with his brothers. Further, the individual units of the digression and the second set of interplays between Joseph and his brothers are comprised three principal scenes. (George W. Coats, *Genesis, with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, vol. 1, FOTL [Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1983], 277-83); also Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*. Contra Westermann who views the Joseph material as a “duple construction” and an adjunct and subordinate element of the Jacob story. (Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 22-5.)

<sup>67</sup> E.g. Gen 39:3, 21, 23; 41:16, 25, 28, 32, 38-39.

is at this point that the interplay between Joseph and his brothers is resumed after a period of some twenty years, and the motif of sibling rivalry that has been developed throughout Genesis is finally resolved.

The compiler's interest in arranging stories in three-part episodes or scenes is carried forward into the set of interactions between Joseph and his brothers in Egypt. In the first of these, the brothers travel to Egypt without Benjamin (Gen 42), where Joseph and the sons of Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah meet for the first time in twenty-two years (unbeknownst to all but Joseph, of course). In the second, all twelve of Jacob/Israel's sons are brought together (Gen 43-45). Finally, the entire extended family of Jacob/Israel is once again reunited in Egypt in the third episode (Gen 46-47). Underpinning this arrangement can be discerned a movement from sibling conflict with fratricidal overtones, towards the primacy of the younger/est sibling, onwards to reconciliation and finally the reunification of a fraternal community as the basis of society.<sup>68</sup>

Reading this material through the prism of Szondi's Cain complex reveals two significant juxtapositions within this three-part arrangement. First, the movement from sibling conflict to the fraternal community reflects the socialising regenerative aspect of Szondi's articulation of the Cain complex as the necessary element in its resolution. In Szondi's Cain complex, socialisation takes the form of the socially conscious society, building on and extending that of the Oedipus complex which is oriented and limited to that of the individual within the family.<sup>69</sup> The second juxtaposition relates to the tripartite, or triangular paradigm that is intrinsic to the Cain complex. To recap briefly, this paradigm consists of the parent, the subject, and the sibling, whereby the subject hates the sibling who is viewed as an obstacle to the love of the parent. As will be demonstrated, this paradigm is present in all the various combinations of exchanges between the members of Joseph's family from ch. 42 through to the final reconciliation between Joseph and his older brothers in ch. 50.

However, the characters and figures constituting the triangular model are variously transposed so that the nature of the paradigm is dynamic, transforming as the story unfolds. For example, the paradigm initially consists of Jacob/Israel in the role of parent, with the sons of Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah as the subject, and Benjamin as the sibling and potential obstacle to the parent (42:1-4;29-38). This is followed by juxtaposed dual iterations of the paradigm that occur when Joseph first meets with his

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<sup>68</sup> In this manner, Joseph's story also represents a recapitulation of the movement across the previous sibling conflict narratives in Genesis.

<sup>69</sup> Ref. Table 7-1.



half-brothers in Egypt (42:6-28). In this episode it is possible to discern that two triangular paradigms are simultaneously in effect: in one Joseph is in the role parent, the half-brothers the subject, and Benjamin, though absent, the sibling; while in the other Jacob/Israel, though absent, is the parent, Joseph is the subject, and the half-brothers fulfil the role of the sibling(s). This complex interface of relational dynamics is then followed by repetitions of the same triangular patterns that alternately consist of Jacob/Israel; the sons of Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah; and Benjamin on the one hand; and Joseph, his half-brothers, and Benjamin on the other. Eventually, the resolution to the Cain complex occurs when Jacob/Israel joins his beloved son, Joseph, in Egypt (46:28-31), representing the *physical* introjection of the father into the relationship between the subject and the sibling(s). Moreover, this episode foreshadows the *spiritual* introjection of the parent into the ego of the subject that, according to Szondi, is necessary to resolve the Cain complex. This becomes most apparent when Joseph assumes the role of leader of Jacob/Israel's family following the patriarch's death and subsequently forgives his brothers (50:15-21).

### ***Joseph and His Older Brothers (Part 2)***

The second set of interplays between Joseph and his older brothers reveals two thematic contrasts. For the first time since they threatened to kill him, Joseph meets his older brothers following Jacob/Israel's decision to send ten of his sons to Egypt to buy grain so the family can negotiate the famine gripping the land (42:1-3). As "governor over the land" (v. 6), Joseph is in the position to provide grain for Jacob/Israel's family. The son who is metaphorically dead hence becomes the key to life for his family. In addition, throughout the bulk of their interactions Joseph possesses knowledge while his brothers remain ignorant of the truth until the very end when Joseph reveals his true identity. As is noted by Robert Alter, the Hebrew terms נָכַר (recognise), אָמַן (verify/believe) and יָדַע (know) run throughout this story.<sup>70</sup> The narrator reveals that Joseph recognises his brothers, but they do not recognise him (42:8); that Joseph overhears his brothers and understands them, but they cannot understand him (42:23). Moreover, it has been Joseph's gift of divination, a special kind of knowledge and insight, which he attributes to God, that is the reason behind his success and power. This status becomes apparent when Joseph once again meets his older brothers. The materials dealing with the account of Joseph and his half-brothers in Egypt have thus been arranged around two sets of thematic contrasts: knowledge and ignorance,<sup>71</sup> and life and death. (These same two thematic sets are also at the core of Szondi's related concepts of the familial unconscious and the Cain complex.)

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<sup>70</sup> See Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* 159-168; and Meir Steinberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 176-178.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Alter.

When the sons of Jacob/Israel first come together in Egypt, there is an obvious power differential between the older brothers and Joseph. As the second-in-command to Pharaoh, Joseph has absolute power over his older brothers, a fact the brothers acknowledge when they all bow down before him (42:6) and refer to themselves as Joseph's servants (עבדיך in vv. 10, 11, 13). The premonition of Joseph's earlier dream of the sheaves (37:6-8) is thereby fulfilled, and the reoccurrence of the motif in Genesis of the pre-eminence of the younger brother is reiterated.<sup>72</sup> It is, however, Jacob/Israel's decision to withhold the youngest of his twelve sons, Benjamin, from the party that is most interesting (42:4).<sup>73</sup> Not only will this act function as a driver of the narrative, it may also reveal an inner disquiet that Jacob harbours concerning the role of the eldest sons in Joseph's apparent death. Jacob/Israel makes it clear that he stops Benjamin from joining his older brothers out of fear "that harm might come to him" (v. 4).

What is the possible threat to Benjamin's safety that Jacob/Israel fears? As is revealed in his final blessing of his sons before his death, Jacob/Israel appears to have held concerns about the moral rectitude of several of them, particularly Simeon and Levi on account of their anger and predilection for violence (Gen 49:5-7). (The reference to the anger of Levi is, as noted above,<sup>74</sup> relevant to Moses since it suggests the familial heritage of this most Cainitic of affects at play in Moses.) Might Jacob/Israel suspect that Simeon and Levi's propensity for violence, as revealed most unambiguously in the episode concerning Dinah and Shechem (Gen 34), had a hand in the death of Joseph? If so, he would not be prepared to risk the life of his youngest and only remaining son to his beloved wife Rachel. It is a reasonable reading which both the gaps and surrounding intertextual connections invite; after all, as Jacob/Israel ably attests, fatherhood is complex. While he may hold suspicions about Simeon, these do not prevent Jacob/Israel from suspecting the worst and lamenting his violent son's death on the return of the nine sons from Egypt (42:36).<sup>75</sup> Nor is he averse to open displays of favouritism among his sons.

Jacob/Israel's lament (42:38) denying once again the release of Benjamin upon the return of nine of his sons from Egypt suggests that Benjamin has taken the place of Joseph in his affections, and the

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<sup>72</sup> The second of Joseph's oracular dreams, i.e. the stars, sun and moon (37:9-10), is only partially fulfilled, of course, since Benjamin, his father and his mother (?) have remained in Canaan.

<sup>73</sup> According to the narrative's account of the passing of time between Joseph's disappearance and his brothers' journey to Egypt, Benjamin would now be aged at least in his mid to late 20s and, therefore, be a mature man. Jacob/Israel's decision is thus more remarkable and fascinating in light of Benjamin's maturity and, presumably, his agency as an adult.

<sup>74</sup> See n.37 in this chapter.

<sup>75</sup> Perhaps too he suspects his other sons of selling Simeon into slavery, linking the disappearance of his son with the appearance of the money in his brothers' sacks.

youngest son has now become as precious to him as Joseph once was. This sense is heightened by Jacob/Israel's reference to Sheol, echoing his lament upon receiving the news of Joseph's death (37:35). Furthermore, and as Wenham observes, in the same verse Jacob/Israel explicitly refers to Joseph as "dead" and "my son" and Benjamin as "his brother" which "effectively denies any fraternal relationship between the sons of Leah and the sons of Rachel."<sup>76</sup> Thus, a sharp distinction is established between Joseph and Benjamin on the one hand and Jacob/Israel's ten other sons on the other prior to the first journey to Egypt. From a Szondian perspective, Joseph and Benjamin could be said to be separated from the heritability of some of the less desirable traits of the sons of Leah, which will also become significant for the reading of the interplay that ensues between Joseph, Benjamin, and the older brothers that I will advance.

Before Benjamin arrives in Egypt, the interplay between Joseph and his brothers discloses two sets of contrasting motifs – these being knowledge and ignorance, life and death – which function as thematic organisers. The centrality of these themes to the concepts of familial unconscious and the Cain complex further reinforce the validity of a Szondian reading of Gen 42-45 and, therefore, the sibling stories in Genesis more broadly.

#### The Cain complex in Joseph's Interplay with his Older Brothers

The Cainitic features evident in the interactions between Joseph and his brothers in Egypt are many and varied. Reading the initial interaction through the paradigm of Szondi's Cain complex, the elementary fact that can be readily established is that Joseph, the subject, has had his access to the father obstructed for a period of some twenty years by the initial Cainitic impulses of his older brothers.<sup>77</sup> Their desire to kill Joseph set in play a series of events that, ironically, leads Joseph to a position of power and authority over them, just as he had predicted in the dreams that were the catalyst for their animus towards him. The question arises, does Joseph plan to inflict actual bodily harm against his older brothers in revenge for what they did to him?

Joseph's charge of spying (i.e. an illicit, underhanded attempt to gain unauthorised *knowledge*) against his brothers (42:9, 14, 16) implies both a significant degree of mistrust and the threat of death. To be accused of spying necessarily entails a punishment of death, a fact Joseph himself emphasises

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<sup>76</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 411.

<sup>77</sup> One might reasonably ask why, if access to the father was so important for Joseph, did he not seek to contact Jacob/Israel during his exile? While there may be many creative responses to this question, the text itself provides one answer when Joseph names his second son Manasseh since "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house" (41:51).

twice in the option he provides his older siblings to return with Benjamin in order to verify their story and prove their integrity (vv. 18, 20). From the perspectives of both the reader and, certainly, the older brothers, Joseph, in the guise of a powerful Egyptian official, looms as a potential source of violence and a threat to life. For their part the brothers' only defence against Joseph's accusation of spying is to claim that they are all members of the same family (v. 13), suggesting such a large party operating covertly for the purposes of espionage would be patently absurd. Despite the seemingly obvious illogicality of a large family group spying together, Joseph uses his brothers' claims to lay out a 'test' for them (v. 15). In response, the older brothers' perilous situation and the impending threat of death is recognised when the brothers make the connection between their current predicament and their treatment of Joseph some twenty years earlier (vv. 21-22).

Two points need to be considered regarding the connection the brothers make between their situation and the fate of Joseph. First, that the brothers' experience in the Egyptian viceregal court is a reminder of the anguish they once inflicted on Joseph suggests that they have been burdened with guilt for his fate for quite some time.<sup>78</sup> Second, there is no reason given as to why the brothers make this association more than twenty years after the fact. That all the brothers appear to readily make the connection between their situation and their treatment of Joseph might also intimate that they unconsciously recognise the Egyptian official, Zaphenath-Peneah, as their brother Joseph. The brothers' psychological correlation between Joseph and the Egyptian vizier who stands before them accusing them of spying is further heightened by Reuben's reference to a 'blood reckoning' (דמו נדרש) that they must bear for Joseph's death (v. 22). The 'blood reckoning' not only emphasises the existential threat that confronts the brothers, it also alludes to the Noahide covenant's requirement for the restitution of a murdered man (cf. Gen 9:5). It might also indicate, as per Wenham, that his brothers may never have revealed to Reuben what really happened to Joseph.<sup>79</sup> Accordingly, some commentators have seen this as the reason behind Joseph's selection of Simeon as hostage (v. 24).<sup>80</sup>

Alternatively, Joseph makes a deliberate and conscious selection of Simeon because of his known inclination to the Cainitic traits of anger and violence. As was suggested above, there is enough in the surrounding materials to intimate that of all the brothers, Simeon is perhaps most likely to have

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. Speiser, *Genesis*, 324.

<sup>79</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 408-9. Alternatively, Reuben may be equating kidnapping with a capital crime viz. Exod 21:16.

<sup>80</sup> E.g. Speiser, 322; Wenham, 409. An alternate perspective is offered by Sternberg who sees in Simeon, the second son of Leah, an equivalence with Benjamin, the second son of Rachel, which makes him "the perfect hostage." (Steinberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 291.)

been the instigator of the brothers' initial animus toward Joseph and the drive to kill him, just as Reuben and, later Judah, acted to mitigate it.<sup>81</sup> By imprisoning all of his older brothers and taking Simeon hostage Joseph extracts some form of vengeance for the pain and torment they inflicted on him.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, the desire for vengeance and his drive to act upon this desire reveals Joseph's own Cainitic tendency. In addition, he simultaneously acts to remove a possible threat to Benjamin who, as the only remaining son of Rachel, seems to have become his father's favourite in Joseph's absence (v. 38). In this manner, Joseph's move to take Simeon hostage is not merely punitive but can be seen as a precautionary and protective measure that parallels Jacob/Israel's initial refusal to send Benjamin to Egypt along with his other sons.

Reading the account of Joseph's second interaction with his older brothers through a Szondian lens also reveals several aspects consistent with what has been explicated regarding the Cain complex. First, there is evidence of concealment and anger as two paroxysmal affects.

The reader has previously been informed that Joseph had forgotten all of his hardships and his father's house as is implied by the naming of his son Manasseh (41:51). However, when Joseph meets with his older brothers after some twenty years, the narrator reveals to the reader that he now remembers (42:9), a rare insight into the inner experience of a character in the HB.<sup>83</sup> Specifically, Joseph recalls the dreams that predicted his pre-eminence among his family. For Joseph, these hitherto repressed memories of what he has previously revealed to be the divinely mandated pre-eminence among his family leads to the two paroxysmal affects of concealment and anger.

Joseph deliberately hides his true identity from his brothers (vv. 7-8), even going so far as to communicate with them through a translator in order to maintain his disguise (v. 23). Concealment is, as discussed previously, a paroxysmal trait in Szondi's drive system (ref. Table 2-1). Thus, in order to preserve his ascendancy over his family and fulfil the divinely inspired prognostic aspects of his dreams, he maintains his new identity of Egyptian vizier thereby concealing his real identity. This act also echoes Jacob's own act of concealment of his identity from his father in order to claim his older brother's birthright and blessing (Gen 27:5-29), further intimating the paroxysmal pattern that is at play within Joseph's own familial unconscious.

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<sup>81</sup> Cf. Alter, 166; Wenham, 412.

<sup>82</sup> Steinberg asserts that this is an example of 'role reversal' in which Joseph "gives them a taste of his own suffering – helplessness in the hands of a bully, false charge with death in the offing, imprisonment, abrupt commutation of sentence – by forcing them to go through it in experiential order." (Steinberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 294.)

<sup>83</sup> Alter, 163; Wenham, 406.

The recognition of his brothers also incites anger within Joseph as is revealed through the harsh manner (קשוח) in which he speaks to them (v. 7).<sup>84</sup> After more than twenty years, the repressed pent-up emotions of anger and despair at what his older brothers inflicted on him surface for Joseph.<sup>85</sup> This paroxysmal, stimulating phase of the Cain complex becomes manifest in Joseph's maintenance of the disguise that sustains the power differential between himself and his brothers, and the interrogative repetition of the accusation of spying against them which, as discussed above, connotes the threat of death. The climax of this scene comes when the brothers insist that they are part of the same family group – "twelve brothers... the youngest, however, is now with our father, and one is no more" (v. 13). Their reference to "twelve brothers" seems to arouse even greater anger on the part of Joseph which he then channels into a demand for 'proof' of their honesty (vv. 14-16).<sup>86</sup>

The second aspect of the Cain complex evident in the narrative is the fully realised triangular paradigm of the complex. Because of his older brothers' animosity, Joseph has been denied access to his father. From Joseph's perspective they have proven to be an effective obstruction to Jacob/Israel, just as their initial animus was provoked by Joseph's favouritism in turn denying them equivalent access to the father from their viewpoint. The triangular paradigm in this second encounter between Joseph and his older brothers is thus a transposition of that which was present in the initial encounter (Gen 37).

The presence of this triangular paradigm results in the third aspect of the Cain complex evident in the account, that being a movement from the paroxysmal phase towards the epileptiform phase. However, unlike Cain in Gen 4, the paroxysmal phase does not metamorphose into the epileptiform or attack phase in Joseph – at least not to same lethal degree. His initial plan to send one brother back to Canaan while the others remain in prison (v. 16), which he abruptly rescinds in favour of imprisoning all of them, suggests a degree of emotional turmoil in Joseph that is reflected in the building up of the paroxysmal affects toward a catalyst that will initiate the attack phase of the Cain complex. However, though the narrative is largely silent regarding what prompted Joseph's change of plan after imprisoning his brothers, it nevertheless reflects a movement away from the potential ignition point that may have result in a lethal expression of the epileptiform phase. Meir Steinberg suggests that this scene demonstrates Joseph's moral growth, "still tormented but in control and more

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<sup>84</sup> Westermann compares the use of וידבר קשוח to David's description of the manner in which Saul speaks to Jonathan (1 Sam 20:10). (Westermann, 102).

<sup>85</sup> Feelings of anger and bitterness and a desire for vengeance on the part of Joseph are entirely understandable in light of what had been done to him. Cf. Alter, 165; Wenham, 408.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Alter, 165.

sinned against than sinning.”<sup>87</sup> The psychologically fraught circumstances that now confront Joseph are captured in the scene in which he reveals his revised plan to ‘test’ his brothers (vv. 18-20). Their admission of guilt connects their present circumstances with the anguish and despair they inflicted on their younger brother and, thus, represents a step toward reconciliation. Joseph, overhearing this, is overcome with emotion, confirming that he was correct in his instinct to resist from impulsively acting on his anger and desire for retribution (v. 24). It is also evidence of his own capacity to counter the paroxysmal pattern at play in his own familial unconscious and thereby resolve the Cain complex.

Despite this, Joseph still engages in some ‘psychological operations’ against his brothers as they return to Canaan, imprisoning one of his most violent brothers, Simeon, in an act that both serves to punish and protect.<sup>88</sup> Given all they had subjected him to, it is difficult not to view Joseph’s actions as understandable.

### *The Sons of Rachel*

Benjamin’s appearance in the Egyptian viceroy’s court is the answer to the ‘test’ that Joseph sets his older brothers (43:16). As discussed, the idea to give his siblings a test occurs to Joseph after they refer to themselves as “twelve brothers” (42:13). The test is therefore designed by Joseph to determine if, in fact, the family still constitutes “twelve brothers.” From a Szondiian perspective it could also be said that Joseph’s test is designed to determine the presence, effect, and limit of the Cain complex at play within his own familial unconscious, the central question being, after all, do the brothers hate Benjamin? Accordingly, Joseph repeatedly places Benjamin at the centre of his interactions with his family.

There is, however, another aspect to Joseph’s demand. Just as his demand that Benjamin appears alongside his other siblings (42:16,20) is a counterpoint to Jacob/Israel’s refusal to release his youngest son (42:4), so too his motivation appears similarly related to Jacob/Israel’s suspicions of the sons of Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah. In other words, Joseph demands proof that his older brothers have changed, and that Benjamin has not been subjected to the same torment that he was once subjected by his half-brothers. Benjamin is thus a proxy for Joseph who must ascertain the limit of

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<sup>87</sup> Steinberg, 294.

<sup>88</sup> Additionally, this may be evidence of the ‘trickster’ in Joseph, for which there is also an identifiable familial inheritance. Cf. Niditch, *A Prelude to Biblical Folklore*, 93-125.

his half-brothers' animus towards the sons of Rachel before he reveals his true identity.<sup>89</sup> The interconnected suspicions of Jacob/Israel and Joseph toward the sons of Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah is the first evidence of the coalescing identities of father and son.

### Joseph as Father Figure

As alluded to above, Joseph's treatment of his half-brothers on one level resembles a paternal concern for balancing righteous anger and meting out punishment for wayward children. I have also argued that Joseph's behaviour vis-à-vis the concealment of his identity reveals familial traits in common with his father, Jacob/Israel. These traits are further reinforced by the tricks Joseph plays on his half-brothers (42:25-28; 44:1-5), evoking those played Jacob/Israel on his father, Isaac, and his uncle, Laban.<sup>90</sup>

Additionally, the movement Joseph undertakes towards sublimating the role and function of his father is evidenced in their mutual concern for Benjamin. Benjamin becomes the pivotal figure through which Joseph assumes the role, function, and identity of the father. The narrative unfolding of the process in which Joseph introjects the function and role of Jacob/Israel into his own character is emphasised by Reuben's initial inelegant (and brutal) solution, ultimately disregarded (42:37-38), and Judah's subsequent successful petition to secure Benjamin's release to travel to Egypt (43:8-10), which resonate with and mirror their earlier mitigation of their siblings' fratricidal intent toward Joseph (i.e. Gen 37:21-27).<sup>91</sup> The figures of Reuben and Judah thereby form a linking function between two accounts in which the older sibling attempts to protect the younger. Joseph's integration of the role, function and identity of the father takes a further step once Jacob/Israel acquiesces to Benjamin's release in order to secure more grain and the liberation of Simeon (43:11-14). Joseph's demand that Benjamin travel to him therefore trumps Jacob/Israel's desire to have Benjamin remain in Canaan and hints at Joseph's eventual inheritance of Jacob/Israel's birthright, blessing and status as *pater familias*.

Joseph's emerging status as father figure, and his sublimation of the identity of Jacob/Israel, is once again accentuated at the meal he hosts for his brothers, a scene in which Benjamin is, again, pivotal (43:31-34). The narrator reveals that Joseph arranges all his brothers according to their birth status,

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<sup>89</sup> Perhaps there is also a concern for his physical safety that is behind his motivations; however, given the power differential between Joseph and his half-brothers, this is a difficult interpretation to sustain.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Gen 27:18-26 and 30:25-43.

<sup>91</sup> See §7.3 'Joseph and his older brothers.'



much to their astonishment (v. 33), and the provision of food from Joseph's own table (v. 34) is the very depiction of the patriarchal figurehead at dinner alongside his family and retinue. Furthermore, just as Joseph was once singled out for special attention and affection from his father, so too Joseph gives special attention at the meal to the youngest, Benjamin (v. 34).<sup>92</sup> Not only does this scene look back to the events of ch. 37, it also performs a proleptic function to Jacob/Israel's blessing of Joseph's sons and his preferment of the younger son, Ephraim (48:14-20).

Following their meal, Joseph's movement towards integration of the father takes another step closer to completion as a result of the final trick he plays on his brothers, secreting the silver cup into Benjamin's belongings (44:2).<sup>93</sup> The motivation behind Joseph's trick could be multifaceted, at once designed to keep Benjamin with him, torment his half-brothers, and deliver a final test to ascertain how they would treat the youngest.<sup>94</sup> When the brothers return to the city (v. 14), Joseph asks them what they have done in words that appear to echo YHWH's interrogation of both Eve (Gen 3:13) and Cain (4:10), in what is one of several allusions to Gen 4 (see below).<sup>95</sup> In this tense scene, Judah steps forward and recounts the interactions between the brothers and Joseph and the brothers and Jacob/Israel (44:18-32). He offers himself in the place of Benjamin, preferring to be made a slave than see his father destroyed by the loss of another of his beloved sons (44:33-34). It is a selfless act; an act of substitution that a parent might engage in to spare their child from undue suffering. Judah's response not only reveals a desire for peace, resolution, and an end to intra-familial turmoil, it intimates that he has finally integrated the 'parent' into his ego in a manner that is genuine and far more comprehensive than his previous intervention to spare Joseph's life (37:26-27).

Joseph, for his part, realising that his brothers have indeed changed, is emotionally overcome and unveils his true identity to them in private (45:1). Joseph reveals to them that God has made him a "father to Pharaoh" (45:8) and that he will provide land and sustenance for all his family in Egypt so that they may survive the ongoing famine (vv. 10-11). This is the very image of the great patriarch,

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<sup>92</sup> Wenham suggests that Joseph's motivation in giving five times the amount of food to Benjamin may have been to elicit a reaction from his half-brothers (see *Genesis 16-50*, 423-4). This is certainly plausible. However, I believe that these would be subordinate concerns for the author/compiler compared with highlighting the allusions to Jacob/Israel. This is further evidenced by the description of the brothers eating, drinking and being merry that soon follows, functioning to conclude this scene on a high note before following with another low point (cf. Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 127).

<sup>93</sup> On the significance of 'silver' in the Joseph stories see Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 387.

<sup>94</sup> On this last motivation it should be noted that the brothers are quick to suggest that the one found with the cup should be killed (44:9). At the time they are confident none among them would be guilty. Joseph's steward makes it clear that the guilty party would not be killed but would instead become a slave.

<sup>95</sup> Schlimm, *From Fratricide to Forgiveness*, 175.

the father to nations.<sup>96</sup> The revelation of Joseph's power, authority and esteem is accompanied by his capacity for forgiveness and munificence. Hence, as the narrative details his physical rise to power and prominence in both the political and familial spheres, it simultaneously reveals his psychological maturity in resisting the Cainitic paroxysmal pattern through his introjection of the father (i.e. YHWH and Jacob/Israel).

### Cain and Abel's Antitheses

The resonances between Gen 42-45 and Gen 4 are most fully realised in the dynamic between Joseph and Benjamin. Throughout this account, Benjamin does not speak, remaining a somewhat ill-defined and shadowy character during the interplay between Joseph and his brothers. Forsyth proposes that Benjamin "is like a ghost: a riveting presence without substance."<sup>97</sup> As such, his characterisation resembles that of Abel, who also does not speak and whose very name implies ephemerality, transience, and unsubstantiality.<sup>98</sup> Benjamin, however, fulfils a role which is very much the inverse of that of Abel. Just as Abel's narrative function was to contrast right action against his brother's inability to do good, Benjamin is the vehicle through which the benevolence and magnanimity of his older sibling is highlighted. Just as Abel proved an obstacle to the older sibling's ability to access and love the father, thereby revealing the killing mindset of Cain, Benjamin enables Joseph to leave the concealment of his Egyptian identity, reunite with his brothers, regain access to his father, and, ultimately, sublimate his identity.

Benjamin and Abel as inverted representations of the youngest brother figure is arguably best encapsulated in the scene in which all twelve of Jacob/Israel's sons sit down to eat a meal together after twenty-two years (Gen 43:34). Not only does this scene provide a contrast to the meal the older brothers ate while Joseph languished at the bottom of a well (37:25),<sup>99</sup> it also presents an allusion to and a juxtaposition with Gen 4. The portion allotted to Benjamin from Joseph's table that is five times greater than any other brother (43:34) evokes Abel's offering which was 'greater' than his brother's (Gen 4:3-5). In fact, the allusions are such that the latter scene forms an inverse parallel of the earlier. This view is reinforced by the recurrence of the term מנחה (offering) in both chs. 4 and

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<sup>96</sup> In fact, the Joseph story reveals a preoccupation with the concept of 'father.' Of the 170 references to אב (father) in Genesis, more than half (86) occur in chs. 37-50.

<sup>97</sup> Forsyth, "Sibling Rivalry, Aesthetic Sensibility, and Social Structure in Genesis," 497.

<sup>98</sup> Recall too that the introductory verses to Joseph's story (i.e. Gen 37:2-3) allude to the figure the Abel.

<sup>99</sup> Ref. Sarna, *Genesis*, 302.

43.<sup>100</sup> The older brothers' preparation and presentation of a gift (מנחה) for Joseph (43:11,15,25,26) recalls the מנחה made by the primeval brothers (4:3-5). Moreover, the portions Joseph provides to the brothers at the meal he hosts (43:31-34), presumably from his own table, provide an intriguing counterpoint to the cultic associations of Abel's offering which, as scholars have noted, connote the presence of a מזבח (altar).<sup>101</sup> Thus, as Abel offered up the best of his flock – the firstlings and their fat portions (Gen 4:4) – to the father, YHWH, so now the 'father,' Joseph, responds with his own munificence and bounty in-kind.

While Benjamin appears in the narrative as a figure with a degree of similitude to Abel, Joseph, on the other hand, provides a well-defined contrast with Cain. Firstly, Joseph uses the power of words to negotiate his relations with his brothers, engaging in extensive dialogue with them, whereas Cain is incapable of articulating anything with his brother. This becomes evident not only in Joseph's relations with his family, where the manner in which he converses is given prominence by the narrator, there is also an emphasis on his interior dialogue that is, as has been discussed, unusual in the HB. There are, however, further pointed intertextual connections between the two, particularly their respective narrative arcs, the nexus of the nature and function of identity as revealed in their stories, and their relative functions as progenitors of community.

With broad reference to their narrative arcs, it should be noted that as Cain is forced away from his family and into exile and, thus, metaphorical death, the journey Joseph undergoes in his story is the diametric opposite. Just as Cain wanders in a land east of his family in Eden, Joseph returns from metaphorical death to reunite with his family, having been revealed to have been dwelling in a land east of Canaan. Joseph's arc thereby reflects the restorative functions of mercy, reconciliation, and justice, while Cain's exposes the damaging result of anger, hatred, and killing.<sup>102</sup>

The theme of the nature and function of identity is also apparent in the stories of Cain and Joseph. The mark of Cain serves at once to both identify and protect him from those who recognise him.<sup>103</sup> As was discussed in a previous chapter, behind the mark is the curse, and behind the curse is the

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<sup>100</sup> Cf. Gen 4:3,4,5 and 43:11,15, 25, and 26.

<sup>101</sup> Neither the MT nor the LXX mention Joseph's table explicitly (cf. the NRSV). Westermann does not refer to a table in his translation (p. 117); Wenham, however, does (p. 414). The MT makes it clear, nevertheless, that Joseph had the portions distributed to his brothers (שָׂאָה lit. "he carried off"). The presence of an altar in Gen 4 was an association, by way of examples, notably made by Gunkel and von Rad. See Gunkel, *Genesis*, 43; and von Rad, *Genesis*, 101.

<sup>102</sup> The same could be said of Joseph's older brothers whose Cainitic tendencies have destroyed the family unit and whose journeys to the east resonate with that of Cain.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred*, 100; LaCocque, *Onslaught Against Innocence*, 86.

murder (§3.5).<sup>104</sup> Joseph, on the other hand, deliberately avows no markers that make him identifiable to his brothers. As the victim of his brothers' animus, he experienced exile from his family; however, whereas Cain's career was driven by fear, Joseph's was built upon his wits, skills, and, crucially, the blessing and presence, albeit somewhat removed, of YHWH.

Finally, Joseph's story is also the embodiment of the regenerative socialising process in resolving the Cain complex. Through the movement towards forgiveness, mercy, and justice, Joseph is once again reunited with his brothers and his father. Szondi's contention is that family is the building block for the fraternal community, which he equates to the "socially conscious society."<sup>105</sup> This is the commission and the promise of the family of Jacob/Israel, of which Joseph assumes leadership, that will eventually be fulfilled in the HB through the transformative experiences of oppression and the Exodus. Cain, on the other hand, becomes the first builder of a city, which, as Szondi points out, is the legacy of fear and the desire to possess since a city is defined by its walls.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, as the compiler of Genesis makes clear, evil has spread throughout the Cainite line of descent into the very origins of the technological civilisation.

In opposition to the killing mindset of Cain, Joseph's psyche therefore reveals the triumph of mercy, reconciliation, and justice. Joseph embodies the antithesis to anger, hatred, violence, and killing. Though he has experienced metaphorical death, torment, and exile, he ultimately resists the urge of the paroxysmal pattern at play within his own familial unconscious and refrains from overt violence and killing. In so becoming, Joseph has fully assimilated the place and character of 'the father' as per Szondi's proposed model for resolution to the problem of Cain. To use Szondi's own nomenclature, one could rightly speak of Joseph *der Mensch* as an apt biblical symbol for the answer to the problem of Cain.

#### **8.4 Why Did Szondi Choose Moses?**

Given that Joseph symbolises a resolution to the problem of jealousy, anger, hatred, and violence first instituted by Cain, and, indeed, that Genesis contains an overarching narrative structure that bends from fratricide to fraternal community, the question arises why Szondi ignored these elements to posit Moses as the answer to Cain. It is a curious oversight given the similitude between Joseph and

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<sup>104</sup> Williams, 36.

<sup>105</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 116.

<sup>106</sup> "Maebe, "BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi."

Lèopold Szondi.<sup>107</sup> The parallels are profound: both were second youngest sons in a blended family; both fathers ‘wrestled’ with God (one literally, the other through literature); and both experienced imprisonment and exile. It is difficult to conceive that an astute reader such as Szondi did not make these connections.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, I propose two possible rationales that may provide some insight for Szondi’s choice of Moses.

First, there is the obvious influence of his father, Abraham Sonnenschein. As was discussed in some detail in Chapter 5, Abraham exercised a strong influence on Szondi during his formative years which would remain for the rest of his life. This factor was also noted by Friedjung Jüttner. As a pious Hasidic Jew, Abraham placed devotion to God through the knowledge of and immersion in Jewish texts above all else. Szondi would recall the influence that his father exerted over his life, especially the role of religion, in a biographical chapter he contributed to collection of papers on psychotherapy around the time *Moses, Antwort auf Kain* was published:

I have to assume that my father made me a religious man. But there must have been other factors at work here too, as I was the only one of seven sons who had accompanied him to the synagogue until his death.

When he died, I was 18, just before graduation. Following the Jewish rites, for a full year early in the morning and in the evening every day, I prayed aloud to the congregation the death prayer called *Kaddish*. During this year, my father was incorporated into my ego. These deep traces later guided me in my scientific work – even when I had already given up the dogmatic rites of the Jewish religion. I remained a Jew and a believer. The role of the faith function in the analysis of fate is probably closely related to the paternal imprint.<sup>109</sup>

Abraham Sonnenschein was thus critical in the formation of Szondi’s fundamentally Jewish identity, and, as the pre-eminent figure in Judaism, Moses holds a distinctive and singular place in the esteem and reverence of a devout Jew. I have argued throughout this study that Szondi was inclined to look

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<sup>107</sup> Szondi does refer to the Joseph story in *Moses* as evidence against Freud’s contention that the stories related to Moses’ two families had been swapped – the more noble with the more common. Szondi contends that one could make large parts of the HB Egyptian by going through the same process and uses the story of Joseph as an example: “Then the legend of Joseph would be something like this: A pharaoh had twelve sons, of whom the youngest [sic], Joseph, was his favourite son. The brothers hated him because of this and threw him into the well. A passing Hebrew rescued him and added him to his family. Later, when there was a famine in Palestine, Joseph led his second, lesser Jacob family to Egypt, where he was soon recognised and accepted as the son of Pharaoh and achieved greatness and fame.” (*Moses*, 22.)

<sup>108</sup> Given Szondi’s interest in Dostoyevsky and his work examining the familial patterns of the author that were reflected in his novels, the oversight is even more pronounced.

<sup>109</sup> Szondi, “Schicksalsanalyse – Eine Selbstdarstellung,” 414.

to religion, particularly his own faith, as the above excerpt makes clear, to give expression to his theory of *Schicksalsanalyse* and its related concepts.

The second rationale for Szondi's choice of Moses, one closely related to the first, is the legacy of his religious heritage more broadly. As the vignette in my introduction to this chapter highlighted, Szondi's identity was strongly bound to Judaism, even though he did not engage in what he terms some of its "dogmatic rites." Judaism nevertheless exerted a profound effect of the development of Szondi's theories, both consciously and unconsciously. As such, it seems self-evident that Moses as a focal point for Judaism would be reflected in Szondi's work. Moreover, as has been discussed, Szondi's reading of the HB is also influenced by Jewish myths and legends. One that is particularly germane and influential, since it is cited by Szondi in both *Kain* and *Moses*, is a thirteenth century Kabbalist text on the transmigration or reincarnation of the soul of Abel in Moses that "speaks", according to Szondi, "of an 'Abel-Moses Identity.'"<sup>110</sup> Szondi's identification of Moses with the 'Abelitic' dimension of the paroxysmal drive is thus informed by extra-biblical Jewish tradition and literature. However, there are also intrinsic elements within the HB which serve to reinforce Szondi's presentation of Moses as a metaphor for the resolution of the Cain complex.

### ***The Biblical Evidence for Moses as the Resolution of the Cain complex***

As has been argued, the *toledot* formulae, i.e. the phrase אלה תולדות, which is evident within Genesis was also used by the authors of Num 3:1 and Ruth 4:18 to point to the significance of the family of Moses and the Davidic line respectively. Just as the formulae's presence in Genesis signifies a theologically motivated narrowing of focus from the creation of heaven and earth through the families of Adam, Noah, Terah and his son Abra(ha)m, to Isaac, Jacob, and the establishment of the nation of Israel, so its use in both Numbers and Ruth similarly has theological implications. However, it is the presence of the formula in Num 3:1 which is of immediate relevance here.

The *toledot* formula in Num 3:1 introduces the descendants of both Aaron and Moses. Significantly, the author has also added additional information situating these family histories "at the time when YHWH spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai." Scholars have noted the relationship of the formula in

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<sup>110</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 150. Cf. Szondi, *Kain*, 10. See also Hughes, *Return of the Ancestor*, 135-6. Szondi's correlation of Moses with Abel also bears considering in the context of post-Shoah German language literature that engages Abel as a metaphor for Jewish victims of the Holocaust (see §6.3 n. 81 for example).

Num 3:1 to those in Genesis.<sup>111</sup> The identification of the formula's presence in Numbers and in Genesis apropos the macro-structure of the Pentateuch seems reasonably self-evident, particularly in light of its function that narrows the focus of the various accounts. As such, Thomas suggests that the תולדה of Aaron could represent the extension of the narrowing of focus evident in Genesis that is attendant with the formulae to the descendants of Aaron, i.e. the priestly class of Israel.<sup>112</sup> This observation is given further credibility considering that much of the latter parts of Numbers is concerned with the priesthood.

What of Moses, however, who has no descendants noted at the time of the Sinai theophany?<sup>113</sup> In a creative response to this question, Thomas proposes that Moses 'descendants' are in fact the fundamentals of Judaic religion: "the Torah, the office of prophet, civil leadership, and the like."<sup>114</sup> Such a perspective is quite congruous with Szondi's own emphasis on Moses as law giver and theopolitical leader. Notwithstanding this connection, the key point to note is that in the compilation of the Pentateuch a literary device most prevalent in Genesis has been used to point beyond that book to the significance of Moses. Thus, Szondi's choice of Moses as the metaphor for the resolution to his concept of the Cain complex is one that is reinforced by the intertextual connections of the HB.

The contrasts and connections between the natures and functions of Joseph and Moses as presented in the HB can also be considered when evaluating these figures as metaphors for the resolution of the Cain complex. These connections manifest as follows. Firstly, a contrast between Moses and Joseph can be evidenced in the Cainitic tendencies they each display. As was discussed above, Szondi makes it abundantly clear that one of the most meaningful aspects of Moses was that he was an 'actual Cain' who eventually brought restitution to the paroxysmal pattern to become the great leader and deliverer

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<sup>111</sup> See Timothy Ashley, *The Book of Numbers* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 76 n. 5; Calum Carmichael, *The Book of Numbers: A Critique of Genesis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 18. Most notably, perhaps, is Dennis Olsen who argues that it occupies a focal point of the Pentateuch. Olsen points to an important consideration in the macro-structural formation of the Pentateuch in arguing that the *toledot* formula is critical to what he interprets as the overarching structure of the Pentateuch, i.e. the passing of the old generation to the new, and evidence of editorial influence in shaping it. (Dennis T. Olsen, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New: The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch* [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985].) Recently, Won Lee has argued against Olsen's thesis, suggesting that the complex structure proposed by Olsen does not in fact reflect the centrality of the *toledot* formula in Num 3:1. "The clear discrepancy," Lee contends, "between what he discusses and what he actually proposes as a result of that discussion cannot be ignored." (Won W. Lee, *Punishment and Forgiveness in Israel's Migratory Campaign* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003], 33). Lee maintains that Olsen's structure does not reflect the literary function of Num 3:1, which is to link the census lists in Numbers to the tribal lists and genealogies in Genesis. For a summary of some of the supposedly contentious elements in Olsen's thesis ref. Lee, *Punishment and Forgiveness in Israel's Migratory Campaign*, 31-6.

<sup>112</sup> Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 47.

<sup>113</sup> At least as far as Num 3:1-4 suggests. Cf. Exod 2:22; 18:3-4.

<sup>114</sup> Thomas, 47.

of his people. Joseph, on the other hand, only exhibited Cainitic *tendencies*, and the paroxysmal phase never metamorphosed into the epileptiform phase as a catalyst for lethal violence, unlike Moses.

Secondly, the broad narrative arcs of the two figures, it could be argued, form a type of inclusio around the events leading to the nation of Israel's movement to Egypt and the events that lead to the Israelites' departure from Egypt. The general movement in Joseph's story is the mirror image of that of Moses. A shepherd whose metaphorical death at the hands of his kin leads to capture and being sent west to Egypt where he forges a career to become the vizier – a prince by any other name – to Pharaoh. Moses, in comparison, represents something of the inverse: an Egyptian prince kills in defence of his kin, flees into the eastern desert where he becomes a shepherd.<sup>115</sup>

The nexus between Joseph, Moses, and Egypt is further enhanced via a distinction that is drawn through the descriptions applied to their relationships with Pharaoh. In Gen 45:8 Joseph reveals to his brothers that God has made him “a father to Pharaoh.” In comparison, YHWH reveals to Moses that YHWH will make him like God to Pharaoh.<sup>116</sup> Thus, in light of their relationship to Pharaoh and Egypt, the Pentateuch indicates that Moses is indeed the more exalted of the two figures.

Finally, there is their function within the unfolding of the Pentateuch. Joseph's decision to bring his family to Egypt would of course have disastrous consequences for the nation of Israel. Though initially well-intentioned, Joseph's role as the sponsor of his family's migration is thus inexorably linked to the experience of oppression and servitude the Israelites experience in Egypt. Moses, on the other hand, is the deliverer of the Israelites from oppression in Egypt. In pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic contexts, Egypt was a by-word for chaos and exile, which, as was discussed previously, is a metaphor for death (§§3.4 and 7.3).<sup>117</sup> To put the contrast succinctly, Joseph sends his people to Egypt, while Moses brings them out. For Szondi, reading Moses in a post-Shoah context, the significance of deliverance from exile and death must have been especially pointed.

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<sup>115</sup> Note also the narrative symmetry in Joseph being dragged from the cistern (בֹּרַי) before his journey west to Egypt, whereas Moses ends his flight east from Egypt beside a well (בְּאֵר) (Exod 2:15). Moreover, Moses was given his name by Pharaoh's daughter because she “drew him out of the water” (Exod 2:10) – Joseph begins his journey to Egypt, where he will be renamed, after being drawn out of the cistern.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Exod 4:16; 7:1.

<sup>117</sup> On the connection between Egypt and chaos cf. Isa 30:7; Ezek 29:3.



## 8.5 Conclusion

Szondi's advancement of Moses as a metaphor for the resolution of his model of the Cain complex is fraught, but not without some justification. Like *Kain*, *Moses* is a blend of the objective and the subjective. On the one hand his claim that his 'warts and all' depiction of Moses creates some unease given the patriarch's status as the Jewish people's "greatest son" speaks ostensibly to Szondi's aim for objectivity. On the other hand, his tacit exoneration of the growth in violence which was attendant with Moses's theopolitical establishment of Israel appears to contradict the claim he previously made in *Kain* that Moses "symbolizes the fate of a man who seeks to make good his mistake by strict legislation."<sup>118</sup> The "strict legislation," as Szondi's own references to the HB makes clear – as indeed does the religious history of the world – at times only exacerbates the problem of violence.

There is, therefore, a degree of the subjective in Szondi's cleaving to Moses as the metaphor for the resolution of the Cain complex. Given the difficulties in conveying many of the social and cultural mores from the ancient world into modern contexts, this is unsurprising. However, in *Moses*, Szondi appears to understand and sense that there are problems with his chosen metaphor, but he advances them regardless. This is a sign both of the strength of his Jewish identity and his vocation as *superstes* to war, violence, killing, and evil. Szondi would hold fast to these throughout his life, just as the ancient author commonly known to us as the Deuteronomist once exhorted the people of Israel in antiquity to קבץ ('hold fast') and cleave to YHWH.

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<sup>118</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 9.

## CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION: “THE POETRY OF EVIL”

*They're lining up the prisoners  
And the guards are taking aim  
I struggled with some demons  
They were middle class and tame  
I didn't know I had permission to murder and to maim  
You want it darker*

Leonard Cohen, “You Want it Darker”

For Léopold Szondi, Cain and Moses were “the two most famous and powerful men in the Old Testament.”<sup>1</sup> As a self-declared Jewish believer, the prominence his statement affords Moses is self-evident; however, the claim that Cain is, alongside Moses, one of the “most famous and powerful men in the Old Testament” initially appears to be much less convincing. As I argued in Chapter 3, one of the aspects of Gen 4 which points to its possible later inclusion in the canon of the HB is the lack of intertextual references to Cain (and his brother Abel) in other parts of the OT except for later traditions in the Apocrypha (see §3.2). The Bible does not give Cain more than ‘minor billing’ despite his role in one of its foundational myths. And yet, despite his relatively brief appearance on the biblical stage and lack of acknowledgement elsewhere in the Bible, Cain has nevertheless proven to be one of the more enduring biblical characters.

The current study began by observing that the story of Cain and his brother Abel is so ingrained in Western cultural tradition that it continues to resonate into the twenty-first century, more than two millennia after its incorporation in the Hebrew Bible. Of greatest significance for this study, I noted that in the aftermath of World War II, in both the academic and broader cultural milieus, Cain came to symbolise the intractable and implacable nature of human aggression and violence. This phenomenon was most notable and relevant in German language discourse where Cain was engaged as an opportune and apt metaphor for the innateness of human wrongdoing and the universality of the proclivity to violence and evil, which thus, in some sense, assuaged German guilt for the atrocities of the war and the Holocaust. This was the setting against which Szondi articulated his concept for an elucidation of both the origins and resolution of human violence and evil, formed within the paradigm of his own psychological framework centring upon the factors constituting human fate.

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<sup>1</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 118.

A person of great learning, as revealed by his considerable literary and scholarly output, Szondi was also a person of diverse experiences who lived through the most turbulent of times. Szondi's experiences of combat, the appropriation of his possessions, the threat of extermination, imprisonment, exile, and the murder of members of his family, are reflected in *Kain* and *Moses*, which, in many respects, embody the attributes of a testimony to absolute human wrongdoing. When he came to give expression to his theory concerning the roots of violent human aggression and evil, Szondi looked to scholarship, his clinical experiences, and his faith, to arrive at Cain and Moses as metaphorical figures for both its cause and its restitution. Cain and Moses are thus appropriate figures for Szondi, indeed arguably "the two most famous and powerful" figures given both the setting against which he wrote and his Jewish identity. The figures of Cain and Moses enabled Szondi not only to articulate a psychological theory for human aggression, but to speak to the hegemony of German language discourse on the nature and origins of evil. His is the voice of a *superstes*. His is a voice that is worth being listened to.

As such, my original contribution to knowledge as represented by this study is the advancement of and contribution to an 'effective history' for Léopold Szondi in English language scholarship, which, to date, has been limited and, if not for the work of Richard Hughes and, to a lesser extent, Jens De Vleminck, almost non-existent. Specifically, I have sought to advance an 'effective history' for Szondi in the field of biblical psychological criticism. This has been realised via a *re-reading* of Gen 4 and the subsequent sibling stories in Genesis through the lens of Szondi's *Schicksalsanalyse* and his theory of the Cain complex. It has been a dialectic process shaped by Gadamer's *Wirkungsgeschichte* and Jauss's concept of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* in which imaginary conversations have taken place between myself and Szondi; Szondi, the authors of the Cain and Moses narratives, and later commentators; and the compiler of Genesis and me (in conjunction with many *real* conversations between me, my supervisors, and expert interlocutors like Friedjung Jüttner). A common feature of the best conversations is the sharing of perspectives – the ebb and flow of point, counterpoint, agreement and rebuttal that is characteristic of an encounter with what Jauss called "an *other*, understanding consciousness."<sup>2</sup> The conversations that have taken place have not only revealed the motivations and origins behind Szondi's Cain complex and its restitution as vested in the figure of Moses, but also the artistic deliberation behind the arrangement of the sibling stories in Genesis. The arrangement of the sibling stories diverges from Szondi's proposal, however, pointing instead to Joseph as the model for the resolution of the problem of human aggression and violence that was inaugurated by Cain.

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<sup>2</sup> Jauss and Bahti, "The Alterity and Modernity of Medieval Literature," 187.

The study sought to answer three interrelated primary questions. The first of these concerned the explanation of Szondi's Cain complex and the explication of its origins. This question was explored in chapters 4 to 6. Szondi's Cain complex emerged in the 1960s from his previous work on choice of marriage partner, 'genotropism,' and his major contribution to the field of psychoanalysis – the depth psychology known as *Schicksalsanalyse* or the analysis of fate. The main contention of *Schicksalsanalyse* is that the often unobserved and unconsidered aspects of one's life, in particular our genetic inheritance and the external and internal environmental factors over which one has little or no agency, constitute the compulsive aspects of fate. Szondi's concept of fate did not imply a type of determinism, however, because of the role that choice plays in his framework. Of the six factors constituting fate in the Szondian paradigm, choice manifests in the interplay between the spirit and the ego – these aspects represent the potential for a degree of freedom to be exercised in the fate of the individual. Linking the oppositional aspects of fate – i.e. the free and the compulsive – is Szondi's concept of the familial unconscious.

Together with his theory of the Cain complex, the familial unconscious represents Szondi's attempt at integrating the individuality inherent in Freudian psychoanalysis with Jungian notions of the collective unconscious. Between the "ontogeny" of Freudian psychoanalysis and the "archaeology" of Jungian analytical psychology was, Szondi contended, the "genealogy" of the familial unconscious.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Szondi's attempt to bridge Freudian and Jungian concepts of the unconscious can also be evidenced in the movement between the subjective and the objective that is inherent in both *Kain* and *Moses*. As was discussed in Chapter 6, one of the features of Szondi's writing is the interweaving of subjective with objective elements. At times, this mixture seems overt and deliberate, while on other occasions it appears to be more subliminal. I suggest that this movement reflects the subjectivity that is inherent in Freud's psychoanalysis and the objectivity implied by Jungian approaches. Equally important, however, this movement between the subjective and the objective also echoes Szondi's inculcation with the mystic aspects of his religion through the influence of his father, and the tension that is at times the result of his twin statuses of *superstes* and scientist.

The work of Freud and Jung were thus not the only influences evident in Szondi's concept of the familial unconscious. As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, there is a preoccupation with genealogy in the Torah, particularly in Genesis as is evident in the numerous occurrences of the *toledot* formulae. I have argued that this preoccupation is also reflected in Neology, the Jewish denomination peculiar

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<sup>3</sup> Szondi, *Ich-Analyse*, 21.

to Hungary and to which Szondi claims he and his father belonged. This preoccupation can be seen, for example, in the theories that were advocated by Neolog intellectuals espousing a common national origin with Magyar Hungarians and were a unique feature of that particular expression of Judaism. I have claimed that, together, the concerns for genealogy that are apparent in Genesis and Neolog Judaism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are also reflected in Szondi's articulation of the familial unconscious.

The familial unconscious is, to be concise, the influence of heredity on an individual's life choices. Szondi argued that what may appear to be the exercise of free will in making important life choices, particularly in partner, friendship, and profession – and more abstrusely in the predisposition to various illnesses and mode of death – in reality reflects the influence of our ancestors on these aspects of life. Well before the discovery of DNA and the subsequent, and somewhat fraught, re-evaluation of the importance of the 'nature' side of the so-called nature vs nurture debate, Szondi maintained that genetic inheritance played a pivotal role in the unfolding of one's destiny in life. According to Szondi, it is the influence of genes which largely determines the dominant drives at play in human behaviour. When the genetic inheritance and dominant drives are combined with the external and the internal mental milieu, fate takes on an uncontrollable, inflexible, and compulsive dimension which Szondi called *Zwangs-Schicksal*. I have suggested that *Zwangs-Schicksal* bears some comparison with Heidegger's concept of *Geworfenheit* in that it reflects the powerlessness which confronts an individual in determining the place in history, geography, and social circumstance to which one is born.

Just as the familial unconscious is a central feature of the compulsive aspects of fate, it also informs the range of choices and opportunities that constitute the free aspects of fate, which Szondi called the *Wahl-Schicksal*. Much like the discussions of fate that preoccupied the philosophers and sociologists who informed him, Szondi was adamant that his concept of *das Schicksal* was not deterministic. For him, this was due to the role that choice played within his framework. However, taking his cue from Hegel and Heidegger who argued that human beings are only free once they come to understand their limitations and the contingencies placed upon them, Szondi maintained that choice did not imply an endless range of possibilities. The choices available to an individual are informed by their ancestry and are therefore limited. The familial unconscious is essential in determining what Szondi calls a 'controllable fatalism' and is thus critical to the Szondian understanding of both the compulsive and liberating dimensions of fate. Revealing these aspects is the goal of *Schicksalsanalyse*.

At the centre of Szondi's exposition of *Schicksalsanalyse* and the familial unconscious stand the figures of Cain and Moses. I have argued that what was originally an interest in the choice of love and marriage partner metamorphosed for Szondi, following his experiences of war, persecution, and exile, into an interest in the dialectics of violence, killing and evil. In keeping with both the *Zeitgeist* and his Jewish heritage, Szondi looked to Cain as a metaphor to explain the phenomenon of human aggression and violence. He consequently defined the Cain complex, which was the result of almost thirty years of psychologically related work on the fate of the individual. While Szondi's personal experiences are arguably the most influential factor in the formation of his concept of the Cain complex, his concept, as its name suggests, also has a legacy in Freud's idea of the unconscious and his articulation of the Oedipus complex. Through the Cain complex, Szondi sought to build and expand upon ideas espoused by Freudian psychoanalysis and the central figure of Oedipus. However, when Szondi looked to the myths, stories, and legends of his own faith tradition he struggled to see evidence of the Oedipus complex. This is because, contrary to Greek mythology, in the Abrahamic faith traditions the father is not the enemy. The pattern that is instead evident in the Bible is that of siblings in conflict which is only resolved with the blessing of the father and the reaffirmation of fraternal/sororal bonds. As has been discussed, Szondi's critique of the Oedipus complex is reinforced by biblical scholarship, particularly that which has focussed on the sibling stories in Genesis (see §7.2).

The Oedipus complex was thus limited, according to Szondi, in its capacity to explain all facets of human relationships, such as those reflected in the scriptural and mythological traditions of the Abrahamic religions. In his opinion, the horizontal orientation of the Cain complex complements the vertical orientation implied by the Oedipus complex, thereby expanding the familial emphasis of the latter into a focus on fraternal relationships and onward into society more broadly. Inherent within the Cain complex is, I propose, an invitation to look beyond the family and to view wider society as one's brothers and sisters. The Cain complex may thus have a potential socially formative function, as is consistent with the seventh thesis of Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik*.

Having accounted for the origins and details of Szondi's theory of the Cain complex, I then addressed the second primary question of the study which concerned what Szondi's articulation of the 'Cainitic' personality reveals about the overarching structure of Genesis. This question was examined in chapters 7 and 8 predominantly. These chapters examined the stories of siblings in conflict in Genesis, namely the episodes dealing with conflicts between Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Leah and Rebecca, and Joseph and his older brothers. Reading the sibling stories that follow Gen 4 in light of the Cain and Abel narrative reveals both the motif of the predominance of the

younger sibling in a reversal of the norms of primogeniture and also a movement towards the gradual mitigation of aggression and extenuation of violence. Taken together, the stories reflect a narrative arc that incorporates the movement from death (fratricide); to an analogue of death (exile); to metaphorical death and rebirth; and to shame and social 'death' (unrequited love and infertility). This movement toward the diminution of violence is, however, interrupted by Gen 37 which ends in a narrative climax with the near physical death of the younger sibling, Joseph, at the hands of his older brothers and a degree of ambiguity surrounding his plight.

A Szondian reading through the lens of the Cain complex reveals that common to all the accounts is the presence of the Cainitic affects of aggression, jealousy, and anger, and that the degree to which conflict is attenuated is inversely related to the introjection of the parent figure (i.e. YHWH in several instances) into the ego of the subject. In other words, the greater the capacity for the subject to integrate the spirit of the 'parent' into their ego, the less overt aggression and violence becomes.

While this movement towards a mitigation of violence across the sibling stories in Genesis has been noted previously by scholars, the application of a psychological reading to this feature of the sibling stories has, to date, been problematic. This is due, in the main, to the reliance of such psychological readings on oedipal frameworks, which, as has been discussed, do not adequately account for the relational axes evident in the HB. What a reading of these narratives through the lens of the Cain complex achieves is not only a more apt description of the psychological mechanics of the interrelational dynamics at play within them, but the advancement of a nomenclature and taxonomy that can be applied to what scholars have hitherto not been able to name because the explicit conceptual structure was not available. Thus, the provision of a *Wirkungsgeschichte* for Szondi in the field of psychological biblical criticism facilitates the application of terminology that may more accurately reflect the distinctiveness of many of the OT narratives.

In addition, if the hypotheses that Gen 4 was a late inclusion in the canonisation process of the HB and was added to extant materials in Genesis as part of a 'prologue' are valid, the notion that the sibling stories have been carefully and deliberately arranged is reinforced. One purpose of this arrangement, I maintain, may have been to provide a commentary against a likely backdrop of internecine and religiously infused conflicts. Psychological readings of the sibling stories, such as this study's Szondian approach, lend themselves to a reciprocity across the expanse of time which may assist in illuminating the realities of conflict and human aggression for the compiler of Genesis and their relationship to more contemporary experiences and concerns.

In Chapter 8, the third and final primary question concerning Szondi's model for resolving the 'Cain complex' was detailed. Szondi chose Moses as the metaphor for the restitution of the Cain complex. However, in so doing he differentiated between the historical Moses and the figure of Moses as presented in the HB. Of central interest was the significance of what the Moses figure (i.e. *Moses der Mensch*) represents vis-à-vis human behaviour. For Szondi, Moses represented the capacity of a Cain-like figure to channel law-breaking into law-making through the integration of the 'parent' figure – YHWH in the case of Moses – and the projection of the violent tendencies of the subject onto the parent. According to Szondi, the behaviours evidenced by Moses place him at either end of the spectrum of the Cain-Moses dialectic. His cruelty and anger stand with the Cainitic attributes at one end, while his authority and benevolence – i.e. his so called 'Abelitic' attributes – reside at the opposite end. In this sense, Moses represents, for Szondi, the ideal resolution to the Cain complex.

However, Moses is a model that is not without some difficulties. For one, anger and violence are not extinguished after Moses has integrated the 'parent' into his ego. If anything, the violent behaviour only becomes even more pronounced. Szondi counters this by asserting that even though Moses had brought restitution of the Cain complex through the integration with YHWH, he nevertheless continues to maintain both the Cainitic and Abelitic traits simultaneously. Even so, the implications of Szondi's theory for the origins of religion are significant. In Chapter 3 I referred to Thomas Thompson's contention that much of the HB has been composed along sectarian lines against a backdrop of tensions and conflicts that are reflected in what he calls the 'theology of the way' motif. In a similar vein, the psychoanalyst Ruth Stein suggests that there is a paradox inherent in religious belief. While on the one hand it can be a source of meaning and represents the concept of "salvation based on the doing of good," on the other hand it can all too readily find expression in fundamentalist narrow-mindedness that, in its worst manifestation, can further degenerate into violence.<sup>4</sup> Stein argues that such sectarianism puritanism at times gives violence a transformative aspect, shifting it from forbidden violence, which is bad, to 'holy violence' which is good.<sup>5</sup> It is difficult to conclude that Szondi does not advocate this very thing when he suggests that when Moses engaged in violence "he did it for God as a theo-politician who tried to save God's kingship in this cruel way."<sup>6</sup>

The culmination of the current study sought to compare and contrast Szondi's presentation of the resolution of the Cain complex with the biblical tradition. In response to Szondi's promotion of

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<sup>4</sup> Ruth Stein, *For Love of the Father*, 61.

<sup>5</sup> Stein, 64.

<sup>6</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 120.



Moses, I have argued that the HB also offers another answer to Cain, and that answer is represented in the figure of Joseph. By reading the sibling stories in Genesis through the lens of Szondi's Cain complex, a 'feedback loop' was established – the Gen 4 narrative informing Szondi's articulation which in turn was used to elucidate the meaning of the sibling stories. These reciprocal 'conversations' revealed both the presence of the Cainitic traits of anger, jealousy, and physical or psychological aggression along the ancestral line (i.e. the *toledot* of Adam, Noah, Terah, Isaac, and Jacob) and the gradual attenuation of aggression and violence across the sibling stories in Genesis.

A Szondian reading of these narratives establishes Cain and Joseph as one another's antipodal counterparts, thereby reflecting the polarity that is inherent in the onset of the Cain complex and its resolution respectively. While other scholarship has noted the diminution of violence across the narrative arc of Genesis, this study found that a Szondian reading of the arrangement of the sibling stories, along with the numerous intertextual allusions between Gen 4 and Gen 37, 42–45 and Joseph's function in bringing the Genesis narrative to its climax and culmination, emphasises the importance of the figure of Joseph as a solution to the problem inaugurated by Cain. That is, while violence and killing were brought into the world through the figure of Cain, the figure of Joseph symbolises the victory of the power of dialogue, faith, justice, mercy, and reconciliation over the destructive Cainitic traits. It is a victory which is founded in Joseph's ability to integrate the spirit of the 'parent' into his ego; to reject anger, revenge, and violence; and to choose an alternate fate for himself, his family, and the embryonic nation of Israel.

## 9.1 Avenues for Further Research

I write this final part of the current study in the midst of a global pandemic. Adding to the chaos and uncertainty of this year, recent events in France and Austria have served as a reminder that the connection between violence, killing, and religion remains a perpetual problem. As Martin Luther observed in his lecture on Gen 4, religiously motivated anger tends to have more visceral and extreme expressions than others:

For in all political or civil rage there remains some degree of humanity... Such fury as this is never found in political wrath! Pharisaic fury is in its very nature a diabolical fury. This wrath began in Cain, and it continues in all Cainites to this very day.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Luther, *Commentary on Genesis*, IV.iii.

As is implied in its title, Szondi's Cain complex has the capacity to provide insight into the psychology of religiously motivated violence through his use of the 'fratricide' motif – a motif which permeates contemporary expressions of religiously motivated violence. The event which left an indelible mark on me and was the catalyst for my turn towards the motivations for violence and killing, i.e. the murder of Lee Rigby, is evidence of the disturbing relationship between violence, killing, and religion.

The presence of the Cain complex in his murder and its aftermath is also identifiable. The shock and savagery of the attack reflects the movement from the paroxysmal through to the epileptiform phases of the Cainitic characteristic of the complex that, together with the killers' expressed desire to exact some form of revenge, speaks to the presence of the Cainitic traits of shame, anger, rage, vengeance, and hatred. In the years since the attack, one of the killers, Michael Adebolajo, has expressed his remorse for his murder of Lee Rigby, indicating that he misinterpreted the Quran in justifying the killing.<sup>8</sup> He has also resiled from being referred to as Mujahid Abu Hamza, the name he had adopted at the time of the attack, now preferring the name he was born with. Both Adebolajo's expression of remorse and his use of a pseudonym at the time of the attack are features of the Cain complex: the former reflects the movement towards the Mosaic characteristic and restitution, while the latter indicates a form of concealment that is another sign of the Cainitic characteristic. In contrast, Rigby's other killer has expressed no such remorse for the murder and, during his sentence, has pleaded guilty to assaulting a prison health worker,<sup>9</sup> suggesting that he exhibits elements of an unresolved Cain complex.

Expressions of religiously motivated violence in the context of the Abrahamic faith traditions can be labelled 'fratricidal' by virtue of the familial links between the three faiths. The 'fratricidal' dimensions of these expressions of violence are also evident in intra-faith conflicts, for example in

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<sup>8</sup> Callum Adams, "Lee Rigby Killer Michael Adebolajo Says Sorry for Murder," *Telegraph Online*, June 3, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/06/03/lee-rigby-killer-michael-adebolajo-says-sorry-murder/>. Understandably, Rigby's mother, Lynn Rigby, has rejected Adebolajo's expression of remorse.

<sup>9</sup> Conrad Duncan, "Michael Adebowale: Lee Rigby Killer Pleads Guilty to Assaulting Nurse," *The Independent*, October 28, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/michael-adebowale-lee-rigby-death-soldier-nurse-assault-broadmoor-hospital-a9174636.html>.

the case of Islamist extremists who reveal a proclivity to attack other members of their own faith.<sup>10</sup> This phenomenon is, of course, not restricted to Muslim fundamentalists. Since the days of the early Christian church, sectarian violence has been a regular feature of the history of Christianity. Nor has the scale of Christian sectarian violence been any less than recent atrocities committed by Islamist extremists.<sup>11</sup> The HB is also replete with examples of Israelite and proto-Judaic sectarian violence. As was discussed briefly in Chapter 3, rivalries between priestly clans can be evidenced in the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Ezekiel as well as Deutero-Isaiah. In some of these accounts whole swathes of people are killed in often violent circumstances (e.g. Exod 32:27 and Lev 10:2).<sup>12</sup> Hence, both inter-faith and intra-faith attacks are of their very nature ‘fratricidal’ and have been, and in some cases continue to be, a feature of all three Abrahamic faiths. The promotion of dialogue between the faiths at all levels and the emphasis on their commonalities should be essential features of any solution to the ongoing problem of religiously motivated violence.

A Szondian reading of the sibling stories in Genesis that points to Joseph as a model for restitution and resolving the Cain complex could be a useful place for the Abrahamic faith traditions to ‘meet’ and enter into dialogue. Joseph represents a commonality for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in a manner that Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad cannot because of the intimate connections each has to

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<sup>10</sup> Mohammed Hafez, an academic specialist on Islamist movements and violent radicalisation at the US Naval Postgraduate School, labels these extremists “fratricidal jihadis.” Drawing a direct allusion to Cain, he claims that these fratricidal jihadis are “destined to wander from one conflict arena to another to another, unable to establish the utopian order to which they aspire.” Moreover, in a more oblique reference to Gen 4 and the exponential growth of violence as represented by the figure of Cain’s descendent, Lamech, their use of violence has a tendency to perpetuate more violence which in turn becomes more arbitrary and indiscriminate. As Hafez claims: “Those who wilfully and wantonly justify the mass killing of innocent civilians will not find it difficult to turn their daggers on fellow rebels who purportedly violate notions of ideological purity.” (Mohammed Hafez, “The Curse of Cain: Why Fratricidal Jihadis Fail to Learn from Their Mistakes,” *CTC Sentinel* 10, no. 10 (2017): 1–7.)

<sup>11</sup> The thirteenth century Albigensian Crusade against the Cathars resulted in almost the total destruction of the movement over a period of twenty years – in 1209, in the town of Béziers alone, all 15,000 citizens were massacred. (See William D. Rubinstein, *Genocide: A History* [Oxford; New York: Routledge, 2014], 32.) Conservative estimates of deaths resulting from the St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of 1572, during the French Wars of Religion, are 2,000 deaths in Paris and up to 4,000 deaths in the provinces. (See Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* [New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2013], 174.) Already mentioned has been the Thirty Years War, which also had its roots in sectarian tensions and violence, resulted in the deaths of 20 percent of the German population. (See §4.2 ‘An Outline of *das Schicksal* in German Thought.’) The Rwandan Genocide of 1994 illustrates a further dimension of the connection between religion and violence, in that religious authorities were largely incapable of stopping the racially motivated violence. Both the Hutu perpetrators and the Tutsi victims were predominantly Roman Catholic. In fact, a Rwandan Catholic Bishop later stated: “The best catechists, those who filled our churches on Sundays, were the first to go with machetes in their hands.” (Miroslav Volf, “The Social Meaning of Reconciliation.” *Int* 54, no. 2 [2000]: 158.)

<sup>12</sup> In the latter example, Moses orders the Levites to “kill your brother, your friend, and your neighbour” as punishment for being led into apostasy by Aaron. The Hebrew word for “kill” that is used in Exod 32:27 is a lexeme of *הרג*, which is used in the HB to refer to particularly ruthless violence committed by private persons (See §7.3 ‘Joseph and his older brothers’).

their respective faiths.<sup>13</sup> The figure of Joseph, in some sense, represents ‘neutral territory’ – recognisable and comprehensible to all three Abrahamic faiths but neither explicitly Jewish, nor Christian, nor Muslim in the same manner that the three central figures of each are. Moreover, the story of Joseph is also a model in scripture for the integration of the Godhead into the ego, for dialogue, and for the transformative power of forgiveness. Further investigation examining Joseph as a model for resolution of the Cain complex apropos the negation of aggression, anger, and violence could thus be a fruitful avenue for continued inter-faith dialogue and understanding.

An additional avenue that could prove productive for future research is more theoretical in nature. I have attempted to demonstrate the usefulness of applying the Cain complex to psychological biblical criticism of the sibling stories in Genesis in order to reveal new insights. In *Kain* and *Moses*, Szondi attempted, in part, a similar approach to Gen 4 and Exodus (and to a lesser extent Numbers) respectively. Applying this framework to other OT texts which reflect a binary paradigm with respect to conflict and violence could prove to be insightful. For example, Szondi’s Cain complex may be a particularly apt framework for approaching the interplay between David’s offspring – the so-called Succession Narrative (2 Sam 11–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2). Somewhat less obviously, an examination of the Josianic reforms (2 Kgs 23) through the lens of the Cain complex might also produce new interpretations. Returning to Genesis, the distinction that Jacob gives to his sons Judah and Joseph – and by extension Joseph’s sons Ephraim and Manasseh – in his final blessing (Gen 49: 8-12; 22-26) over his other sons could be a productive point from which to commence an exploration of the tensions that develop between the northern and southern kingdoms through the lens of *Schicksalsanalyse* and the Cain complex.

In summary, Szondi’s theories have much to offer the field of psychological biblical criticism. In keeping with both the exegetical and the therapeutic effects of the psycho-hermeneutical elements of psychological biblical criticism, as asserted by Rollins, and my proposition that the Cain complex has a potential socially formative application, two of the most readily identifiable avenues for further research extending from this study are thus oriented to practical and theoretical applications of Szondi’s theories.

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<sup>13</sup> Aside from his place in the Torah, there are NT allusions to Joseph in the name of Jesus’ father (Matt 1:18–2:23; Luke 2:4-7; 22-24; 39; and 3:23) and his dreams (Matt 1:20-21; 2:13; 19-20), in the second of which an angel tells him to take his family to Egypt. In the Quran, Joseph is held in high esteem and his story comprises Sura 12.

## 9.2 Final Thoughts

Evil is not an abstract concept for Szondi – it is a deeply personal experience, which is reflected at times in his articulation of both the Cain complex and its resolution represented by the figure of Moses. Moses is a problematic model if one understands that his metaphorical role within the Cain complex is to bring about the elimination of violence. But is this what Szondi is proposing? Is Moses the answer to Cain because he represents the elimination of violence or its resolution through assimilation and expiation? As with much of what I have experienced in reading Szondi, the answer is not straightforward.

Despite what I argue is the convincing case for Joseph as a model for the resolution of the Cain complex, as is revealed through a Szondian reading of the sibling stories, one of the most surprising aspects of this study has been Szondi's silence on the significance of Joseph. Szondi's lack of interest in Joseph is made even more perplexing after considering the many similarities that Szondi shares with the biblical figure. I previously mentioned some of these (see §8.4): the similar familial compositions and positions of both, and the innocent suffering that both endured. The extent of the correspondences between Szondi and Joseph were unanticipated in the earlier stages of the current study, even after the initial Szondian approach to Genesis revealed Joseph to be 'an answer' to Cain. This surprising realisation led to deeper consideration of the significance of Moses for Szondi and why this might account for his silence about Joseph.

The point of connection between Joseph and Moses is Egypt. Egypt, as was discussed, is a byword in biblical literature for exile and death. As a forced exile from his native Hungary and a victim of and witness to oppression, Joseph's role in settling the family of Israel in Egypt, where they experienced decades of subjugation and servitude, carries with it connotations that Szondi would naturally have wished to avoid. Moses, on the other hand, was the figure who delivered the nation of Israel out of exile and death.

Hence, consideration must be given to Moses's place within Judaism alongside Szondi's Jewish identity and his personal experiences. On one level, Szondi is transparent about the anxiety his conclusion that the Decalogue stems from Moses's paroxysmal personality and his Cainitic traits has instilled in him. I suggest that this also reflects Szondi's own sense that Moses is not the perfect answer to the problem of Cain since he does not embody the elimination of violence.

However, Szondi's personal history and his role as a *superstes* also needs to be taken into consideration. His choice of Moses as the optimal symbol for the resolution of the Cain complex, therefore, seems more appropriate. In such a light, his decision to place Moses at the top of his taxonomy of behaviour for the resolution of aggressive and violent traits speaks to the hegemony of German language discourse on the origins and innateness of humanity's proclivity to evil.

Szondi was a person who had seen himself as a "Magyar of the Mosaic faith," demonstrated in his choice to Magyarise his father's surname, and loyal to the Dual Monarchy, as evidenced in his service to the Empire in World War I. Following that war, he built up considerable prestige in Budapest through his career as a physician and researcher. The relatively sudden reversal in his circumstances which saw him persecuted and exiled must have been a painful irruption of fate: a cruel deviation, using the language of the sociologists of his day, of his perceived life trajectory. Just like his two case studies in 'Cain, the War Criminal,' I believe that Szondi's choice of Moses also speaks to his personal pain, his survival, and his ability to endure and overcome his own time in the wilderness.

Not only does Moses's wandering and his struggle with Cain reflect Szondi's own journey through life, these struggles were also embedded in ancient Israelite society as is reflected in its sacred literature. The contrast between the lawlessness and murderous anger of Cain and the authority and the benevolence of the 'Abelitic' aspects of the paroxysmal pattern, both of which, Szondi maintained, are evident in Moses can also be seen throughout the HB. One only has to read divergent texts such as Ps 137:7-9 and Isa 11:1-9 for evidence of this.

Steeped within this perspective is also Szondi's affinity for the mystical aspects of Judaism, particularly *kavana* as articulated by Buber. As Szondi's depiction of Moses and the establishment of monotheism, as well as the HB more broadly suggest, good and evil are the same substance, both of which need to be accounted for and assimilated to achieve personal wholeness. There is no reliable hope for the *elimination* of evil in Szondi's framework. There is instead the assertion that humanity can only integrate, expiate, and channel evil 'drives' – i.e. the Cainitic affects such as anger, rage, envy, vengeance – for creative rather than destructive ends. More tacitly, there is also the acceptance that evil and good are intrinsic and endemic dimensions of the human condition. Thus, though he may be a problematic choice for certain readers' expectations vis-à-vis confronting evil, Moses is in the end an apt choice for Szondi's response to the problem of Cain.

In his interview with Jacques Schotte, Szondi says that he is aware that his fate analytic framework can prompt negative reactions and resistance: "It was said at first that I'm worse than Calvin – stricter

and more deterministic!”<sup>14</sup> While such accusations do misconstrue his theories and his emphasis on the role of choice in an individual’s sense of agency over their fate, I must nevertheless conclude that Szondi evidences a degree of pessimism regarding the ability of human beings to actually confront evil and use it, in his words, “to serve God.” Szondi’s assertion that the sublimation of the simultaneous Cainitic and Mosaic natures on a spiritual level is the most difficult and rarest of the potentialities in the Cain-Moses dialectic speaks to this. So, too, does his conclusion to *Kain* where he immediately follows a reference to Frederic Wertham’s claim that evil must be overcome with a lengthy quote from Honoré de Balzac’s *A Harlot High and Low* detailing that the “poetry of evil” contains within it an irresistible lure.<sup>15</sup>

Ultimately, Szondi’s approach to evil is ambivalent as his choice of Moses as the answer to Cain reflects. On one hand, he holds out the hope that individuals affected by the paroxysmal pattern might, through the therapeutic application of *Schicksalsanalyse*, be capable of effecting positive change and choose to channel the influence of Cain in their familial unconscious for their betterment and, consequently, the eventual benefit of society. On the other hand, he remains sceptical that this will ever be achieved in sufficient numbers, so his outlook for collective evil is bleak. In a nod to Freud and before him Gustave Le Bon, Szondi despairs that the crowd – the masses – and, thus, civilisation is perpetually struggling. This is due, he claims, to the influence that powerful ‘Cains’ are able to exercise in the fields of politics, economics, the arts, and religion. As Balzac writes, “People like that are as dangerous in society as lions would be in the heart of Normandy.”<sup>16</sup> When Szondi asserts that this is especially true during times of war, he is reflecting on his own experiences of combat and persecution, and his portrayals of Zöldi and Eichmann.

The “vast majority of the history of the world,” Szondi therefore claims in *Kain*, “is the eternally recurring history of Cain.”<sup>17</sup> In this sense, Cain does indeed rule the world. For Szondi, the biblical account of Cain’s genealogy and the birth of civilisation (Gen 4:17-24) and the events of the twentieth century corroborate this claim. As he concludes *Moses*, he nevertheless holds out a small but forlorn hope for humanity “longing for the arrival of a new Moses with a new Decalogue.”<sup>18</sup> I have suggested

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<sup>14</sup> Maebe, “BRT document Jacques Schotte Interviews Lipót Szondi.”

<sup>15</sup> See Honoré de Balzac, *A Harlot High and Low*, trans. Rayner Heppenstall (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 432.

<sup>16</sup> Balzac, *A Harlot High and Low*, 432.

<sup>17</sup> Szondi, *Kain*, 7.

<sup>18</sup> Szondi, *Moses*, 154.

that such a figure may already exist: that Joseph, “more Moses than Moses” as Friedjung Jüttner succinctly perceived, could represent Szondi’s longed for “new Moses.”

And yet I must also concede that, as the Torah and Szondi’s personal history attest, Joseph’s story is not the whole story. Neither, though, is Moses’s the whole story, as the current study’s Szondian reading affirms. There is thus an implicit tension between the figures of Joseph and Moses apropos Szondi’s Cain complex. While both channel the destructive impulses of their Cainitic inheritances into establishing new paradigms for society – the fraternal society in the case of Joseph and the kingship of God in the case of Moses – the biblical account reveals that both approaches are also fraught with the potential for adverse consequences. Perhaps then, if civilisation is to progress, the real answer to Cain lies with both Joseph and Moses? Maybe, but the path forward for any solution to Cain will not be an easy one. The truth of this is reflected in Szondi’s contention that the best hope for civilisation lies with the fate of the individual and his equivocal final words in *Moses*:

Is not the goal of the philosopher, according to which the masses with the evil instincts should serve the spirit, God, an unattainable utopia? Who knows? Happy is the one who can believe in it.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Szondi, 154.



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