

MEALS IN EARLY JUDAISM

Social Formation at the Table

Edited by

Susan Marks and Hal Taussig



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Ten Theses Concerning Meals and Early Judaism

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and Jordan D. Rosenblum*

The three of us began to study meals because we understood we could not address our questions concerning Early Judaism without such a perspective.¹ We have now been writing on meals for quite some time and have experienced some very substantial breakthroughs in our accumulated work. The study of Jewish meals as a subdiscipline of Biblical Studies, Jewish Studies, or the emergent field of Food Studies existed, but scholarly attention to ancient Jewish meals tended to be incidental to “silo-ed” disciplinary focuses, with scholars interested in the origins of the Eucharist, the Last Supper, or the Passover Seder in a much less interdisciplinary age.² The question of whether these iconic meals were more “Jewish” or “Greek” or an innovation of Jesus often dominated the discussion. Our work sought to take this foundational scholarship forward by employing more theory and engaging in a more interdisciplinary conversation.

We first worked together to articulate these new directions when we were asked to write several theses for presentation at the Society of Biblical Literature’s “Meals in the Greco-Roman World” Seminar in 2010. This exercise proved quite fruitful, causing us to realize that together we could explore ideas more deeply and recognize new connections. The crafting of this

chapter provided an opportunity to return to these Ten Theses, to look back at the research that had allowed us to begin our studies, at what we had discovered, and at new possibilities. We consider our Ten Theses as akin to rabbinic hermeneutical principles: rules for reading ancient Jewish sources concerning food and foodways. You will find all Ten Theses listed in the Appendix to this chapter as well as individually featured as epigraphs prior to the discussions they triggered. Further explorations encompass the perspectives of three different scholars who have been involved with this dialogue—one earliest (JBK), the other a little more recently (SM), and another more recently still (JR). On the macrolevel, we tend to agree with each other. However, happily our slight disagreements have led to more nuanced statements.

In this chapter we are interested in explaining early Judaism, from the time when the Second Temple still stood in the early centuries BCE, but most particularly early rabbinic Judaism, whose key texts first appeared in the third century CE. Recently, scholars have argued more forcefully for the Roman-ness of the early Rabbis.³ In examining the meals of these people, we build upon these developments in rabbinic scholarship while also expanding it in new directions.⁴ We aim to share ideas that have proved valuable to us, while simultaneously recognizing what has yet to be explored in the way of Meals in Early Judaism, so that a volume such as this in 20 years will look quite different. In what follows, we explore new insights into the Jewish meal context (Theses 1–4); ways that the study of meals offers confirmation for other kinds of research (Theses 5–6); and finally, the early Jewish development of received meal traditions (Theses 7–10).⁵ Ultimately, we demonstrate that a focus on meals transforms prior insights into early Judaism.

- 1) *Theories developed in other disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, and especially food studies contribute a methodological foundation to the study of the early Jewish table.*

While scholars of Jewish food and meals have drawn profitably on theories from other disciplines for some time (e.g., the influential work of Mary Douglas),⁶ the opportunities for dialogue

have greatly expanded in the past two decades. Various scholars, including anthropologists, sociologists, and historians, have turned their attention toward food and meals. These topics have also grown in popular appeal, with the rise of television shows, books, and magazines devoted to cooking and cookery. From scholars working on the ancient Mediterranean in general,⁷ to those working on early Christianity in particular,⁸ there is much new conversation to be had. Further, work on groups (both Jewish and Gentile) in other time periods and locations have much to offer, overlapping considerations emerging from notions of embodiment, commensality, and foodways.

Scholars of early Judaism have also begun to interact with and profit from the work of food studies in general. Reading cultural and historical studies of food that examine groups temporally, spatially, religiously, and culturally distinct from early Judaism has resulted in more complex, comparative, and theoretically savvy scholarship, such as Brumberg-Kraus's explorations of recent trends in Jewish Food History.⁹ For another example, the interactions between politics and gender in World War II America, as explored by Amy Bentley, can inform similar discussions about the rabbis in Roman-period Palestine.¹⁰ Bentley shows how US government propaganda about wartime food rationing evidences broader conceptions of gender construction. Scholars of rabbinic literature can use Bentley's analysis to explore the ways in which rabbinic foodways help to establish and reify rabbinic conceptions of gender.¹¹ This interaction is not limited to scholars of antiquity, as discussions of politics, food regulations, and corporate business in regard to modern kosher laws draw on similar discussions about the American food system in general.¹² Or the work of scholars such as Ohnuki-Tierney and Appadurai on food and the construction of Japanese and Indian national identities offer suggestive ways of describing the connections (e.g., "metonymic foods") as well as the instructive caveats about simple definitions of national or ethnic "identities" foods and meal practices are supposed to express.¹³

- 2) *Any early Jewish ritual involving meals must seriously investigate meals, as Catherine Bell observes about ritual:*

“When abstracted from its immediate context, an activity is not quite the same activity.”¹⁴

Because meals are so mundane, scholarship has tended to selectively decontextualize or overly theologize them. The difference between ancient meals found in difficult and fragmentary sources and idealized descriptions of them have too often been blurred. In the light of information supplied by all the fields that contribute to our understanding of meals, we recognize that consideration of meals can no longer be considered a luxury, a nice domestic touch. Rather, without understanding meals, we fail to understand the myriad aspects of the social world that developed as part of the meal. Difficulties abound. On the one hand, the idea that we must investigate the situation of ritual activity sounds obvious; on the other hand, in practice, the study of the ancient world depends on textual passages and fragments, which can easily lead scholars to an articulation of textual puzzles to the exclusion of the larger context. In the face of this, we must think contextually and, in the case of meals, wonder about the mealtime situation framing the ritualized practice, for which the text offers one puzzling kernel of indirect evidence.

For many years, *sheva brachot*, the seven blessings recited at a rabbinic wedding, constituted such a puzzle. Studies of the words of this wedding blessing so absorbed scholars that the meal context faded into the background. Since, in the modern world, the seven blessings appears prominently in a ceremony separate from the meal, it was forgotten that in the ancient world these blessings belonged to a meal.¹⁵ Once the “situation” of this seven-part blessing is recalled, then the nearby *huppah* and the sexual activity of the bridal couple loom larger, challenging us to search for contextual evidence for this “disembodied text.” Consideration of the irrepressible wedding meal, peopled by real hosts and guests, a local community and neighboring communities, reveals new possibilities and challenges hinted at by the blessing.

The text of *sheva brachot*, or “seven blessings,”¹⁶ does cite biblical texts, such as Genesis, pertaining to creation, or

Jeremiah, with its “streets of Jerusalem,” in the last component of blessing:

Speedily, O Lord our God, may there be heard in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of the singing of bridegrooms from their *huppah* (wedding chambers) and of youths from their feasts of song. Blessed are you, O Lord, who makes the bridegroom to rejoice with the bride.¹⁷

How exciting to see such a messianic vision! Nevertheless, attention to the context recalls that, despite the salience of the intertextual references, these words become associated with actions and rarely appear as merely a text.¹⁸ The relevant passage in the Babylonian Talmud introduces these components by describing participants who interact with the meal and with each other, invoking the complexity of the surrounding culture and society. In other words, the blessing may allude to a prophetic landscape, but further attention to the text reveals how, in the immediate moment, the table continues to shape the surrounding society.

The narration continues by situating these blessings at the meal, thus helping us to understand their enactment:

Levi came to the house of Rabbi to the wedding feast of R. Simeon his son [and] said five benedictions. R. Assi came to the house of R. Ashi to the wedding feast of Mar his son [and] said six benedictions.¹⁹

According to this account, people came to these feasts and said such blessings, and they disagreed on the proper number of blessings. The recitation of these six blessings enacts one side of the argument: “say this and not that.” With Bell’s caution in mind, we look to the text’s invoked context as well as its intertextual puzzle. Levi’s vision clashes with that of R. Assi at the wedding meal, *not* at the study table in the *bet midrash*, or so the Babylonian Talmud’s telling would like to suggest. This point cannot be overemphasized. A significant number of rabbinic texts not only locate the occasions for teaching at *meals*, or

but also explicitly or implicitly have their dialogue participants refer to those meal settings to make their point.²⁰

Following out this thread, we can begin to see the stakes: weddings served as key venues for developing and consolidating the small-but-growing rabbinic movement. Guests included almost everyone, as we learn in various stories, including New Testament Gospel parables.²¹ These wedding meals served as a powerful center for the community, the social networking of its day. Where better to insert rabbinic ideas for understanding creation, procreation, and prophetic ideals for the community? Meanwhile, through this rabbinic action, the rabbis suggested themselves as knowledgeable participants in such festivities.²² The blessing in the context of the meal thus models the rabbis attending (and attending to) the larger community events, actions that could give them support and legitimacy. Focusing on the situation helps us understand the unfolding spectacle and ultimately allows us to see the *sheva brachot* as a new ritual response. In other words, we remember to focus on the meal and situate relevant practices within its orbit. In the case of weddings, because of a focus on meals, we can begin to observe changing dynamics in ritual practice around weddings that reveal important changes and developments in rabbinic Judaism.

3) *Shared Greek and Roman meal practices prompt particularized Jewish practice at meals in the early Jewish and Rabbinic world.*

While the earlier case emphasizes the importance of the meal context, meals also allow us a glimpse of particularly “Jewish” practice. The meal setting continually (re)establishes cultural boundaries and connections, based upon a foundation provided by Greek and Roman customs.²³ The introduction to this volume discusses Siegfried Stein’s identification of symposiastic practices underlying the Passover Seder, and those replying to and building upon Stein.²⁴ More recently, Rosenblum’s exploration of reclining draws connections between work on Classics and rabbinic literature.²⁵ Reclining served specific gendered,

political, social, cultural, economic, and rhetorical roles in the ancient Mediterranean.²⁶ Jews, like their ancient contemporaries, engaged in this bodily discourse. Likewise, Marks’s chapter in this present volume makes the connection between the rabbinic Grace after Meals and libation practices, each invoking elaborate rules for precedence. And Brumberg-Kraus’s chapter on performing midrash at the early rabbinic table recognizes the quintessential Hellenistic symposiastic practice of table talk as a distinctive feature of scholastic rabbinic meals. As new explorations reveal important connections, each paves the way for the next. Each study has made it easier to see the relationship of those meals described in Jewish literature and those we know of from other ancient sources.

4) *Greek and Roman meal practices and literary representations of them figure in the development of a rabbinic “symptotic ethic.”*

Although it might be an overstatement to assert the symptotic ethic became *the* rabbinic ethic, the subsequent reception history of Greek and Roman symposiastic practices in rabbinic tradition suggests that these meal practices played a crucial role in the rabbinic movement’s articulation and propagation of their values and norms. Conventional components of symposiastic practice were rabbinized. Rituals of rabbinic scholasticism akin to their contemporary non-Jewish sages’ symposia elevated the rabbinic table. The popular philosophic symptotic values of table talk about table topics (*sumpotika* and *sumposiaka*), of wine’s friend-making power among learned table companions, and of *spoudaiogeloion* (“serious fun”) were rabbinized and sacralized—as *divre torah al ha-shulhan* (“words of Torah about and over the table”); wine drinking requirements at Jewish holidays, Sabbath, and life cycle event ritual meals (enshrined in the saying: *ayn simhah ela be-yayin* (“there is no festive celebration without wine”)); the four required cups of wine at the rabbinic Seder; the *kos shel berakhab* (“cup belonging to the blessing” for blessings before and after Sabbath and holiday meals), and the performance of midrash at the dinner table.

Likewise, symposiastic washing and reclining became the required rituals of *netilat yadain* (lit., “raising the hands [to wash them]” with its accompanying blessing). Reclining even appears as one of the four ritual meal practices specified as distinguishing the night of the Passover Seder meal “from all other nights” in the Four Questions. Most Tannaitic and Amoraic descriptions of rabbinic meals use some form of the Hebrew or Aramaic verbs “to recline” as almost a shorthand to refer to or to set the scene of a meal. The importance of the rabbinic sympotic ethic is to be seen not only in its Roman imperial context, but also in the postrabbinic reception history of rabbinic meals in medieval *sifrei haḥagot* (“conduct books”) about eating, like Rabbenu Bahya ben Asher’s *Shulhan shel Arba*, the *Tu Bishvat haggadot*, and the contemporary expressions in the New Jewish Food Movement.²⁷ In other words, a sympotic ethic remained relevant in certain Jewish circles long after the period of its origin.

- 5) *Scholarly understanding of the centrality of meals provides independent confirmations (or challenges) to ideas developed according to other methodologies.*

The aforementioned first four Theses each started with attention to methods and meals as important ways to view the ancient world. We also observe that other research can be affirmed or strengthened by appealing to its consonance with a developing understanding of Jewish meal practices. Judith Hauptman’s work provides a fine example of how the centrality of meals provides confirmation. Hauptman has been developing a sustained challenge to accepted ideas about the relationship of the Mishnah and the Tosefta, exploring the possibility that the later Tosefta sometimes witnesses an UrMishnah, an earlier version than the Mishnah itself preserves. In the case of Passover, Hauptman wrestles with the question of which came first: the order of the Seder presented in the Mishnah, with the story-telling prior to the eating of the meal, or the Tosefta’s version, which prescribes the meal before the intellectual exercise:

What is at issue is when the seder and haggadah as we know them developed. Oral traditions, of which we have no record at all,

cannot provide us with an answer. Let me suggest that it is the redactor of the Mishnah who introduced the requirement of telling the story at the seder and who deliberately chose to turn the study session into a haggadah.²⁸

Consideration of the Roman Banquet form, based on the Greek sympotic idea, certainly supports her argument that a symposiastic discussion of laws that occurred *after* the meal in the Tosefta constitutes the norm, so that we recognize the Tosefta preserving an earlier Seder, while the Mishnah’s version appears to record a new development. Although Hauptman’s overriding questions concern the Mishnah and the Tosefta as a whole, her attention to the nature of the meal and symposium, and the way particular meals engage in and modify this paradigm, leads her to confirm important changes that had been overlooked.

We can also imagine this confirmation process working the other way around, challenging conclusions that have ignored the meal and the meal’s context of social formation. For example, recently, Gil Klein in “Torah in Triclinia” challenged earlier conclusions by raising the issue of whether the *bet midrash* or the rabbinic banquet is the setting for certain rabbinic meal traditions.²⁹ Correlating the architectural evidence of dining rooms at archeological sites such as Sepphoris, with literary accounts of rabbis referring to their surroundings at a banquet to make a legal point (e.g., *t. Ber.* 5:1–2), Klein makes a strong case for meals themselves as the original setting for their teaching.³⁰

- 6) *Understanding of Hellenistic and Roman meals gives us an important lens to consider the rhetoric of women’s idealized relationship with meals in tension with actual practice.*

Our consideration of meals suggests that meals can provide an instructive and underutilized way to look at gender. Analyzing the complexity and performance of meals contributes important nuances to the study of women in the ancient world and constructions of gender. Kathleen Corley’s *Private Women, Public Meals* opened up these questions, including important differences in the roles of women at Roman versus Greek meals.³¹ Building upon this, Carolyn Osiek, Angela

Standhartinger, and Ellen Aitken, all combine an interest in women and early Christian meals. Recently Osiek looks at the evidence of Roman archeology;³² and Standhartinger surveys pre-Christian and Christian ancient meals, including Jewish meals in Philo.³³ Aitken looks at the meal as the “generative matrix” that fosters traditions, and thus serves as a locus for considering how the Jesus movement “remembers” women. In the absence of definitive evidence, Aitken considers alternatives, including situating women in attendance as part of the symposium, on the one hand, or separately, on the other.³⁴ Likewise Marks, in considering Greek, Roman, Christian, and Jewish wedding meals, finds that the silence of a text about who attends the meal does not invariably signal the absence of women, but that such ambiguity requires multiple answers.³⁵

This approach to ambiguous evidence concerning gender appears elsewhere in important studies discussing Jewish women: their work lives, sex lives, and religious lives.³⁶ Thus studies of Jewish women and studies of meals already share certain elements, each study providing small steps that correct earlier glib portraits. The interactions and traditions of the meal can contribute to the study of gender, revealing overlooked possibilities. Rosenblum’s work in this volume considers gender in the creation of food in rabbinic kitchens; elsewhere, he investigates the question of women reclining at rabbinic meals and the barriers to participation.³⁷ In this volume also, Hauptman returns to the question of women at the Passover meal and mealtime discussions.³⁸ Attention to the meal as social location might also allow for expansion of already fine studies. Exploring the depiction of women as sorcerers in rabbinic literature, Rebecca Leses considers the rabbinic teaching that one should pass by “food left on the road” because the “daughters of Israel . . . might have used the food for sorcery.”³⁹ Here, amidst other explorations, is a relatively isolated glimpse of food. Would further consideration of the meal and the place of food help explore the relationship between these rabbis and these women? Marjorie Lehman investigates how the *sukkah* may be a domestic space like a house and the implications of this concerning women and construction of gender. She finds familiar ambiguities. When the rabbis consider women, they

present them as exempt from the obligation of the *sukkah*, but when the rabbis consider priests, their argument suggests the involvement of wives.⁴⁰ Here too, attention to the meal as a central feature of the *sukkah* might add yet another perspective.⁴¹

7) *In the Greek and Roman periods, Jews used kasbrut as a distinct foodway to distinguish themselves both from non-Jews and from other Jews.*

In addition to revealing important ways to study early Judaism and confirming other kinds of studies, an examination of meals demonstrates Jewish wrestling with meal customs as central to developing self-understanding. Thus, the four Theses in this third and final section examine the way Jews expressed and constructed their social identities specifically in their performance of meals. While Milgrom and others have argued that the biblical food laws served to separate Jew from Gentile, the evidence for this separation does not truly appear until the Second Temple period.⁴² Beginning in the Second Temple period, both Jews and non-Jews begin to notice that Jews separate themselves at meals and have peculiar culinary practices (most notably, their abstention from pork). Of course, this does not mean that all Jews did so. It also does not mean that all of these practices are ancient. In fact, we have evidence that many of them are new to the period.

Moving into the rabbinic period, we encounter a myriad of new culinary and commensal practices (often centered around purity).⁴³ The rabbis use these distinct practices to distinguish themselves from both non-Jews and nonrabbinic Jews. For example, as David Kraemer persuasively argues, the rabbinic expansive interpretation of the biblical commandment prohibiting cooking a kid in its mother’s milk results in a bifurcation of the Jewish community in antiquity: between those who follow rabbinic law and those who do not.⁴⁴ The meal therefore becomes a locus of difference, contestation, and identity construction.

8) *In the rabbinic transformations of Biblical priestly sacrificial traditions to the rabbinic table there is a shift in*

emphasis from food preparation to table talk as what distinguished the “rabbinic Jew” from others.

Paralleling this attention to what was eaten, other developments of early rabbinic table practices also transformed meals into a locus of intra-Jewish group differentiation. Rabbinic ideas about what constituted priest-like behaviors regarding the table changed, and as we shall show, so did their definition of the “non-rabbinic Jews” whom they called *ammei ha'aretz* (lit., “people of the land”).⁴⁵ The Tannaim did not adopt the earlier Pharisees’ *whole* program of eating properly tithed food in a state of ritual purity. For while the Tannaim appreciated the Pharisees’ intensification of Jewish norms by having nonpriests eat like priests, the Pharisees “pretend-to-be-priest” behavior depended upon a Temple system of sacrifice and tithing that required actual hereditary priests. This is not possible for the Tannaim after 70 CE.

One can see this shift especially in rabbinic interpretations of the “*torah* of beast and fowl,” that is, the phrase summarizing the Biblical dietary laws in Lev. 11:46. They reflect the development of new, postbiblical conceptions of “*torah*.” Normally in Leviticus, “*torah*” refers to instructions about sacrifices and purity either for priests or instructions by priests to ordinary Israelites on how to be holy, for example, “this is the *torah* of the burnt offering [*olab*]” (6:2); “this is the *torah* of the grain offering [*minhab*]” (6:7); “this is the *torah* of her who bears a child [*ha-yoledet*]” (12:7); or “this is the *torah* of beast and fowl” (11:46). But even in these priestly *torot*, the dietary rules (“the *torah* of beast and fowl”) stand out as rules that the priests are to teach all Israelites to observe, in order to “be holy,” that is, to be like an order of priests. The pre-70 CE *haberim*/Pharisees seemed to adopt this general idea that ordinary Israelites could be holy like priests through their dietary choices, but not just by distinguishing between clean and unclean animals—*kashrut*. They also insisted that ordinary Israelites could be holy like priests by observing tithing and purity rules, which for a population who ate meat relatively infrequently, afforded many more opportunities to “be holy” on a daily basis. Moreover,

these tithing and purity traditions attributed to the *haberim*/Pharisees do not seem to use the term “*torah*” to refer to verbal instructions about tithing and purity, that is, they do not seem to advocate explicit talking about the rules of tithing and purity over the table. Rather, the pre-70 CE *haberim*/Pharisees expressed these tithing and purity rules as the prerequisites (perhaps in the literary form of lists of meal rules) for members to gather for table fellowship in Hellenistic associations, not specifically as talking points for their table conversations.

While some scholars are reluctant to identify the Tannaitic literature’s *haberim* and *bavurot* with the Gospels’ Pharisees, I (JBK) am not.⁴⁶ As Jacob Neusner demonstrated long ago in *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*:

The Gospels’ picture conforms to the rabbinical traditions about the Pharisees, which center upon the laws of tithing and ritual purity, defining what and with whom one may eat, that is, table fellowship.⁴⁷

These are mostly nonverbal symbolic actions. Through their self-conscious engagement in more or less priest-like activities, not primarily studying or teaching Torah at their tables, the pre-Tannaitic Pharisees turned their own non-Temple tables into what later generations referred to as a *mikdash me’at*—a “mini-Temple.” Like their Jewish contemporaries among the Qumran Essenes and early Christians, they sacralized their communal meals as *priestly* service of God outside the Temple, in what could be called the “ritualizations of the metaphor” that “we are priests.”⁴⁸ They called Jews who did not follow their rules “*ammei ha-’aretz*.”⁴⁹ While some table talk was part of the Pharisees’ characteristic meal activities, for example, in the form of table blessings and the prescribed psalms (*Hallel*) and verses that participants were obliged to say in the Passover Seder (according to the traditions attributed to them in Tannaitic literature), the overwhelming majority of meal rules attributed to them had to do with meal *preparations*.

But the post-70 CE Tannaim wanted to stress that teaching Torah verbally, especially at the table, not just tithing and

observing purity rules like priests, was *what was really equivalent* to the priests' service in the Temple. We see traditions that express the Tannaitic rabbis' ambivalence about associating themselves with the Pharisees' table fellowship practices and distancing themselves from them, by suggesting that they are archaic. This is particularly evident in the rabbinic traditions distinguishing "*ammei-haaretz* with respect to tithing and purity" from "*ammei-haaretz* with respect to Torah learning," for example, *m. Demai* 2:3. This shift in focus is particularly evident in the *sugya* in *b. Pesah* 49b containing a series of *baraitot* contrasting *talmidei hakhamim* and '*ammei ha-'aretz*. Particularly of note is this *baraita*:

Our sages taught, It is forbidden for an '*am ha-'aretz* to eat meat, as it is written, 'This is the Torah of the beast and fowl.' [Lev. 11:46] All who engage in Torah are permitted to eat the meat of beasts and fowl, and all who do not engage in Torah are forbidden to eat beast and fowl.

While this tradition concerns itself with what an '*am ha-'aretz* and "all who engage in Torah" may eat, it nevertheless represents the shift of terminology from earlier tannaitic traditions contrasting the '*ammei ha-'aretz* to those who do not tithe or purify themselves before meals, to the later ones opposing '*ammei ha-'aretz* to "those who engage in torah," or "those who serve in the *bet midrash*," that is, to *talmidei hakhamim* (*b. Pesah* 49b, *m. Demai* 2:3). It belongs to a stage of development after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE in the second or third century CE.⁵⁰ In these traditions, Torah study now counts as the distinguishing qualification of the Tannaim and Amoraim's ideal type: the "sage"—the *hakham*.⁵¹

So how does one engage in Torah at a meal? By speaking words of Torah at the table, as the well-known passage from *m. Avot* 3:3 articulates:

Rabbi Simeon said: If three have eaten at one table and have not spoken over it words of the Torah, it is as though they had eaten of the sacrifices of the dead, for it is written (Isa 28:8) "For all tables are full of vomit, no place is without filthiness." But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken over it words of the Torah,

it is as if they had eaten from the table of God, for it is written (Ezek 41:22) "He said to me, 'This is the table which is before the LORD.'"

Hence, by paying attention to when and how Pharisees and Tannaim (and later Amoraim) perform their identities at *meals*, we notice two important things. First, the metaphorical meaning and symbolic value they attach to their meal activities is the same: what we are doing is like the divine service of God that the hereditary priests in the Temple in Jerusalem performed. However, secondly, the meal rituals by which they ritualize this metaphor of performing sacred rites like priests are different. While Torah table talk probably had its origins in Pharisaic meal practices, the symbolic actions that conveyed the Pharisees' program were primarily the *rituals of preparation* for the meal and the eligibility of their guests. But for the Tannaim and their successors, as *Mishnah Avot* 3:3 states explicitly, the Torah table talk during the meal itself became the ritual way to perform a divine service like priests. Thus we see how important it is to examine the reception history of rabbinic meals (and their biblical antecedents) in order to recognize when the values and meanings attributed to what seems to be a common idea change. In other words, while the idea that Jews can perform priest-like activities apart from the Temple "had legs" throughout Jewish history, which actions and intentions actually conveyed that ritualized metaphor were not the same over time.⁵²

9) *Rabbinic table ethics have a "civilizing" function reflecting and promoting the values of a rabbinic scholastic class.*

Recent trends in rabbinic scholarship suggest that the rabbinic sage was a recognizable social type, something like a sophist (of the Second Sophistic, not exactly Plato's sophists); sages, teachers, and bureaucrats who promoted the civilizing benefits of their scholastic program to establish their authority and influence.⁵³ Meal settings served as important contexts for performance, demonstration, and rhetorical advocacy of scholastic values in general (e.g., as in Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae*), and rabbinic values in particular. They provided: "fixed" ritual

practices intended to elevate eating from animalistic activity, including prescribed blessings, wine drinking, washing, reclining, and perhaps most important, improvisational displays of virtuoso table talk. All of these sympotic conventions enabled the rabbis of the late Roman empire to idealize the *talmid bakham* (“disciple of the Sage”) as a kind of *Jewish* deipnosophist, a rabbinic “dinner table philosopher.” The rabbinic table provided opportunities for the sages to enact the civilizing power of Torah at the table, especially in their apt midrashic application of biblical verses and clever repartee with hosts and guests, demonstrating knowledge of how to behave like a *mensch*.⁵⁴

In rabbinic meal settings, the participants performed their social ranks, practices that honored extraordinary improvisational performers of “words of Torah about the table over the table” (*talmidei bakhamim* par excellence) and Torah-learning over age-based seniority. Meal rituals such as serving bread, leading *birkat hamazon* (“blessing after the meal”), or where one reclined in the triclinium arrangement became opportunities to publicly honor the Torah scholars.⁵⁵ This is the historical significance of the shift pointed out earlier, viewed in the broader context of the development of a class of sage/bureaucrats and sophists throughout the late Roman empire. Pharisaic symposiastic practices became a philosophic sympotic ethic among the Tannaim and Amoraim, that is, one that stressed rabbinic “philosophizing” at the table (i.e., Torah talk, midrash). Or better, the conventions of Greek and Roman *philosophical* symposia become more prominent at the rabbinic table, because they served their scholastic agenda magnificently.

- 10) *Rabbinic meals exploit the multisensory, synaesthetic experience of table rituals to embody rabbinic communal values.*

Martin Jaffee and others after him make a compelling case that early rabbinic ideology understood and represented sages and their disciples as embodied Torah.⁵⁶ The multisensory

experience of meals noted by some evolutionary psychologists offers a fruitful focus for examining the psychosomatic mechanisms by which Jewish rabbinic ideology was internalized and embodied.⁵⁷ Rabbinic meals exploit the reciprocal play of talking and eating—of tasting, smelling, seeing, touching, hearing *together*—to create powerful emotional experiences. Meal rituals in general are effective ways to cultivate a group’s communal values and sense of experiencing themselves as a community, what ritual theorists call the feeling of *communitas*.⁵⁸ So as Ninian Smart, the great twentieth-century scholar of religious studies remarked in *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs*:

Consider how we often celebrate events through a banquet—a special meal expressing the togetherness of a group usually relating to some cause or some association—a school reunion, a political party, a retirement dinner, a wedding, and so on.

Once we begin to think about the meaning of food and drink, we are given a marvelous opportunity to think again about what is, after all, so close to us that we fail to notice it: our whole way of living and acting is drenched in meanings.⁵⁹

What in particular are the communal myths they convey? Is it the story that Alan King quipped that fits all Jewish holidays: “They tried to get us, we survived, let’s eat!” Even if “the Jewish story” could be reduced to that (spoiler alert—it cannot), *how* are those meanings conveyed at rabbinic meals? We already touched upon this in the discussion of the Creation and messianic era stories alluded to in the seven blessings at rabbinic wedding banquets,⁶⁰ and Brumberg-Kraus argues this point in “Performing Myth, Performing Midrash at Rabbinic Meals,” elsewhere in this volume. It is a fruitful line of inquiry to examine the effect (or at least intended effects) of rabbinic meal rituals in light of the psychology of taste and the other senses.⁶¹

Rabbinic meal rituals not only turn these stories or snippets of stories into ritualized metaphorical actions, but they also use these words and the choreography of the meal itself to accentuate the gustatory, aromatic, visual, acoustic, and tactile sensory experiences of the meals. They are a synaesthetic “mode

of paying attention.”⁶² Or to put it in Clifford Geertz’s terms, performing sacred scripts/Scriptures at Jewish meals have proved to be an effective way of “formulating a general order of existence . . . to establish powerful, pervasive, and long lasting moods and motivations” in Jews “by clothing [them] with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.”⁶³ The “system of symbols” inscribed in the Oral and Written Torah recited and riffed on improvisationally at the Jewish celebratory table become so real, you can taste them!

These ten Theses push the field to taste early Jewish meals in novel ways. Twenty-five years ago, Jewish and Hellenistic meal practices were seen like meat and milk, separate entities that could not (and should not) be combined. Today, we argue against that presumption, envisioning instead a complex variety of practices brought up to the same table. In doing so, we build upon the seminal work of Stein, Smith, and Klinghardt, among others. Like many others, we reject the facile and artificial boundaries drawn between early Judaism and its surrounding social, political, economic, and culinary milieu.

Bringing the theory from fields such as Food Studies, Ritual Studies, and Gender Studies to the table allows us to not only understand better the academic study of early Jewish meals, but also fleshes out concepts relevant to the study of Judaism in antiquity in general. For example, scholars of early Judaism have begun to question the atypicality of Judaism in a variety of contexts, as time and again recent studies conclude that early Judaism is clearly a product of its physical, social, and temporal location.⁶⁴ In short, it is an ancient Mediterranean religion. The application of various theories therefore helps to situate early Jewish meals within both the larger academic study of meals and the larger academic study of early Judaism.

The serious study of Jewish (and other) meals is still in its infancy. Our essay, and in many ways this volume as a whole, provides a snapshot of the current terrain of the field. But like any map, there are borders. Since it is far easier to be a historian than a prophet, we cannot predict the terrain that lies ahead. What we do know is that we continue to pick up more

traveling companions along the way. We look forward to exploring together.

APPENDIX: THE TEN THESES

- 1) Theories developed in other disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, and especially food studies contribute a methodological foundation to the study of the early Jewish table.
- 2) Any early Jewish ritual involving meals must seriously investigate meals, as Catherine Bell observes about ritual: “When abstracted from its immediate context, an activity is not quite the same activity.”⁶⁵
- 3) Shared Greek and Roman meal practices prompt particularized Jewish practice at meals in the early Jewish and Rabbinic world.
- 4) Greek and Roman meal practices and literary representations of them figure in the development of a *rabbinic* “symptotic ethic.”
- 5) Scholarly understanding of the centrality of meals provides independent confirmations (or challenges) to ideas developed according to other methodologies.
- 6) Understanding of Hellenistic and Roman meals gives us an important lens to consider the rhetoric of women’s idealized relationship with meals in tension with actual practice.
- 7) In the Greek and Roman periods, Jews used *kasbrut* as a distinct foodway to distinguish themselves both from non-Jews and from other Jews.
- 8) In the rabbinic transformations of Biblical priestly sacrificial traditions to the rabbinic table, there is a shift in emphasis from food preparation to table talk as what distinguished the “rabbinic Jew” from others.
- 9) Rabbinic table ethics have a “civilizing” function reflecting and promoting the values of a rabbinic scholastic class.
- 10) Rabbinic meals exploit the multisensory, synaesthetic experience of table rituals to embody rabbinic communal values.

NOTES

1. We wish to thank all those who participated in the 2010 SBL session on "Meals in the Greco-Roman World." Most particularly, we want to thank Heather White for her thoughtful and helpful reading of an early draft of this chapter.
2. For survey of scholarship and method before 2002 see Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus, "Meals as Midrash: A Survey of Ancient Meals in Jewish Studies Scholarship" in *Food and Judaism*, ed. L. J. Greenspoon, R. A. Simkins, and G. Shapiro, vol. 15 (Omaha: Creighton University Press, 2005), 317. Originally presented as paper for the SBL Seminar on "Meals in the Greco-Roman World" in 2002.
3. See, for example, Hayim Lapin, *Rabbis as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine, 100–400 CE* (New York: Oxford, 2012).
4. The extent to which these Ten Theses are useful for describing other data sets can be assessed by others (or ourselves, but in other essays).
5. See Appendix for all ten Theses.
6. See, for example, Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Routledge, 1966); repr., New York: Routledge, 1999.
7. For example, see Michael Beer, *Taste or Taboo: Dietary Choices in Antiquity* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2010); and the classic of ancient food studies, Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
8. For example, see Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003); Matthias Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgesellschaft: Soziologie und Liturgie frühchristlicher Mahlfeiern*. Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter 13. (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1996); and Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal: Social Experimentation and Early Christian Identity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).
9. Brumberg-Kraus, "'Bread from Heaven, Bread from the Earth.'" Recent Trends in Jewish Food History in *Writing Food History: A Global Perspective*, ed. K. Claflin and P. Scholliers (London: Berg, 2012). That said, this dialogue is still a bit one-sided. While Jewish food studies have drawn much from general food studies, we could do more to make our work known to general food scholars. Brumberg-Kraus's piece is a gesture in that direction, as are Weingarten's numerous contributions to the annual Proceedings of Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery and other venues regarding the archeological and Talmudic evidence for ancient Jewish meals; "A Feast for the Eyes: Women and Baking in the Talmudic Literature"; "Charoset"; "Children's Foods in the Talmudic Literature"; "Eggs in the Talmud"; "'Magiros', 'Nahton' and Women at Home: Cooks in the Talmud"; "Wild Foods in the Talmud: The Influence of Religious Restrictions on Consumption."
10. See Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).
11. See, for example, Jordan D. Rosenblum *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 115.
12. On modern kosher laws, see, for example, Timothy B. Lytton, *Kosher: Private Regulation in the Age of Industrial Food* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); and on the American food system, see Marion Nestle, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); repr., Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. In fact, Nestle provides a blurb for the back of Lytton's book.
13. See Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self: Japanese Identities through Time* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Arjun Appadurai, "How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India," *Comparative Studies* 30, no. 1 (1988); and Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism*, 46.
14. Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 81.
15. The text of this blessing first appears in the Babylonian Talmud of the fifth to sixth centuries CE.
16. The title "seven blessings" refers to a blessing over wine followed by six additional component blessings.
17. Jer 33: 10–11, in *b. Ketub. 7b–8a*, translation adapted from Samuel Daiches, *The Babylonian Talmud: Kethuboth* (United Kingdom: Soncino Press, 1936). See Susan Marks, *First Came Marriage: The Rabbinic Appropriation of Early Jewish Wedding Ritual* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013), 140–152 for a list and discussion of biblical components prior to an examination of the larger context.
18. See also Brumberg-Kraus, chapter 5 in this volume.
19. *b. Ketub. 8a*.
20. See especially Gil Klein, "Torah in Triclinia: The Rabbinic Banquet and the Significance of Architecture," *JQR* 102, no.3 (2012): 325–370; and Brumberg-Kraus, chapter 5 in this volume.

21. See, for example, Luke 14:7–24. Though in Luke's account here, Jesus tells these parables in order to point out that his proto-rabbinic Pharisee table companions are not too happy about this! And in the Mishnah, the rabbis taught that men should not keep their wives from attending weddings, as it was such a central communal event: A man must divorce his wife rather than prohibit her from all "houses of mourning and houses of (wedding) feasting," *m. Ketub.* 7.5. Rabbinic concern for the social function of weddings is also discussed in Rosenblum, chapter 3 in this volume.
22. Marks, *First Came Marriage*, 135–187. This is one piece of a larger argument concerning why this development of wedding ritual takes place in the Amoraic or later rabbinic period and not prior.
23. We refer to "Greek and Roman meal customs" as opposed to the hyphenated term "Greco-Roman" or the phrase "Greek and Roman meals," which conceals the complicated relationship between the two cultures in their interaction with the indigenous cultures of the regions where they held sway. That is, Hellenistic practices in the later Greek Empire and the eastern part of territories then governed by Rome were not exactly the same. That said, we did not want to use overly cumbersome terminology, and so settled upon "Greek and Roman meal customs." Although inexact, the very messiness of the terms proves preferable when focusing upon customs and practices. We are grateful to our Seminar colleague Nancy Evans for cautioning us about using the term "Greco-Roman."
24. Stein, "The Influence of Symposia." See Marks, in the Introduction of this volume for further discussion.
25. Rosenblum, "Inclined to Decline Reclining?, Women, Corporeality, and Dining Posture in Early Rabbinic Literature," in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. D. E. Smith and H. Taussig (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). drawing on Matthew B. Roller, *Dining Posture in Ancient Rome: Bodies, Values, and Status* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).
26. See also Gil Klein, "Torah in Triclinia: The Rabbinic Banquet and the Significance of Architecture," *JQR* 102, no. 3 (2012): 325–370, who draws upon the architecture of triclinia, especially the archeological evidence in Sepphoris, to explicate the meaning of rabbinic banquet texts.
27. See Brumberg-Kraus, "Communal meals. II. Judaism." *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009).
28. Judith Hauptman, "How Old Is the Haggadah?," *Judaism* 51, no.1 (2002): 9.
29. Klein, "Torah in Triclinia," 340.
30. Klein, "Torah in Triclinia," 336ff.
31. Kathleen E. Corley, *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993).
32. Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. MacDonald, with Janet H. Tulloch, *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006); and Osiek, "What Kinds of Meals Did Julia Felix Have? A Case Study of the Archaeology of the Banquet" in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. D. E. Smith and H. Taussig, 37–56 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
33. Angela Standhartinger, "Women in Early Christian Meal Gatherings," in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. D. E. Smith and H. Taussig (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
34. Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, "Remembering and Remembered Women in Greco-Roman Meals," in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. D. E. Smith and H. Taussig, 120–121 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
35. Marks, "Present and Absent: Women at Greco-Roman Wedding Meals," in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. D. E. Smith and H. Taussig (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
36. For examples, see Cynthia M. Baker, *Rebuilding the House of Israel: Architectures of Gender in Jewish Antiquity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); Charlotte E. Fonrobert, *Menstrual Purity: Rabbinic and Christian Reconstructions of Biblical Gender* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); Maxine L. Grossman, "Reading for Gender in the Damascus Document," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 11, no. 2 (2004): 212–239; Judith Hauptman, *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998); Ross S. Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Miriam B. Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies: Rabbis, Gender, and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
37. Rosenblum, chapter 3. See also Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism*, and Rosenblum, "Inclined to Decline Reclining?"

38. Hauptman, chapter 3 in this volume.
39. Rebecca Lesses, "Exe(o)rcising Power: Women as Sorceresses, Exorcists, and Demonesses," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 69, no. 2 (2001): 343–375, see esp. 351.
40. Marjorie Lehman, "The Gendered Rhetoric of Sukkah Observance," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 96, no. 5 (2006): 309–335, see esp. 331.
41. See also in Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism*, 130–131 and 170–173.
42. David M. Freidenreich, *Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); David C. Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity through the Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism*, 36–45.
43. As Jacob Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Ktav, 1979), noted many years ago.
44. Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity*, 50–52.
45. While *'am ha-aretz* (plu., *'ammei ha-aretz*) is a term originally found in the Hebrew Bible meaning something like "the common people," I (JBK) deliberately do not translate it here. What it means in Rabbinic Hebrew depends on the context, as what follows shows. While it has come to mean "ignoramus," that connotation derives from the particular Tannaitic use of the designating someone who does not engage in Torah, that is, is ignorant of rabbinic Torah learning.
46. Though not all mentions of *haberim* and *bavurot* in the Mishnah and Tosefta may refer to groups that tithed meticulously and observed rituals of purity like Pharisees, some, particularly those preserved in *m.* and *t. Demai*, do. It is therefore likely that some Pharisees were *haberim* or *ne'emanim*, but not all *haberim* and *ne'emanim* were Pharisees. The distinguishing characteristics of the *haberim* and *ne'emanim* were their tithing, purity rituals, and their rules for table fellowship. The synoptic gospels depict these characteristics, too, as distinguishing the Pharisees from their own Christian groups.
47. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety*, 80.
48. See Brumberg-Kraus, "Meat-Eating and Jewish Identity" and "Not by Bread Alone..."; Ivan Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1996), 6.
49. Oppenheimer, *The 'Am Ha-aretz: A Study in the Social History*, 170. The *haberim* were probably the New Testament's and Josephus' Pharisees, who sought to heighten Jewish national identity under Roman rule by intensifying the norms of Jewish behavior. In particular, they adapted the priestly standards of purity, and tithed food for nonpriests, to encourage "lay" Israelites to participate in their table fellowship practices, as if they were priests. In other words, the *haberim*/Pharisees' table fellowship practices were a strategy of ritualized "street theater" intended to win Jewish "converts" to their way of practice (See Brumberg-Kraus, "Were the Pharisees a Conversionist Sect?" unpublished manuscript, 2002 (<http://acumix.wheatonma.edu/jkraus/articles/Pharisees.htm>)).
50. As Aharon Oppenheimer, *The 'Am Ha-aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 175, suggests regarding this *baraita* in *b. Pesah.* 49b.
51. See Brumberg-Kraus, "Meat-eating and Jewish Identity."
52. Moreover, we would be remiss if we overlooked the fundamental traumatic event that provided the impetus for this idea to take root in the rabbinic program, in all its forms and transformation—the destruction of the Temple and the priestly sacrificial cult dependent on it in 70 CE. As the Talmud puts it bluntly, "R. Yohanan and R. Elazar both said: While the Temple is functioning, the altar atones for a person. And now, when there is no functioning Temple, the table of a person atones for him" (*b. Menah.* 97a). But the Tannaitic tradition is not always so blunt, often adopting a strategy that understates the traumatic reason why rabbinic Judaism substitutes the table for the altar, particularly in its development of Jewish meal practices, like the Passover Seder. See especially Baruch M. Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
53. See Henry A. Fischel, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1973); Klein, "Torah in Triclinia;" Brumberg-Kraus, "'Not by Bread Alone...';" and Jonathan Wyn Schofer, "Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection: Rabbinic Ethics and Comparative Possibilities," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 33, no. 2 (2005): 255–291; and *Confronting Vulnerability: The Body and the Divine in Rabbinic Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
54. On *derekh eretz* traditions, see Schofer, "Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection"; Brumberg-Kraus, "Better a Meal of Vegetables with Love": The Symbolic Meaning of Vegetables in Rabbinic and Post-Rabbinic Midrash of Proverbs 15.17," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 104, no. 1 (Winter 2014) forthcoming.

55. See Brumberg-Kraus, "Meals as Midrash"; Klein, "Torah in Triclinia".
56. Martin S. Jaffee. "A Rabbinic Ontology of the Written and Spoken Word; on Discipleship, Transformative Knowledge, and the Living Texts of Oral Torah." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65, no. 3 (1997): 525–549; Martin S. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200 BCE–400 CE* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Jaffee, however, does not focus on meals *per se* as the locus for rabbinic embodiments of Torah, but rather on oral performances of rabbinic teaching, memorization, and recitation, what he calls "torah in the mouth." That said, the possibilities for explicitly connecting his "torah in the mouth" to what we are saying about rabbinic meals are quite suggestive. Much later, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Hasidic rebbe Judah Aryeh Leib Alter ("the Sefat Emet") basically equates the acts of talking and eating during the Passover Seder as both "mitzvoth of the mouth," in his Haggadah commentary, *Haggadah Shel Pesah*.
57. Paul Rozin, "Food Is Fundamental, Fun, Frightening, and Far-reaching" *Social Research* 66 (1999): 9–30; and Rozin Jonathan Haidt, Clark McCauley, and Sumio Imada, "Disgust: The Cultural Evolution of a Food-based Emotion" in *Food Preferences and Taste: Continuity and Change* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1997).
58. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: de Gruyter, 1969).
59. Ninian Smart, *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000).
60. See Marks, *First Came Marriage*, 135–187.
61. See Rozin, "Food Is Fundamental", and for interpretations of the sensory dimension of ancient Jewish texts and rituals, see Deborah A. Green, *The Aroma of Righteousness: Scent and Seduction in Rabbinic Life and Literature* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2011); Yael Avrahami, *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011); and Brumberg-Kraus, "'Truly the Ear Tests Words as the Palate Tastes Food' (Job 12:11): Synaesthetic Food Metaphors, 2.
62. On ritual as a mode of paying attention, see J. Z. Smith, *To Take Place* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); and for the synaesthetic dimension of Jewish meals, Brumberg-Kraus "'Truly the Ear Tests Words" as the Palate Tastes Food' (Job 12:11): Synaesthetic Food Metaphors.
63. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 90.
64. See n. 2. The wording regarding Judaism's "atypicality" comes from Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 36.
65. Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 81.