Scribalism and the Beginnings of Jewish Demonology

Annette Yoshiko Reed (New York University; ar5525@nyu.edu)

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Across the Mediterranean world, the early Hellenistic age (333–167 BCE) was marked by intensified efforts to collect, catalogue, and textualize knowledge.¹ Not only did Greek literature and literacy occupy a central place in the pedagogical formation of elites within the new empires of Alexander’s successors, but the patronage of polymaths and papyrus rolls by the Ptolemies, in particular, embodied an aspiration to possess all the wisdom of the world. The totalizing horizon of such claims recalls the universalizing rhetoric of Achaemenid Persian imperial discourse.² The emphasis on textuality, however, signals a reorientation with significant cultural consequences. Within the newly multipolar political landscape of the Hellenistic world, Macedonian monarchs faced the challenges of legitimizing rule over areas to which they bore no connection of landedness or lineage.³ Claims about books and knowledge achieved what could not be claimed for territory: even if no one empire could allege—like the Achaemenids or Alexander—to rule all the known world, it was possible to purport to possess all of its written wisdom.⁴

Most celebrated, in this regard, are the products of Ptolemaic support of sciences and scholasticism in the newly transnational prestige-language of Greek. The success of such efforts still resounds in the cultural memory of the West through the image of the Egyptian city of Alexandria, founded by Alexander in 331 BCE. Not only did the early Ptolemies attract and support a number of immigrant intellectuals to the polis, but its state-sponsored shrine to the Muses boasted a substantial archive of papyrus rolls: “the scale of collecting that the Ptolemies engaged in surpassed all previous endeavors,” Benjamin Acosta-Hughes and Susan Stephens surmise, “and that was undoubtedly the point: for the upstart city without traditions or history to possess the greatest literary accomplishments of the Greek

¹ Among Classicists, it is conventional to refer to the “Hellenistic period” as 333–30 or 323–30 BCE—that is, spanning the time from the conquests or death of Alexander the Great to the fall of the last surviving dynasty of his successors (i.e., the Ptolemies) to Rome. Here, as below, I use “early Hellenistic age” to denote the first portion of this period as demarcated from the perspective of Jewish history—and hence, from Alexander’s conquest up until the Maccabean uprising against the Seleucids (ca. 167–164 BCE). As above, this choice of periodization reflects my interest in recovering neglected pre-Maccabean contexts and perspectives through synchronic analysis of Aramaic as well as Greek Jewish sources, both in relation to one another and in relation to non-Jewish trends and sources from the third and early second centuries BCE.

² Strootman, “Hellenistic Imperialism and the Ideal of World Unity.”

³ In noting a shift I do not mean to imply the total lack of globalizing territorial claims; after all, Callimachus proclaims that Ptolemy II “shall rule over the Two Countries and over the lands that lie beside the sea, as far as the edge of the earth, where the swift horses always bring the sun” (Hymn to Delos 4.169–70) and Theocritus’ encomium for the same king proclaims that “the whole sea and all the land and the roaring rivers are fueled by Ptolemy” (Id. 17.92); for more examples of this sort, see Strootman, “Hellenistic Imperialism and the Ideal of World Unity,” 47–50.

⁴ For a recent account of the period emphasizing multipolarity, see Kosmin, Land of the Elephant Kings.
past, just as it sought to collect and so to control a vast array of objects, among them rare stones and animals.” In the process, Ptolemaic and other acts of amassing books and patronizing scholarship made archival and epistemological claims central to competition among other Macedonian monarchs as well. Among the cultural effects posited by Classicists like Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh was to inspire a “totalizing gesture” among poets, scholars, and scientists in and beyond Egypt:

The Alexandrian library (later imitated in Pergamum and elsewhere) brought the whole world into a single city, broadcasting the glory of the Ptolemaic rule that had provided the conditions for its possibility. And a whole range of scholars imitated and influenced that totalising gesture in their individual works. Zenodotus, for example, Homeric editor and lexicographer and first head of the Library; Callimachus, whose poetry flaunts its own dazzling generic flexibility, in combination with designedly abstruse bibliographical and historical knowledge; and most prodigiously of all, Eratosthenes, whose work covers mathematical, chronographical, geographical, philosophical and literary scholarship. Others outside Alexandria followed similar paths: Theophrastus, the successor of Aristotle in the Athenian Lyceum; Aratus, the poet-scholar based in Pergamum; and Posidonius, the extraordinary polymath of the second to first centuries BCE, who prospered in Rome.

To be sure, the degree to which the intellectual shifts of the early Hellenistic age can be causally correlated to this one library remains a matter of debate. But whether as a direct consequence of the Library of Alexandria, or as an extension of the same translocal trends of textualization that made it possible, it remains that a number of Greek authors of the time

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5 Acosta-Hughes & Stephens, *Callimachus in Context*, 12. For the echoes in later memory, see, e.g., Dio Chrysostom 32.36: “Alexandria is situated, as it were, at the crossroads of the whole world, of even the most remote nations thereof, as if it were a market serving a single city, a market which brings together into one place all manner of men, displaying them to one another and, as far as possible, making them a kindred people” (trans. H. Lamar Crosby, LCL). On the enduring power of this image into the Middle Ages and beyond, see also Della, "From Romance to Rhetoric"—there noting how "although numerous other libraries throughout the ancient Mediterranean—in Asia Minor, the Persian empire, Athens and Rhodes, for example—have disappeared, no one ponders their fate. In the Western tradition, the romantic lament for the lost wisdom of the ancient world is reserved for the great library at Alexandria" (1464).

6 The Ptolemies were uniquely situated to do so, as Andrew Erskine notes: "Their secret weapon in this culture war was their control over the supply of papyrus" ("Culture and Power," 46). On the case of Pergamum, see his discussion and references there at pp. 46-47.

7 König & Whitmarsh, *Ordering Knowledge,* 8–9. They point to precedents in “Aristotle’s project of systematising knowledge across an enormous range of different subjects,” but emphasize the concretization of such aims particularly in the Hellenistic era due to the “uniquely concrete links between the projects of political organisation and cultural systematization” under the Ptolemies and others.

8 On the difficulties separating the history and memory of the Library, see Bagnall, “Alexandria: Library of Dreams.” Even if our sources interweave rhetoric and realia, however, they remain significant, for our purposes, in pointing to the place of knowledge in the imperial pageantry and culture politics of the early Hellenistic age. Bagnall, for instance, notes the new intellectual endeavors “supported by the Library’s collections,” including the compilation of critical editions as well as “many attempts to compile systematic information about different subjects,” and he also emphasizes the power of its very image: “already within a century or so of its founding the Library had become a symbol of universality of intellectual inquiry and of the collection of written texts” (361).

9 See now Johnstone, “New History,” similarly emphasizing "the political objectification of the book" in this era, but approaching "the history of the Library of Alexandria... as one strand in this decentralized revolution happening from Athens to Babylon and in many places in between," whereby "aristocrats and monarchs across the Greek world began to found and fund libraries as part of the politics of elite benefaction, euergetism" (349).
turned to compile and catalogue received knowledge, repackaging older teachings, texts, and traditions in new literary forms. The early Hellenistic age saw what Steven Johnstone calls the “invention of the library” and the “political objectification of the book,” but also an intensification in the textual cultivation of polis-based and pan-Greek pasts as well as the anthologizing of non-Greek knowledge under the auspices of a newly global and/or “Greek” gaze.\(^\text{10}\)

There is no doubt that Jews of the time were aware of these developments. It is, in fact, through Jewish eyes that we first glimpse them. The most ancient among all extant witnesses to the Library of Alexandria is a Greek Jewish text that engages in self-conscious reflection about this epistemological project and the prospect of the inclusion of Israel’s literary heritage therein.\(^\text{11}\) Writing in the second century BCE, the unknown author of the *Letter of Aristeas* points to the Ptolemaic desire to collect “all the books in the known world” (ἀπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην βιβλία; Ep.Ar. 9), and he frames the tale of the Greek translation of the Torah from Hebrew in terms of the imperially-sponsored integration of Jewish wisdom into a non-Jewish imperial library with globalizing pretensions. Whatever this text might tell about the Septuagint, it is our oldest evidence of any sort for this celebrated Library, and it preserves a poignant glimpse into Ptolemaic culture politics as seen from the periphery of the city’s elite Greek and Macedon circles.\(^\text{12}\) As Bagnall notes, "even if Pseudo-Aristeas's story of the creation of the Septuagint is fictitious, it shows us that inclusion in the Library was a kind of universally recognized validation to which people would inspire."\(^\text{13}\) No less significantly, for our purposes, it also provides some confirmation that at least some learned Jews both knew of this Library and recognized the ramifications of the politicization of knowledge that it represented.

Nor is the author of the *Letter for Aristeas* alone in seeking to situate Jews within the new oikoumene constituted by the new empires of Alexander’s successors. Roughly around the same time, Eupolemus, Artapanus, Pseudo-Eupolemus, and others were writing in Greek to argue for including Enoch, Abraham, and Moses among the ranks of those primeval

\(^{10}\) Johnstone, “New History,” 349. It is in this sense that the link of library and literature underpins Whitmarsh’s above-noted characterization of the Hellenistic age in terms of an “archival” impulse; see esp. *Ancient Greek Literature*, 122–38. By his assessment, this impulse is not merely important for the eventual product of a “canon” of the Greek past that shapes our current notion of “Classics”; rather, a "cultural history of Greek texts" ideally includes "various ways that Greeks themselves narrated their own literary history, and the role of the archive in maintaining and disseminating those narratives"—not least because its emergence occurs over centuries when "Greek identity was increasingly bound up with the study of literature, which it came to see as a defined body of texts” and when “institutions like schools, libraries, and performance halls were created to disseminate awareness of literature" (22).

\(^{11}\) This has led some Classicists to take the *Letter of Aristeas’* account of the Library largely at face value, e.g., Blum, *Kallimachos*, 102–3—although see now Bagnall, "Alexandria: Library of Dreams," 349-54; Johnstone, “New History.”

\(^{12}\) For a recent reassessment see Wright, “Letter of Aristeas and the Question of Septuagint Origins Redux”—there stressing the shortcoming of studies that have conflated evidence for the production and reception of Greek translations of the Torah and other Hebrew scriptures (306) and concluding that the “Letter of Aristeas, which forges close associations among royal patronage, independent scriptural status, and a product of literary and philosophical character, does not offer a picture consistent with what we can observe in the Septuagint itself, and thus we cannot rely on it for information about the translation’s original historical and socio-historical contexts…. In the end, however, the *Letter of Aristeas* tells us about the Septuagint in Aristeas’ own time, not at the time of its origin” (324).

inventors and discoverers who shaped what “the Greeks” valued as constituent of civilization. Just as the Letter of Aristeas proclaims the inclusion of the Torah in the Ptolemaic archive of purportedly global Greek knowledge, so these and other Jewish authors preserved via Alexander Polyhistor culled the primeval and patriarchal past for Jewish figures to include in Hellenistic histories of knowledge. In the process, they argued for a place for Israel, alongside Egypt and Babylonia, as among those most ancient nations of “barbarians” who constituted the heritage of wisdom now culled in the name of the Greeks.

Modern scholarship on Greek Jewish literature has charted some of the inner-Jewish effects of the increased place of books and knowledge in the imperial pageantry and culture politics of the early Hellenistic age. But what might we learn if we approach the Aramaic Jewish literature of the third and early second centuries BCE with an eye to these same dynamics? In recent research on Ptolemaic Egypt and Seleucid Babylonia, Demotic and Akkadian works from the early Hellenistic age have been reconsidered in light of some of the same cultural shifts and concerns so richly analyzed in Greek literature of the time. Can research on Second Temple Judaism also benefit from charting the cultural shifts of this pre-Maccabean era with more attention both to trends in Greek literature and to sources beyond the Greek language?

This chapter explores this possibility by further attending to the renaissance of Jewish literary production in Aramaic in the centuries following the conquests of Alexander. In the previous chapter, I reread the Astronomical Book (I Enoch 72–82; ca. third century BCE) in relation to cross-cultural trends toward repackaging received lunar and other technical knowledge in newly literary, pedagogical, and cosmographical forms, especially in the third century BCE. In what follows, I extend the experiment to the Book of the Watchers (I Enoch 1–36; ca. third century BCE). Here too, a sense of a broader “archival turn” in the Hellenistic world might help us to draw out the reasoning and ramifications of its redactional creativity and anthological logic—which, in this case, enables the creation of a systematized Jewish demonology out of the threads of “magical,” biblical, and other Near Eastern traditions. At

\[14\] I.e., thus participating in the Hellenistic discourse of heurematography, while also engaging the competitive historiography between Egyptians and Babylonians at the time. For the relevant texts with commentary, see Holladay, *Fragments*, esp. 1:93–244. On heurematography see Zhmud, *Origin of the History of Science*, 117–65; Thrade, “Erfinder II”; Kleingünter, “Protos Heurètes.” On Hellenistic-era competitive history and its Greek ethnographical precedents see Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*, 20–136.

\[15\] See further Honigman, "Jews as the Best of All Greeks"; Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition*, 137–225; Reed, “Abraham as Chaldean Scientist,” 136–45. Just as Egyptian and Babylonian efforts of this sort often occur under the aegis of Ptolemaic and Seleucid patronage and competition, so Jewish efforts in Alexandria, in particular, may be predicated on the partial inclusion of Jews in Greekness. Honigman points to Ptolemaic administrative documents that confirm the categorization of Egyptian Jews as "Greeks," thus suggesting—contrary to modern scholarly assumptions of Jewish self-isolation—that "insofar as the ethnic labels used in the Ptolemaic administrative papyri correspond to genuine social categories and document a peculiar two-tiered construction of Greek ethnicity, there is no reason to doubt that the Ioudaioi settled in Alexandria, and in Egypt as a whole, in Ptolemaic times were defined by the royal administration as a sub-group within the immigrant community of the Greeks" (211–12, with special reference to *Ep.Ar.* 182).

Excellent recent examples of research on relationships between Greek Jewish literary production and Alexandrian intellectual trends have looked especially to Hellenistic scholasticism on Homer to illumine the translation of the Torah into Greek, e.g., Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*; Honigman, *Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship*. My suggestion here is that this celebrated connection may be one cluster in a constellation of intersections of varying intensity.

the same time, the example of the *Book of the Watchers* enables further attention to the cross-cultural discourse of discoverers (i.e., heurematography) of the early Hellenistic age—both because of the increased prominence of Enoch within this apocalypse and because of the intensive preoccupation with lineages of knowledge therein.

Since J. T. Milik’s publication of the Aramaic Enoch fragments from Qumran in 1976, scholarly attention to the *Book of the Watchers* has helped to revolutionize the study of apocalyptic literature, not least by enabling critical distinctions between apocalyptic eschatology and the apocalypse as literary genre.\(^{18}\) This chapter builds upon the results of the rich discussions about the *Book of the Watchers* in research on the history of Jewish apocalyptic literature. But my aims and approach here differ. Consistent with my synchronic focus on the early Hellenistic age, I draw attention to micro-dynamics of the collection and combination of diverse materials within the *Book of the Watchers*. I attend especially to its extension of the angelology, cosmology, and scribal practices that shaped the *Astronomical Book* and its resonance with references to demons in other Aramaic and pre-Maccabean writings, while attempting to avoid the retrojection of later ideas and developments. Special caution is thus taken not to read this work through the later lenses of the Book of Daniel and the Enochic pseudopigraphy of the Maccabean age.\(^{19}\) As with the *Astronomical Book* in the previous chapter, I focus instead on the anthological and other writing-practices that shaped what we might plausibly reconstruct as the pre-Maccabean forms of the *Book of the Watchers*, and I ask why this redactional activity intensified and coalesced when and how it did.

To the degree that past scholarship have sought to situate the demonology of the *Book of the Watchers* in historical context, it has been largely through hypotheses about which contemporary figures or controversies might lie behind its references to Watchers and Giants.\(^{20}\) Here, I look instead to the most dominant and defining element in the text itself—namely: its preoccupation with knowledge. In the process of exploring the function of its claims to knowledge—and its claims to knowledge about transmundane powers in particular—I ask what might be missed when the transmundane powers therein are reduced to ciphers for specific historical figures or groups at the time of the *Book of the Watchers* or its sources.

What happens when we take seriously the *Book of the Watchers*’ claims to knowledge about spirits and monsters as actually claims to knowledge about spirits and monsters? Such an approach—I suggest—follows the dominance of epistemological concerns within the *Book of the Watchers* itself, and it helps to illumine their place within the textual formation and literary structure of the apocalypse as a redacted whole. When we read the *Book of the Watchers* on its own terms, we encounter ample evidence for a concern for demonology as an intellectual project in its own right. Fallen angels, evil spirits, and archangels are here presented as components of the cosmos, participants in human history, and elements of lived experience—with no sense that they must be read merely or mainly as metaphors. Their concreteness, in fact, is what gives power to the scribal claim to know and write their names, their origins, their functions, and their fates. By collecting and consolidating knowledge

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\(^{18}\) Milik, *Books of Enoch*; Collins, "Towards the Morphology of a Genre."

\(^{19}\) Elsewhere, I have also noted the scholarly tendency to conflate pre- and post-Maccabean Enochic apocalypses, perhaps in part because of the temptation to read them through the lens of the late antique *compendium I Enoch*; see further Reed, *Fallen Angels*, 58–83.

about transmundane powers, its authors and redactors thus contribute to the broader process, discussed above, whereby the authority of the Jewish scribe and the scope of the Jewish archive become radically expanded in the early Hellenistic age.

When we pair our above insights from the *Astronomical Book* with analysis of the *Book of the Watchers*, we notice further points of intersection with translocal trends at the time toward totalization, textualization, and the re-ordering of local and imperial knowledge. Claims to epistemological mastery over demons—as we shall see—prove integral for the totalizing intellectual project of the *Book of the Watchers* whereby complete and concrete knowledge about the cosmos, its structure, its history, and its workings is placed firstly and uniquely among Jewish scribes. And, just as the comprehensiveness of this project thus resonates with the cross-cultural competition sparked by the Ptolemaic politicization of knowledge, so its concreteness points also to the cultural work done by demonology in local and inner-Jewish contexts as well.

A sense of these local and inner-Jewish contexts is now newly possible to recover due to evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls for practical efforts among ancient Jews to combat demonic forces in their everyday lives. This evidence includes some plausibly pre-sectarian materials in both Aramaic and Hebrew (e.g., 4Q560; 11Q11) as well as related materials composed within the Qumran community (e.g., *Songs of the Maskil*). In addition, it is intriguing that the two earliest known Jewish narratives about exorcism appear in other Aramaic texts from the early Hellenistic age: the Book of Tobit from the third century BCE and *Genesis Apocryphon* from the second century BCE.²¹ Taken together, these sources serve to remind us of the local circulation of ideas about angels and demons outside of literary, elite, and exegetical contexts, while also pointing to new trends in their textualization, narrativization, and systemization—especially in Aramaic—in the pre-Maccabean era in which the *Book of the Watchers* took form.²²

The present chapter thus attempts a synchronic analysis of the *Book of the Watchers*, arguing for the importance of situating this work *both* within the translocal epistemic ferment of the early Hellenistic age and *within* a local continuum of Jewish commerce with transmundane powers in the practical domain of so-called “magic.”²³ Such an analysis helps

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²¹ One partial exception is 1 Sam 16:13–23; cf. LAB 60:2–3. On the reception of David as exorcist, see now Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*.
²² On the many connections between Tobit and *Genesis Apocryphon*, as well as the question of their representativeness vis-à-vis the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls, see now Machiela & Perrin, “Tobit and the Genesis Apocryphon.”
²³ There is no notion of “magic” *emic* to the Jewish culture of the Second Temple period, and no Hebrew or Aramaic terms functions quite like Greek *mageia* or *goêteia* (so, e.g., Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 75–78). The assumption of an ontological difference between “magic” and “religion” is clearly anachronistic and, as with “science” and “religion,” reflects the post-Enlightenment European ordering of knowledge rather than any universal distinction (see further, e.g., Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion*). Accordingly, there is a lively scholarly debate about the heurism of the category within and across ancient cultures (for a recent summary: Stratton, *Naming the Witch*, 1–38). For the limited purposes of the present inquiry, I use the adjective “magical” sparingly for the limited heuristic purpose of countering the scholarly tendency to read ancient discussions about demons as if such traditions reflected only the theological musings of the literate elite. Here and below, I thus use the designation “magical” to denote materials reflecting practical and context-specific rituals and invocations aimed at combatting the unwelcome intervention of otherworldly spirits in the lives and fates of individuals (notably: Jewish rituals to coerce or adjure lesser spirits for other aims—like love, revenge, power, or learning—were either rarer at this time or do not survive in writing). What proves helpful about the
us to pinpoint the innovation of the *Book of the Watchers* before and beyond the Maccabean-era development of historical apocalypses like Daniel. Its demonology is not merely a symbol-system in the service of *vaticinium ex eventu*. Rather, it is the product of scribal efforts to compile, order, organize, and narrativize received materials. This anthological impulse resonates with the archival and textualizing trends of the early Hellenistic age that we have discussed in relation to the *Astronomical Book*. Yet, in this case, the materials are perhaps even broader, spanning biblical and related traditions and Mesopotamian myth and scholasticism but also local and Near Eastern practices of exorcism and apotropaic prayer. What we find in the *Book of the Watchers*, then, is precisely what we had noted in Chapter One as conspicuously absent in the Hebrew Bible—that is: the systemization of diverse demon-beliefs into what one might call “demonology.”

Accordingly, this chapter first argues against the tendency to explain away the traditions about otherworldly spirits in the *Book of the Watchers* and then explores their angelological and demonological ramifications in light of what we know of Jewish “magic,” especially from the Dead Sea Scrolls. I then turn to situate its systemization of ideas about spirits in relation to the angelological concerns and anthological practices of the *Astronomical Book*, and I highlight the various ways in which the *Book of the Watchers* imposes order on the unseen world—including but not limited to the naming, mapping, listing, and hierarchicalized abstraction of its inhabitants, on the one hand, and the narrative evocation of those with the expertise to know them, on the other. Finally, I situate its treatment of spirits, scribalism, and the antediluvian past against the background of broader intellectual and imperial trends in the early Hellenistic age.

In the process, I argue that the *Book of the Watchers* marks the beginnings of Jewish demonology but also a watershed moment for the remapping of the very scope of Jewish knowledge and scribal authority. Like the scribes responsible for the *Astronomical Book*, those responsible for the *Book of the Watchers* textualize received traditions about transmundane powers in newly literary forms. Here, however, the association with Enoch becomes more central: he is used to model the scribal mastery of an even broader range of topics of Jewish teaching, learning, and writing, and his exemplarity becomes the magnetized core of a newly expansive anthological impulse. If one can speak of an “Enochic discourse,” it is in relation to this impulse, whereby Near Eastern ideals of scribal education and expertise become newly mobilized by learned Jews in a manner mirroring the claims of Greek *paideia* and Hellenistic imperial archives. The result is a startlingly spacious ideal of Jewish learning and literature, exemplified by its expansion to encompass knowledge about the divine abode in heaven, the structure and contents of the earth to its very ends, the winds and spirits that cross and connect them, and the fallen angels and evil spirits that impinge on their order.

*Interpreting Evil Spirits in the Book of the Watchers*

By all accounts, the *Book of the Watchers* marks the earliest attestation of any systematic Jewish discourse about demons. Within earlier biblical literature, one finds terms related to names associated with demons elsewhere in the Near East, and some angels and other figures—such as *ha-satan*—take on functions adversarial to Israel. Even as Biblicalists debate designation, for our purposes, is its power to remind us that ancient Jewish beliefs about transmundane power were far from limited to the pens, scrolls, and minds of learned scribes.
the nature of the beliefs behind allusive passages about Azazel, Resheph, Deber, ha-satan, and se'irim, however, it is clear that those responsible for the Hebrew literature that comes down to us as “biblical” did not take demonology as a topic for concerted literary exploration, nor as a central element of the textualized history and memory of the Jewish past, nor as a primary domain of scribal pedagogy or scholastic expertise.  

If anything, expertise in spirits is figured as foreign. As noted in Chapter One, the only two references to shedim in the Hebrew Bible describe them as subjects of worship that is deemed dangerous due to the blurring of boundaries between Israel and other nations. Furthermore, ritual practices that involve commerce with spirits—such as sorcery, divination, witchcraft, spell-binding, omens, and necromancy—are figured as paradigmatically non-Israelite, such as most influentially in Deuteronomy, where such domains of expertise are cited as exemplary of those purportedly alien ways that Israelites must not “learn to imitate” (18:9–14).

To be sure, other biblical passages provide indirect data for practices that fell outside of the purview of priestly authority but nevertheless shaped ideas about transmundane powers current among ancient Jews. What they do not attest, however, is what we find expressed so unequivocally in the Book of the Watchers—namely: Jewish attempts to compile, organize, and textualize knowledge about demons in a concrete and systematic manner. The Book of the Watchers includes explanations of the origins, nature, and fate of “evil spirits” (Gr. πνεύματα πονηρὰ; Eth. manfasaʾekuyaʾ), and these explanations form part of a sophisticated and systematic account of transmundane powers, which outlines the proper roles and domains of “spirits” in contrast to “flesh” as well as mapping the spaces overseen by specific archangels and the places of the imprisonment of wayward angels and their eschatological judgment. Furthermore, this theorization is achieved with a focus on angelic transgression and its consequences for the origin and spread of demons, as explored along both temporal and spatial axes. Its aetiological appeal to the past pivots on the tale of the earthly descent of 200 angels from the class “Watcher” (Aram. ʾעֵר; Eth. teguh), their desire for human women, their teachings of corrupting and civilizing arts, and their paternity of monstrous Giants who tormented humankind and polluted the earth—in hybrid flesh until the purification of the Flood and as demonic forces thereafter. Its spatial ideology pivots on the claim to know the places of angelic descent, imprisonment, judgement, and punishment no less than the structure of the cosmos, God’s heavenly abode, and the sites of the post-mortem and eschatological fates of humankind.

One finds hints of an antediluvian transgression of cosmic order already in the terse description of the “sons of God,” “daughters of men,” and Nephilim in Genesis 6:1–4. What

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24 See Blair, De-Demonising, as well as discussion above in Chapter One.
25 I.e., in Psalm 106, it is asserted that attention to shedim came only because Israel "mingled with the nations and learned their ways" and "worshipped their idols" (Ps 106:34–41), while in Deuteronomy 32, shedim are similarly dismissed both as "no-gods" and as new to Israel (Deut 32:16–18). See further Chapter One.
26 Compare the condemnation of sorcery and divination as defiling in Lev 19:26, 31, and contrast the cases where mantic activities of various sorts are described as means to determine divine will by kings and priests in the course of narratives.
27 Schmitt, "Problem of Magic and Monotheism." Notably, Israelite women are sometimes associated with those types of ritual expertise and commerce with spirits that are rejected as counter to the will of Israel’s God (Ezek 13:18–21; cf. Exod 22:17).
28 On ʿעֵר (i.e., Watcher) as the name for a class of angel, see further Dimant, “Fallen Angels,” 32–33; Davidson, Angels at Qumran, 38–39, and compare Daniel 4.
is allusive and unexplained in Genesis, however, is expounded in spectacularly specific detail in the Book of the Watchers. In 1 Enoch 6–16 alone, the “sons of God” are explicitly equated with angels; their class is specified as “Watchers,” and their number, names, leader, and place and method of descent are all explained, together with their sexual and pedagogical transgression, their motives, and the proximate and ultimate results. Whereas the brief notice in Genesis veers abruptly to the assertion that “YHWH saw how great was humankind’s wickedness on the earth, and how every plan devised by his mind was nothing but evil all the time” (Gen 6:5), followed by an extensive narrative about Noah and the Flood (6:6–8:14), the Book of the Watchers explains every step of the connection between angelic descent and diluvian destruction. This apocalypse includes detailed accounts of the fallen angels’ corrupting teachings of humankind, the violence and bloodshed wrought upon the earth by their gargantuan hybrid sons, and the earthly prayers and archangelic intercession that prompted God’s watery purification of the earth and the imprisonment of the Watchers. Not only is angelic descent here made definitive of the decline of the antediluvian age, but it is also interwoven with the biography of Enoch, serving simultaneously to explain how and why this figure—mentioned only passingly in Genesis (5:18–24)—came to “walk with God.”

Much past research has focused on the possibility of recovering the older myths or sources that might lie behind 1 Enoch 6–16, particularly with the aim of determining the precise relationship of these materials to the terse treatment of Enoch in Genesis 5 and the passing references to “sons of God” and Nephilim in Genesis 6. To the degree that scholars have attended to the contextualization of the formation of the Book of the Watchers in the third century BCE, it has been largely through attempts to read the descriptions of Watchers and Giants therein as symbolic expressions of contemporary critiques or controversies. In an influential 1979 article, for instance, David Suter posited a “paradigmatic” interpretation of fallen angels as ciphers for wayward priests, thus locating the formation of the Book of the Watchers among those Jews who countered the leadership in the Jerusalem Temple. Writing soon thereafter, George Nickelsburg concurred in the case of 1 Enoch 12–16, which emphasizes the pollution of the Watchers and their abandonment of their proper tasks; with respect to 1 Enoch 6–11, he suggested instead that the violence of the Giants encoded the wars of the Diadochi, and he adduced parallels between the corrupting teachings of the fallen angel Asael in 1 Enoch 8 and Greek traditions about Prometheus to posit a critique of the Greek knowledge spread by Hellenism as well. Despite some notes of caution, their

29 The contrast is notable even if the relationship between Genesis and the Book of the Watchers cannot be reduced to exegesis; see further Reed, Fallen Angels, esp. 52–57.
30 For recent summaries of the source-critical debate see Bhayro, Shemihazah and Asael Narrative; Drawnel, "Knowledge Transmission," 123–27.
31 Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest.”
33 Nickelsburg, “Apocalyptic and Myth”; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1, 193. To be sure, these interpretations each resonate with important themes in the Book of the Watchers (e.g., the defense of an ideal of purity, the diagnosis of earthly ills of war and bloodshed, the ambivalence toward some types of knowledge). What I would like to question here, however, is the modern scholarly tendency to reduce its references to transmundane powers into symbols for something else.
theories have defined the parameters of scholarly discussion of the *Book of the Watchers*’ historical context for over three decades.\(^{34}\)

What has become conventional in the study of Jewish apocalypses, moreover, has been revived in recent attempts by scholars like Richard Horsley and Anatha Portier-Young to redescribe the entire corpus of apocalypses as “resistance literature.”\(^{35}\) Horsley posits that “no Second Temple Judean text classified as ‘apocalyptic’ has survived that does not focus on imperial rule and opposition to it,” and he thus treats the *Book of the Watchers* as akin to the Book of Daniel in this regard, even despite its pre-Maccabean date.\(^{36}\) Likewise, Portier-Young argues for the “origins of the genre itself as a literature of resistance,” in part by stressing the “manifold ways in which the apocalyptic writers used the power of symbol to counter imperial domination.”\(^{37}\) Symbolic readings thus ground her argument for interpreting even the pre-Maccabean *Book of the Watchers* as a response to the crisis of Macedonian rule.

I here heed their call to counter the traditional isolationism of research on apocalypses with renewed attention to imperial and other historical contexts. There have been many benefits to studying apocalypses as a corpus united across time by generic conventions and ideological commonalities. Yet the dominance of this approach has come with the unintended consequence of teleological and tautological isolationism, distracting from the task of investigating the different historical and political contexts of that shaped the very earliest apocalypses in particular. In my view, Horsley thus makes a persuasive case against a tautological tendency in Biblical Studies whereby "Judaean 'apocalyptic' texts are treated as sources for the scholarly construction of a distinctive theology or worldview in ancient Judaism called 'apocalypticism.'”\(^{38}\) It is a timely moment to counterbalance diachronic approaches with more synchronic perspectives on the same material: “instead of lumping Second Temple texts with all other texts that have previously been classified as ‘apocalyptic’ we should more appropriately concentrate on texts that are responding to the same definable historical circumstances,” as Horsley suggests, and "instead of applying generic definitions and concepts derived from a synthesis of motifs and terms from an extremely wide range of literature, it would be more appropriate to investigate how the images and statements in each particular text may be related to particular historical circumstances.”\(^{39}\) Among the potential gains, in the process, is the prospect of finally “moving past the previous reduction of the historical situation to a vague conflict between 'Hellenism' and 'Judaism,' and moving beyond 'religious persecution' to the concrete political-economic-religious conflicts.”\(^{40}\)

Like Horsley and Portier-Young, I thus feel that it is an apt moment for scholarship on apocalypses to flip the lens of our analyses, so as to correct some of the blind-spots in the dominant interpretative privileging of Christian theological and other diachronic trajectories. In the previous chapter, we have seen the value of a synchronic focus with respect to the

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\(^{35}\) Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes*, 47–62; Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 15–21


\(^{37}\) Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 45, 198.

\(^{38}\) Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes*, 4.

\(^{39}\) Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes*, 7.

\(^{40}\) Horsley, *Revolt of the Scribes*, 8.
Astronomical Book, and in this chapter, we shall further explore its efficacy for the Book of the Watchers. To do so effectively, however, I suggest that it is necessary to set aside the expectation that all apocalypses might fit within the same models of “imperial resistance”; if anything, as we shall see, synchronic approaches to the Book of the Watchers point to significant differences in how pre-Maccabean and Maccabean apocalypses reflect and engage their respective imperial settings.

In the case of the authors of Maccabean-era apocalypses like Daniel, Portier-Young aptly demonstrates how "revealed knowledge provides the necessary basis for the resistant action they advocate,” and "[t]heir use of 'mythical images rich in symbolism' exposes and counters imperial mythologies, through a strategy of critical inversion that enables readers to reimagine a world governed not by empires but by God.” She makes a strong case—for these apocalypses—that “[a]lternative symbol-making, like alternative syntax, disrupts the logic of imperial hegemony and introduces other ways of seeing and speaking the real.”

But is this necessarily applicable already to the Book of the Watchers? Scholarly habits of canonical privileging naturalize the extrapolation of dynamics from Daniel onto all other apocalypses. Consistent with my broader aim in this book to “reverse the gaze” to center so-called “pseudoepigrapha,” however, it is pressing to ask: what might be lost when we read the pre-Maccabean Book of the Watchers in terms of the Maccabean-era Daniel? Might it be more appropriate to read the demonology of the Book of the Watchers on its own terms, or in relation to the angelology of the even earlier Astronomical Book—and, hence, as potentially shaped by aims other than “symbol-making”?

The reading strategy of interpreting transmundane powers as historical symbols dovetails with a common practice in modern scholarship on apocalyptic literature whereby such works are dated by deciphering historical allusions in the mythic or visionary material therein. The parade example is Daniel 12, which uses symbols to recount an ex eventu prediction of the succession of empires from up until the rise of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. There, the correspondence is exact enough to enable dating of the work as a redacted whole to the time that this prediction ceases to describe history as we know it from other sources—in this case, the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the success of the Maccabean Revolt. The utility for understanding Daniel is unquestionable, and the same might be said of other historical apocalypses as well.

There are problems, however, in imposing the same reading strategy, without further ado, onto earlier works like the Book of the Watchers. For the consensus argument along these lines for Daniel, the "Animal Apocalypse," and Similitudes of Enoch, e.g., see Collins, Apocalyptic Imagination, 67–72, 87–88, 178—although, notably, Collins himself refrains from extending the pattern to all of Enochic traditions: "Like the Book of the Watchers, both the ‘Apocalypse of Weeks’ and the Epistle avoid explicit reference to historical figures and events, and so frustrate the desire to date them precisely" (62). Recent attempts to stretch these reading practices to other Enochic
It is notable, in my view, that the visions in Daniel are explicitly and self-consciously marked as symbolic speech encoding other meanings. Not only are the animals and other symbols therein explicitly framed as objects and figures viewed in dreams, but their encoded character is narratively conveyed by Daniel’s own requests to angels to interpret them. In Daniel 7, for instance, the seer is described as confused about the meanings of his dream-visions. Yet he is quite certain that their imagery must be a veiled expression of some true meaning awaiting proper interpretation (i.e., pesher):

As for me Daniel, my spirit was disturbed within me, and the vision of my mind alarmed me. I approached one of the attendants and asked him the true meaning of all this. And he gave me this interpretation of the matter... (Dan 7:15–16; JPS)

So too in Daniel 8:

While I, Daniel, was seeing the vision, and trying to understand it, behold, there appeared before me one who looked like a man. And I heard a human voice from the middle of Ulai, calling out, “Gabriel, make that man understand the vision.” He came near to where I stood, and as he came, I was terrified, and fell upon my face. He said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.” (Dan 8:15–17; JPS)

Read within the narrative world of Daniel, this logic makes sense: the two opening chapters describe Daniel as an exiled Jew in the Babylonian court who had “understanding of visions and dreams of all kinds” (דְלֵי הַרְצִים וְלֵבֶן הַצְּלָחֹת; 1:17). When Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream and commanded his court “to call for magicians, exorcists, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to interpret for the king” (לְכֶשֶדֵים לְכָשְׁפֵי לְחֶרֶטִים לָרְאִים לָאָשֶׁפים לַמָּלָּךְ; 2:2), others failed to understand the meaning therein but “to Daniel in a vision, which was at night, the mystery was revealed” (וּלְדוֹנֵא הָמַרְשָׁה דָּרוֹלֶנֶא רַוּ בְּלֵי; 2:19). The angel whom Daniel consults in chapters 7-8, thus, takes on a role akin to Daniel himself in relation to the king in chapter 2. Conveyed across all of these narratives, moreover, is an understanding of dreams as sets of symbols in need of decoding to discover predictions of divinely-set events fated to unfold on the stage of human history (cf. Gen 37:5–11; 40:5–41:57).

As with Enoch in the Astronomical Book, Daniel is described in scribal terms, and Jewish scribes are associated with skills and services also attributed to angels. There is, however, a notable difference. Daniel dramatizes the power of revealed wisdom to expose mantic meanings that would otherwise be obscure and inaccessible: the meanings of the predictive dreams are there presented as beyond the normal bounds of human education or understanding, but nevertheless accessible to Daniel by virtue of God’s granting of night-materials, however, also include Angel, "Reading the Book of the Giants," 320–21, 326–41—there drawing inspiration directly from Horsley's and Portier-Young's readings of both Enochic and Danielic apocalypses as "resistance literature"; see, however, the concerns raised in Stuckenbruck, "Qumran Aramaic Today," 5–7; Ehro, “Historical-Allusional Dating”; Ehro, “Internal Dating Methodologies.”

44 Daniel’s own scribalism is doubled: he and his companions are said to have been taught "the writings and the language of the Chaldeans" (כשדים ולשון ספר; Dan 1:4) in the Babylonian court, but it is later stressed that the God of Israel also gave them “all writing and wisdom” (וחכמה בכל שפר; 1:17)—a pairing that recalls the scribal training described in Aramaic Levi, etc.—on which see Chapter Two. The signaling of Aramaic as a language among mantic experts in the Babylonian court (e.g., 2:4) makes these connections all the more intriguing.
visions and angelic interpreters. As we have seen in the previous chapter, however, Enoch and Uriel model a different ideal of scribal epistemology. In the *Astronomical Book*, Jewish scribes are akin to angels in their capacity to understanding everything, and scribal teaching is depicted as encompassing and conveying a grand totality of knowledge. Whereas the confused Daniel awaits a God-given vision or angel to explain, the confident Enoch is akin to the angel Uriel in his ability to know and to teach “everything.” Daniel’s acts of seeing are visionary; Enoch’s acts of seeing are scientific and scribal.

What I would like to suggest, in what follows, is that the demonology of the *Book of the Watchers* may be better understood in relation to the angelology of the *Astronomical Book*. Not only do both predate Daniel and reflect a pre-Maccabean context, but both are marked by an appeal to Enoch that is couched in totalizing rhetoric celebrating the comprehensiveness and certainty of scribal knowledge. In the *Astronomical Book* and the *Book of the Watchers*, the scribal exemplar is described as having learned everything taught and shown to him by angels. If anything, the pattern is even more pronounced in the *Book of the Watchers*. Even at the outset, the completeness of Enoch’s comprehension is proclaimed with the pointed decisiveness of first-person direct speech:

1, Enoch, a righteous man whose eyes were opened by God, beholding the sight of the Holy One and of heaven (Gr\(^\text{Pan}\): ἀνθρώπου δίκαιος ἐστίν, ὃ ὄρασις ἐκ θεοῦ αὐτῷ ἀνεφαίρετη ἡ ἁγία, ἐγενόμην τήν ὀρασίν τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). He showed me (Ἐδείξεν μοι). And from the words of the Watchers and holy ones, I heard everything (Aram: אנהשמעתכלהוקדישין[עיריןmalı̄omן],) and as I hearkened everything from them, so I also understand what I saw (Gr\(^\text{Pan}\): καὶ ὅς ἥκουσα παρʼ αὐτῶν πάντα καὶ ἐγνών ἐγὼ θεωρῶν). (I En 1:2)

Here, Enoch stands at the head of a lineage of scribes, and he models their ability to understand for themselves in a manner akin to the angels. As with Uriel in the *Astronomical Book*, Enoch’s angelic interlocutors in the *Book of the Watchers* function less as angelus interpres and more as teacher. Angels do not reveal secret meanings that the human scribe is not otherwise able to comprehend. Quite the contrary: it is stressed that Enoch’s “eyes were opened by God,” and that it was God Himself who “showed” him, such that he can learn “everything” from the angels and to understand whatever he sees. Accordingly, throughout the *Book of the Watchers*, angels do not reveal secret or hidden meanings per se: they are akin to teachers, whose didactic tasks of showing and teaching are paired with writing and reading as in the practice of scribal pedagogy on earth. It is here only fallen angels, in fact, who model more mantic acts (e.g., I En 8:3).

Rather than mysterious symbols in need of decoding, transmundane powers are presented in the *Book of the Watchers* as agents in the history of humankind’s antediluvian

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45 Notably, interpretation is a major concern throughout Daniel. “Of all Hellenistic Jewish narratives,” as Seth Sanders notes, “Daniel is likely the most abundant in moments in which revelation is explicitly interpreted, at the center of all but three of its 12 chapters”; “Daniel and the Origins.” See also Henze, “Use of Scripture in the Book of Daniel.”

46 Here following the fragmentary Aramaic of 4Q201 col. i line 3, as reconstructed in Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 142; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 137. The corresponding clause in Gr\(^\text{Pan}\) reads καὶ ἁγιολόγων ἄγιων ἥκουσα ἐγὼ.

47 Cf. *1 En* 90:6 [BD]: 4Q268 1.7-8. For parallels to this metaphor of “opened eyes,” see further Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 380-81.
past and its lineages of knowledge.\textsuperscript{48} Their stories are told in third-person narrative prose in the course of a description of events before the Flood—first with no reference to Enoch at all (\textit{1 En} 6–11) and then with him actively involved as a scribe whom wayward Watchers approach for help in writing a petition and whom God commissions to rebuke them (\textit{1 En} 12–16). Further information about these fallen angels follows in the course of Enoch’s journeys (\textit{1 En} 17–36), when he visits the sites of their present binding and future punishment and learns about the evil spirits that sprung from the bodies of their hybrid sons. Far from ciphers to decode, Watchers and Giants are presented as part of the history and structure of the cosmos created by God, as known and mastered by Jewish scribes since Enoch.

To be sure, figures like Uriel, Shemihazah, and Asael might simultaneously serve as \textit{exempla} for the pedagogical illustration of acts to emulate or avoid—an approach that is attested quite early and emphatically in the reception-history of the \textit{Book of the Watchers}, even if not unequivocal within the work itself.\textsuperscript{49} In this, however, these figures are akin to the men and women of Israel’s history.\textsuperscript{50} As in the case of Enoch, there is no indication that these figures are reduced to symbols or paradigms in any manner that blunts the claims to the concreteness of their existence. Rather, knowledge about angels and demons is here presented as an integral part of knowledge about the workings of the cosmos, the course of history, and the conditions of human experience. Instead of denouncing such knowledge as foreign, feminine, popular, or polluting, those responsible for the \textit{Book of the Watchers} lay claim to demonology as a domain of Jewish scribal expertise. To understand how and why they did so, it might be less useful to look to Daniel than to consider what we know of other discourses about demons among ancient Jews—especially in relation to the more practical domains of so-called “magic.”

\textit{From Jewish Exorcism to Enochic Scribal Expertise}

On the basis of the biblical avoidance of demons and condemnation of commerce with otherworldly spirits, it might be tempting to presume a general Jewish disinterest in transmundane powers. Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls, however, now opens a window onto a broader range of attitudes within the lived practice of ancient Jews. There, we find a wealth of more practical materials pertaining to the manipulation of intermediate spirits. As Esther Eshel has shown, these fall into two main types: [1] “incantations or spells, aimed to exorcize or drive out evil spirits or other evil forces” and [2] “apotropaic psalms which were intended for protection.”\textsuperscript{51} The former are addressed directly to demonic power(s), while the latter appeal to God and/or angels for protection against them. In the case of the former, we find the rhetoric of adjuration and, at times, appeals to the exorcistic efficacy of the divine Name. In the case of the latter, verbal patterns best known to us from Psalms (esp. Ps 91) are

\textsuperscript{48} Notably, this is the case even in the “Animal Apocalypse”—the Enochic work that most conforms to the Danielic model of presenting encoded meanings through symbols in dreams; when angels are there meant, for instance, stars, horses, shepherds, etc., are used to symbolize them.

\textsuperscript{49} On the polyvalence of angelic descent, see Collins, “Methodological Issues”; on the Watchers as negative exempla, see Reed, \textit{Fallen Angels}, esp. 98–116.

\textsuperscript{50} On Israel’s past as a source of \textit{exempla} in the Second Temple period, see Reed, “Construction and Subversion.”

\textsuperscript{51} Eshel, “Genres of Magical Texts,” 396; Eshel, “Apotropaic Prayers,” 84–86.
deployed in the service of demonic protection.\textsuperscript{52} Both exorcistic and apotropaic materials thus presume the power of the spoken word to empower individual people to manage their interactions with spirits.

Most relevant, for our purposes, are those materials which plausibly predate the foundation of the Qumran community and which might therefore offer some clues as to the views of otherworldly spirits that likely circulated among Jews in third century BCE. Especially significant in this regard are 4Q560, which preserves what seems to have been an Aramaic “magic book,”\textsuperscript{53} and 11Q11, which preserves what seems to have been a Hebrew exorcistic manual of probable pre-sectarian provenance.\textsuperscript{54} Both sources exhibit interesting overlaps with the \textit{Book of the Watchers} but also notable points of divergence.

Although 4Q560 is highly fragmentary, it conveys a poignant sense of the variety of Jewish beliefs about demons that circulated before and beyond concerted elite or literary attempts to systematize them. Fragments of one column, for instance, preserve examples of direct first-person speech to a “spirit” (רוח; רוח) as the subject of adjuration (4Q560 1 ii), while fragments of the other includes mention other different types of demons, including male and female shudder-demons (להולא הדרה ולהולא נקברת) and male and female crumble-demons (פרכית, פרך; 4Q560 1 i).\textsuperscript{55} In the latter, the danger of the demonic is linked in part to their ability to foster iniquity and transgression (1 4). Yet their power to infect is associated foremost with bodily ailments: not only do demons pose a threat to women during childbirth (4Q560 1 1), but they enter into the teeth and body, and they can cause “fever, chills and heart fever” (1 3–5).

In 11Q11, similar concerns are expressed through Hebrew apotropaic psalms and related incantations, albeit here framed in a more cosmic perspective and articulated in terms recalling both biblical and Enochic traditions.\textsuperscript{56} Explicit references to shedim and malʾakim occur alongside references to David, Solomon, Israel, and YHWH.\textsuperscript{57} Among the Hebrew incantations here preserved in fragmentary form is one “in the Name of the Lord” (11Q11 V 4; cf. 8Q5 frg. 1), directly addressing a demon as follows:

\begin{quote}
Who are you [the one who was born of] man and seed of the holy ones? Your face is a face of [delusion, and your horns are horns of disappearance. You are darkness not light, injustice not justice. (11Q11 V 6–8)
\end{quote}

The adjuration alludes to one demon’s mixed parentage as the product of the mingling of humankind and “holy ones.” The danger of the demonic is thus located in the pollution emblazoned by the angelic–human hybrid. Although this allusion does not necessarily imply that all demons originated from single instance of inter-species reproduction, a

\begin{footnotes}
\item[52] Fröhlich, “Magical Healing at Qumran,” 44–46.
\item[53] Penny & Wise, “By the Power of Beelzebub”; Naveh, “Fragments of an Aramaic Magic Book.”
\item[54] Fröhlich, for instance, reasons that the latter “manuscript was, in all probability, a library copy used as a manual for appointed days,” in part because “the length and the form of 11Q11 do not allow for the possibility that the text could be stored inside an amulet worn on the body” and “the leather on which the text was written shows no traces of folding” (“Incantations in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 27).
\item[55] Eshel, “Genres of Magical Texts,” 396–98. This formula of male-female pairing, as Penny & Wise have noted, is characteristic enough of later Aramaic amulets and incantation bowls as to be “virtually diagnostic” (“By the Power of Beelzebub,” 628).
\item[56] So Eshel, “Genres of Magical Texts,” 401.
\item[57] On 11Q11 as part of the continuum of psalmic compilations at Qumran and beyond, see now Mroczek, \textit{Literary Imagination}.
\end{footnotes}
number of scholars have noted the parallel to the *Book of the Watchers*’ aetiology of evil spirits from the union of the fallen Watchers and their human wives.\(^{58}\)

At first sight, it might be tempting to interpret this parallel as an instance of the influence of the *Book of the Watchers*. It may be worth wondering, however, whether the relationship between 11Q11 and the *Book of the Watchers* may be better understood on analogy to the relationship between the didactic list of 4Q208 and the narrativized forms of the *Astronomical Book* that we examined in Chapter Three. In both cases, we find two sets of materials with similar content, each framed in different forms to fit different aims, and the more context-specific forms may help us to recover a sense of the earlier received materials that were compiled and synthesized in the more abstractified and narrativized forms. In the case of 11Q11 and the *Book of the Watchers*, of course, the correspondence is far less precise. Nevertheless, even if 11Q11 postdates the *Book of the Watchers* and does not approximate any of its “sources,” it may aid us in speculating about the practical, context-specific, and local rites that preceded and enabled early Enochic scribal claims to map a systematic demonology—especially if read alongside 4Q560 and other examples of Jewish “magic” within and beyond the Dead Sea Scrolls.

As in the case of the *Astronomical Book*’s relationship to 4Q208 and 4Q209, then, it may be useful to reconsider the *Book of the Watchers*’ relationship with this Qumran evidence for Jewish “magic” through the lens of David Carr’s emphasis on the differing force of long-duration literature and context-specific writing.\(^{59}\) The parallels between 11Q11 and the *Book of the Watchers*, in particular, provide a poignant example of how much the same content can be framed variously within context-bound and formalized modalities of writing. What is specific to the setting of a written script for direct speech to one demon in the former (“Who are you [the one who was born of] man and seed of the holy ones?”; 11Q11 v 6–8) is universalized into an aetiology of all evil spirits in the latter (esp. 1 En 15) and integrated into a narrative about the early history of the cosmos and humankind (esp. 1 En 6–16). And in this sense, the *Book of the Watchers* exemplifies the power of long-duration literature to “formalize, generalize, and perpetuate features and intentions of language, cutting it loose from momentary and context-bound utterance.”\(^{60}\)

A similar pattern can be seen in later “magical” materials that attest the continued circulation and vitality of ideas about demons in practical settings and non-systemized forms, even after the systematizing demonological efforts of the *Book of the Watchers*. Hebrew prayers for protection composed by the Qumran community, for instance, include references to a class of demons called “spirits of the bastards” (רהות ממזרים) or simply “bastards” (ممזרים)—a term also applied to the Giants in the *Book of the Watchers* (1 En 10:9).\(^{61}\) In the *Songs of the Maskil*, the list of demons against which the petitioner seeks protection includes “the spirits of the destroying angels (רוחי מלאכי חבל) and the spirits of the bastards, the

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\(^{59}\) Carr, *Writing on the Tablet*, 10.

\(^{60}\) Carr, *Writing on the Tablet*, 10. As noted above, Carr uses this category as a means of acknowledging the many different uses of writing in ancient cultures, while also distinguishing those elements most prominent in literary works meant for continued copying and study.

demons” (4Q510, frg. 1, 5) alongside other types of spirits with counterparts in Near Eastern and/or biblical traditions: “lilith, the howlers, and [the yelpers?], and those who strike suddenly to lead astray a spirit of understanding and to destroy their hearts” (5–6; cf. Isa 34:14). Some impact of the Book of the Watchers seems possible, particularly in light of our evidence for its popularity at Qumran. It remains, however, that these “magical” traditions cannot be collapsed into their literary counterparts, nor their relationship reduced to an arithmetic of simple influence: transmundane powers are here deployed for more context-specific and individualized aims and, thus, in different forms, configurations, and settings shaped by the shifting purposes and practical needs at hand.

That ancient Jews continued to cultivate more context-specific and practical demon-beliefs, in a manner parallel yet separate from systemized demonologies, is also clear from the corroborating evidence of late antique Aramaic incantation bowls. Parallels with 4Q560 were noticed already by Douglas Penney and Michael Wise, and more recently, Gideon Bohak and Siam Bhayro have pointed to parallels with 11Q11 as attesting some continuity in the traditions circulating within practical “magical” settings in which expertise in demons was deployed for the apotropaic protection of individuals. Inasmuch as the “magical” materials from the Dead Sea Scrolls also exhibit some parallels with earlier Mesopotamian traditions, they may provide a “missing link” of sorts, revealing a situation somewhat akin to what we discussed above in Chapter Three in relation to calendrical astronomy.

On the basis of his triangulation of Mesopotamian “magic,” the Dead Sea Scrolls, and Aramaic incantation bowls, Bhayro thus proposes an “Aramaic cultural mediation” of Mesopotamian scholasticism in the case of exorcism, similar to what Jonathan Ben Dov has posited on the basis of the Astronomical Book and other “scientific” Dead Sea Scrolls. If Bhayro is correct, it is possible that exorcistic expertise may have played some part in the Aramaic Jewish pedagogy of the early Hellenistic age, alongside calendrical astronomy and antediluvian historiography. Just as knowledge about the moon, sun, and stars circulated in other forms and settings both before and after its integration into the narrativized forms of long-duration literature like the Astronomical Book, perhaps so too with the knowledge about transmundane powers integrated within the Book of the Watchers. What is clear, in any case, is that our analysis of parallels with Jewish magical materials cannot be reduced to debates about the dependence of one on the other. To chart their relationship, rather, is to recover something of the vitality of the local and practical demon-belief that preceded and paralleled

62 I here follow the common rendering of the last term as the plural “demons” (i.e., שדים, שדים, שדים), although the term could also be read as a singular “fearsome demon”; Baillet, Qumrân Grotte 4 III, 216–17. The plural, in my view, makes more sense in the context of the list. See, however, Reimer, “Rescuing the Fallen Angels.”


64 See Penny & Wise, “By the Power of Beelzebub,” 628-30, noting parallels in formula of 4Q560 and later Aramaic amulets and incantation bowls and explaining them with an emphasis on how "amulets and incantation texts were conservative of tradition" (630).

65 Bhayro synthesizes a number of findings so as to make the argument that “incantation bowls can serve as an important testimony for how no-longer extant first-millennium BCE Aramaic sources were themselves received and used by later scribes”; see further “Reception of Mesopotamian and Early Jewish Traditions,” quote at 196. See already Bohak, “From Qumran to Cairo.”

66 I.e., in the sense that “ancient Babylonian science and literature was, in some form or another, received in Aramaic, which allowed their reception within Jewish circles”; Bhayro, "Reception of Mesopotamian and Early Jewish Traditions,” 188.
the beginnings of Jewish demonology, constituting the lived and local experiences that gave
meaning and power to the claims of some scribes to know—and write—the origins, nature,
names, types, and purpose of these and other transmundane powers.

If so, then these data would also fit a common pattern found in cross-cultural examples
of demonology: beliefs about demons that spring from local, context-bound, and practical
concerns (e.g., healing, protection) tend to precede and inform elite literary efforts to make
sense of them.\(^{67}\) Nor was such systemization either inevitable or conclusive. Rather, as Karel
van der Toorn has emphasized, “scholarly” experts sometimes sought to resolve sets of
demon-beliefs that quite readily coexisted in “popular” experience: the former “aimed for an
order in which gods and demons had their proper place” even though “people can believe in
an all-powerful God while fearing at the same time attack by demons.”\(^{68}\) The practice of
systematizing transmundane powers often contributed to the authority of temples, ritual
experts, or intellectuals. Nevertheless, “magical” discourses about demons tend to continue
long after the rise of more “theological” explanations, often absorbing elements thereof but
never wholly collapsed into them.

So too with our ancient Jewish data. Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls for “magical”
engagement with demons exhibits some overlaps with the Book of the Watchers, as we have
seen, but their relationship resists any tidy collapse into unidirectional arrows of
“influence.”\(^{69}\) Rather than trying to draw any direct lines of literary dependence, or to trying
construct one system to make seamless sense of both, then, it may be more useful to consider
how varying modes and practices of writing inform their distinctive articulations of common
ideas about the workings of a world in which humans and spirits inhabited the same
landscapes. In the process, moreover, the juxtaposition with “magical” materials may
highlight demonological and epistemological dynamics in the Book of the Watchers
neglected in the dominant scholarly focus on its relationship to Genesis and other literary
materials.

Most basically, for instance, 11Q11 and the Book of the Watchers presume the same
logic with respect to the mechanics of demonic control. Multiple incantations in 11Q11
coerce demons by means of voiced threats. In one case, a demon (שד) is to be warned that the
“chief of the army of the Lord” (יהוה הצבאشر) will imprison it in the deep (11Q11 V 8–13).
In another incantation, the threat to be made to the demon is that God will send “a powerful
angel” (מלאך תקיף) to take the demon “down to the great abyss” to dwell in darkness (IV 5–9).
The content of these threats are the much the same as what the Book of the Watchers
describes when recounting the fate of the fallen angels. There, archangelic acts of binding
loom large in the account of God’s acts of commissioning archangels to act on His behalf to
 cleanse the earth of antediluvian evils (1 En 10:4–14). Two of the four commissioned
archangels, in fact, are tasked with binding the wayward Watchers. Passing mention is made
of Noah and the Flood in the context of the commission of Sariel to warn and save him
(10:1–3). Here, however, much more attention is given to these angelic acts of binding—with
Raphael sent by God to “bind Asael hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness” (10:4–8)

\(^{67}\) Frankfurter, Evil Incarnate, 13–30.
\(^{68}\) Van der Toorn, “Theology of Demons,” 62.
\(^{69}\) I remain unconvinced by Alexander’s attempt in “Demonology” to argue for a single and coherent
demonology that was based on the Book of the Watchers and is expressed uniformly in the Dead Sea Scrolls.
For other critiques of his approach, see Reimer, “Rescuing the Fallen Angels”; Stuckenbruck, “Origin of Evil,”
103–4 nn. 34, 36.
and Michael to “bind Shemihazah and the others with him who have united themselves with the daughters of men” (10:11–14). Later, Enoch himself claims to have visited the deep pits of bound stars (21:1–6) and the prison of angelic confinement near the abyss (21:7–10). Just as the scribes responsible for the Book of the Watchers seem to root their descriptions of the aetiology of evil spirits in ideas about some specific demons current in incantations circulating for practical use against them, so they seem to ground the plausibility of their description of the punishment of the fallen angels in common notions of what angels could be called upon to do in the course of more practical efforts to combat the demons encountered in everyday life.

To reduce fallen angels and Giants to symbols, thus, is to miss an important element of the Book of the Watchers: it took form in a milieu in which expertise about demons and their names circulated already in everyday efforts to combat them. This point has important ramifications for our understanding of the much-cited angelic descent myth in the Book of the Watchers (esp. 1 Enoch 6–16). One prominent line of research on this apocalypse has read this myth as promoting one position in a purportedly dichotomous intellectual debate about theodicy. Paolo Sacchi and Gabriele Boccaccini, for instance, read Genesis 1–3 as exemplary of what they see as the position in the Hebrew Bible, central to what they call “Zadokite/Mosaic Judaism,” which emphasizes human responsibility for the origins of evil, and they point to the chapters about the fallen angels in the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 6–16), by contrast, as exemplary of what they call “Enochic Judaism,” which they reconstruct around the counter-claim that “supernatural” forces are responsible for earthly ills.70 Elsewhere, I have questioned the logic whereby differing aetiologies of sin and suffering are extracted from such sources and imagined to have sufficed to splinter Judaism(s) in Second Temple times; as much as 20th-century thinkers have been preoccupied with “origins,” theodicy, and the “problem of evil,” moreover, it is unclear whether such concerns were framed in quite the same fashion already by Jews in the early Hellenistic age.71 For our present purposes, it suffices to note the import of “magical” materials like 4Q560 and 11Q11, which corroborate what can be inferred from a close reading the Book of the Watchers on its own terms: its demonology cannot be reduced to rarefied theological reflection about evil or to a response to a theological crisis sparked only by large-scale historical events like the Babylonian Exile. Rather, the Book of the Watchers draws much of its persuasive power from local ideas about otherworldly spirits that were current in contemporary efforts to combat their interventions in the lives of individuals, even as it imposes narrative, theoretical, and theological order upon them.

Whereas scholars such as Sacchi and Boccaccini have approached the angelic descent myth as an important moment in the intellectual history of Second Temple Judaism, P. S. Alexander thus points to how much we miss when we disembodied this myth from local landscapes vivified by beliefs about invisible forces with impact upon everyday life: “Faced almost certainly with a multiplicity and diversity of evil spirits in the religion of the day, the author or authors of this myth tried to bring order into the anarchic and chaotic demonic

70 E.g., Boccaccini, Roots of Rabbinic Judaism, 26–42, 89–102.
71 Genesis 1–3 eventually came to be interpreted as an aetiology of evil, especially by Christians, it is not clear that this was how it was understood by Jews prior to the first century CE.
realm, and to integrate demons into their theological worldview.”

Accordingly, it is necessary to take its demonology “with utmost seriousness.”

Our analysis confirms Alexander’s insight in this regard. But it may also allow us to push one step further. As we have seen, the Book of the Watchers’ understanding of demons did not simply spring from exegesis or elite debate but also (and perhaps primarily) from an acutely felt and lived sense of malevolent forces as active in everyday life. Yet a desire for theological control over the entropic quotidian does not suffice to explain its innovative turn to demonology. To write order upon evil spirits in early Hellenistic age, after all, was not merely to speculate about evil in some abstract or global sense: it was also to root one’s authority in a claim to expertise about transmundane powers that were widely believed to intervene in the lives, fates, and bodies of individuals.

This positive appropriation of knowledge about demons marks a rather radical departure from the patterns in the Hebrew Bible discussed above in Chapter One. Yet we do find some parallels in other Aramaic Jewish literature from the third and second centuries BCE. Both Tobit and Genesis Apocryphon preserve second-hand evidence for Jewish exorcism. In contrast to Deuteronomistic denunciations of commerce with demons and the spirits of the dead as exemplary of the “abhorrent practices of the nations” that Israel must abandon to be worthy of the Promised Land (e.g., Deut 18:9–14), both works include narratives that associate exorcistic efficacy with pious Jews with special access to angels (e.g., Tob 4:17; 6:13–17; 8:1–3; 1QapGen 20:28–29; cf. 1 Sam 16:14–23; Zech 3:1–2). Manipulation of demons is there assumed to be an appropriate domain of Jewish expertise: it is not framed or presented as a sign of corruption by “foreign” customs, but rather narratively represented as an extension of piety and a consequence of close commerce with the angels of the God of Israel. Taken together, this evidence suggests that knowledge about such matters was taking on positive associations among some Jewish scribes. In associating Enoch with claims to knowledge about the origins and fate of wayward angels, evil spirits, and the spirits of the dead, the scribes responsible for the Book of the Watchers similarly take up topics that are systematically excluded from the earlier Hebrew literary cultures that shaped the Bible. These and other Jews writing in Aramaic, in fact, may participate in a broader project of the scribal appropriation of such domains of expertise, emblematized by demonology no less than astronomy.

To what degree, then, does the Book of the Watchers collect and compile known traditions about heavenly, wayward, and wicked spirits, and to what degree does it impose its own schemata or interpretations? Unfortunately, the surviving first-hand evidence for Jewish “magic” still remains sparser for the Second Temple period than for later eras. Nor can we presume that all such materials voice a singular, static, or systematic view of otherworldly spirits. The relevant material that survives, however, does seem to share some basic assumptions. It seems generally presumed, for instance, that multiple varieties of impure and malicious spirits, male and female, are active on the earth. Such spirits are assumed to intervene in everyday human lives, sometimes in unwelcome ways. They sometimes induce illness and sometimes inspire iniquity. They penetrate tooth and flesh but also sway the heart

74 The best summary and synthesis of the relevant data remains Bohak, Ancient Jewish Magic, 70–142.
or mind. Accordingly, as in many ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures, healing, prayer, and exorcism are overlapping domains.\textsuperscript{75}

Prominent in the surviving evidence from Second Temple Judaism, in particular, is a sense of the special power of the spoken word when deployed in incantations, petitions, and apotropaic prayers. The status of speech as the main medium for communication with the divine is well established already in ancient Israelite psalms, liturgy, and prophecy, and if anything, perhaps intensified with the growth of interest in prayer in Second Temple times. Likewise, notions of the latent power of language as activated by oral performance are familiar from Jewish traditions surrounding the divine Name as well as from the ideal of Scripture as read from mouth to ear to memory. As we have seen, “magical” materials from the Dead Sea Scrolls presume the potentiate power in human speech to wield exorcistic or apotropaic power: just as speech is figured as the main channel for people seeking to petition angels for aid and protection from demons, so it is also figured as efficacious for coercing demons through threats.

Notably, this sense is also present in the Book of the Watchers—and precisely in 1 Enoch 10, the chapter that contains the greatest density of overlaps in theme and content with extant “magical” materials like 4Q510 and 11Q11. It is perhaps telling that the narrative context is explicitly petitionary: 1 Enoch 10 describes the divine and archangelic acts that answer human suffering at the hands of Watchers and Giants after the cries of perishing men went up to the heavens (8:4; 9:3; 9:10). The prior chapter had taken care to describe the precise mechanics: "the earth... raises the voices of their cries to the gates of heaven," and "Michael, Sariel, and Raphael, and Gabriel looked down from the sanctuary of heaven upon the earth and saw much bloodshed" (9:1–2). Just as "to the holy ones of heaven, the souls of men make suit, saying 'Bring in our judgment to the Most High'" (9:3), so the archangels then approach God on their behalf, stressing how "the spirits of the souls of the men who have died make suit, and their groan and has come up to the gates of heaven" (9:10). It is in God’s answer, commanding them to act, that we find the monstrous sons of the Watchers described in terms also familiar from materials like Songs of the Maskil—with Gabriel sent “to the bastards, to the half-breeds, to the sons of miscegenation” (10:9). The result is not just to “fill gaps” left by the inclusion of a terse description of the “sons of God,” Nephilim, and Gibborim prior to the narrative about Noah and the Flood in Genesis (i.e., Gen 6:1–4), but also to evoke a paradigmatic past instance in which spoken words on earth had the power to petition God and His angels for protection against the demonic violence and corruption. A practice that would have been familiar to readers at the time—petitionary prayer against violence from transmundane powers—is here projected back in the distant past and recounted in terms that reveal how its earthly efficacy operates from the perspective of heaven.

Works like 4Q560, 11Q11, and the Songs of the Maskil activate expertise about demons to prescribe context-specific rites for individuals to counteract specific demons among a multiplicity assumed to be active on the earth—writing scripts meant for speaking. The scribes responsible for the Book of the Watchers, however, use scribal strategies of textualization and narrative to theorize at a level of abstraction, leaving the realm of lived practice to opine instead on the cosmos and the distant past. Their acts of writing invoke the power of speech, but they also impose written order on the demonic by distinguishing and filiating different types of transmundane powers through scribal strategies of systemization

\textsuperscript{75} See, e.g., Scurlock, “Physician, Exorcist,” on asû and āšipu on ancient Mesopotamia.
such as listing, naming, aetiology, lineage, and hierarchy.\textsuperscript{76} As such, this text does not just “reflect” or “express” widespread ideas or beliefs about demons; such ideas and beliefs, rather, provide the raw material for scribal practices of ordering knowledge that also make meaning in their own right. Juxtaposition with “magical” materials thus helps to draw out some of the epistemological force of the assertion of self-consciously scribal knowledge about transmundane powers in the \textit{Book of the Watchers}, whereby the shift from demon-belief to demonology serves to expand the very scope of the conceptual territory claimed for Jewish scribal expertise.

The “magical” materials from the Dead Sea Scrolls thus also help us to recover something of what Frankfurter characterizes as the “rudimentary systematizing of demons [that] belongs to the oral, interactive domain of popular discussion, legend-telling, and the recommendation (or composition) of protective spells,” wherein “it is neither relevant nor conceivable to contemplate the entire range of potentially malignant spirits or to integrate them with the formal theology of the dominant religious institution.”\textsuperscript{77} Attention to such sources can thus help us to pinpoint the innovation of the \textit{Book of the Watchers}, not as the advent of Jewish interest or belief in demons, but rather as the beginnings of a scribal Jewish engagement in the more abstractified, second-tier practices of “collection, classification, and integration” of demon-belief into systematic demonology.\textsuperscript{78} As evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls and Aramaic incantation bowls makes clear, the demonology of the \textit{Book of the Watchers} did not displace or replace practical and local demon-belief, even if its re-framing and redeployment of some common elements might have impacted some of its articulations. What it did, however, was inaugurate an influential line of Jewish literary tradition whereby scribes, in particular, claimed authority over—and by—using technologies of textuality to organize knowledge about transmundane powers into broader theological and cosmological systems.\textsuperscript{79}

It is in this sense that we might liken the \textit{Book of the Watchers’} integration of demon-beliefs known from these “magical” materials to what we discussed above in Chapter Three concerning the \textit{Astronomical Book’s} integration of lunar and other didactic lists into newly narrativized and systematized forms. In the case of demonology, however, the source material bears one important difference—namely, its focus on the power of speech rather than the power of writing. Above, we noted how the lunar and other astronomical lists that preceded and informed the \textit{Astronomical Book} seem to have been cultivated from within a setting of scribal teaching. By contrast, the above-noted “magical” materials seem to presume a different sort of expertise, recorded in writing but ultimately predicated on oral performance. The \textit{Book of the Watchers} not only textualizes and narrativizes such traditions: it simultaneously scribes them.

\textsuperscript{76} See further below. As for aetiology, lineage, and hierarchy, note that the Watchers are here the fathers of Giants, from whose bodies spring evil spirits and whose mothers become sirens. This differentiation, notably, is among the reasons why it is not plausible to read the incantations in 11Q11 as if they simply presume the same aetiology of evil spirits outlined in the \textit{Book of the Watchers}: the latter differs notably in its systematic efforts to distinguish between Watchers and Giants/demons in their origins, sins, and punishment.

\textsuperscript{77} Frankfurter, \textit{Evil Incarnate}, 15.

\textsuperscript{78} Frankfurter, \textit{Evil Incarnate}, 13–15.

\textsuperscript{79} Below, we shall see how this process continues especially in \textit{Jubilees}, drawing further upon local practices of petitionary prayer while simultaneously extending the \textit{Book of the Watchers’} systemization of angelic and demonic roles to speak also to the relationship of Israel and other nations.
With 11Q11 and other “magical” materials from the Dead Sea Scrolls—as we have seen—the Book of the Watchers shares a sense of the power of spoken words of prayer and petition to traverse the divides between earth and heaven, persuading angels to act against demonic or monstrous forces on behalf of humankind. Indeed, the above-noted archangelic acts of binding are clearly described there as spurred into action by sound: it is “a groan… come up to the gates of heaven,” for instance, that conveys the petition of the “spirits of the souls of the men who have died” at the hands of the Giants (1 En 10:9–10). What the Book of the Watchers depicts that is unparalleled in contemporaneous Jewish “magical” materials, however, is the power of writing also to cross precisely these same divides.  

It is telling, for instance, that Enoch does not even enter the narrative world of the Book of the Watchers (i.e., 1 En 6ff) until his scribal technai are needed to open a line of communication between earth and heaven. When first approached by heavenly Watchers to rebuke their fallen brethren, he is explicitly called by the title “scribe”:

> And look, the Watchers of the Great Holy One called me, Enoch the scribe, and said: “Enoch, righteous scribe (Gr. Ὑνώχ, ὁ γραμματεὺς τῆς δίκαιοσύνης), go and say to the Watchers of heaven who forsook the highest heaven, the sanctuary of their eternal station, and defiled themselves with women. As the sons of earth do, so they did and took wives for themselves. And they worked great desolation on the earth—‘You will have no peace or forgiveness.’” (1 En 12:3–4)

That his mediatory role is predicated on his scribal skills becomes clear when the fallen angels respond with a request for him to “write (γράψω) a memorandum of petition for them, that they might have forgiveness, and that I recite (ἀναγγέλω) the memorandum of petition for them in the presence of the Lord of heaven” (13:6). Not only are his acts of writing and reading here presented as among those acts that lead to his rapture and heavenly journey (1 En 14), but their content of this “memorandum of petition” (τὸ ὑπόμνημα τῆς ἐρωτήσεως) is described in some detail, thereby highlighting the specificity and precision of the requested scribal acts (e.g., as including “requests concerning themselves, with regard to their deed individually, and concerning [their sons] for whom they were making request, that they might have forgiveness and longevity”; 13:6).

This points us to an interesting pattern: explicit references to the power of writing may be common in our evidence for “magic” from other cultures of the time, as well as in later Jewish traditions, but they are notably absent from our Jewish evidence from the Second Temple period.  

Even the most closely related materials from the Dead Sea Scrolls have no counterpart to the triangulation of scribal expertise, claimed commerce with heavenly spirits, and mastery of knowledge about demons that is narrativized and textualized in the Book of the Watchers. Even in the contemporaneous Aramaic narratives of Tobit and Genesis Apocryphon, other technologies of demonic control are in focus instead: the former describes how the demon Asmodeus was expelled by the smoke made from burning the heart and liver

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80 These materials, of course, are themselves written, which is how we are able to access them. Their textualization, however, is here for the sake of enabling oral performance, as is clear from the contrast with later materials: “in the earlier stage, exorcistic hymns were gathered into handbooks [i.e., like 11Q11], but their use was in a verbal fashion; in the later period, they were used both in a verbal and in a scribal manner" (Ancient Jewish Magic, 302).

81 Bohak, Ancient Jewish Magic, 137–38. Bohak stresses the “scribalization gap” between Second Temple and late antique Jewish magical materials; it is not until much later than in the PGM and other Greek materials, for instance, that writtenness figures strongly in Aramaic and Hebrew materials (esp. 283–85).
of a particular fish (Tobit 6:8,16–17; 8:2–3),\(^8^2\) while the latter conveys the power of holy men like Abraham to drive away demons, even apart from special words, substances, or even direct acts of intervention by God or angels (1QapGen 20:28–29).\(^8^3\) The innovation that we see the *Book of the Watchers*, then, may not just be limited to its impulse to systematize and categorize knowledge about transmundane powers: it may relate also to the very contention that mastery of knowledge about demons should belong to those educated in writing and other forms of scribal expertise—a notion with precedents in Mesopotamia but wholly unparalleled in earlier biblical materials.\(^8^4\)

Modern scholars have tended to focus on the bold theological contentions of the authors and redactors of the *Book of the Watchers* to know and convey the true purpose of angels, the sins of fallen angels, and the origins of demons—not least since these are the elements of its angelology and demonology that became so influential in later centuries. For understanding their departure from the literary practices that shaped earlier biblical literature, it may be no less significant that these claims are predicated on the power of what Frankfurter has observed across the ancient Mediterranean world as the demonological efficacy of “writing, as a technology allowing both abstraction from local experience and the magical force of the inscribed name.”\(^8^5\) My suggestion, here, is that the demonology of the *Book of the Watchers* is not only a theological project: claims to knowledge about demons also prove critical for its articulation of a newly totalizing vision of Jewish scribal knowledge and expertise. It is in this sense—I suggest—that the *Book of the Watchers* takes up the textualizing and archival project of the *Astronomical Book* that we charted in Chapter Three, extending it into an even more expansive epistemology that claims to encompass even the furthest and darkest corners of the cosmos. And it is also in this sense that it fits with the cultural trends of the early Hellenistic age, consolidating and anthologizing received knowledge in new textualized forms with a “totalizing gesture” that encompassed even demons.

\(^8^2\) That this narrative detail may have had some counterpart in actual practice is suggested by Bohak on the basis of supplementary evidence for the ancient Jewish use of fumigation to dispel demons; see *Ancient Jewish Magic*, 89–94, citing as parallels in Josephus, *War* 7.180–85, Justin, *Dial.* 85.3, and *Pirqe de Rav Kahana* (ed. Mandelbaum, p. 74). Taken together, these data attest Jewish beliefs about the inherently anti-demonic properties of certain natural substances, which could be activated by rituals and which could be efficacious seemingly apart from direct divine or angelic involvement.


\(^8^4\) See Chapter One above.