

# Notes on the *Zohar* in English

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THE ZOHAR, or *Sefer ha-Zohar*, is without question *the* major text of classical Kabbalah. It is not a single book, but rather a collection of tracts of various sizes, there being about two dozen which form fairly coherent units. The bulk of the Zohar is a running commentary on the Torah, into which the numerous shorter tracts have been incorporated, added in the margins, or compiled as addenda to the various chapters. Some of the shorter tracts are in a separate section called the *Zohar Hadash* (the NEW ZOHAR), and there is yet a third section called the *Tikkunei Zohar* (the ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ZOHAR).

Work concerning the authorship and chronology of the zoharic strata is on-going, though most scholars agree that the main body of the Zohar was written by Rabbi Moses de Leon (1250-1305) and perhaps some others in his circle toward the end of the thirteenth century into the beginning of the fourteenth. Later strata (*Raya Mehemna* and the *Tikkunim*), were written in the fourteenth century and added to de Leon's work.\*

Since the 2001 update of this paper, it may be said that a publication which can viably claim to be a complete Zohar in English has been published—and two others have been promised; see below regarding the editions of (1) the Kabbalah Centre International, (2) Fiftieth Gate Publications, and (3) Stanford University (= the PRITZKER EDITION). Before this, only two-thirds to three-quarters of the Zohar had been put into English, and that spread over a handful of separate publications.

\* On the authorship of the Zohar, see Yehuda Liebes, "How the Zohar Was Written," in *Studies in the Zohar* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993). On the Zohar's internal chronology and on its subsequent collection and publication, the most recent work has been published in Hebrew articles by Ronit Meroz and Boaz Huss; however, note the English articles by Meroz and Huss in the bibliography below.

On whether the Zohar was originally a unified literary unit, i.e., a *book*, see Daniel Abrams, "Critical and Post-Critical Textual Scholarship of Jewish Mystical Literature: Notes on the History and Development of Modern Editing Techniques," in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, vol. 1, edited by D. Abrams and A. Elqayam (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 1996), and especially Abrams' "The Invention of the Zohar as a Book—On the Assumptions and Expectations of the Kabbalists and Modern Scholars," in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, vol. 19, edited by D. Abrams (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2009).

The most recent "Overview of Zohar Research" appears in Melila Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden: The Language of Mystical Experience in the Zohar* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009): pages 23-28.

This paper is divided into five sections:

1. SOURCES OF THE ZOHAR IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION
2. DIVISIONS OF THE ZOHAR: a chart showing the different tracts and sections of the Zohar along with initial-coded entries to indicate books which contain translations of them
3. BIBLIOGRAPHY with notes, listing books, sections of books, and articles which discuss the Zohar or some aspect of it; many of these items contain translated passages
4. RECOMMENDATIONS concerning the pursuit of Zohar study
5. “Zohar I 51b-52a...”

## 1. SOURCES OF THE ZOHAR IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The most comprehensive guide to the Zohar is Isaiah Tishby's *Wisdom of the Zohar*, the English version of which came out in 1989. (Complete publication information on this and all other books discussed in this section is given in § 3. BIBLIOGRAPHY.) The Hebrew original, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, has been a standard, lauded by scholars since its publication: volume 1 in 1949 and volume 2 in 1961. In form, *Wisdom* is an anthology of Zohar readings arranged by subject. Each subject is thoroughly and clearly introduced; each translated passage is supported by full explanatory footnotes. While most excerpts are a page or two in length, a few are quite extensive, such as the full translations of the section *Yanuka* (*i* on the divisions chart), major portions of *Sava* (*b* on the chart), and the first of the two *Hekhalot* sections (*f* on the chart). (*Wisdom* is keyed as IT on the chart.)

The principal virtue of Tishby's rich study is the organization which it lends to the Zohar by bringing together passages on similar or related subjects (which, in the printed editions, are scattered all over the place) and offering such complete and lucid introductions. By giving the reader so much help, Tishby makes the concepts of the Zohar, many of which are quite difficult and obscure, far more accessible than they would be from a translation standing alone.

The work which, from the 'thirties until recently, presented the largest amount of the Zohar in English (maybe two thirds) is the five-volume translation of Simon, Sperling, and Levertoff: *The Zohar* (Soncino Press, 1931-4, and a “student” edition by Rebecca Bennet Publications—frequently reprinted; keyed on the divisions chart as SSL). This set is often referred to as *The Soncino Zohar*.\*

Clearly, SSL's idea was to present a coherent linear commentary to the Torah, but their omissions leave the reader frustrated. Missing are not only most of the inserted tracts but many of the particularly difficult passages from the running commentary itself.

Introductory material and notes are minimal. Gershom Scholem (*Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, p. 387, n. 34) says of SSL, “This translation is not always correct but it conveys a clear impression of what the Zohar is. It is to be regretted that too much has been omitted. The innumerable deliberate falsifications of the French translator, Jean de Pauly, are of course not to be found in this more solid and workmanlike translation.”

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\* *The Soncino Zohar* has been produced on CD-ROM for both Mac and Windows. The *Zohar*, which is the same as the books, can be gotten alone or on a CD-ROM which also includes an extensive selection of texts in both Hebrew/Aramaic and English: the Bible, the Talmud, and Midrash Rabba; the commentaries of Rashi on the Talmud and *Chumash*, and the *Tosafot* on the Talmud are in Hebrew only. *The Soncino Zohar* requires 4 meg RAM and CD-ROM drive. On the Internet, go to [www.soncino.com](http://www.soncino.com).

After seventy years, SSL's Zohar was finally surpassed in scope by "The First Ever Unabridged English Translation with Commentary" offered by Kabbalah Centre International: *The Zohar* by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, with The *Sulam* commentary of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (Yeshivat Kol Yehuda, 2001; VOLUME 23: *Index*: 2003). In twenty-two volumes the Zohar is presented, paragraph by paragraph, in the original Aramaic and in English. The English is a translation of Rabbi Ashlag's *Ha Sulam* (THE LADDER), namely Ashlag's Hebrew translation of the Zohar containing his "embedded commentary," which, in the Kabbalah Centre's edition, is shown in a different typeface from the Zohar text. (*Ha Sulam* was originally published in Jerusalem, 1945-55.) Most chapters are introduced by short summaries, which, starting at volume 3, are headlined "A Synopsis." Some chapters are further set up by additional paragraphs headlined "The Relevance of the Passage." Each volume contains a glossary of Hebrew words, including biblical names and kabbalistic terms.

Ashlag's commentary appositively identifies many of the Zohar's widely (wildly) ranging referents with *sefirot*, *parzufim*, and other features fundamental to Lurianic developments. Elsewhere the commentary fleshes out the Zohar's apparent shorthand (often by simply identifying the antecedents of potentially ambiguous pronouns). In some paragraphs, the commentary overwhelms the text; in others, no commentary at all appears. Of the *Sulam* commentary, Isaiah Tishby (*Wisdom of the Zohar*, p. 105) says, "The explanations follow the Lurianic system and are of little help in clarifying the literal meaning of the text."

Comparison with SSL shows that Kabbalah Centre's Zohar follows the same order but includes the material omitted from the earlier work. Thus, here one finds THE BOOK OF CONCEALMENT, the *Idrot*, both *Hekhalot* sections, etc. While not unreasonably priced at around \$20 per hardbound volume, the whole set represents something of a commitment, especially considering that, as editor Rabbi Michael Berg's introduction puts it, the Kabbalah Centre's Zohar is "*deliberately not* a scholarly edition" [Berg's italics]. What we do have is "a literal—not a vernacular—translation" where "[m]aterial has not been condensed or moved to achieve clarity or a more logical presentation."

For further *Ha Sulam* translations, see Rav Michael Laitman, *The Zohar: Annotations to the Ashlag Commentary* (Toronto–Brooklyn: Laitman Kabbalah Publishers, 2009), which gives—in English—the Zohar's PROLOGUE (roughly the first half of volume one of the Kabbalah Centre's Zohar: §§1-260) with the *Sulam* commentary, additional commentary from the first part of Ashlag's *Hakdamat Sefer ha-Zohar*, plus Laitman's "own explanations."

An older multi-volume work from Kabbalah Centre is the translation of one particularly significant section of the Zohar prepared by Rabbi Phillip S. Berg: *The Zohar: Parashat Pinhas* (3 volumes, Research Centre of Kabbalah, 1987-8, keyed as PSB on the chart). The set presents a major portion of *Raya Mehemna* (t on the chart). This translation is nearly identical to the *Pinhas* portions of the newer Kabbalah Centre Zohar (volumes 20-21), indicating that this work was also based on Rabbi Ashlag's *Ha Sulam*, though not all of the *Sulam* commentary is included. Here and there Rabbi Berg inserts commentary of his own in clearly marked paragraphs separate from the text. Further, Rabbi Berg uses the Standard English names of biblical books and other terms (e.g., NUMBERS instead of *Bemidbar*). Berg's *Parashat Pinhas* includes an introduction and helpful indices to the three volumes.

Another "complete" Zohar which has been promised, but has thus far seen only its first volume published, is *Zohar: Selections Translated and Annotated by Moshe Miller* (Fiftieth Gate Publications, 2000). This inaugural volume provides introductory sections: "Historical Background," "The Structure of the Zohar," and "The Mystical Concepts of the Zohar." Translated selections from the Zohar comment on the first four portions of the Torah: *Bereishit*, *Noah*, *Lech Lecha*, and *Vayera*. However, Miller does not begin with Zohar 1:1 and progress in the order of one of the printed editions as SSL's and Kabbalah Centre's do; he presents the commentary following the order of the biblical verses, drawing on all parts of the Zohar, including *Zohar Hadash* and *Tikkunei Zohar*. Embedded in the Zohar text in smaller type are comments and explanations drawn from classic commentaries,

such as *Or Yakar* [R. Moses Cordovero], *Or ha-Hamah* [R. Abraham Azulai], *Tanya* [R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi], *Ziv ha-Zohar* [R. Y. Y. Rozenberg], *Damesek Eliezer* [R. Eliezer Tzvi of Komarna], and the text for the Kabbalah Centre translation, *Ha Sulam* [R. Yehuda Ashlag].

The most important recent development in Zohar scholarship and publication is the Stanford University's PRITZKER EDITION\* of the Zohar, in both Aramaic and English, prepared by Daniel Matt. The English translation is from a "critical text" which Matt composed (using the Margaliot edition as a starting point) "based on a selection and evaluation of the manuscript readings" (p. XVII) from some twenty "reliable manuscripts"—some dating as far back as the fourteenth century—along with the Mantua and Cremona editions of the sixteenth century—all in Aramaic, the original language of the Zohar (unlike the Kabbalah Centre's translation, which is based on a Hebrew translation *and* which includes embedded commentary). When completed, this edition will run twelve volumes. The first five volumes have been published (2004: VOLUME I, Z1:1a-76b, omitting Z1:38a-45b = *Hekhalot*, which will appear in a subsequent volume; VOLUME II, Z1:76b-165b; 2006: VOLUME III, Z1: 166a-251a; 2007: VOLUME IV, Z2: 2a-94a; and 2009: VOLUME V, Z2: 94b-179a, which includes §§ *Sava de-Mishpatim* and *Sifre di-Tzeniuta*).

The numerous footnotes constitute a helpful commentary to the text. Matt draws on a range of traditional Zohar commentaries, including those of Moses Cordovero, Hayyim Vital, and Yehuda Ashlag, as well as the work of modern scholars, such as Reuven Margaliot, Isaiah Tishby, Gershom Scholem, Yehuda Liebes, and Charles Mopsik. Volume I includes an introduction by Arthur Green, which is reduced from his companion volume to the PRITZKER EDITION: *A Guide to the Zohar*, also published by Stanford. Green's *Guide* provides an exquisite overview, covering the history, structure, style, and concepts of the Zohar.

Matching the highest academic standards with genuine sympathy for the text—Matt describes his translation as "literal yet poetic" (p. XX)—the PRITZKER EDITION will undoubtedly become the English Zohar of choice among scholars and informed lay readers.

There are a number of translations of one particularly important set of Zohar texts: *Sifre deTzeniuta* and the *Idrot* (*b*, *c*, *d*, and *e* on the chart). Three versions among these stand out as the most reliable—certainly the most faithful to the original: (1) Roy A. Rosenberg's *Anatomy of God* (Ktav, 1972), which contains all four texts; (2) Pinchas Giller's *Reading the Zohar* (Oxford, 2001), which offers *Sifre deTzeniuta*\*\* and *Idra de bi Mashkana* (*b* and *e*); (3) *Sifre deTzeniuta* in Daniel Matt's *Zohar*, VOLUME 5 (Stanford, 2009). For the other versions of these texts, see the bibliography under MATHERS, SASSOON & DALE, RUNES, and WORK OF THE CHARIOT; these sections also appear in the Kabbalah Centre *Zohar*.

A translation of *Midrash ha-Neelam* to the BOOK OF RUTH (*s* on the chart) comprises *The Mystical Study of Ruth: Midrash ha-Neelam of the Zohar to the Book of Ruth*, translated and edited, with introduction and notes by Lawrence A. Englander with Herbert W. Bassler (Scholars Press, 1993; keyed EwB on the chart).

The first half of *Sava* (or *Sava d'Mishpatim* – Z2: 94b-104a, *b* on the chart) is given in Aramaic and English, with commentary and 21 appendices, in what is described in the foreword as "a work in progress": *Zohar: Sabba d'Mishpatim – The Old Man in the Sea*, PART ONE: REINCARNATION/RESURRECTION/REDEMPTION; translation and commentary by Shabtai Teicher (Jerusalem: 2004—

\* PRITZKER is the name of the sponsor of the Zohar translation/publication project—not the name of a publisher or manuscript collection as many assume. The Aramaic text which serves as the basis for Matt's translation can be viewed at Stanford's site, [www.sup.org/zohar](http://www.sup.org/zohar) > Aramaic Text Online.

\*\* See also Giller, "A Working Translation of the Sifra de-Tzeniuta," which is § III of Textual Reasoning: The Postmodern Jewish Philosophy Network, Volume 6, Number 2 (May/June 1997), on-line at [http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/journals/tr/archive/pmip/pmip6\\_2.html](http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/journals/tr/archive/pmip/pmip6_2.html)

formerly available at [www.kabbalaonline.org](http://www.kabbalaonline.org) > RECOMMENDED KABBALA BOOKS IN ENGLISH > RECOMMENDED KABBALA WORKS : TO VIEW COMPLETE ARTICLE > *The Old Man in the Sea* : “To purchase...click here.” Alas, the times I checked—January 2007 through June 2008—the book was listed “SOLD OUT”. As of December 28, 2008, it’s gone). Fortunately, *Sava* is in Daniel Matt’s *Zohar*, VOLUME 5.

“[A]pproximately one half of the text” of *Sithre Othioth*, THE SECRETS OF THE LETTERS (p on the chart), is translated, and the whole text analyzed, in Stephen G. Wald’s book, *The Doctrine of the Divine Name: An Introduction to Classical Kabbalistic Theology* (Scholars Press, 1988; keyed SGW on the chart).

Gershom Scholem published a reader of Zohar excerpts in English: *Zohar: The Book of Splendor, Basic Readings from the Kabbalah* (Schocken Books, 1949, reprinted frequently). Scholem’s translations are of passages which appear elsewhere (e.g., SSL, Kabbalah Centre); however, his renderings are, in places, quite different.

Another collection of excerpts, more extensive than Scholem’s, is Daniel C. Matt’s *Zohar – The Book of Enlightenment* (Paulist Press, 1983). A fine introduction and ample notes supplement the translations. (One wonders, though, about Matt’s setting these passages in a free-verse format.) More recently, a distressing abridgement of this book appeared as *Zohar: Annotated & Explained* (Woodstock: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2002), which offers about half of the passages from the Paulist publication. Explanatory notes, massaged into conventional prose from the more academic notes of the original work, face the pages of text. The most unfortunate victim of the abridgement is the introduction: the commendable 36-page introduction of the original work was chopped to a most inadequate 8 pages.

In his foreword to *Tales from the Zohar - PART 1: GENESIS* (Jerusalem: Haktav Institute, 1992), Aaron Avraham Slatki writes, “Anyone who sought to benefit from the tales of the righteous found that they are scattered throughout the sea of the Zohar, and are engulfed in the sea of concealed secret teachings and the forest of esoteric interpretations of the holy Torah. Now...anyone may derive benefit from this magnificent treasure of true practices, moral teaching, fear of G-d, and Torah teachings inherent in the wonderful tales of the Zohar.” *Tales from the Zohar*, the Zohar’s narrative segments selected and translated by David Shalom Basri, has been put into English by Edward Levin.

Eight narrative segments from the Zohar are translated, with notes and extensive commentary, in Aryeh Wineman’s *Mystic Tales from the Zohar* (The Jewish Publication Society, 1997).

In *Dreams of Being Eaten Alive* (Harmony Books, 2000), David Rosenberg treats the Zohar as one of the great works of world literature—albeit one not recognized as such. Rosenberg devotes some sixty pages to “New translations of the Kabbalah,” primarily Zohar, along with passages from *Midrash Rabba*, *Sefer ha-Bahir*, and *Sefer Yetzirah*, arranged by subject.\*

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\* On the topic of dreams, in 1515 (Salonika) Rabbi Solomon Almoli first published his book of dream interpretations, *Pitron Halomot*. Almoli’s sources include the Talmud, the Zohar, R. Saadia Gaon, R. Hai Gaon, Maimonides, R. Eleazer of Worms, even Averroes, Avicenna, and al-Ghazzali. Two somewhat shortened translations of *Pitron Halomot* are available in English: (1) Chapter Two of Joel Covitz’ *Visions of the Night: A Study in Jewish Dream Interpretation* (Shambhala, 1990), who says (p. 9), “The first part of *Pitron Chalomot*...is at times heavy, polemical, repetitive, and even boring... In the abridged text, I have sought to spare the modern reader (Almoli’s) obsessiveness...”; (2) Yaakov Elman’s translation, *Dream Interpretation from Classical Sources* (Ktav, 1998), which is rather less abridged than Covitz’, includes two appendices: passages from R. Manasseh ben Israel’s *Nishmat Hayyim* and R. Judah Moses Ftayya’s *Minbat Yehuda Harubot Mesapperot*. Elman’s introduction is scant. To fill this void, see Monford Harris, “The Interpretation of Dreams by a Sixteenth-Century Rabbi,” in *Studies in Jewish Dream Interpretation* (Jason Aronson Inc., 1994), pp. 39-63. Also find also Annelies Kuyt’s article, “With one Foot in the Renaissance: Shlomoh Almoli and his Dream Interpretation,” in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, Volume 6, No. 3 (1999), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck.

Seth Brody's selection of translated texts, *Rabbi Ezra ben Solomon of Gerona: Commentary on the Song of Songs and Other Kabbalistic Commentaries* (Kalamazoo: Published for TEAMS [The Consortium for the Teaching of the Middle Ages] by Medieval Institute Publications / Western Michigan University, 1989) includes "Zohar Hadash: Commentary on Lamentations." Along with the Zohar passage and R. Ezra's commentary, Brody adds R. Bahya ben Asher of Saragossa's commentary on GENESIS 1:1-2.

Part III, JEWISH MYTH AND MYTHMAKING IN THE MIDDLE AGES, of Michael Fishbane's *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) offers numerous passages from the Zohar in English in CHAPTER 10, "Introduction," CHAPTER 11, "The Primordial Serpent and the Secrets of Creation," CHAPTER 12, "Divine Sorrow and the Rupture of Exile," and Appendix 1, § B. SEA MONSTERS AND THE MYSTERY OF EVIL: ZOHAR II. 34A-35B, and § C. DIVINE SORROW AND CONSOLATION: ZOHAR HADASH, EICHA.

Scores of passages from the Zohar are translated and discussed in the numerous works of Elliot R. Wolfson; refer below to § 3: BIBLIOGRAPHY, where items by Wolfson far outnumber those of any other scholar catalogued. Note in particular *Luminal Darkness: Imaginal Gleanings from Zoharic Literature* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007), which collects eight of Wolfson's previously published articles, and the hefty *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005) in which the Zohar is central to Wolfson's protracted and ranging discussions of gender, poetics, existence/non-existence, embodiment, and numerous other topics.

"A full translation and in depth commentary" by Perets Auerbach covering the first section of the "Zohar Volume I: Introduction" (i.e., *Haqdamat* or PROLOGUE: Z I:1a-14b) is available as an e-text: *Zohar: The Book of Splendor* (Jerusalem: Association of Authentic Kabala Educators [A.A.K.E.], 2009). A.A.K.E. are described on the title page as "A society of sincere, genuine, dedicated kabalists who work individually and collectively to bring the light of the ancient mystical texts to the contemporary modern mind."

2. DIVISIONS OF THE ZOHAR

a. commentary on the Torah		SSL	IT <sup>1</sup>	KC: 1-22/ M: 1—
b. Sifre de'Tzeniuta	Z2 176b—179a	RR	PG	KC: 11 / M: 5
c. Idra Rabba	Z3 127b—145	RR		KC: 17
d. Idra Zutta	Z3 287b—296b	RR		KC: 22
e. Idra de bi Mashkana <sup>2</sup>	Z2 127a—146b	RR	PG	KC: 11
f. Hekhalot	Z1 38a—45b <sup>3</sup>		IT'	KC: 2
	Z2 244b—262b			KC: 13
g. Raza de Razin	Z2 70a—76b	SSL		KC: 10
	Z2 76b—78a			KC: 10
	ZH 35b—37c			
h. Sava	Z2 94b—114a	SSL	IT <sup>4</sup> /ST	KC: 10 / M: 5
i. Yenuka	Z3 186a—192a	SSL	IT'	KC: 19
k. Rav Methivtha	Z3 161b—163a	SSL		KC: 18
	Z3 163a—174b <sup>5</sup>			KC: 18
l. Sithre Torah	Z1 15a—2b	SSL		KC: 1
parallel cols	74b—75a			
	76b—77a			
	78b—81b		P(G) <sup>6</sup>	
	88a—90a		P(G) <sup>7</sup>	
	97a—102a		Myer <sup>8</sup>	
	107b—111a			

	146b—149b	P(G) <sup>9</sup>	DM <sup>10</sup>	
	151b—152a			
	154b—157b			
	161b—162b			
	Z2 146a			
m. Mathnithin	Z1 64a, 74, 97, 100b, 107b, 121, 147, 151, 154, 161b, 165, 232, 233b, 251			
	Z2 4a, 12b, 68b, 74, 270b			
	Z3 49, 73b			
	ZH 1d, 3a, 122b, 195a			
n. Z to <i>S OF S</i>	ZH 61d—75b			
o. Kav ha-Middah	ZH 56d—58d			
p. Sithre Othioth	ZH 1b—7b	SGW		
q. comm. on <i>EZ</i>	ZH 37c—41b		IT <sup>11</sup>	
r. Midrash ha-Neelam	Z1 97a—140a	P(GM) <sup>12</sup>	IT <sup>13</sup>	KC: 3-4
	Z2 4a—5b	SSL		KC: 8
	14a—22a	SSL	IT <sup>14</sup>	KC: 8
	35b—40b	SSL		KC: 9
	ZH 2b—26b		DR <sup>15</sup>	
	27b—28d		IT <sup>16</sup>	
s. M h-N on <i>S OF S</i>	ZH 60a—61d			
M h-N on <i>RUTH</i>	ZH 75a—90b	EwB		
M h-N on <i>LAM</i>	ZH 91a—93b			
t. Raya Mehemna	Z2 40b—43b	SSL	IT <sup>17</sup>	KC: 9
	114a—121a		IT <sup>18</sup>	KC: 10



	Z3	97a—104a	SSL		KC: 16
		108b—112a			KC: 16
		121b—126a	SSL	IT <sup>19</sup>	KC: 17
		215a—258a	PSB		KC: 20-1
		270b-283a		IT <sup>20</sup>	KC: 22
u. Tikkunei Zohar (passages from <i>Tikkun</i> 70)	Z1	22a—29a	SSL		KC: 1
v. additions to q.	ZH	31a—35b			
		93c—122b			
w. Ta Hazei	ZH	7a			

## Key to initials:

DM.....Daniel Matt. *Zohar – Book of Enlightenment*.  
DR.....David Rosenberg. *Dreams of Being Eaten Alive*.  
EwB.....Englander with Basser. *The Mystical Study of Ruth*.  
IT.....Isaiah Tishby. *The Wisdom of the Zohar*.  
KC.....Kabbalah Centre International. *Zohar*. (KC followed by volume number)  
M.....Matt. *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition*.  
Myer.....Myer. *Qabbalah*.  
P(G).....Patai. *Gates to the Old City*.  
P(GM).....Patai. *Gates to the Old City* and *The Messiah Texts*.  
PG.....Pinchas Giller. “Appendix” to *Reading the Zohar*.  
PSB.....Phillip S. Berg. *The Zohar: Parashat Pinhas*.  
RR.....Roy Rosenberg. *Anatomy of God*.  
SB.....Seth Brody. “*Zohar Hadash: Commentary on Lamentations*”  
(in *Commentary on the Song of Songs*)  
SGW.....S.G.Wald. *The Doctrine of the Divine Name*.  
SSL.....Simon, Sperling, and Levertoff. *The Zohar*.  
ST.....Shabtai Teicher. *Zohar: Sabba d'Mishpatim*.

(Full descriptions of these books are given in the bibliography.)

## Other abbreviations:

Z.....Zohar	M h-N.....Midrash ha-Neelam
ZH.....Zohar Hadash	S OF S.....SONG OF SONGS
cols.....columns	LAM.....LAMENTATIONS
comm.....commentary	EZ.....EZEKIEL

## Notes to “DIVISIONS OF THE ZOHAR”:

1. IT (Tishby) contains numerous passages from the running commentary. KC and Matt’s PRITZKER EDITION follow the running commentary. Matt omits inserted texts; these will be published separately.
2. What constitutes the *Idra de bi Mashkana* is a matter of some confusion. Scholem identifies it as Z2 127a-146b (which is included in SSL), whereas Rosenberg, following standard editions of the Zohar (i.e., paged according to the Mantua Zohar), places it at Z2 122b-123b, which is not included in SSL; translations of this section appear in Rosenberg, Tishby, and Giller. Giller calls it simply “The Shorter *Idra*,” and he suggests (*Reading the Zohar*, p. 90) that the actual *Idra de bi Mashkana* is lost or not identified as such because it lacks the characteristic framing narrative of the other *Idrot*, i.e., that of the forum of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai and his circle.
3. *Hekhalot* Z1 38a—45b does not appear in Matt’s VOLUME 1; it will be included in a later volume. For Z1 41a-45b, see IT 597-614.
4. Z2 94b-99b, 103a, 106a-b; see IT 177-97, 517, 1511-13.
5. Mirsky states that the passage translated in *Rabbinic Fantasies* (ed. Stern and Mirsky—see the bibliography) is based on Z3 332-5 of the Margolioth edition. This pagination does not, indeed cannot, agree with our divisions chart in that our [Mantua] Zohar stops at Z3 299b. Mirsky notes that the translation appears in *Zohar be-Midbar: Shelah Lecha*, which, by our pagination covers Z3 156b-176a. SSL leaves a huge gap at 163a-174a: Mirsky’s passage falls inside this gap, probably somewhere around Z3 167a-168a. Other passages from this gap are given in Tishby: Z3 168b-169a, Z3 168a, and Z3 170a; see IT 672-3, 784-5, 794-5. For this section intact, see Kabbalah Centre’s Zohar, volumes 17 and 18; the section which matches the *Rabbinic Fantasies* segment appears in KC, volume 18, pp. 112-130.  
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6. Z1 81b; see P(G) 427.
7. Z1 89a-90a; see P(G) 484-5.
8. Z1 97a, 98b, 99a 100a; see Myer 427-8.
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10. Z1 147a-148a; see DM 75-79.
11. ZH 38a, 38a-b, 38d, 39d-40a, 41a; see IT 619, 492-3, 619-20, 643-5, 615.
12. Z1 98a-99a, P(G) 496-7; Z1 135b-136a, see P(M) 243-5.
13. numerous passages
14. numerous passages
15. ZH 26b and 18d-19a; see DR 90-1 and 95-7.
16. numerous passages
17. Z2 40b-41a, 42b-43a; see IT 1317, 265-6.
18. numerous passages
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—*Vol. II, Introduction to the Book Zohar* includes "Preface to the Book of Zohar," which is the same text as *An Entrance to the Zohar*, Part Two; and "Introduction to the Book of Zohar" which is the same text as *An Entrance to the Zohar*, Part One, and *In the Shadow of the Ladder*, Chapter 3. Both are presented with extensive commentary.

Rav Michael Laitman, a student and personal assistant of R. Yehuda Ashlag's son, R. Baruch Ashlag, has also written a series of introductory books on Kabbalah which are available in print and on the Internet at [www.kabbalah.info](http://www.kabbalah.info) > Free Kabbalah Books. See below, under "Laitman."

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Krakovsky, Rabbi Levi I. *The Omnipotent Light Revealed: Wisdom of the Kabbalah*. Hollywood: Kabbalah Culture Society of America, 1939; rpt. Brooklyn: Yesod Publishers, n.d. (ca. 1970).

Admonition and apologetic burden this introduction to the Zohar and Kabbalah by a follower of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag.

Lachter, Hartley. PARADOX AND MYSTICAL UNION IN THE ZOHAR. PhD dissertation, New York: New York University, 2004.

The paradoxes are those “the Zohar maintains regarding the being of the world and the human self. ... [T]he Zohar presents a picture of reality in which the cosmos and the human self are both one with and other than God simultaneously.” (from the ABSTRACT, p. v) “Becoming one with God is a central aspect of the dialectical worldview of the Zohar in a way that does not resolve the tension of these paradoxes. Moreover, mystical annihilation itself is paradoxical, in that the unification of the self with God is also a unification of the cosmos and the divine self with transcendence in a way that is both annihilative, yet renewing and sustaining.” (p. 270)

Laitman, Rabbi Michael. See above: “Ashlag.”

Laitman, Rav Michael. *The Zohar. Annotations to the Ashlag Commentary*. Toronto – Brooklyn: Laitman Kabbalah Publishers, 2009.

“This book offers a semantic translation of *The Zohar* itself, Rabbi Ashlag’s *The Sulam* commentary, and my own explanations. The book also contains the first part of *The Book of Zohar—Hakdamat Sefer Sefer HaZohar* (Introduction of *The Book of Zohar*).” —*The Zohar*, page 18.

Levi, Eliphas. *The Book of Splendours: The Inner Mysteries of Qabalism, Its Relationship to Freemasonry, Numerology and Tarot*. Originally published 1894; reprinted New York: Samuel Weiser, 1973.

Levi includes a compacted paraphrase of *Idra Rabba* (though Levi refers to it as “The Idra Suta”) which can be compared with Mathers’ rendition: the divisions and subheadings correspond, indicating that Levi’s source was also Knorr von Rosenroth’s *Kabbala Denudata*.

Liebes, Yehuda. “The Kabbalistic Myth as Told by Orpheus,” in *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism*. [SUNY SERIES IN JUDAICA: HERMENEUTICS, MYSTICISM, AND RELIGION]. Albany: State University of New York, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Myth vs Symbol in the Zohar and in Lurianic Kabbalah,” in *Essential Papers on Kabbalah*, edited by Lawrence Fine. New York: NYU Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Studies in the Zohar*. [SUNY SERIES IN JUDAICA: HERMENEUTICS, MYSTICISM, AND RELIGION, AND RELIGION]. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.

1. The Messiah of the Zohar
2. How the Zohar Was Written
3. Christian Influences on the Zohar

Lodahl, Michael E. *Shekhinah/Spirit: Divine Presence in Jewish and Christian Religion* [A Stimulus Book: STUDIES IN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY] New York – Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1992.

See especially PART II, § 3.a. “The Zohar Encountering Evil.”

Mathers, S. L. M. *The Kabbalah Unveiled*. London: George Redway, 1887; reprinted New York: Samuel Weiser, 1968, and reprinted frequently since.

Contains *Sifre deTzenniuta*, *Idra Rabba*, and *Idra Zutta* (b, c, and d on the chart) in English. Mathers translated these texts from the Latin of Knorr von Rosenroth (*Kabbala Denudata*, tom. II, Sulzbach: 1677-84). Notes and glosses included by Rosenroth are incorporated into Mathers’ translation, along with Mathers’ own additions and notes. With all of this extra material, much of which is quite off the mark, this is not a clear presentation of these subtle, important texts. Ironically, it is the *only* version which has been reprinted—several times at that. The most recent example:

*The Kabbalah: The Essential Texts from the Zohar*, with a foreword by Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi (SACRED TEXTS). London: Watkins, 2005.

Matt, Daniel C. *The Essential Kabbalah: The Heart of Jewish Mysticism*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco (a division of HarperCollins, New York) 1994.

Includes a handful of Zohar passages, nearly all from Matt’s *Zohar*.

\_\_\_\_\_. “‘New-Ancient Words’: The Aura of Secrecy in the Zohar,” in *Gershom Scholem’s MAJOR TRENDS IN JEWISH MYSTICISM 50 Years After*. [PROCEEDINGS OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HISTORY OF JEWISH MYSTICISM], edited by Peter Schäfer and Joseph Dan. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sefer Mar’ot ha-Zove’ot* (in Hebrew): R. David ben Yehuda he-Hasid. *The Book of Mirrors* [BROWN JUDAIC STUDIES, Number 30] Chico: Scholars Press, 1982.

“An important feature of *The Book of Mirrors* is the large number of passages from the Zohar which Rabbi David translates into Hebrew from the original pseudo-Aramaic. His renderings represent the first lengthy translations of the Zohar. Through them we see how a contemporary Kabbalist read and understood (sometimes misunderstood) the seminal Work of Kabbalah” (HUCA 51, p. 129). The Scholars Press edition of *Book of Mirrors* is a slightly revised version of Matt’s Ph.D dissertation, *SEFER MAR’OT HA-ZOVE’OT by Rabbi David ben Yehudah he-Hasid: Text and Study* (Waltham: Brandeis University, 1978), available from UMI at [www.il.proquest.com](http://www.il.proquest.com)—easier to obtain than the book. A revision of Matt’s English introduction appears as “David ben Yehuda Hehasid and His *Book of Mirrors*” in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. 51 (Cincinnati: 1980)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Zohar: Annotated & Explained*. [SKYLIGHT ILLUMINATIONS Series]. Woodstock [VT]: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Zohar—The Book of Enlightenment*. [THE CLASSICS OF WESTERN SPIRITUALITY]. Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Zohar*. PRITZKER EDITION. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

- VOLUME I: Diagram of the Ten Sefirot, *Foreword* by Margot Pritzker, *Translator’s Introduction* by Daniel C. Matt, *Acknowledgements*, *Introduction* by Arthur Green, *Haqdamat Sefer ha-Zohar*, *Parashat Be-Reshit*, *Parashat Noah*.
- VOLUME II: Diagram of the Ten Sefirot, *Parashat Lekh Lekha*, *Parashat Va-Yera*, *Parashat Hayyei Sarah*, *Parashat Toledot*, *Parashat Va-Yetse*.  
—2006.
- VOLUME III: Diagram of the Ten Sefirot, *Preface* by Daniel Matt, *Parashat va-Yishlah*, *Parashat Va-Yeshev*, *Parashat Mi-Qets*, *Parashat Va-Yiggash*, *Parashat Va-Yhi*.  
—2007
- VOLUME IV: Diagram of the Ten Sefirot, *Preface* by Daniel Matt, *Parashat Shemot*, *Parashat Va-Era*, *Parashat Bo*, *Parashat Be-Shallah*, *Parashet Yitro*.  
—2009
- VOLUME V: Diagram of the Ten Sefirot, *Preface* by Daniel Matt, *Parashat Mishpatim* (*Sava de-Mishpatim*) plus commentary, *Parashat Terumah* plus commentary, *Sifre di-Tsniuta*.

McGinn, Bernard. "The Language of Love in Christian and Jewish Mysticism," in *Mysticism and Language*, edited by Steven T. Katz. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Meltzer, David (ed). *The Secret Garden: An Anthology in the Kabbalah*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1976: Part Six. Hechaloth, Petach Eliyahu.

Though the editor claimed that neither of these items from the Zohar had been previously translated, the so-called "Hechaloth" (*hekhbalot*) section had already appeared in English several times:

- a. in SSL (1931-4) vol. 3, pp. 130-7, in a section which, in SSL, is rightly referred to as *Raya Mehemna*;
- b. in Scholem's reader (1949), pp. 77-81;
- c. in R. Yehuda Ashlag's *Entrance to the Zohar* (1974), pp. 143-52, though this rendering appears to be paraphrased.

Translations of "Petach Eliyahu," a hymn from *Tikkunei Zohar*, had also previously appeared in English:

- a. in Raphael Ben Zion's *Way of the Faithful* (1945), pp. 5-7; this collection was reprinted in the early 'seventies by Yesod under the title *Anthology of Jewish Mysticism* (reprinted again in 1981 by Judaica Press, New York);
- b. in Louis Jacobs' *Jewish Ethics, Philosophy and Mysticism* (1959) Chapter 20.

In *The Secret Garden* (p. 149), the Zohar segment there called "Hechaloth" was mistakenly numbered Z1 42b-43a, which, if correct, would set this passage into the first of the *Hekhalot* sections. However, the correct number for the section given is Z2 42a-43b, which is, in fact, part of *Raya Mehemna*.

Meroz, Ronit. "Middle Eastern Origins of Kabbalah," in *The Journal for the Study of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry*, Volume 1, Issue 1 (February 2007), edited by Zion Zohar, on-line at <http://sephardic.fiu.edu/journal/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Zoharic Narratives and Their Adaptations," in *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* 3, edited by Yorn Assis and Raquel Ibanez-Sperber. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000, online at <http://jewish.huji.ac.il/Publications/hispaniaju/hispjudbul3-prel.pdf> (off-line, May 2007)

Miller, Moshe. *Zohar: Selections Translated and Annotated by Moshe Miller*. Morristown: Fiftieth Gate Publications and Seminars, 2000.

website: <http://kabbalah.1.tripod.com/kabbalah/id2.html>

Moses de Leon. "Jacob's Journey," translated and annotated by Daniel Matt in *Fiction*, vol. 7, nos. 1-2: Rabbinic Fantasy. New York: The City College of New York / CUNY, 1983.

Also in Matt's *Zohar*, pp. 75-9.

Muller, Ernst. *History of Jewish Mysticism*, translated by Maurice Simon. Oxford: East and West Library, 1946; reprinted, New York: Yesod Publishers, n.d.: The Zohar—study: pp. 84-119; translated excerpts: pp. 174-80.

Myer, Isaac. *Qabbalah. The Philosophical Writings of...Ibn Gebirol...and Their Connection with the Hebrew Qabbalah and Sepher ha-Zohar...* Philadelphia: privately printed, 1888; reprinted New York: Samuel Weiser, 1974; reprinted San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1988.

Zohar excerpts in Chapters 3, 4, 18, 19, 20, and Appendix A.

Neubauer, A. "The Bahir and the Zohar," in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, original series, vol. 4 (1892).

Neubauer disputes the antiquity of both texts. He includes translations from Meir ben Simeon of Narbonne (1245) on the Book *Bahir* and from Isaac of Acco's letter on the Zohar.

Nurho de Manhar. *Zohar. Bereshith-Genesis*. Originally published in serial form in *The Word* (monthly), edited by H. W. Percival, New York: Theosophical Publishing Company, 1900-14; reprinted San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1978 and 1980 [as part of THE SECRET DOCTRINE REFERENCE SERIES].

Nurho offers the first three portions of the running commentary (Z1 1a-96b), including sections omitted by SSL (e.g., the first scheme of the *hekhbalot*. This version is a "non-literal" translation rendered in the light of Mme. Blavatsky's teachings, and throughout there are explanatory notes drawn from her works. Nurho de Manhar was William Williams, an early member of the Golden Dawn.

Orr, Leonard. "Delineating the Tradition: Merkabah and Zoharic Mysticism," in *Studia Mystica*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Sacramento: California State University, 1979).

Patai, Raphael. *Gates to the Old City: A Book of Jewish Legends*. New York: Avon Books, 1980. Ch. 5. "Kabbala."

Excerpts of the Zohar; see especially those listed on the divisions chart: P(G)

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Hebrew Goddess*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1967; reprinted New York: Discus/Avon, 1978: Ch. v. "The Kabbalistic Tetrad"; Ch. vi. "The Goddess of the Kabbala"

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Messiah Texts*. New York: Avon Books, 1979.

Zohar excerpts throughout; see especially those listed on the divisions chart: P(M).

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Jewish Alchemists: A History and Source Book*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994: Ch. 12. Kabbalah and Alchemy, § "Moses de Leon" (pp. 160-6)

Translated passages: Z1 249b-50a, Z2 23a, Z2 23b-24b, Z2 73a-b, along with excerpts from de Leon's *Sefer Sheqel ha-Qodesh*.

Rankin, Oliver Shaw. *Jewish Religious Polemic*. [LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE No. 9]. London: Edinburgh University Publications, 1956.

Ch. VI. Introduction to the Letter of Rittangel and the Jew of Amsterdam

Ch. VII. The Letters Translated

Ch. VIII. Rittangel, The Mystic – the Zoharic Passage in the Letters

Raphael, Simcha Paull. *Jewish Views of the Afterlife*. Northvale – London: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1994.

Ch. 8. The Afterlife Journey of the Soul in Kabbalah

Rojtman, Betty. *Black Fire on White Fire. An Essay on Jewish Hermeneutics, from Midrash to Kabbalah*. Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1998: "Conclusion" (pp. 149-163)

Rosenberg, David. *Dreams of Being Eaten Alive: The Literary Core of the Kabbalah*. New York: Harmony Books, 2000.

"New Translations of the Kabbalah," primarily Zohar (along with passages from *Midrash Rabba*, *Sefer ha-Bahir*, and *Sefer Yetzirah*), gathered according to theme.

Rosenberg, Roy A. *The Anatomy of God*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973.

Rosenberg's is the best of the translations of *Sifre deTzeniuta* and the *Idrot* (b, c, d, and e on the divisions chart; Rosenberg is keyed as RR).

Runes, Dagobart D. *Wisdom of the Kabbalah*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1957.

The text portion of Mathers' *Kabbalah Unveiled*.

Sassoon, George; and Dale, Rodney. *The Kabbalah Decoded: Mysteries of the Zohar*. London: Duckworth, 1978.

*Kabbalah Decoded* gives yet another translation of *Sifre deTzeniuta* and the *Idrot* (b-e on the chart), though with a unique purpose. Sassoon and Dale see in these texts a technical manual for a "manna machine," thus offering a "non-mystical" explanation of how the Jews were fed in the wilderness. This theory is exhaustively developed in *The Manna Machine* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1978) by the same authors, in which they "lay bare the description [of the Ancient of Days of the Zohar] in all its anthropomorphic detail, matching it piece by piece to similar machines made today for oxygen regeneration and food production in closed environments." They theorize that this manna machine was brought down by a being from outer space, who set it up to help the Jews. In spite of this far-flung interpretation, *The Kabbalah Decoded* offers a clear, "literal" translation of the texts from the original Aramaic, with many interesting notes on the peculiar language of the Zohar.

Schachter, Zalman. *Fragments of a Future Scroll: Hassidism for the Aquarian Age*. Germantown: Leaves of Grass, 1975: Appendix 2. Petach Eliyahu from Tikuney Zohar

(The same translation appears in Meltzer's *Secret Garden*.)

Schaya, Leo. *The Universal Meaning of the Kabbalah*. French original: *L'Homme et l'Absolu selon la Kabbale*. Paris: Editions Buchet/Chastel, Correa, 1958; English translation, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971; reprinted Secaucus: University Books, 1972.

One of the better popular books of (Zoharic) Kabbalah.

Schneider, Sarah. "Constriction Precedes Expanse: The Woodgatherer Was Tslafchad – R. Yehuda Ashlag's Commentary on *Zohar* 3:157a," in *Kabbalistic Writings on the Nature of Masculine and Feminine*. Northvale – Jerusalem: Jason Aronson Inc., 2001

Scholem, Gershom. "Colours and Their Symbolism in Jewish Tradition and Mysticism," in *Diogenes*, nos. 108 (Part I) and 109 (Part II). Firenze: Casalmi Libri, 1979-80.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Kabbalah*. [articles collected from *Encyclopedia Judaica*]. Jerusalem – New York: Keter Publishing House and Times Books, 1974; reprinted New York: Meridian, 1978; and New York: Dorset Press, 1987: See especially pp. 57-61 and 213-43.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. Jerusalem: Schocken Publishing House, 1941; reprinted frequently: New York: Schocken Books.

Fifth Lecture. The Zohar 1. The Book and Its Author

Sixth Lecture. The Zohar 2. The Theosophic Doctrine of the Zohar

\_\_\_\_\_. *Zohar – The Book of Splendor. Basic Readings from the Kabbalah*. New York: Schocken Books, 1949; reprinted 1963 and subsequently.

Schwartz, Howard. *Gabriel's Palace: Jewish Mystical Tales*. New York - Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 22. The Decree                   | (ZH 26b)              |
| 23. The Curtain of Fire          | (Z2 14a-15a)          |
| 24. A Saint from the Other World | (Z1 5a-7b)            |
| 25. The Golden Scepter           | (Z2 13a-b; Z1 1721-b) |
| 26. The Book of Adam             | (Z1 117b-118a)        |
| 28. The Celestial Academy        | (Z1 4a-b)             |
| 29. The Book of Flying Letters   | (Z1 216b-217a)        |

Sears, David. *The Vision of Eden: Animal Welfare and Vegetarianism in Jewish Law and Mysticism*, Spring Valley: Orot, Inc., 2003.

Segal, Eliezer. "The Exegetical Craft of the Zohar: Toward an Appreciation," in *AJS Review*, vol. 17, no.1. Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1992.

Seidenberg, David Ross Mevorach. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD: GOD'S IMAGE IN THE MORE-THAN HUMAN WORLD. "Deep" EcoTheology Drawn from Midrashic and Kabbalistic Sources. PhD dissertation, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2002.

"Chapters on Kabbalah will [cover] some of the analogues for tselem that are used in Zoharic literature to extend the divine image to aspects of the created world. The midrashic notion that the human unites heaven and earth through being in the tselem of the 'upper ones' or heavens will be compared with the ideas that evolved in Kabbalah, especially in Yosef Ashkenazi and Isaiah Horowitz, in which the tselem within the human is comprised of the image of all beings and levels of creation." (from the ABSTRACT)

Siegel, Andrea. "The Shekhinah: Foundation for Feminist Symbol? Relationship to the Mystic in Zoharic Theosophy," in *'Igrot ha'Ari—The Lion's Letters* [COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY STUDENT JOURNAL OF JEWISH SCHOLARSHIP], Volume 1, Issue 1 (Spring 1997/5757).

Simon, Maurice; Sperling, Harry; and Levertoff, Paul. *The Zohar*. [5 vols.] London: Soncino Press, 1931-4; reprinted frequently by Soncino Press (New York); student edition by Rebecca Bennet, New York.

Spector, Sheila A. *Jewish Mysticism: An Annotated Bibliography on the Kabbalah in English*. New York – London: Garland Publishing Group, 1984.

§ I of *Jewish Mysticism*, "The Zohar," lists a total of eighteen primary and thirteen secondary sources, some of which I have not seen. Of these, Spector includes

Primary Sources:

- 13: *Hebrew Literature, Comprising Talmudic Treatises, Hebrew Melodies and the Kabbalah Unveiled*. Intro. Epiphanius Wilson. New York: Colonial Press, 1901. (anthology; the *Kabbalah Unveiled* portion is, indeed, from Mathers)

- I8: Caplan, Samuel; and Harold U. Ribalow, eds. *The Great Jewish Books and Their Influences on History*. New York: Horizon Press, 1952; [rpt] New York, Washington Square Press, 1963.
- I10: Shahn, Ben. *The Alphabet of Creation: An Ancient Legend from the Zohar*. With drawings by Ben Shahn. New York: Schocken Books, 1954. (rpt. 1965, 1982. I have seen this; the whole production has always struck me as rather cutesy. The text is from SSL.—DK)
- I11: Glatzer, Nahum N., ed. “Mystic Drama of Jerusalem: From the Zohar.” *Commentary* 21 (1956), 365-66.
- I14: Horowitz, Michael, ed. *A Freak’s Anthology: Being Golden Hits from Buddha to Kubrick*. Edited with Countercultural Commentary. Los Angeles: Sherbourne Press, Inc., 1972. (Zohar selections and commentary, pp. 81-93)
- I16: Zahavy, Zev, ed. *Idra Zuta Kadisha: The Lesser Holy Assembly*. New York: Sage Books, Inc., 1977. (Mather’s translation from *Kabbalah Unveiled*)

Secondary Sources:

- I19: Rubinsohn, Theoph. “The System of the Jewish Cabbalah, as Developed in the Zohar.” *Bibliotheca Sacra and American Biblical Repository* 9 (1852), 563-81.
- I20: Fluegel, Maurice. “Philosophy and Qabbala: The Zohar, Copernicus and Modern Astronomy.” *Menorah* 29 (1900), 77-84. (translates ZIII 9-10)
- I21: Gaster, Moses. “The Origin and Antiquity of the Zohar.” *Israel’s Messenger* (Shanghai) 3.10 (Ellul 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5606 / August 23, 1906), ed. N. B. Ezra.
- I22: Pick, Bernard. “The Zohar and Its Influence on the Cabala.” *Open Court* 24 (1910), 233-43.
- I27: Garstin, E. J. Langford. “The Doctrine of ‘The Son’ in the Zohar.” *Search Quarterly* 3 (1933), 286-302.
- I28: Levertoff, Paul P. “Some Aspects of Jewish Mysticism.” *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain* 65 (1933), 71-87. (Excerpts from Levertoff’s portions of SSL. —DK)
- I29: Stern, S.M. “Rationalism and Kabbalists in Medieval Allegory.” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 6 (1955), 73-86.
- I31: Wijnhoven, Jochanan H. A. “The Zohar and the Proselyte” in *Texts and Responses: Studies Presented to Nahum N. Glatzer on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday by His Students*, edited by Michael A. Fishbane and Paul R. Flohr (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1975).

Stern, David; and Mirsky, Mark J. *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1990; rpt. [YALE JUDAICA SERIES: Volume 29] New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 1998:

Chapter 11. “Love in the After-life: A Selection from the Zohar” (Z3 167a-168a)

Teicher, Shabtai (trans./comm.) *Zohar: Sabba d’Mishpatim – The Old Man in the Sea, PART ONE: REINCARNATION / RESURRECTION / REDEMPTION*. Jerusalem: 2004.

Tirosh-Samuelson, Hava. “The Kabbalistic Prescription for Happiness,” in (*idem*) *Happiness in Premodern Judaism: Virtue, Knowledge, and Well-Being* [MONOGRAPHS OF THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE, Number 29]. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2003.

“In this chapter, I present the *Zohar* as an alternative to the philosophic conception of happiness and, in turn, to the philosophers’ approach to the religious life.” (page 291)

Tishby, Isaiah. “Mythological versus Systematic Trends in Kabbalah,” in *Binah*, volume 2: *Studies in Jewish Thought*, edited by Joseph Dan. New York – Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1989.

Tishby, Isaiah, with Lachower, Fischel. *The Wisdom of the Zohar: An Anthology of Texts*. 3 volumes [THE LITTMAN LIBRARY OF JEWISH CIVILIZATION] Hebrew original: *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, vol. 1, 1949; vol. 2, 1961. English translation by David Goldstein. Oxford: Oxford University Press for The Littmann Library, 1989.

Two extracts from the study portions of *Wisdom* are reprinted in *Essential Papers on Kabbalah* (ed. Lawrence Fine, New York: NYU Press, 1995): “The Doctrine of Man in the Zohar,” and “Prayer and Devotion in the Zohar.”

Verman, Mark. “The Development of *Yibudim* in Spanish Kabbalah,” in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, vol. 8 (English section), edited by Joseph Dan. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1989.

This piece appears in revised form as Chapter 11 of Verman’s *History and Varieties of Jewish Meditation* (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc., 1996).

Waite, Arthur E. *The Holy Kabbalah*. London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd, 1929; reprinted New Hyde Park: University Books, 1960.

See especially “Book IV” and “Book V.” *The Holy Kabbalah* incorporates *The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah*, London: Theosophical Publication Co, 1902; *The Secret Doctrine in Israel: The Study of the Zohar and Its Connections*, London: Wm Rider and Son, 1913.

Wald, Stephen G. *The Doctrine of the Divine Name: An Introduction to Classical Kabbalistic Theology*. [Brown Judaic Studies, Number 149]. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.

Translation of the first half of *Sithre Othioth*, p on the divisions chart; Wald is keyed SGW.

Werblowsky, R. J. “Philo and the Zohar,” parts 1 and 2, in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vols. 10 and 11, The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 1959 and 1960.

Wineman, Aryeh. *Mystic Tales from the Zohar*, with Papercut Art by Diane Palley. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1997.

An inexpensive (alas *cheap*) paper edition of this book has been published which, unfortunately, does not include the lovely paper-cuts.

Winston, Jerry. *Colors from the Zohar*. San Francisco: Barah Publishing, 1976.

Translated excerpts.

[NOTE: Items by Elliot R. Wolfson marked with an asterisk (\*) appear in *Luminal Darkness*—listed below.]

Wolfson, Elliot R. *Alef, Mem, Tau: Kabbalistic Musings on Time, Truth, and Death*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press, 2006.

\* \_\_\_\_\_. “Beautiful Maiden without Eyes: *Peshat* and *Sod* in Zoharic Hermeneutics,” in *The Midrashic Imagination: Jewish Exegesis, Thought and History*, edited by Michael Fishbane. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Circumcision, Vision of God, and Textual Interpretation,” in *History of Religions*, 27. University of Chicago, 1987; also in Wolfson’s *Circle in the Square* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

The Gaon of Vilna (Elijah ben Solomon Zalman: 1720-97) is “cited to illustrate the linguistic process of God’s self-disclosure” through his comments on *Sefer Yezirah* and the *Zohar*.

\* \_\_\_\_\_. “Coronation of the Sabbath Bride: Kabbalistic Myth and the Ritual of Androgyny,” in *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, vol. 6. (Harwood Academic Publishers GmbH, 1997).

\* \_\_\_\_\_. “Fore/giveness on the Way: Nesting in the Womb of Response,” in *Graven Images: Studies in Culture, Law, and the Sacred* 4 (Madison: School of Law, University of Wisconsin, 1998)

\* \_\_\_\_\_. “Forms of Visionary Experience in the Zoharic Literature,” in *Gershom Scholem’s MAJOR TRENDS IN JEWISH MYSTICISM 50 Years After* [PROCEEDINGS OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HISTORY OF JEWISH MYSTICISM], edited by Peter Schäfer and Joseph Dan. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. “From Sealed Book to Open Text: Time, Memory, and Narrativity in Kabbalistic Hermeneutics,” in *Interpreting Judaism in a Post-modern Age*, edited by Steven Kepnes (New York University Press, 1996).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.

\* \_\_\_\_\_. “Left Contained in Right: A Study in Zoharic Hermeneutics,” in *AJS Review*, vol. XI, no. 1, edited by Robert Chazan. Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Letter Symbolism and *Merkavah* Imagery in the Zohar," in *'Alef Shefer: Studies in the Literature of Jewish Thought Presented to Rabbi Dr. Alexandre Safran*, edited by Mosheh Hallimish. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1992.

\*\_\_\_\_\_. "Light through Darkness: The Ideal of Human Perfection in the Zohar," in *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 81, no. 1. (1988.)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Luminal Darkness: Imaginal Gleanings from Zoharic Literature*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Murmuring Secrets: Eroticism and Esotericism in Medieval Kabbalah," in *Hidden Intercourse: Eros and Sexuality in the History of Western Esotericism* [ARIES BOOK SERIES, vol. 7], edited by Wouter J. Hanegraaff and Jeffrey J. Kripal (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008)

\*\_\_\_\_\_. "Occultation of the Feminine and the Body of Secrecy in Medieval Kabbalah," in *Rending the Veil: Concealment and Secrecy in the History of Religions* [NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS], edited by Elliot R. Wolfson. New York: Seven Bridges Press, LLC, 1999.

\*\_\_\_\_\_. "Re/membering the Covenant: Memory, Forgetfulness, and the Construction of History in the Zohar," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory: Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi* [TAUBER INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF EUROPEAN JEWRY SERIES, 29]. Hanover – London: Brandeis University Press/University Press of New England, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Anonymous Chapters of the Elderly Master of Secrets—New Evidence for the the Early Activity of the Zoharic Circle," in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, vol. 19, edited by D. Abrams (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2009).

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Hermeneutics of Visionary Experience: Revelation and Interpretation in the Zohar," in *Religion* 18 (1988.)

A chapter (CHAPTER 7) bearing the same title appears in Wolfson's *Through a Speculum That Shines* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), which is a greatly revised and enhanced version of the original article.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Venturing Beyond: Law & Morality in Kabbalistic Mysticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Woman—The Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity*, edited by Laurence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn (New York University Press, 1994).

Wolski, Nathan. "The Secret of Yiddish – Zoharic Composition in the Poetry of Aaron Zeitlin," in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, vol. 20, edited by Daniel Abrams (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2009).

Wolski, Nathan; and Carmeli, Merav. "Those Who Know Have Wings: Celestial Journeys with the Masters of the Academy," in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, vol. 16, edited by D. Abrams and A. Elqayam (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2007).

"In a particularly beautiful Zoharic composition known as *Raw Metivta*, the Master of the Academy, the Companions of the Zohar ascend to the celestial academies of the members of this generation where they not only learn of their blessed fate, but also merit to participate in a most dynamic and animated fashion in their celestial existence." (pages 83-4)

Work of the Chariot. [WC #0] *Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Hollywood: Work of the Chariot, 1971.

Contains "Hechaloth" (incorrectly numbered Z1 42b-43a) and "Petach Eliyahu" from *Tikkunei Zohar* – the same pieces as in Meltzer's *Secret Garden*.



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1. 2 – B . *Sifra Detzmittha: Zohar – Torah*. Hollywood: Work of the Chariot, 1971.
2. 2 – C . [ii] *Idra Rabba*. Hollywood: Work of the Chariot, n.d.
3. 2 – C [iii] *Lesser Holy Assembly* (= *Idra Zutta*) n.p., n.d.

Work of the Chariot has a website ([www.workofthechariot.com](http://www.workofthechariot.com)) where one can find all of the translations listed along with articles on the “Mystical Qabalah” covering “Background,” “Sources,” “Core Teachings,” “Practices,” and a glossary. These articles also appear in a book advertised at the site: *Qabalah: The Mystical Heritage of the Children of Abraham*, by Daniel Hale Feldman (Work of the Chariot, 2001).

Ziegler, Jerry L. *Ancient Wisdom of the Zohar*. Volume 1. PROLOGUE TO A BEGINNING (1996); Volume 2. IN A BEGINNING (1998); Volume 3. THE FLOOD (1999). Stamford: Next Millennium Publishers.

Ziegler describes the rites of Passover, Sabbatical and Jubilees “in terms of the electrical effects that caused a divine light to shine on the devotees.” Ziegler draws on the Zohar to “rediscover the ancient wisdom of the Bible.” For descriptions of Ziegler’s books, refer to the Knowledge Computing / Stop Press website: [www.knowledge.co.uk/xxx/cat/ziegler/index.htm](http://www.knowledge.co.uk/xxx/cat/ziegler/index.htm). The link to Ziegler’s own website no longer works.

Zinberg, Israel. *A History of Jewish Literature*, Volume III: THE STRUGGLE OF MYSTICISM AND TRADITION AGAINST PHILOSOPHICAL RATIONALISM, translated from the Yiddish by Bernard Martin. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973: BOOK ONE, *Chapter Three*: “The Zohar.”

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

If the reader wishes to get acquainted with the Zohar but is reluctant to spend several hundred dollars in doing so, there are some fine sources in paperbound editions. (Refer to the bibliography for details on the following titles.)

- Scholem. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism.*
- Scholem. *Zohar – The Book of Splendor.*
- Matt. [DM] *Zohar – The Book of Enlightenment.*

For the committed reader, researcher, or librarian wishing to acquire a definitive selection (as far as that is possible in English), to the above list add

- Tishby [IT] *The Wisdom of the Zohar.* [3 volumes]
- SSL *The Zohar.* [5 volumes]
- Kabbalah Centre *The Zohar.\** [22 volumes]
- Matt [M] *The Zohar – PRITZKER edition\*\** [12 volumes projected]
- Rosenberg [RR] *Anatomy of God.*
- Giller *The Enlightened Will Shine.*
- Liebes *Studies in the Zohar.*
- Wolfson *Luminal Darkness*

This list is confined to works on the Zohar, so it must not be thought of as an adequate list of works on Kabbalah or Jewish mysticism in general. Scholem's *Major Trends* would be an excellent place to start.<sup>†</sup>

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\* This title might not bear the critical scrutiny which the others on the list would.

\*\* Including the introductory companion, Arthur Green's *Guide to the Zohar*.

† To begin to obtain a solid impression of Jewish mysticism and *kabbalah*, my recommendation is to read Scholem's *Major Trends*, Idel's *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, and Wolfson's *Through a Speculum that Shines*, in that order.

## 5. Zohar I 51b-52a

“Zohar I 51b-52a: an omission from the Simon and Sperling translation of the Zohar, translated from the French of Jean de Pauly (*Sepher ha-Zohar* [*Le livre de la splendeur*] doctrine ésotérique des Israélites; traduit pour la première fois sur le texte chaldaïque et accompagné de notes par Jean de Pauly. Œuvre posthume entièrement revue, corrigée et complétée, publiée par les soins de Émile Lafuma-Giraud...Paris: 1906-1911—6 volumes), by Thomas F. Daubert, Jr. and D. Karr,” originally published in *Collected Articles on Kabbalah*, vol. 1, edited by D. Karr (Ithaca: KoM [# 5], 1985), pp. 13-16.\*

(51 b) Note: the beings on high are all of the same illumination, being of celestial essence, whereas the beings below are of a different essence. They (the lower) are to this illumination (the higher) as the candle is to the flame.

Note: all space is divided into 45 parts (of which) each shows a different color. These seven different colors are the ones which, upon the striking of their emanations against the gems from seven mines, draw forth water, for it is the air of the color white which changes itself in water.

The light and the shadows are the only elements which form air and water. The one constituent element with light forms air, the one with shadows forms water.

On leaving its source, the light divides into 75 channels directed toward the material world. Upon the light's entrance into each of these channels a voice thunders which causes the deep to tremble. The voice makes heard these words: DIVIDE YOURSELF, O MATTER, IN ORDER FOR THE LIGHT TO PENETRATE WITHIN YOU. Thus it is written: DEEP CALLS TO DEEP AT THE THUNDER OF THY CATARACTS (channels) [Ps. 42:7].

Below these channels there are 375 trenches, of which one part is of the color white, another of the color black, and the third of the color red. These trenches are divided into 17 classes, of which each presents the shape of a chain-net. Two of these chain-nets have the quality of iron, and two others that of copper (or brass).

At the two extremities of space are situated two thrones which are in constant communications with the channels and the trenches which go from one to the other. Each of these thrones forms a sky, one of which is on the right side and the other on the left. The one on the right is of the color black and the one on the left is multicolored. (52 a)

As the light goes from one throne to the other, it follows, for each time that the light of a throne has reached the other, by means of the course of channels mentioned, it returns near to the first throne to draw for itself new strength.

Thus, the light travels, through specific channels, from the throne on the right to the throne on the left, and returns, through certain other channels, from the throne on the left to the throne on the right. So it is with the blood in the veins of the human body. The blood ascends to the heart through specific veins and returns through others.

Such is the vision of this area of space which forms seven different colors. These seven colors constitute the supreme mystery.

Seven other lights are divided into seven seas, which together amount to one giant sea. This last is the supreme sea where seven others are concentrated.

The seven lights previously discussed fall into this giant sea and then become separated into seven parts, to correspond to the number of seven seas which, in essence, form the branches of the greater one, and thus is it written: AND SMITE IT INTO SEVEN CHANNELS [Is. 11:15].

Each of the seven branches subdivides into seven pools, each pool into seven rivers, each river into seven streams. The result is that the one preceding the water of the giant sea, of its branches, of its seven pools, of the seven rivers, of the seven streams, is connected (all with all).

A large fish, emanating from the left side, runs over all these courses of water. Its scales are as solid as iron. A flame shoots from its mouth which consumes all that returns along its path. Its tongue is tapered like a sword. With all its might it strains to penetrate the sanctuary, which is the giant sea, to defile its holiness, to extinguish the lights, and escape from the waters of the giant sea, once frozen, never again to impose itself on its (the sea's) branches.

This mystery is conveyed in the words of the scriptures: NOW THE SERPENT WAS MORE SUBTLE THAN ANY OTHER WILD CREATURE THAT YHVH ELOHIM HAD MADE. The awful serpent wanted to realize his goal: to defile the upper holiness by beginning to contaminate man here in the lower world. Recognizing the manner of construction of all the courses of water, he understood that causing the water of a stream to be briny would, in effect, reach all the way to the great sea. That is why he came to seduce man down here (on earth): in order to intercept the inferior watercourses with the major ones. The serpent had thus brought on the death of the world. He emanated from the left side. He was able to furtively enter the interior of man. But there is another serpent which emanated from the right side. Both serpents accompany man throughout his life.

The scriptures said: ...MORE SUBTLE THAN ANY OTHER WILD CREATURE THAT YHVH ELOHIM HAD MADE. For not all the animals on earth had been endowed with so much skill at wronging man as has been the serpent—because he constituted the veinstone of gold.

Bad luck to him who permits himself to hurry away from the serpent, for the serpent will cause that person's demise, and that of his successors as soon as that have arrived.

Adam was unable to avoid the serpent because he wanted to taste all of the pleasures (secrets) of the world below. The serpent, in showing him all of the pleasures of the world, interested him, and caused death for him and for all the generations which succeeded him.

Until the day when Israel was placed at the foot of Mount Sinai, the contamination of the serpent did not vanish from the world. As the scriptures said, That was when Adam and Eve sinned by attaching themselves to the tree of death.

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\* This rendition of Z1:51b-52a was completed in the winter of 1978, being the first of a proposed series of translations from various sources selected to fill the numerous gaps in SSL. Subsequently, four English translations of this passage have appeared:

- Wizards Bookshelf's edition of *Zohar (Bereshith-Genesis): An Expository Translation from the Hebrew* by Nurho de Manhar (San Diego: 1978 and 1980), pp. 220-222.
- approximately the first half of the passage above in Lachower and Tishby's *Wisdom of the Zohar* (Oxford/New York: Littman Library/Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 658-9.
- *The Zohar by Shimon bar Yochai* . . . etc., edited and compiled by Rabbi Michael Berg (Jerusalem – New York: Yeshivat Kol Yehudah/Kabbalah Centre, 2001), in Volume 2, *Beresheet B*, § 55: "By forty-five colors of light," pp. 185-192.
- The PRITZKER EDITION, prepared by Daniel C. Matt: *The Zohar* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), in Volume I, pages 286-9.