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Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
- ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
- AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
- AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
- BSOAS* *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (London, 1917ff.).
- CSCO* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
- EAE* S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- PdP* *La Parola del Passato. Rivista di studi classici*, Napoli 1946ff.
- PICES 8* TADDESE BEYENE, ed., *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, University of Addis Ababa (26–30 November) 1984*, I–II (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies–Frankfurt am Main: Frobenius Institut, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1988–1989).
- PICES 10* C. LEPAGE and É. DELAGE, eds, *Études éthiopiennes: Actes de la X^e Conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24–28 août 1988* (Paris: Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 1994).
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND, A.J. DREWES, and R. SCHNEIDER, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, I: *Les documents*, II: *Les planches* (Paris: (Académie des inscriptions et belle-lettres) Diffusion de Boccard, 1991).
- RRALm* *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Roma, 1892ff.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli, 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.

The Term *ʿālam* in 1 Enoch

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Introduction

This paper deals briefly with the significance of the term *ʿālam* in 1 Enoch.¹ Among the various words for time such as *gizē*, *zaman* or *ʿalat*, *ʿālam* takes a prominent place in 1 Enoch both for its frequency and diversity of meaning. A statistical examination based on Flemming's edition of 1 Enoch shows that the Gəʿəz word *ʿālam* is mentioned some hundred and seventy-eight times. This, by far, supersedes the other significant words for time in 1 Enoch, except for the term *ʿalat*. The term *ʿālam* alone, without any preposition, is attested seventy-two times, whereas *laʿālam* occurs seventy-four times and *ʾəmʿālam* six times. As for *baʿālam*, *zaʿālam*, *wabaʿālam* and *zabaʿālam*, they are each mentioned once in 1 Enoch. As part of construct state, *laʿālama* occurs twenty-two times.² It is hoped to show that denotations of 'remotest time', 'eternity', 'perpetuity' and 'duration of time', as scholars suggest for the Hebrew cognate *ʿolam*, or the Greek *aiōn*, are indeed perceptible throughout the text of 1 Enoch. The range of meanings can be determined through the word's usage in its immediate context.

Temporal/Spatial meaning

Although *ʿālam* in 1 Enoch has mainly a temporal dimension one can observe a spatial one too, simply meaning 'world', as in Ps 24:1. However, the temporal connotation of *ʿālam* by far outnumbers the spatial one. The latter is in fact scarce, perhaps with a maximum of three references. In 1 En 20:4, the

¹ For the various meanings of the term *ʿālam* in Ethiopic literature, see Dillmann 1865, 951–952, Kidāna Wald Kəfle 1956, 696–697.

² For examples of the Aramaic term *ʿlm* attested in the Qumran fragments, see 4QEn^a I ii: 11 (1 En 5:1), 4QEn^c I i: 30 (1 En 5:1); 4QEn^b I iii: 14 (1 En 9:4); 4QEn^c I v: 1 (1 En 10:13); 4QEn^c I vi: 14 (1 En 14:5); 4QEn^s 1 iv: 23 (1 En 91:15); see Milik 1976, 146, 171, 185, 189, 193, 266. See also Stuckenbruck 1990, 32. Given that the Greek fragments of 1 Enoch contain many more verses than the Aramaic ones, it is possible to make a better comparison between the Ethiopic *ʿālam* and the Greek equivalent *aiōn* or any other related Greek word in 1 Enoch; for the Greek data, see Black 1970.

angel Raguel will take vengeance on the ‘world’ and the luminaries.³ Here, *°ālam* does not have a temporal association, since vengeance on ‘eternity’ would be meaningless, at least from the perspective of an archangel.

°Ālam qualifying heaven

Heaven is described as ‘high’, ‘holy’ and ‘eternal’ in 1 En 15:3. According to 1 En 12:4, God sends Enoch to the watchers who, after descending to the earth, try in vain to return to heaven. Something worse awaits them according to the divine decree. They are guilty of forsaking heaven, that is, an eternal holy place in order to have sexual union with women. It is not easy to understand the meaning of ‘eternal secrets’ revealed to human beings by Azazel. Perhaps, the answer is in the details given in 1 En 9:6 itself. The secrets are made in heaven. They are eternal in the sense that they are created in heaven and are not meant for the earth.

According to Isa 57:15, God ‘inhabits eternity’. Furthermore, this verse, with two interesting attributes, namely height and holiness, may draw our attention to the association between eternity and God’s transcendence; the divine and heavenly secrets are beyond human reach. The epithets of heaven, in 1 En 15:3, and the epithets of God, in Isa 57:15, match in an interesting manner. The qualities of God and of heaven are interchangeable.⁴ In the book of Maccabees the term ‘heaven’ is used to mean God. The text gives unambiguous examples of such a substitution: ‘May Heaven preserve us from forsaking the Law and its observances’ (1 Ma 2:21; cf. also 1 Ma 3:18.19; 3:60; 4:10; 4:24; 4:55; 9:46; 12:15; 16:3; 2 Ma 3:15; 7:11; 8:20; 9:4).

°Ālam qualifying God

According to 1 En 1:4, the term *°ālam* is attested and qualifies God who will ‘tread upon Mount Sinai, and will appear with his host’. The construct form *°Amlāka °ālam* here shows that the dependent word (eternity) signifies a property of the word ‘God’.⁵ It is a genitive of ‘quality’.⁶ One finds an analogous expression in 1 En 58: 4, literally ‘Lord of Eternity’ and meaning ‘Eternal’ Lord. The same genitive relation is used in 1 En 25:3, 5, 7 in order to qual-

³ Another reference is found in 1 En 41:4: ‘the beginning of the world’. See also 1 En 58:4, where there is ambiguity between a spatial and a temporal meaning: ‘the Lord of the world’ or ‘the Lord of Eternity’.

⁴ In some texts such as Ps 73:9; Job 20:27; Dan 4:23, heaven stands for God; cf. Schoenborn 1990, 543.

⁵ Dillmann 1907, 462.

⁶ Cf. Blass and Debrunner 1961, 91–92.

ify God as ‘Eternal King’. Nevertheless, instead of *nəguśa ‘alam*, the text reads *nəguś zala‘alam*. A similar expression, from the grammatical point of view, is found in Isa 40:28, where the Lord is ‘the everlasting God’ (*‘āmlāk zala‘alam*). The Gə‘əz term employed here is *zala‘alam*, literally ‘of eternity’, just like the Greek *tou aiōnos*. Gen 21:33 has the same attribute *zala‘alam* for God (*‘el ‘olam; ‘əgziābəḥēr zala‘alam*). Similarly, according to 1 En 75: 3, God’s glory is eternal (*‘əgzi‘ā səbhāt la‘alam*).⁷

‘Alam qualifying the life of angels

The life of the angels is qualified by eternity and immortality in 1 En 15:6:

But you formerly were spiritual, living an eternal, immortal life for all the generations of the world.

Here, one finds a very paradoxical situation, in which those who retain the characteristics of eternity and immortality behave as if they were non-eternal and mortal. And this is condemned by God. The verse is in fact bad news addressed to the fallen angels, who by coming down to earth, in order to commit sin, lost an ‘immortal and eternal’ life. Other angels, commissioned by God, come down to Earth without the danger of losing their spiritual and eternal heaven. Thus, Raphael, in 1 En 10:4, is told to go down and bind Azazel.

Qualities of eternal life

Eternal life is expressed by eternal goodness and mercy in 1 En 92:3.⁸ Eternal peace is depicted even more richly as the main feature of eternal life. The future age is characterized by peace (cf. 1 En 1:8), implying the present age’s lack of harmony. 1 Enoch exemplifies this well through the chaotic situations caused by the fallen angels. However, not everybody will enjoy peace in the future; the transgressor and the proud-hearted who spoke against God will be deprived of peace (1 En 5:4). On the other hand, the chosen will relish light, joy and peace (1 En 5:7).⁹ The peace they enjoy is eternal (1 En 5:9). Peace and truth, united, will last forever according to 1 En 11:2.¹⁰ 1 En

⁷ For ‘eternal king of glory’ see 1 En 81:3. For the genitive relation with the use of a number of prepositions, see Dillmann 1907, 68–70.

⁸ This is accompanied by the elimination of sin and evil in 1 En 92:5. According to Nickelsburg (2001, 433), ‘eternal’ mercy means ‘permanent’ mercy. For a commentary of these verses, see Stuckenbruck 2007, 227–231.

⁹ The text adds that the chosen will inherit the earth too, reflecting an eschatology probably different from the other sections of 1 Enoch.

¹⁰ The expressions ‘days of eternity’ (eternal days) and ‘generations of eternity’ (eternal generations) are quite noteworthy.

71:15 refers to the future age, qualified by peace in particular and with a remarkable emphasis on its permanence, through a threefold mentioning of the term *°ālam*: *la°ālam wala°ālama °ālam*.¹¹

°Ālam expressing the most distant time

Although *°ālam* qualifies mainly otherworldly realities, there are also earthly ones qualified by the term eternity or eternal. In 1 En 69:9, an evil angel has taught human beings the art of writing since remotest time (lit. from eternity to eternity). Similarly, with the same usage, old time is evoked in connection with the creation of the sea, the deep, the movement of the sun and the moon (1 En 69:19–20). In 1 En 70:4, Enoch, taken to heaven, sees the dwelling place of the first fathers and the righteous. Enoch affirms that the latter dwell in that place since time immemorial (*°am°ālam*).

Perpetual time could signify a period of time which lasts in duration within the large framework of the present age. For instance, references to situations taking place during life on earth or before the new earth fit into this category. Accordingly, in 1 En 10:5, Azazel (cf. 1 En 10:4) should be imprisoned in a dark place, ‘forever’ (*la°ālam*). Now it is clear from 1 En 10:6, that the imprisonment will last until the last judgement. In other words, the time during which Azazel will be imprisoned has a beginning and an end. The imprisonment, it is true, engages most of the present age. Azazel was imprisoned immediately after the fall of angels. He would come out from prison at the last judgement, and would be thrown into an abyss of fire (cf. 1 En 10:13).¹² In other words, there is a time limit for the sequestration. Thus the expression *la°ālam* is not ‘without end’; the imprisonment stops at the moment of the last judgement. The same meaning of *°ālam* is perhaps implied in 1 En 21:10, in connection with the prison of angels, assuming that a worse situation awaits them after the last judgement.

In 1 En 12:6, it is stated that the watchers will lament over the death of their offspring caused by the flood. Their lament and petition would be ‘forever’, *la°ālam*. Now, one might wonder whether their lament would be without end since they themselves will be in darkness and then in eternal fire. Perhaps it means that they will mourn the death of their offspring for a long period of time, i.e. their suffering lasts a long time. Strictly speaking, imprisonment and lamenting the death of one’s offspring (1 En 12:6) are painful experiences.

However, 1 Enoch does not qualify human suffering as something everlasting. One might observe a contrast between the suffering of human beings in

¹¹ Nickelsburg (2012, 329), highlighting the emphasis, translates: ‘forever, and ever and ever’.

¹² Here *la°ālam* seems to have the meaning ‘eternal’ or ‘without end’.

the present age and that of the fallen angels. To present the suffering of human beings as perpetual (*la‘alam*) would be too pessimistic. It would fill human life with despair. On the other hand, to announce the day of the last judgement as something which is at hand, is to give hope, and to affirm that the suffering of innocent humans will soon be brought to a close.

Even in the case of an otherworldly reality, one can distinguish between Eternity as an attribute of God and eternity in reference to the life of angels. According to 1 En 14:1, the watchers are ‘from Eternity’ (*‘am‘alam*). Now, given that they are created, ‘Eternity’, with regard to the ‘life span’ of the watchers, means remotest time and not time without beginning.

One finds comparable usages in biblical texts. Jenni affirms that ‘eternity’ would mean a ‘most distant time, whether with regard to the past, to the future or to both’.¹³ Cypress and myrtle become eternal monuments for God in Isa 55:3. That probably does not mean that the plants will never die. Watts affirms that ‘eternal’ in Isa 55:3 does not mean ‘the ‘forever’ of a different worldview’.¹⁴ This remark presupposes an equivocal use of the term ‘eternal’. When it comes to earthly things, eternal connotes a very long period but does not necessarily imply an era without end, an infinite time. Thus, according to 1 En 99:2, there is a law or a covenant (*šar‘at*) that should not be altered or distorted, and qualified as eternal.¹⁵ God has an ‘eternal covenant’ with every living creature following the flood (Gen 9:16). Keeping the Sabbath is an ‘eternal covenant’ (Ex 31:16). Perhaps in connection with 1 En 99:2, 1 En 99:14 mentions an ‘eternal inheritance of fathers’.¹⁶ The plant of righteousness which is given an eternal attribution, in 1 En 93:10, is a metaphor for a group of people (Israel), i.e. for an entity on earth. The events connected with the expression concern the present age and not the future one, i.e. the one following the last judgement.

‘Alam meaning ‘forever without end’

There are examples in 1 Enoch where *la‘alam* may mean absence of an end as expected from God ‘who lives forever’ in 1 En 5:1. Several doxologies ending with the expression ‘forever’ or ‘for ever and ever’, frequently found

¹³ Jenni and Westermann 1997, 853–862.

¹⁴ Watts 2005, 819.

¹⁵ For the interpretation of the verse, see Nickelsburg 2001, 489 and Stuckenbruck 2007, 376–380.

¹⁶ Both distant past or distant future, including the present time, are suggested as possible explanations of the attribute ‘eternal’ in 1 En 99:14 by Stuckenbruck 2007, 422–423.

in the *Book of Parables* (1 En 37–71)¹⁷ denote perpetuity. The elect and the chosen will dwell with the Son of Man, to eat, to lie down and to rise up perpetually (*la^cālam^cālam*,¹⁸ cf. 1 En 62:14).

In contrast with the favourable future just mentioned, 1 En 14:5 affirms the hopeless situation of the fallen angels:

And from now on you will not ascend into heaven for all eternity, and it has been decreed that you are to be bound in the earth for all the days of eternity.

Here, ‘For all eternity’ (*ʿaska k^wəllu^cālam*) means that the angels will never be able to ascend into heaven.

Perpetuity is expressed also in terms of ‘eternal judgement’ related in the *Apocalypse of Weeks*; 1 En 91:15 finishes the narration of the great scheme of history with an ‘eternal judgement’, supposed to take place after a number of previous judgements on earth. It is clear here that ‘eternal’ does not signify duration in time; it is not about a judgement that does not last, rather it means a final judgement, after which there is no further need for judgements.¹⁹

Conclusion

While the spatial connotation of the term *ālam* in 1 En is poorly attested, the large majority of *ālam*’s usage is temporal. Accordingly, any thorough analysis of the vocabulary of time²⁰ in 1 Enoch cannot neglect the term *ālam*.

¹⁷ These are abundantly attested in the *Book of Parables*; cf. 1 En 49:1 where glory will not fail before God for ever and ever; 1 En 49:2: ‘his glory is for ever and ever’; 1 En 61:11: ‘Blessed is he, and blessed be the name of the Lord of Spirits for ever and ever’; 1 En 61:12: ‘and all flesh which beyond its power will praise and bless your name for ever and ever’.

¹⁸ This expression meaning ‘for all eternity’; see Dillmann 1907, 461.

¹⁹ Stuckenbruck says: ‘The judgment is ‘eternal’ because it marks the complete, unrepeatable defeat of evil’; Stuckenbruck 2007, 148; cf. 1 En 104:5.

²⁰ According to Angeles, time may have the following definitions: ‘that in which events are distinguishable in terms of the relations of before and after, beginning and end’; Angeles explains ‘time’ as ‘the irreversible succession of instants (events, segments, points, intervals and durations) conceived of as a linear progression or only as a directional line’. This definition can be useful for the examination of 1 Enoch’s eschatology. The *Eschaton* or the End, of which we have several references in 1 Enoch, comes after the present time. It is also interesting to see the terms that express duration in 1 Enoch. ‘Periodisation’ is one feature in several parts of the book. Angeles adds: ‘a measure of change, or change itself observed, as in the positional change of the sun or the hands of a clock, or the qualitative change of the colour, of an object or sharpness of a sound or sight. Such changes are often used as a reference for comparison to other changes; for example, the cycle of the moon is called a month, and is used as a

Without being exhaustive, this paper has shown that *‘alam* has been used to qualify the spiritual heaven, to portray God and the angels, to illustrate the otherworldly reality. Heavenly secrets too are given the attribute ‘eternal’. The doxologies, abundant in the *Book of Parables*, end with the expression *la‘alam*, often reflecting an otherworldly context. But, the term *‘alam* is also used to describe these worldly realities, especially to express the remotest time, or a long duration in the future. The term has thus served to describe the fallen angels’ period of punishment and painful imprisonment before the last judgement. Similarly, in the expressions ‘eternal law’, ‘eternal plant of righteousness’ and ‘eternal inheritance’, all entities belong to this world. The expression ‘Eternal judgement’ has been used to mean final, complete and irrevocable judgement. One therefore needs to see the attribute ‘eternal’ case by case in order to discern the nuances and decide on the meaning that best fits the immediate context. The rich range of meanings of *‘alam*, recurring in an impressive manner, in 1 Enoch, would be even better appreciated in a more complete philological study.

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measure of Time to compare to the cycle of light and darkness we call a day’; this time, which can be called cosmological time, is well described in the Astronomical section of 1 Enoch (72–82); see Angeles 1992, 313.

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Summary

In 1 Enoch, the term *°alam* offers various meanings, most of which are temporal. It qualifies God as well as heaven. It also expresses the type of angelic life in heaven. With regard to life on earth, *°alam* signifies the most distant past and the most distant future. It also refers to things that will have a long duration, yet not without limit, like the suffering of fallen angels. In contrast human suffering on earth is never associated with an eternal one.