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Erez DeGolan
Columbia University

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"Heaviness of the Head" and the Unbearable Lightness of Rejoicing

Erez DeGolan
Columbia University[1]

I. Not an Affection but an Attitude

This essay questions the attention bias for distinct terminology in studies of emotions in premodern literatures, especially in works associated with the history of emotion approach. To do so, I will explore a pair of rabbinic Hebrew idioms: *koved rosh*, literally "heaviness of the head," and its antonym, *qalut rosh*, or "lightness of the head." Because, to the modern ear, the two phrases do not obviously refer to emotional experiences, their affective dimensions are routinely overlooked. Taking inspiration from works in affect theory, I will argue, however, that rabbinic texts use these terms to denote physical experiences that epitomize opposing emotional states, mourning (*koved rosh*) and rejoicing (*qalut rosh*).

[1] I thank the following individuals for discussing earlier versions or portions of this piece: Beth Berkowitz, Emanuel Fiano, Marjorie Lehman, Jesse Mirotznik, Sarah Wolf, Meira Wolkenfeld, and Shlomo Zuckier. I am also grateful for the valuable feedback of the two anonymous reviewers and JTR's editor, Deborah Barer.

Our point of departure is Mishnah Berakhot 5:1, where "heaviness of the head" appears in a passage concerning the worshiper's attentiveness when performing the *ʿAmidah* (daily prayer):[2]

אין עומדין להתפלל אלא מתוך כובד ראש

> One should rise to pray only out of heaviness of the head (*koved rosh*).[3]

Notwithstanding the text's direct tone, its operative phrase, "heaviness of the head," remains opaque. Scholars writing in English typically maintain that this mishnah uses *koved rosh* to stipulate a "reverent frame of mind,"[4] "respectful mind,"[5] "serious frame of mind,"[6] or "serious-mindedness"[7] as a prerequisite for enacting the *ʿAmidah* attentively. These translations are grounded in the Mishnah's Hebrew, at least partially. The English adjectives chosen to render the noun *koved*— "reverent," "respectful," etc. —recall the linguistic proximity between the Hebrew words for "heavy" and "honor" (both stem from the root *k.b.d*). As for the Mishnah's focus on the worshiper's "mind," it may be the case that modern readers associate *rosh*, or "head," with "mind," since, in English, the head is identified as the seat of consciousness and the intellect (this is not always the case, however, in ancient Jewish sources).[8]

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[2] Tzvee Zahavy, *The Mishnaic Law of Blessings and Prayers: Tractate Berakhot*, *Brown Judaic Studies* (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1987), 66.

[3] M. Berakhot 5:1A.

[4] Michal Bar-Asher Siegal, *Early Christian Monastic Literature and the Babylonian Talmud* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 79.

[5] Alberdina Houtman, *Mishnah and Tosefta: A Synoptic Comparison of the Tractates Berakhot and Shebiit*, *Texte Und Studien Zum Antiken Judentum* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 104.

[6] Stefan C Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer: New Perspectives on Jewish Liturgical History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 105.

[7] Avraham Walfish, "Approaching the Text and Approaching God: The Redaction of Mishnah and Tosefta Berakhot," *Madaei Hayahdut* 43 (2005): 21-79, 61.

[8] David Arthur Lambert, "Refreshing Philology: James Barr, Supersessionism, and the State of Biblical Words," *Biblical Interpretation* 24.3 (2016): 332–56.

The choice of "mind" as the locus of m. Berakhot 5:1A's *koved rosh* hints that the worshiper's emotional state falls outside the purview of this legal text. Jacob Neusner expressed this position explicitly. In his 1987 monograph, titled *Vanquished Nation, Broken Spirit: The Virtues of the Heart in Formative Judaism*, Neusner made emotions his central object of analysis. In his words, *Vanquished Nation* set out to explore the rabbinic "repertoire of affections" and the ways in which it "came to literary expression and… then shaped to serve the larger purposes of the canonical system as a whole."[9] To study the rabbis' "repertoire of affections," Neusner complied a "list of words for emotions" in the rabbinic corpus and examined these entries in their various literary contexts.[10] Since the phrase is not an obvious fit in the rabbinic catalog of "words for emotions," Neusner translated *koved rosh* as "a solemn frame of mind" and concluded that the ruling "refers not to an affection but an attitude."[11]

Despite its age, *Vanquished Nation* can be seen as a forerunner of history of emotion, an approach which leverages insights from cognitive psychology, constructivist sociology, and anthropology to ask how and why rules and norms governing emotion change over time or how they factor-in in moments of historical change. Neusner's consideration of "the phenomenon of emotion in its public aspect… not something individual and principally psychological," as well as his analysis of rabbinic emotions in light of the "Jews' political and social condition," parallels the theoretical orientation of present-day historians of emotion.[12] The monograph's methodological frame of mind also aligns with current works in history of emotion. Barbara Rosenwein implores historians of emotion to "problematize emotion terms" precisely because, just like Neusner, contemporary scholars take "list[s] of words for emotions" as their

[9] Jacob Neusner, *Vanquished Nation, Broken Spirit: The Virtues of the Heart in Formative Judaism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 7.

[10] Ibid., 27.

[11] Ibid., 30.

[12] Ibid., 3, 4-5.

primary, if not exclusive object of analysis.[13] Neusner's analysis of "heaviness of the head" reflects, then, a tendency in contemporary works in history of emotion: scholars often disregard affective themes which are not directly linked to recognizable vocabulary of emotion.

The increasing scholarly interest in emotions in the humanities, especially since the mid-1990s, has given rise to yet another approach alongside history of emotion. This second methodology is found in works associated with affect theory, "an approach to history, politics, culture, and all other aspects of embodied life that emphasizes the role of non-linguistic and non- or para-cognitive forces," as Donovan Schaefer writes.[14] Affect theory emerged as a countermeasure to the "linguistic turn,"[15] a paradigm shift in the humanities whose impact on various fields of study, including ancient Jewish studies[16] and cognate areas of research, [17] cannot be overstated. Affect theorists argue that the basic conviction fostered by the turn, that language is the *punctum Archimedis* for studying societies and cultures, comes with a hefty price tag.[18] The prioritization of language, they argue, clouds the ways in which bodies are constantly "moving through worlds under the pressure of a complex welter of affects, with language weaving between and reshaping those pressures only sometimes."[19] To rectify what they see as the shortcomings of the

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[13] Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," *Passions in Context: International Journal for the History and Theory of Emotions* 1 (2010): 1–32, 13.

[14] Donovan O. Schaefer, *The Evolution of Affect Theory: The Humanities, the Sciences, and the Study of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 1.

[15] For a recent account of the intellectual history of the "linguistic turn" (including an abundance of references), see Jason Ānanda Josephson-Storm, *Metamodernism: The Future of Theory* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2021), 152-62.

[16] Maxine L Grossman, "Is Ancient Jewish Studies (Still) Postmodern (Yet)?," *Currents in Biblical Research* 13.2 (2015): 245–83.

[17] See, e.g., Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[18] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins," *Critical Inquiry* 21.2 (1995): 496–522.

[19] Donovan O. Schaefer, *Religious Affects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 9.

linguistic turn, scholars of affect advocate for an approach that takes into account the "visceral forces" which are "beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing," with emphasis on emotions.[20]

On the face of it, affect theory's call for a reorientation away from language might seem irrelevant for scholars of classical rabbinic literature, whose training and expertise—and, indeed, most of the data that is available to them—is first and foremost textual. Moreover, if for the rabbis themselves, "the reading and interpretation of sacred or authoritative texts were real and powerful forces… as famines and wars," as Christian Hayes phrases it, would their literature even lend itself to the study of affect?[21]

On the other hand, the view of emotions of certain affect theorists is surprisingly similar to notions found in ancient Jewish texts.[22] Patricia Clough explains that the term "affect" refers "to bodily capacities to affect and be affected or the augmentation or diminution of a body's capacity to act, to engage."[23] The focus on corporality, Marianne Liljeström reflects, "has created a space for" reconsidering "the dualism between body and mind" in inquiries of emotional themes; for "readings of affect as emotive intensities, emotional affections, intuitive reactions, and life forces."[24] Ancient Jewish texts do not submit to a Cartesian dualism to begin with.

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[20] Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Greeg, "An Inventory of Shimmers," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Greeg (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 1.

[21] Christine Hayes, *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 8.

[22] Some affect theorists consider affect to be distinct from the phenomenon of emotions. See, e.g., Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique* 31 (1995): 83–109; for a critique of Massumi, see, William Mazzarella, "Affect: What Is It Good For?," in *Enchantments of Modernity*, ed. Saurabh Dube (New York; London: Routledge, 2012), 291–309.

[23] Patricia T. Clough, "Introduction," in *The Affective Turn*, ed. *idem.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 2.

[24] Marianne Liljeström, "Affect," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*, ed. Lisa Disch and Mary Hawkesworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 16–37, 16.

The Hebrew Bible's perspective on the category—if such even exists[25]—flies in the face of modern, psychological, views of emotions as "centered internally, in subjective feelings."[26] For example, Françoise Mirguet shows how "love," "fear," and similar terms "are not limited to the expression of what we call emotions; rather, they also include actions, movements, ritual gestures, and physical sensations, without strict dissociation among these different dimensions."[27] Likewise, rabbinic "hate," as analyzed by Joel Gereboff, is not a private, amorphic upheaval that the individual may or may not externalize. In light of his findings, Gereboff extrapolates from his study of hate a theoretical proposal, according to which rabbinic emotions are to be thought of as "embodied ways of knowing."[28]

Gereboff's suggestion is helpful for thinking of the rabbinic *koved rosh*, heaviness of the head, and its antonym, *qalut rosh*, "lightness of the head," for arguably, these terms themselves connote "embodied ways of knowing." The relationship between the pair of phrases is sensed intuitively. The way we read one of the terms impacts our understanding of the other. Mark Johnson calls such expressions "balance metaphors" — images which convey meaning "in terms of weight and mass."[29] The comprehension of balance metaphors involves tacitly "*weighing* the relative" value of opposite quantities to evaluate objects' reverse qualities.[30] Importantly, however, balance metaphors, as Johnson empha-

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[25] David A. Lambert, "Mourning over Sin/Affliction and the Problem of 'Emotion' as a Category in the Hebrew Bible," in *Mixed Feelings and Vexed Passions: Exploring Emotions in Biblical Literature*, ed. F. Scott Spencer (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2017), 139–60, 140.

[26] K. T. Strongman, *The Psychology of Emotion: From Everyday Life to Theory*, 5th ed. (Chichester, England: J. Wiley & Sons, 2003), 3.

[27] Françoise Mirguet, "What Is an 'Emotion' in the Hebrew Bible?," *Biblical Interpretation* 24.4–5 (2016): 442–65, 443.

[28] Joel Gereboff, "Hate in Early Rabbinic Traditions," in *To Fix Torah in Their Hearts,* ed. Jaqueline S. du Toit et al. (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, 2018), 59–83, 63.

[29] Mark Leonard Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 85.

[30] Johnson, *The Body in the Mind,* 89.

sizes, are effective because they are rooted in experiences of "bodily movement and perception."[31] Therefore, while *koved* and *qalut rosh* are helpfully considered as balance *metaphors*—a linguistic phenomenon—we must not lose sight of the concrete meaning of the terms or the corporeal phenomena they denote.[32]

Yet like Neusner, Gereboff, and other scholars working on emotions in early Jewish writings and similar corpora limit their analyses to lists of "words for emotions." Although these scholars convincingly demonstrate that we cannot burden ancient terminology with anachronistic meanings, somewhat paradoxically, they remain focused on the same vocabulary they seek to read anew. As Françoise Mirguet argues, the polysemic nature of biblical emotion words "casts doubt on the existence of an isolated emotional realm in Biblical Hebrew's organization of human experience."[33] If this is the case, would we not expect that emotions, as features of a robust "human experience," manifest themselves also in words or terms *not* instinctively taxonomized as relating to emotions?

Works in affect theory inspire us to look beyond "words for emotions." Sara Ahmed argues that "words for feeling, and objects of feeling, circulate… move, stick, and slide."[34] Ahmed and others,[35] such as

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[31] Johnson, *The Body in the Mind*, 85.

[32] Some scholars have entertained a more concrete understanding of the phrase. In a translation of Mishnah Berakhot from 1912, Oscar Holtzmann suggested "niedergedrücktem Haupt," bowed head, as an appropriate gloss. See Oscar Holtzmann, *Berakot (Gebete). Text, Übersetzung und Erklärung. Nebst Einem Textkritischen Anhang* (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1912), 67. About a decade later, Williams A. Lukyn wondered if *koved rosh* might denote "bending it [the head] down," although eventually he conceded that "probably, the expression is here solely metaphorical." See Williams A. Lukyn, *Tractate Berakoth (Benedictions) Mishna and Tosephta: Tr. from the Hebrew, with Introduction and Notes* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1921), 35. More recently, Rachel Rafael Neis has contemplated whether *koved rosh* is best translated as "a lowered head." See Rachel Rafael Neis, "Directing the Heart: Corporeal Language and the Anatomy of Ritual Space," in *Placing Ancient Texts*, ed. Mika Ahuvia and Alexander Kocar (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 131–66, 138.

[33] Mirguet, "What Is an 'Emotion' in the Hebrew Bible?", 443.

[34] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 14.

[35] Schaefer, *The Evolution of Affect Theory*.

Kathleen Stewart, investigate how bodies exchange affective experiences,[36] how emotional experiences move between spaces, vocabularies, and registers "in broad circulation," despite being thought of or even experienced as unique to the "intimate lives" of individuals.[37] Affects are "surging," escaping singular bodies, breaking the membrane between the individual and the world. Emotions, Eve Sedgwick wrote, are shared and mobile and "can be, and are, attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things."[38] Emotions are confined neither to the sovereign individual's psyche nor to specialized terminology.

Following the trajectory of *koved* and *qalut rosh*'s circulation reveals how emotional or affective experiences subtly rear their head in rabbinic texts through unexpected signifiers. This approach does not diminish the importance of recognizable emotion words. Like Neusner, Mirguet, and Gereboff, in what follows, I engage the rabbinic "repertoire of affections." At the same time, by not limiting my point of view to lists "of words for emotions," I seek to trace toward what objects "heaviness of the head" and "lightness of the head" move, to what activities or other words and terms they stick, and between what practices they slide. Indeed, as we shall see below, for the rabbis, the linguistic couplet denotes physical experiences that epitomize opposing emotional states, namely, mourning (*koved rosh*) and rejoicing (*qalut rosh*).

II. Qalut Rosh and Rabbinic Normativity

A. Conversation, Laughter, and Lightness of the Head (Tosefta Berakhot 3:21)

In m. Berakhot 5:1A, as we saw above, *koved rosh* "sticks" to worship; heaviness of the head is understood by the mishnaic ruling as optimal for

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[36] Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[37] Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 2.

[38] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 19.

preparing to perform the *ʿAmidah*. Shifting from the heavy to the light, we now turn to texts where *qalut rosh* is disassociated from proper praying and sticks to problematic conduct—behaviors which conflict with the standards of rabbinic ethics. In a parallel ruling of the Mishnah's *koved rosh* passage, Tosefta Berakhot (3:21), lightness of the head is presented as detrimental to the prayer-act:

> אין עומדין להתפלל לא מתוך סיחה ולא מתוך השחוק ולא מתוך קלות ראש אלא מתוך דברים של חכמה
>
> One should not rise to pray out of conversation, nor out of laughter, nor out of *qalut rosh* [lightness of the head], but only out of words of wisdom [i.e., Torah-study].[39]

Like m. Berakhot 5:1A, the Tosefta contains a positive prescription,[40] stating what the worshiper ought to do before commencing the prayer. Unlike its mishnaic parallel, however, the Tosefta also includes a negative directive — the text lists "conversation," "laughter," and "lightness of the head" as things out of which it is prohibited to rise to pray.

The text does not spell out why these three specific activities must be avoided before enacting the *ʿAmidah*. Evidently, the problem with these categories is taken for granted, without specifying their relevance to the context of prayer. The grouping together of items in the list is not unique to the Tosefta, although other tannaitic texts do not mention all three categories, but rather pair up only two of them.[41] Mishnah ʾAvot (6:5), for example, links "conversation" and "laughter" together and identifies these activities as impediments to Torah study, similarly to how the Tosefta juxtaposes these activities (plus "lightness of the head") with "words of wisdom." Perhaps, then, the Tosefta draws upon formulaic language in compiling its list of stipulations. But in other texts that feature

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[39] T. Berakhot 3:21.

[40] Using an exceptive structure, אין... אלא.

[41] B. Berakhot 31a quotes the Tosefta's *baraita* (albeit with a distinct alteration). B. Shabbat 30b does include all categories, and is also drawing on the Tosefta, plausibly as it is presented in b. Berakhot.

categories from the Tosefta's list, we observe how certain permutations of two of the three terms are understood, from the perspective of rabbinic normativity, as especially problematic. In another mishnah in tractate ʾAvot (3:13), "laughter" and "lightness of the head" are said to lead to moral transgression. According to a tradition attributed to Rabbi ʿAqiva these activities make one accustomed to sexual sinning.[42] Perhaps, then, there is a moral hierarchy between "conversation," "laughter," and "lightness of the head," which dictates the order of their presentation in t. Berakhot 3:21.

If we string the two mishnayot in ʾAvot together, we notice that the texts present "conversation," "laughter," and "lightness of the head" in the same order in which these categories appear in t. Berakhot 3:21. In ʾAvot 6:5, just as in t. Berakhot 3:21, "conversation" precedes, textually speaking, "laughter." In ʾAvot 3:13, in turn, "laughter" appears first, followed by "lightness of the head." The textual ordering of the three prohibited pre-prayer activities the Tosefta lists corresponds with the ranking, as it were, of their normative status. Although the "conversation" in the Tosefta might refer to vain chatter, mundane small talk ("*siḥah batelah*")— an activity against which the rabbis warn—conversation *per se* is not intrinsically abhorrent in rabbinic thought.[43] "Laughter," too, is not always frowned upon by the rabbis,[44] but unlike "conversation," it is never mentioned in passing, as a neutral activity. The normative status of "lightness of the head," on the other hand, is less ambiguous. Rabbinic texts often deem *qalut rosh* a threat to agents' ethical conduct; the phrase demarcates the edge of a slippery slope which leads to transgressions of

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[42] M. ʾAvot 3:12-3 (in some versions: 3:15-16), MS Budapest A50 (Kaufman).

[43] Nachum Bronznick, "'Sihat Hakhamim', 'Milta Di-Vdihuta', and 'Sihah Betelah' (Parts A and B)," *Or Ha-Mizrah* 41 (1993): 174–89.

[44] In fact, according to one tradition, if one's last breath is laughter, it is considered a good omen (b. Ketubbot 103b; cf. ʾAvot de-Rabbi Nathan, Ver. A., 25:19. See more in, Eliezer Diamond, "But Is It Funny? Identifying Humor, Satire, and Parody in Rabbinic Literature," in *Jews and Humor*, ed. Leonard J. Greenspoon (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2007), 33–53, 36.

rabbinic norms of conduct, as we have already seen in m. ʾAvot 3:13. On the normative scales of counter-*halakhic* categories, rabbinic discourse views *qalut rosh* as heavier than "conversation" and "laughter." Whatever lightness of the head means precisely, followers of rabbinic law are better off avoiding it.

B. Qalut Rosh and Free Form Actions (Mishnah Berakhot 9:5)

Qalut rosh does not—or at least ought not—circulate where normative rabbinic practice takes place. Yet the precise meaning of lightness of the head, as used in t. Berakhot 3:21, remains unclear. The Tosefta's categories of prohibited pre-prayer engagements may nevertheless offer clues concerning the descriptive range that *qalut rosh* covers. "Conversation" directly conflicts with certain aspects of the ʿ*Amidah* ritual. A conversation entails unscripted, reactive, and reciprocal speech — the exact opposite of the liturgical discourse of the daily prayer. The spontaneous nature of dialoguing leaves room for endless variations of the content of the conversation, fluctuations in the tone, speed, and volume of speakers' voice, and, moreover, the duration of a social conversation is determined *ad hoc*. By contrast, rabbinic *halakha* governs the texture of the worshiper's voice (e.g., t. Berakhot 3:9) and tolerates hardly any divergences from the ʿ*Amidah*'s script (e.g., m. Berakhot 5:5).

In t. Berakhot 3:21, the dissonance between the free form of speech in mundane conversations and the structured discourse of the ritual of the ʿ*Amidah* is associated with *qalut rosh* only though the textual juxtaposition of "conversation" and "lightness of the head." Another text, m. Berakhot 9:5, suggests that *qalut rosh* is implicated with other unstructured, free-form activities:

> לא יקל אדם את ראשו כנגד שער המזרח שהוא מכוון כנגד בית קדשי הקדשים לא יכנס להר הבית במקלו ובמנעלו ובפונדתו ובאבק שעל רגליו ולא יעשנו קפנדריא
>
> A person should not lighten his head (*yaqel et rosho*) opposite the Eastern gate because it is directed toward the Holy of Holies. He should not enter the Temple Mount with his staff, his shoe, his

> pouch, or with the dust on his feet, and he should not make it a shortcut.[45]

On par with t. Berakhot 3:21, this mishnah seeks to ban lightness of the head from circulating near acts of worship. In Tosefta Berakhot, subjects present themselves to the Divine through prayer. Here, in m. Berakhot 9:5, the legal subject enters God's geographical domain, the Temple Mount. Using a verbal conjunction of *qalut rosh*, the Mishnah instructs one not to act with lightness of the head when one is oriented toward Holy of Holies. The injunctions that follow, "He should not enter the Temple…", seem to provide examples for what lightening one's head might entail. First, the Mishnah lists three items with which it is forbidden to enter the Temple Mount— staff, shoes, and pouch—followed by a prohibition against entering the compound "with the dust on his feet." We can gather from the selected examples that the Mishnah is picturing a person arriving to Jerusalem after a journey,[46] perhaps a pilgrim who wishes to celebrate a festival at the Temple.

The subsequent prohibition, against using the Temple Mount as a shortcut, does not necessarily evoke the picture of a pilgrim arriving to the city from afar. Yet it is precisely the grouping of this demand with tropes of travelling that helps us appreciating how m. Berakhot 9:5 understands lightness of the head. Just as uttering the words of the daily prayer involves the mechanism of speech, which is activated identically whenever one speaks, so too entering (יכנס) "the Temple Mount" requires the same measures as, say, entering (הנכנס) "a city" (m. Berakhot 9:4)—moving one's body to create the motion of walking. Mishnah Berakhot 9:5 concerns the movement to (pilgrim) or through (non-pilgrim) the Temple Mount, the location of God's dwelling, precisely because whether one is walking during a journey, taking a shortcut, or approaching the Divine,

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[45] M. Berakhot 9:5. Translation from, Walfish, "Approaching the Text and Approaching God: The Redaction of Mishnah and Tosefta Berakhot", 49. I have altered Walfish's rendering of לא יקל... את ראשו, which he translates as "should not act lightheadedly."

[46] Note that the theme of "entering" a city is brought up in m. Berakhot 9:4 a well.

walking is walking. At stake in the text is privileging *this* movement, of entering the territory of God, from movements in other contexts, which are, technically speaking, *the same movements*. Lightening the head means importing the free form of everyday movement into the realm of ritualized movement.

C. Qalut Rosh and Socializing (Tosefta Megillah 2:18)

Tosefta Berakhot's list of banned pre-prayer activities has more to contribute to our analysis of lightness of the head. At least two of the three activities mentioned in the Tosefta's list of prohibited pre-prayer activities— "conversation" and "laughter" —imply an interaction between two or more actors. Likewise, the positive instruction in t. Berakhot 3:21, to rise to pray out of "words of wisdom," suggests a scenario of communal Torah-study. It might be helpful to recall m. Berakhot 5:1: there, the *koved rosh* ruling can apply to a worshiper preparing for the *ʿAmidah* in solitude. Tosefta Berakhot's *qalut rosh* passage, by contrast, pictures a *social* setting prior to and during the prayer-act.[47]

An examination of other appearances of lightness of the head reveals that, like "conversation" and "laughter," *qalut rosh* often presupposes a social setting. From a descriptive point of view, moreover, lightness of the head entails interpersonal interactions in specific contexts. In line with t. Berakhot 3:21 (prayer) and m. Berakhot 9:5 (temple), Tosefta Megillah 2:18

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[47] Both m. Berakhot 5:1A and t. Berakhot 3:21 open with an identical clause, which I have translated, in both cases, as "One should rise to pray…" In the Hebrew text, the main verb in the text, "rise," does not actually agree with the grammatical subject of the English translation, "one." The verb is parsed as a plural, masculine participle. In rabbinic Hebrew, plural masculine participles can be used in the impersonal sense, to refer to a generic subject. Thus, while, morphologically speaking, the verb in our texts (עומדין) implies a plural subject, it may be conventionally translated into English using a singular construction, "one should rise." This translation is perfectly suitable for m. Berakhot 5:1A. In the Tosefta, however, notwithstanding its impersonal tone, the plural verb עומדין also hints that the *halakhah* pictures a *social* setting, with several actors present. It is noteworthy, in this regard, that another passage in t. Berakhot (3:20) does portray a prayer-related scenario in which a worshiper might be alone. It does so by using a singular verb (היה עומד ומתפלל).

seeks to detach *qalut rosh* from the sphere of worship. The text forbids acting in lightness of the head in buildings used as synagogues. It also provides examples of behaviors that fall under the category of *qalut rosh*, thereby providing insight into the descriptive range of the term. The activities that the Tosefta links to the phrase include eating, drinking, being at leisure/being entertained (*metaylin*[48]), and being self-indulgent (*neʾotin*).[49] Lightness of the head circulates between agents when they interact with each other and engage together in activates that relate to enjoyment and leisure. Perhaps that is why a tradition in ʾAvot de-Rabbi Nathan—the only rabbinic text that does *not* view lightness of the head negatively—mentions *qalut rosh* as one of three things that make a man beloved by his peers.[50]

III. Qalut Rosh and Rejoicing

A. Qalut Rosh and Non-Jewish Rejoicing (Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2)

In Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2, lightness of the head circulates outside the boundaries of rabbinic identity and must, therefore, be tamed. The *halakhah* sets out to regulate how a rabbinic Jew ought to interact with, or rather separate from, non-Jews during their days of festivities. The text most likely postdates and reacts to a related discussion in Mishnah

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[48] Menachem Slae, "Ha-Tiyul Be-Sifrut Ha-Shot," *Ha-Maayan* 16.3 (1975): 17–35; Nachum Bronznick, "Le-Mashmao Shel Ha-Niv "Metayel… Arukot u-Ketzarot," *Ha-Maayan* (1999): 51–55; Shamma Friedman, "The Meaning of Metayyel in the List of Sukkah Activities (in Hebrew)," in *Meḥevah Le-Menaḥem: Studies in Honor of Menahem Hayyim Schmelzer*, ed. Shmuel Glick, Evelyn M. Cohen, and Angelo M. Piattelli (Jerusalem: Schocken, 2019), 319–55.

[49] The meaning of *neʾotin* in the context of t. Megillah is difficult to ascertain. My understanding of how it is used in this context builds upon Kottsieper's discussion of uses of the root ʾ.w.t in the Niphʿal conjugation in rabbinic Hebrew. See Ingo Kottsieper, "אות und ערב: Ein Beitrag zum Hebräischen Lexikon und zum Verhältnis von 'CD' zu '1QS,'" *Revue de Qumrân* 24.3 (95) (2010): 405–19, 408-411.

[50] Version A, 18:22.

ʿAvodah Zarah.[51] We will therefore begin by examining m. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:1, which pertains to financial activities between Jews and non-Jews in the period leading up to their festival. The ruling first states:

> לפני אידיהן של גויים שלושה ימים אסור מלשאת ומלתת עימהן ומלהשאילן ומלשאול מהן מלהלוותן ומללוות מהן מלפורען ומלפרוע מהן
>
> For three days prior to the festivals of non-Jews it is prohibited to buy and sell with them, to lend objects to or borrow objects from them, to lend money to or borrow money from them, to repay a debt or to collect a debt from them.

This detailed fiat sparks a debate over the legal status of debt collection, the last form of financial activity the text mentions. Rabbi *Yehudah* disagrees with the anonymous opinion cited above. He avers that collecting debt ought to be permitted. Rabbi *Yehudah's* view is subsequently objected with a rebuttal to his explanation:

> רבי יהודה אומ' נפרעין מהן מפני שהוא מצר אמרו לו אף על פי שהוא מצר עכשיו שמח הוא לאחר זמן
>
> Rabbi Yehudah says, "One may accept repayment from them, because he [the non-Jew] is [thereby] distressed." They said to him, "Even though he is distressed now, he will be joyous [about it] later.[52]

The point of friction between the opposing opinions also clarifies what are the parameters of agreement between them.[53] The disagreement concerning collecting payments is contingent upon the emotional effects the non-Jew would experience upon repaying his debt. As Sarit Kattan

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[51] According to Catherine Bonesho, in the case of tractate ʿAvodah Zarah, "the Tosefta is best understood in its traditional characterization as some sort of supplement to the traditions of the Mishnah." See, Catherine E Bonesho, "Foreign Holidays and Festivals as Representative of Identity in Rabbinic Literature (Ph.D. Dissertation)" (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2018), 67-8.

[52] M. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:1.

[53] Hayes, *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds*, 69.

Gribetz writes, the "financial prohibitions in the Mishnah thus seek both to limit direct and indirect *material* contributions to idolatry and to curb direct and indirect *affective* contributions to or participation in idolatrous worship."[54]

Now, to t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2. The text opens with two directives that rework the mishnaic tradition:

A. לא ישא אדם ויתן עם הגוי ביום אידו
B. ולא יקל עמו את ראשו

A. A person ought not to buy and sell from/to a non-Jew on the day of his [the non-Jew's] festival
B. nor should he [the Jew] lighten his head (*yaqel et rosho*) with him [the non-Jew].[55]

The first part of the *halakhah* (A) further circumscribes the ruling in m. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:1. It focuses on buying and selling only *on the day* of the festival. Other activities of commerce and the issue of the days leading up to the festival are relegated to a separate textual unit.[56] There is also no trace of the debate between Rabbi Yehudah and the anonymous authority. Likewise, an explicit reference to the nexus between non-Jews' joy (ש.מ.ח) and a specific trade-related activity, an issue which is addressed elsewhere in the Tosefta,[57] is absent from the *halakhah* above.

In the Mishnah, both Rabbi Yehudah and the anonymous voice disagree concerning how collecting a debt from a non-Jew would affect him, or more specifically, they debate whether the distress caused by parting from money would endure (Rabbi Yehudah) or not (anonymous Mishnah). The ruling, it may be recalled, pertains to the days *prior* to the

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[54] Sarit Kattan Gribetz, *Time and Difference in Rabbinic Judaism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 44.

[55] T. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2.

[56] The antecedent *halakhah* (1:1).

[57] See t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3 (ואף על פי שגמר את כליו לפני אידו לא יוליכם לו ביום אידו מפני **שמשמחו**)

festival itself. The issue of the non-Jew's joy "later" (לאחר זמן) is relevant only because both parties agree that effecting joy in the non-Jew *on the day of the festival* is, indeed, prohibited.

Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 treats only the day of the festival, not the three days prior to it. Therefore, any concerns with delayed joy are beyond the text's consideration. Nevertheless, the *halakhah* extracts the legal position that is enveloped within the Mishnah's debt collection debate and codifies the prescription that is only implied by that disagreement. The affective dimension of interacting with non-Jews *during their festivals*, which is taken for granted in the Mishnah, is spelled out in the Tosefta as a standalone ruling. But where the Mishnah used the Hebrew word for joy (in a verb from), the Tosefta deploys the terminology of lightness of the head. Using the verbal form of *qalut rosh* ("nor should one *lighten* his head"), the text prohibits promoting joy in non-Jews during their festivals. Lightness of the head moves between free-form speech and movement in t. Berakhot 3:21 and m. Berakhot 9:5, slides between actors when they socialize in t. Megillah 2:18 and sticks to festive joy—the festive joy of non-Jews, in the instance of t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2.

B. Qalut Rosh and Jewish Rejoicing (Tosefta Sukkah 4:1)

In Tosefta Sukkah 4 (1-5, 7-9), *qalut rosh* is associated with joyous Jews. Alongside a corresponding mishnaic unit, m. Sukkah 5:1-5, t. Sukkah 4 describes a ritual called "the Rejoicing of the Place of Water Drawing," which took place in the Temple's public court during the Sukkot pilgrimage. The celebratory ritual, according to the tannaitic accounts, involved a nocturnal procession that featured live music and dance performances. Recalling elements of *qalut rosh* in Tosefta and Mishnah Berakhot (3:21/9:5), the tannaitic accounts imagine spontaneous, loosely structured—or free, as I termed it above—movement and speech as characteristic of the Rejoicing ritual. Both Mishnah and Tosefta Sukkah report how "Pious Men and Men of Deeds used to dance and utter words of praise" in front of a gathered crowed during the ceremony. The "words of praise" (דברי תושבחות), at least in the Mishnah's version, are unscripted, suggesting, perhaps, that what the text imagines is improvised

speech rather than recitation. As for the dancing, judging from the Tosefta's account of Rabban Shimʿon the son of Gamliʾel's dance moves during the Rejoicing ritual, performers' bodies were stretched to their limits:

> מעשה ברבן שמעון בן גמליאל שהיה מרקד בשמנה אבוקות של אור, ולא היה אחד מהן נונע בארץ, וכשהוא משתחוה מניח אצבעו בארץ על גבי הרצפה, שוחה ונושק וזוקף מיד
>
> Once Rabban Shimʿon the son of Gamliʾel was dancing with eight flaming torches, and not one of them touched the ground. When he bowed down, he put his finger to the earth on the floor, bowed, kissed and stood upright immediately.[58]

Broadly speaking, the rabbis, like other moralists of their era, were warry about dancing.[59] Indeed, the Palestinian Talmud, or Yerushalmi, quotes the tradition above, only to transmit another teaching subsequently, according to which "the most worthless person is the dancer."[60] Rabban Shimʿon the son of Gamliʾel's performance is criticized by the Yerushalmi, which hints that it is nothing but a worthless display of dancing. Although the dictum in the Yerushalmi postdates the tannaitic tradition, its sentiment hints at the criticism that is contained already in the Tosefta itself. The description of the acrobatic act—a series of surprising movements—draws upon terminology that belongs to choreography of the *ʿAmidah* prayer (משתחוה, שוחה).[61] The exportation of choreography of

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[58] T. Sukkah 4:4.

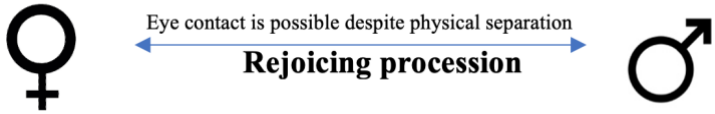
[59] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Dancing, Clapping, Meditating: Jewish and Christian Observance of the Sabbath in Pseudo-Ignatius," in *Judaea-Palaestina, Babylon and Rome; Jews in Antiquity*, ed. Benjamin Isaac and Yuval Shahar (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 29–51; Catherine Hezser, *Rabbinic Body Language: Non-Verbal Communication in Palestinian Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

[60] הריקים שבריקים זה ארכיסטיס.

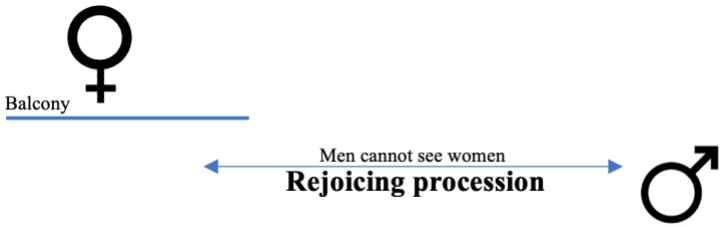
[61] Uri Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language of Prayer: A New Approach to Jewish Liturgy* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), chapter 2.

worship to the Rejoicing ritual's stage is at odds with normative rabbinic views on dancing.

At any rate, Rabban Shimʿon's don't-try-this-at-home dancing and juggling routine brings us closer to the territory of *qalut rosh*. When the Tosefta invokes the term, lightness of the head is explicitly implicated with moral transgression, similar to what we have encountered in Mishnah ʾAvot (3:13, 6:5). The Tosefta reports that "at first," although men and women were in separate locations, visual contact between them was still possible, presumably because the spaces for both genders were on the same level. Schematically, we may picture a setting such as the following:



This spatial configuration was problematic, the Tosefta tells us. The male members of the celebrating audience would gaze at their female counterparts and develop, consequently, *qalut rosh*, lightness of the head. Therefore, the Court (*beit din*)[62] decreed the construction of elevated balconies for the women attending the Rejoicing ritual, so that the men could no longer look at them:



[62] According to Naftali Cohn, in the early rabbis' imagination, the members of the Court are "their Temple-era predecessors who transmitted to them [the rabbis] authority over Judean law and tradition." See Naftali S. Cohn, *The Memory of the Temple and the Making of the Rabbis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 52.

As Cynthia Baker writes, the affair of the balconies expresses rabbinic anxiety regarding the "sexual threat" posed by women.[63] Once more we observe how *qalut rosh* is designated as the threshold of sexual transgression. What prompts the Court to initiate the architectural intervention is the potential *effect* of lightness of the head. Tosefta Sukkah surely takes interest in this aspect of *qalut rosh*, in the moral risks it poses, and in prescriptive ways to keep the experience at bay. But the narrative also contributes to our understanding of the *descriptive* range of the term by communicating what *causes* lightness of the head.

In the case of Sukkah, the link between *qalut rosh* and rejoicing is made explicit through the presence of a familiar emotion word, *simḥah* (joy/rejoicing). The depicted ritual is named, it may be recalled, the "*Rejoicing* of (*simḥat*) the Place of Water Drawing." In fact, the Mishnah (5:1) goes as far as commenting, hyperbolically, that "whoever has not seen the Rejoicing of the Place of Water Drawing never in his life saw [true] joy" (מי שלא ראה שמחת בית השואבה לא ראה שמחה מימיו). Within this framing, the Tosefta narrates how rejoicing slips and slides between dancing, gazing, and arousal.[64] It is under the guise of rejoicing, we learn from the Tosefta, that the sexual threat becomes acute; the men of the audience are described by the text as *arriving at* lightness of the head (באין לידי קלות ראש). Rejoicing moves male subjects, even pushing them toward lightness of the head. In the account of the Tosefta, joy (שמחה), or more specifically, communal rejoicing sticks to *qalut rosh*.

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[63] Cythia Baker, "The Queen, the Apostate, and the Women Between: (Dis)Placement of Women in Tosefta Sukkah," in *A Feminist Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud: Introduction and Studies*, ed. Tal Ilan (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 173-4. Note that the threat is not posed *by* men. Presumably, even after the architectural "upgrade," women could still look at men in the crowd, or at those in the Rejoicing procession itself.

[64] In m. Taʿanit 4:8, gazing at dancing women is also associate with both joy (שמחה) and arousal. See also a *baraita* in b. Qiddushin 61b.

IV. Koved Rosh against Joy

A. Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2, Take 2

The term *qalut rosh* has no place in the "list of words for emotions" which Neusner compiled. Yet the term refers to experiences that are directly linked to an emotion, namely, joy, or more specifically, festive rejoicing. As we have seen in t. Berakhot 3:21, m. Berakhot 3:13, ʾAvot 6:5, m. Berakhot 9:5, and t. Megillah 2:18, lightness of the head is associated with social interactions and spontaneity of speech and movement. These attributes are stretched to the extreme in t. Sukkah 4, where *qalut rosh* circulates in the orbit of collective rejoicing and even sticks to a "proper" emotion word, *simḥah* (joy).

To consider how this picture of lightness of the head informs our understanding of *koved rosh*, heaviness of the head, we now return to t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2. Above, we examined only the first part of this *halakhah*, that part which contains the term lightness of the head (in a verbal form). The second part of the text features the term heaviness of the head. With both *koved* and *qalut rosh* side by side, t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 is germane for exploring the idioms. As a reminder, the first part of the text reads:

A. A person ought not to buy and sell from/to a non-Jew on the day of his [the non-Jew's] festival
B. nor should he [the Jew] lighten his head (*yaqel et rosho*) with him [the non-Jew].[65]

After instructing Jews not to act in *qalut rosh* with celebrating non-Jews (A-B), the Tosefta goes on to discuss the social practice of exchanging greetings and the way it plays out vis-à-vis non-Jews during their festival days. It is in this context where heaviness of head is included. However, the text of the second part of the *halakhah* is quite ambiguous. Its vocabulary and syntax permit at least two plausible readings, each

[65] T. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2.

yielding distinct legal outcomes. In the translation below, I present the two readings that are supported by Hebrew:

Reading 1	Reading 2
C. ולא ישאל בשלומן D. **במקום שמתחשב** מצאו לפי דרכו שואל בשלומו בכובד ראש	C. ולא ישאל בשלומן **במקום שמתחשב** D. מצאו לפי דרכו שואל בשלומו בכובד ראש
C. nor should one extend a greeting to them [non-Jews]. D. [But] **in a scenario where he is regarded as an important person**, if one comes across him incidentally, he may extend a greeting to him with heaviness of the head (*koved rosh*).	C. nor should he [the Jew] extend a greeting to him [the non-Jew] **in a place designated** [for festive worship] D. [But] if one comes across him incidentally anywhere else, he may extend a greeting to him with heaviness of the head (*koved rosh*).

The nature of the Tosefta's ruling concerning greetings is contingent upon our interpretation of an ambiguous subordinate clause in the text, which is identified above by its bold font. The underlying Hebrew of the clause consists of two words: *be-maqom she-mitḥashev*. The meaning of each of these is flexible. The word in the first position, *be-maqom*, means, literally, "in a place [where[66]]." It can be read concretely, understood as signifying a location. But a figurative reading, where the "place" refers to a case or a set of circumstances, is possible as well.[67] The second word, *mitḥashev,* is a participle stemming from a common root in rabbinic Hebrew, *ḥ.sh.b*, but the Hitpaʿel conjugation found here is not so common in the corpus. The result is a word whose precise meaning is hard to decipher: *mitḥashev* can mean, more or less, "[the grammatical subject is] counted [together with]," "[the subject is] considered [as]," "[the subject is] regarded as important,"

[66] The prefix of the second word, *she-mitḥashev*, functions as the relative "where" in this sentence.

[67] Compare, e.g., m. Bava Meṣiʿa 4:11 (literal sense) and m. Bava Meṣiʿa 6:1 (metaphorical sense).

or "[the subject is] taking account [of]." But when this form is encountered, including in another passage in t. ʿAvodah Zarah (2:7), it can be quite difficult to ascertain which of these definitions—if any—fits better.[68] In our text, the uncertainty is exacerbated by the ambiguous identity of the grammatical subject of *mitḥashev*.

Some argue, in line with Reading 1 above, that the grammatical subject of *mitḥashev* is a human agent who is "regarded as an important person," maybe the addressee of the ruling—a Jew who encounters a non-Jew—but, more likely, the non-Jew whom the Jew encounters.[69] Assuming so also results in a figurative reading of *maqom*, as illustrating "a scenario." Thus, if Reading 1 is followed, then the problematic clause (*be- maqom she-mitḥashev*) is understood as follows: "in a scenario where the non-Jew is regarded as an important person." As such, the clause is most fittingly subordinated to part D of the text, which now functions as an addendum to the previous ruling. It introduces some flexibility to the demand not to "extend a greeting to" non-Jews during their festivals (C) by indicating when the otherwise prohibited act of greeting becomes permissible. This interpretation also circles us back to commonplace understandings of *koved rosh* in m. Berakhot 5:1A as connoting a respectful frame of mind. Upon engaging a noble non-Jew, the Jew must prioritize respecting the individual, for, otherwise, the Jew is placing himself at risk. While such an encounter is hardly typified by a vacuity of affect—fear is surely at

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[68] Beth A. Berkowitz, "The Limits of 'Their Laws': Ancient Rabbinic Controversies about Jewishness (and Non-Jewishness)," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99.1 (2009): 121–57, 140-1, n. 51.

[69] There are justifications for assigning the Jew, the legal subject of the Tosefta, as the subject of *mitḥashev*. It could be that the Tosefta is envisioning a respected Jew whose virtuous behavior is often mimicked by other Jews of his community. In that case, there is a fear that the followers of said respected Jew will learn the wrong message from observing the man denying a greeting from a non-Jew: they will cease to extend greetings, even when it is not the holiday season. See Peter J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 163. This interpretation is based on how *mitḥashev* is supposedly used in m. Sheviʿit 8:11. All of the above notwithstanding, if we chose to follow Reading 1, the more convincing interpretation, to my mind, is that the non-Jew whom the Jew encounters is the one who is "regarded as an important person." Accordingly, at stake is a worry about the implications of not greeting an honorable non-Jew.

play[70]—taking "heaviness of the head" as denoting respect shifts our focus from the emotional dynamics of which the text speaks (see below). For, according to Reading 1, t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2's emphasis is on "honor as political capital in Roman public life" and on Jews' pragmatic participation within this social institution.[71]

B. Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3 in Support of Reading 2

Reading 1 is at odds, however, with the very next *halakhah* in Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:

שואלין בשלום הגוים באידיהן מפני דרכי שלום

> We extend greetings to non-Jews on their festivals for the sake of peace.[72]

If, in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2, *mitḥashev* refers to the social status of the non-Jew (or the Jew), then the greeting ruling blatantly contradicts its adjacent text, t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3. Reading 1 considers greeting as the *exception*, an undesired behavior that the rabbinic lawmakers are compelled to accommodate due to the dangerous act of not greeting a nobleman. This does not comport with the text above, which explains why non-Jews, all of them, are greeted on non-Jewish festivals.

On the other hand, if Reading 2 is accepted, then t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3A can be understood as an explanatory elaboration of the text that proceeds it. Reading 2 proposes a locative meaning for *be-maqom*. In other words, the word is understood concretely, as referring to a place. This very "place," according to this line of interpretation, is also the grammatical subject of *mitḥashev*, which now functions as an attributive. The difficult clause (*be-maqom she-mitḥashev*) is thus translated as "in a designated

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[70] Compare, e.g., m. Berakhot 2:1.

[71] Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 140.

[72] T. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3A.

place,"[73] or "in a place designated [for]." Now, instead of conceiving of not greeting as the general rule and permissible greeting as the exception—a position which is incongruent with the *halakhah* just quoted—the Tosefta's greeting policy is understood as quite narrow or specific to begin with. Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 decrees that, no matter the social stature of either the Jew or the non-Jew, greetings must be avoided in places designated for worship, but in incidental encounters elsewhere, greetings are allowed, albeit with *koved rosh*, heaviness of the head.

While we cannot *a priori* expect the Tosefta to be free from internal contradictions,[74] there is no reasons to *prioritize* contradictions. Readings 1 and 2 are equally valid, and it therefore makes more sense to accept the interpretation that fits better within its literary context. In fact, reading on in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3 reveals a preoccupation with the location in which non-Jews are encountered.

> אומנין של ישר' שהיו עושין אצל גוי בביתו של ישר׳ מותר ובביתו של גוי אסור
>
> Israelite artisans working with a non-Jew [on a non-Jewish festival day][75] — in a house of an Israelite, it is permitted, but in a house of a non-Jew, it is prohibited.[76]

This ruling allows for Jews to work shoulder to shoulder with non-Jews on the latter's festivals, as long as the labor is carried out in the house of a Jew. It is not non-Jews from which Jews should keep their distance, but rather, non-Jewish domiciles. According to the Tosefta, some places are "designated" for festive worship, and are therefore unfitting for

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[73] See also Reena Lynn Zeidman, "A View of Celebrations in Early Judaism: Tosefta Avodah Zarah (Ph.D. Diss.)" (University of Toronto, 1992), 370-75.

[74] Paul Mandel, "The Tosefta," in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. IV, ed. Steven Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 316–35, 324ff.

[75] I am assuming, based on the literary context, that this ruling refers to festival days.

[76] T. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3B.

coworking, while others are not. The greeting ruling in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 follows a similar logic.

C. Bavli Gittin 62a in Support of Reading 2

A *baraita* in b. Gittin 62a bolsters my endorsement of Reading 2 of t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2. The *sugya* in which the *baraita* is incorporated treats familiar topics. The talmudic discussion analyzes two rulings in m. Gittin 5:9, which allow for some social intimacy between Jews and non-Jews on account of "the ways of peace" (דרכי שלום). Thus, one may assist a non-Jew in agricultural labor during the Sabbatical year (מחזקין ידי גויים בשביעית) and also, generally speaking, extend greetings to non-Jews (ושואלין בשלומן מפני דרכי שלום).

The Bavli is puzzled by the Mishnah's explicit mention of both rulings. If, for the sake of maintaining a good rapport with one's neighbors, it is permissible for a Jew to aid a non-Jew and, effectively, to work the land on the Sabbatical year, then obviously basic gestures of politeness, such as greeting, should not be an issue. Why would the Mishnah teach both rulings (השתא אחזוקי מחזקינן שואלין בשלומן מיבעיא)? The *sugya* answers by quoting the Amora Rav Yeiva, who explains the necessity of stating both rulings by narrowing the reference point of the greeting prescription. True, Rav Yeiva agrees, you do not need the Mishnah to teach you the obvious, that greeting non-Jews is permissible. Nevertheless, to avoid misunderstandings, the Mishnah does need to teach that greeting is permissible *even* on non-Jewish festival days (לא נצרכא אלא ליום חגם). Rav Yeiva grounds his interpretation in a *baraita* (דתניא) that constitutes one of three tannaitic passages in the Bavli which feature the term *koved rosh*.

> לא יכנס אדם לביתו של עובד כוכבים ביום חגו ויתן לו שלום מצאו בשוק נותן לו בשפה רפה ובכובד ראש
>
> A person may not enter the home of a non-Jew on the day of his [the non-Jew's] festival and extend greetings to him. If he [the Jew]

> encounters him [the non-Jew] in the market, he may greet him with loose lips and with *koved rosh*.[77]

I do not know whether we are confronted here with a different version of the traditions of the Tosefta explored above, or with an interpretive reworking of them, but what is certain is that the *baraita* resembles, in language and content, rulings found in Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1. The *baraita* establishes two scenarios, one in which greeting is prohibited, and another, in which greeting may be issued, but with "heaviness of the head." The scenarios are differentiated based on *location* and the level of social intimacy which that implies. On days of non-Jewish festivals, it is prohibited, according to the text, to approach and greet a non-Jew proactively, but greeting is tolerated if the encounter is incidental. The *baraita* conflates the issues we observed in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 and 1:3. The topic of greeting and the articulation of when the social practice is prohibited and when it is permitted, but with "heaviness of the head," recalls *halakhah* 1:2 and 1:3A. The specification of the non-Jew's domicile and its legal significance, on the other hand, is more closely associated with 1:3B, the ruling concerning Israelite artisans.

In both the Tosefta's artisans ruling (1:3B) and the *baraita*, non-Jewish houses are marked as spaces designated for idolatrous worship on festival days. Both texts, moreover, juxtapose non-Jewish houses with other spaces, which are "safer," as far as non-Jewish religious rituals are concerned. In t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3B, we observe a dichotomy between domiciles, based on the house owner's identity (non-Jew/Jew). In b. Gittin 62a, on the other hand, the dichotomy is between private and public spaces; the non-Jew's house is contrasted with the marketplace (שוק). The religious neutrality that the *baraita* ascribes to the marketplace is questionable, though. In Roman Palestine, marketplaces were commonly sites of worship on festival days,[78] just as Bavli Gittin presupposes

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[77] B. Gittin 62a.

[78] L. de Ligt, *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire: Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-Industrial Society* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1993).

regarding the non-Jew's house.[79] Although the *baraita*'s term for "marketplace," *shuq*, is often used in rabbinic texts generically, there are tannaitic texts that evoke the word to refer to sites of public worship.[80] If the point of the ruling is that, upon encountering the non-Jew in a place *not* designated for festival worship, the Jew may extend a greeting to him, then perhaps the textual version that replaces "encounters him in the marketplace" (מצאו בשוק) with "on the road" (מצאו בדרך)[81] is more loyal to the realia of Roman Palestine, from which the *baraita* supposedly originated. Non-Jewish worship could have taken place on the road, but roads were not designated for public performances of rituals on festival days.

At any rate, the *baraita* in b. Gittin 62a sheds light on the question of the "designated place" in the Tosefta's greeting law. The *halakhah* determines that greeting a non-Jew is prohibited when the individual is encountered in *a place designated for worship during festivals*, maybe a fair.[82] This understanding ties together the different parts of t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 as it brings together the issue of contributing to the celebrating non-Jew's joy—by lightening one's head toward him—and the question of greeting. Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 seems to suggest that greeting contributes to the greeted individual's joy. Therefore, when greeting takes place, it must be accompanied with *koved rosh*. This heaviness of the head, I suggest, is evoked by the Tosefta as a countermeasure to the non-Jew's festive joy.

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[79] See also the interplay between m. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:4 and t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:5-6, as illuminated by Emmanuel Friedheim, "A New Look at the Historical Background of 'Mishna Aboda Zara' I.1," *Zion* (2006): 273–300, 291ff.

[80] See, e.g., Sifre Ba-Midbar §131 ("…**באותה שעה אדם יוצא לטייל בשוק**"). See additional sources in, Ze'ev Safrai, "Fairs in the Land of Israel in the Mishna and Talmud Period," *Zion* (1984): 139–58.

[81] In the manuscript St. Petersburg RNL Evr. I 187, accessible thorough The Saul and Evelyn Henkind Talmud Text Databank (http://www.lieberman-institute.com).

[82] Indeed, in y. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:4 (39d) our text is quoted amid a discussion of attending a festival fair (*yarid*). On fairs and idolatry, see, Yehudah B. Cohn, "The Graeco-Roman Trade Fair and the Rabbis," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131.2 (2011): 187–93.

V. Koved Rosh and Mourning

Lightness of the head is closely associated with joy and rejoicing, and heaviness of the head is evoked as antithetical to the experiences these emotions entail. Yet heaviness of the head is more than *qalut rosh*'s kryptonite. In rabbinic discourse, the term *koved rosh* not only curtails joy but also constitutes an active expression of mourning.

A. Idolatry and Mourning (Massekhet Semaḥot)

There are, more specifically, intriguing parallels between *halakhot* in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1 and legal fiats found in the so-called minor tractate, Massekhet Semaḥot.[83] For instance, t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:3B, which we have encountered above, allows Jewish artisans to work alongside a non-Jew during non-Jewish festivals, if the labor is carried out in the house of a Jew; but the text prohibits it if the jobsite is the house of a non-Jew. The same logic undergirds a ruling in Semaḥot 5:9. Laborers may work for a mourner *in their house*, but not in his.

A less obvious resemblance may be detected between the greeting law in t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2 and Semaḥot 1:7. According to Reading 2 of the Tosefta's ruling, one is forbidden to greet a non-Jew during a festival time when encountering him in a place designated for festive worship. Semaḥot, in turn, forbids Jews from exchanging greetings during the period of mourning over a fellow resident of a town. This is not a blanket prohibition, however. It applies only in a small village (עיר קטנה). In a larger settlement (עיר גדולה), the restriction is null. Both rulings are predicated on the subject's expectations. On days of non-Jewish festival, one ought to expect to encounter a rejoicing non-Jew in a place designated for celebrations of worship. In a small town where someone has passed,

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[83] For a discussion of the text's origin and dating, see the Introduction in, Dov Zlotnick, *The Tractate "Mourning" (Semahot)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). Zlotnick maintains that the text was redacted at the end of the third century; on the so-called Minor Tractates, see, M. B. Lerner, "The External Tractates," in *The Literature of the Sages Part One: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*, ed. Shmuel Safrai (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 367–409. Lerner is somewhat agnostic concerning Zlotnick's dating of Semaḥot.

likewise, one ought to expect to encounter a mourner. In both cases, extending a greeting can prompt joy in the greeted individual. The Tosefta prohibits greeting to ensure that Jews do not contribute to the festive rejoicing (recall m. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:1).[84] In Semaḥot, assumptions about the effect of greeting are similar, but the motivation is different. Greeting (in small towns) is prohibited to ensure that Jews do not hinder their fellows' mourning practices.

B. Mourning and ʿAmei Haʾaretz (Bavli Taʿanit 14b)

Elsewhere in the rabbinic corpus, greetings are performed with *koved rosh* in texts that negotiate the interface between mourners and their communities.[85] Bavli Taʿanit 14b[86] discusses the practice of communal fasting in response to a drought, a technique of pleading to God which is designed, in rabbinic law, as a ritual of collective mourning.[87] The text analyzes a vague mishnaic ruling (m. Taʿanit 1:7), which states that, as part of the process of communal fasting, exchanges of greetings must be

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[84] Perhaps the sentiment is even stronger, namely, that the rabbis envisioned mourning as a response to idolatrous (joyous) practice. Tertullian alludes to such an attitude when commenting on Romans 12:15 ("Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.") In his *De Idolatria*, 13:3, Tertullian writes: "let us mourn while the world rejoices, and we shall rejoice when afterwards the world mourns."

[85] See also the *baraita* in b. Moʿed Qattan 21b.

[86] The text in b. Taʿanit 14b is presented as a *baraita*, that is, a text originating from the tannaitic strata. Indeed, a parallel to the Bavli's text is found in Tosefta Taʿaniyot 3:12, and Yerushalmi Taʿaniyot 1:7 (64d) quotes another parallel *baraita*. However, aside from one textual witness of the Tosefta—the so-called *Tashbeṣ Qattan*, a thirteen-century halakhic treatise penned by Rabbi Shimshon ben-Ṣadoq (see §439)— the term *koved rosh* appears only in the Bavli's version of the text. This fact introduces complex diachronic considerations to our topic, which I will not address in this essay.

[87] See, S. Lowy, "The Motivation of Fasting in Talmudic Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 9.1–2 (1958): 19–38; Gary A. Anderson, *A Time to Mourn, a Time to Dance: The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991); David Levine, *Communal Fasts and Rabbinic Sermons - Theory and Practice in the Talmudic Period* (Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001) [in Hebrew]; Dov Herman, "The Different Approaches o f the Rabbis in Yavneh, Lod, and Galilee Regarding the Ninth of Av as Reflected in the Laws of the Day," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 73 (2002): 1–29 [Hebrew].

"diminished" (ממעטין). The Talmud considers a related ruling to ascertain what constitutes the required diminishing, since the Mishnah provides no concrete guidelines:

> תנו רבנן חברים אין שאילת שלום ביניהן עמי הארץ ששואלין מחזירין להם בשפה רפה ובכובד ראש והן מתעטפין ויושבין כאבלים...
>
> Our Sages taught: *ḥaverim* do not extend greetings among themselves. [But when] *ʿamei haʾaretz* extend greetings, [*ḥaverim* may] reply to them [but] with loose lips and with *koved rosh.* And [the *ḥaverim*] wrap themselves and sit as mourners…[88]

Among themselves, *ḥaverim*, followers of rabbinic *halakhah,* cease altogether from exchanging greetings. The *ḥaverim* behave "as mourners," and mourners do not receive or extend greetings. A greeting from one of the *ʿamei haʾaretz*, the Jewish *hoi polloi* who do not adhere to rabbinic law, is a different story.[89] Presumably, *ʿamei haʾaretz* are likely to fail to act "as mourners," or otherwise err in how they perform mourning. The exchange of greetings diminishes quantitatively, as opposed to not being practiced at all during the fasting period, since *ʿamei haʾaretz* greet *ḥaverim*. In such cases, according to the text, *ḥaverim* ought to reciprocate and greet their non-rabbinic fellow, but they also must diminish the quality of the greeting they extend back. Rabbinic Jews, *ḥaverim*, must broadcast that they are "as mourners" by acting in *koved rosh*, lowering their voice, and externalizing their state of mourning through emphatic ritual performance.

Heaviness of the head, in both b. Taʿanit 14b and t. ʿAvodah Zarah 1:2, is a technique for affective demarcation of identity. In both cases, the emotional calibration of the "other"—the *ʿam haʾaretz* or the non-Jew—is unfitting for the rabbinic Jew. In both cases, *koved rosh* alters the affective implications of greeting. In the talmudic *baraita*, heaviness of the head

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[88] B. Taʿanit 14b.

[89] On *ḥaverim* and *ʿamei haʾaretz*, see, Christine Hayes, "The 'Other' in Rabbinic Literature," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. Charlotte E. Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee (Cambribge University Press, 2007), 243–69, 260-2.

ensures the integrity of mourning *despite* reciprocating a greeting. In the *halakhah* in the Tosefta, likewise, *koved rosh* allows the Jew not to partake in the non-Jew's joy—not to lighten the head with him—even when interacting with him by means of extending a greeting. Heaviness and lightness of the head emerge, then, as antithetical affective states; *qalut rosh* is closely associated with joy, and *koved rosh* is linked with mourning.

VI. Conclusion: Prayer and the Unbearable Lightness of Qalut Rosh

Gary Anderson argues that rabbinic law envisions joy and grief not as "amorphous subjective" feelings,[90] but rather as "discrete behaviors," ritualized actions which envelope "symbolic significance."[91] Drawing on the works of anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz and Mary Douglas, Anderson asks how the "performative" sides of joy and grief are encoded within the broader cultural "system of symbols" of biblical and rabbinic discourse.[92] What goes overlooked in Anderson's thick description of joy and grief, however, is clear descriptions of emotional, embodied, and sensory elements of the "discrete," even ritualized "behaviors" that constitute these emotional states. Affect theorist Teresa Brennan spoke of emotions as "sensations that have found the right match in words."[93] Emotion terms of joy and mourning match the symbolic meanings or culturally contingent interpretations of learned, ritualized, or scripted activities and behaviors. But the affective experiences—sensations—which these actions, gestures, and encounters may generate in the body can "move, stick [to], and slide" between terms, objects, and contexts.[94]

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[90] Gary A. Anderson, "The Expression of Joy as a Halakhic Problem in Rabbinic Sources," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 80.3/4 (1990): 221–52, 224.

[91] Anderson, *A Time to Mourn*, 18.

[92] Ibid., 5; quoting, Clifford Geertz, "Religion As a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 87–125, 90.

[93] Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect*, 5.

[94] Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 14.

Heaviness and lightness of the head circulate in reverse affective orbits. Tosefta ʿAvodah Zarah shields off the joy of non-Jewish festivities using *koved rosh*. Tosefta Sukkah judges festive rejoicing as a fecund ground for *qalut rosh*. At the same time, heaviness and lightness of the head are not synonyms of discrete emotion-words. Yet if the two terms indeed signify bodily experiences that epitomize opposing emotional states— mourning (*koved rosh*) and rejoicing (*qalut rosh*)—then why do m. Berakhot 5:1A and t. Berakhot 3:21 demand "heaviness of the head" or prohibit "lightness of the head"? That *koved rosh* sticks to mourning surely does not mean that Mishnah Berakhot 5:1A requires worshipers to feel sad before praying. Tosefta Berakhot 3:21, likewise, cannot be said to exempt happy people from performing the *ʿAmidah* when it prohibits rising to prayer out of *qalut rosh*.

Some tentative observations may be offered. Prayer occupies a unique place in the rabbinic legal system. The rabbis viewed the fulfillment of most *miṣvot* as completely embedded within practitioners' daily lives and performed alongside ordinary activities.[95] This is not the case with the *ʿAmidah*. The rabbis required that the enactment of this ritual be distinguished from and privileged in comparison to quotidian actions.[96] According to rabbinic law, the obligation to pray occurs *in medias res* of common engagements, but the prayer-act itself must be bracketed off from the mundane realm.

At stake in sequestrating the *ʿAmidah* vis-à-vis the world is the worshiper's attention during the prayer-act. The term *koved rosh*, it may be recalled, is featured in the Mishnah within a text that deals with cultivating and sustaining attentiveness. The mishnah, in its entirety, reads:

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[95] Alexander Samely, *Forms of Rabbinic Literature and Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 145.

[96] My language here is inspired by, Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 74 and passim.

A. אין עומדין להתפלל אלא מתוך כובד ראש
B. חסידים הראשונים היו שוהים שעה אחת ומתפללים כדי שייכוונו את לבם למקום[97]
C. ואפילו המלך שואל בשלומו לא ישיבהו אפילו נחש כרוך על עקיבו לא יפסיק

A. One should rise to pray only out of heaviness of the head (*koved rosh*).
B. The early Pious Men (*ḥasidim ha-rishonim*) would linger for one hour and pray so that they may direct their heart to the Place.
C. Even if the king greets him, he should not greet him back; and even if a snake is wrapped around his heel, he should not stop.[98]

Regardless of *koved rosh*, this mishnah is difficult. As Alberdina Houtman notes, the members of this text connect somewhat awkwardly. The transitions from A to B to C are "not smooth, either in content or in grammar." [99] Operating from a higher critical perspective, Houtman writes that m. Berakhot 5:1 appears to be an "abbreviated version of a longer tradition" that is lost to us. [100] Despite the textual difficulties, however, a certain poetic synergy does characterize the juxtaposition of its three sections. From part A to C, the text encompasses worshiping bodies, from head to toe, or at least from head to heel. The ruling begins at the top of the body, demanding heaviness of the head. Next, our gaze tilts down toward the torso, with the hearts of the Pious Men. In its final stich, the text points to the bottom edge of the praying body: even if "a

[97] Some witnesses have, לאביהם שבשמים.

[98] M. Berakhot 5:1.

[99] Houtman, *Mishnah and Tosefta: A Synoptic Comparison of the Tractates Berakhot and Shebiit*, 104.

[100] Ibid., 103.

snake is wrapped around his heel," the mishnah orders, the ʿ*Amidah* must go on.

It is easy enough to classify the corporeal map drawn by the three parts of m. Berakhot 5:1 as a happy coincidence.[101] But for the purpose of concluding the discussion of *koved* and *qalut rosh*, I suggest taking up the text as an invitation to ponder the intersection of emotion, body, and attention in the rabbinic ʿ*Amidah*.

Heaviness and lightness of the head are not synonyms of discrete emotion words. They are terms that denote contrasting bodily experiences whose affective features are shared, according to rabbinic phenomenology, with "rejoicing" and "mourning." In rabbinic texts, joy, especially festive rejoicing, involves excessive bodily activation and constant engagement with other actors. The movement of rejoicing is light. Mourning, by contrast, entails the retreat of the body and its restrained activation in terms of the sensory inputs that stimulate it, the substance it consumes, the movements it undergoes, and its interactions with other bodies. Mourning is heavy, spatially fixed, and slow.

In rabbinic law, the performance of the ʿ*Amidah* requires slowing down, ceasing from ongoing activities, pausing the body's movement. While the gerund ʿ*Amidah* means "Standing," in the context of prayer, the term is not to be understood as the opposite of sitting.[102] Rather, ʿ*Amidah* stands in opposition to walking, working, and other purpose-oriented

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[101] However, as recent studies teach us, bodily concerns are hardly peripheral to the rabbinic vision of prayer. Uri Ehrlich demonstrated the centrality of an elaborated "gestural system" to the rabbis' fashioning of the ʿ*Amidah*. Dalia Marx problematized the scholarly tendency to "privilege the mental-cognitive aspects of prayer and relegate the corporeal to a lesser status." Most recently, Rachel R. Neis illuminated "physical and spatial resonances of phrases related to direction or orientation" in early rabbinic discussions of the ʿ*Amidah* and other rituals. See, Uri Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language of Prayer: A New Approach to Jewish Liturgy* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Dalia Marx, "The Behavioral and the Mental in Jewish Worship: Is There A Hierarchy?," in *On Wings of Prayer: Sources of Jewish Worship; Essays in Honor of Professor Stefan C. Reif on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday.*, ed. Nuria Calduch-Benage, Michael W. Duggan, and Dalia Marx (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 285–97, 285; Rachel Rafael Neis, "Directing the Heart: Corporeal Language and the Anatomy of Ritual Space," in *Placing Ancient Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 131–66, 131.

[102] Ehrlich, *The Nonverbal Language of Prayer*, 14.

motions. The kind of detachment that the *ʿAmidah* calls for, which we might call embodied attention, is congruent with rabbinic practices of mourning. This form of attentiveness cannot, however, bear the lightness of rejoicing.