English Abstract:

The *Qedushta'ot* of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman

Al-Sanjary for the Festivals

Rabbi Shelomo Birabbi Amar Al-Sanjary is one of the liturgical poets whose name is known only as a result of having access to the Cairo Genizah. Despite the fact that his liturgy appears very frequently in the Genizah manuscripts, during the first years of studying the Genizah, scholars did not realize the centrality of Shelomo Suleiman's work in the annals of Hebrew liturgical poetry and were content with a few sporadic publications of some of his poems. It was M. Zulai who laid the solid foundations for the study of Shelomo Suleiman's liturgy, and a number of his postulations are valid to this very day. During World War II, Zulai worked studiously on gathering Shelomo Suleiman's liturgical poems, thereby realizing how extremely prolific the poet had been (he tended to attribute approximately one thousand poems to Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman) and how frequently his compositions are copied in the Genizah manuscripts. In the publication of his findings, Zulai also emphasized the wide variety of the liturgical genres that had been composed by Shelomo Suleiman. In addition, the distinguished scholar also noted the poet's Babylonian origin, from the town of Sindjar in northern Iraq, and mentioned that his denomination of 'Al-Sanjary' implies that he had left his homeland and settled in Israel or in Egypt. As for the period he worked in, Zulai deliberated between a number of contradictory findings and did not reach a final conclusion.

J. Schirman also pondered on the question of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's origin and believed that he was active in Babylon or in its surroundings. He postulated that Rabbi Shelomo cannot be placed as early as the ninth century but, on the other hand, he

claimed that such a placement can not be later than the first half of the eleventh century.

In his book *Hebrew Liturgical Poetry in the Middle Ages*, E. Fleischer made Shelomo Suleiman prominent as the leading artist among the Eastern Era poets and described him in words that have characterized the poet in the minds of scholars ever since: "a respectable but overly prolific poet" (p. 324). Fleischer noted the classical structure of Shelomo Suleiman's *qedusta'ot* as well as the prevalence of their pattern ornamentation. As for Shelomo Suleiman's *yozer* structures, Fleischer claimed that they constitute a perfect example of the positive attributes of the liturgical poetry in the Eastern Liturgical Era: they are thematically sparse, their language is simple, their affinity to the Sages' homilies is weak and they excel only in their emotional lyric tone. In other studies on the subject, Fleischer argued that Shelomo Suleiman preceded Rav Sa'adya Gaon and was active in the second half of the ninth century. In fact, the structure of Shelomo Suleiman's compositions greatly affected Rav Sa'adya's liturgy.

The publication of *Mahazor Erez Yisrael* in 1987 by J. Yahalom revealed the important place Shelomo Suleiman has in the codex and made the scholars aware of the extremely high literary level of his *qedushta'ot.*

In the early 1980's, S. Elizur noted Shelomo Suleiman's affinity to the Israeli custom of reading the Torah. This revelation was the first in a series of findings showing that Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions were intimately connected to the early prayer customs I the Land of Israel.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta* for Passover ואורץ אצהיל בשירות מנושקות׳ was published in its entirety by V. Padeva in 1989. N. Katsumata recently compiled two of

the poet's *sidrei avoda* and a number of his *ma'archot yozer* were published by S. Elizur in some of his articles.

Up to now, the evaluations and conclusions regarding Shelomo Suleiman's work were based on a partial reading of his *qedushta'ot* and his *ma'archot yozer*. The majority of the poet's *qedushta'ot* has not yet been published in a scientific edition and they have not been studied comprehensively and in depth, a study which may reveal processes and developments in the *qedushta* type at the beginning of the later Eastern Era of the Hebrew liturgy. This study wants to present Hebrew liturgy scholars and lovers with a scientific edition of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* for the festivals of the year, including textual variations, interpretation and a comprehensive introduction. The edition is based on the manuscripts in the Cairo Genizah that were identified as containing segments of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman *qedushta'ot,* which are over three hundred in number. My study focuses on Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* for the festivals of the year, but one must remember that the series of *yozrot* composed by the poet is worthy of study in its own right. This series has great significance in the world of the Late Eastern liturgy since it constitutes the foundation for all the following *machzoeri yozrot.*

A comprehensive survey of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's work in the *qedushta* genre focused on two festivals: the three Pilgrim Festivals and the Day of Atonement. We have twelve compositions written by the poet for the Pilgrim Festivals: five for the Passover period (the Sabbath before Passover, Passover day and the seventh day of Passover, three for the festival of *Shavuoth* (three *qedushta'ot* and two *sidrei olam* that are meant to combine with them or with other of the poet's *qedushta'ot* that are lost to us) and four for *Succoth* (two *qedushta'ot* for the first day of *Succoth*, one for the second day of *Succoth* and one for *Shemini Atzeret*).

It seems that the congregants for whom Shelomo Suleiman served as a poet and a cantor loved hearing his *qedushta'ot* on festivals, as they were written in light poetic language, which expressed the joy of the festival lyrically and which recounted legends and homilies known to every Jew. Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's four *qedushta'ot* for Passover poetize the verses of *Shir Ha'shirim*, as does the magnificent *qedushta* he wrote for *Succoth*. This seems to hint at the poets' and the prayer congregants' fondness for liturgy based on verses from *Shir Ha'shirim*, which depicts nature images of the Land of Israel and conveys the throes of lovers' hearts.

As aforementioned, the second focus of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's activity was the Day of Atonement. We have two of the poet's magnificent *qedushta'ot* for *shaharit* and *mussaf* of that day, a remainder of a comprehensive *rashut* (perhaps for *ne'ila*) and three splendid *sidrei avoda.*

However, it may be that we can learn more from the lack of liturgical series for certain annual festivals than from the quality of his existing *qedushta'ot*. Obviously, we must always bear in mind the possibility that a significant part of the poet's work is lost to us, but in any case, it is surprising that we did not find any liturgical poems by Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman for the New Moon or for the festivals of Hanukka and Purim. Perhaps in those communities where the poet served only the fixed form of prayer was used in those festivals or perhaps ancient compositions had a permanent place in the people's prayer customs.

It should also be noted that similarly to the other liturgical poets in the Land of Israel from the times of Rabbi El'azar Birabbi Kilir onwards, we did not find any liturgical poems of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman for regular Sabbaths, in which the Torah is read in an annual cycle. Almost all of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* we have are intended for major festivals, and except for the *qedushta* which was probably meant

for the Sabbath of *va'yehi bahazi ha'layla*, we have no compositions for special Sabbaths such as the three *Shabbatot Puranut*, the seven *Shabbatot Nechama*, *Shabbat Shuva* or the Sabbaths of the four *parshiyot*. The only *qedushta* of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman that is intended for a Sabbath and not for a central festival is the *qedushta* for mourning, a fragment of which is found in one manuscript. This *qedushta* is the only available proof for the fact that Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman wrote *qedushta'ot* for Sabbaths and not only for festivals.

A large part of the study is devoted to examining the attribution and designation of compositions identified as written by Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman. The designations of the *qedushta'ot* published in my study, i.e. the time of year and the prayer in which the *qedushta'ot* were intended, are usually clear. The attribution of the *qedushta'ot* is also not problematic, except for two cases, one *qedushta* for Passover (4) and one for Passover on a Sabbath (5), where the attribution to Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman is questionable. The attribution and designation of the *sidrei olam, sidrei divrin* and *sidrei avoda* written by the poet are also clear, except for the *seder avoda* ['....] זכור מילתי', whose attribution to the poet is still doubtful. On the other hand, the conclusions of the discussion of the *rahitim*, which were previously identified as compositions of Rabbi Shelomo, are still far from being conclusive. I raise some doubts regarding the original attribution and designation of three widespread *rahitim*: ('וירד אדון משמי ערבות' [כ] and 'וירד איש בנביאים מיוחד' [יח] ,'סיסרא אפס' [ח[), and the attribution of one *seliha* and two single *silukim* to the poet is uncertain.

The examination of the patterns of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* is especially significant for understanding his place in the annals of the holy Hebrew liturgical poetry in The East, since it reveals two opposite tendencies that were the sources of the formulation of the poet's *qedushta'ot*. On the one hand, one may point

at typical classical patterns in the *qedushta'ot*, and the impression is that the poet remained loyal to the ancient poetic ways of writing and that he is a typical classical Israeli poet. On the other hand, the *qedushta'ot* published in this edition also reveal clear post-classical characteristics, suggesting a work mode that perceives the pattern and composition of the *qedushta* in a way totally different from the conventions of the ancient liturgical compositions.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's 'classical' facets are evident first and foremost in the maintenance of the overall frame of the *qedushta*. His *qedushta'ot* are composed of three main sections: the first contains the *magen,* the *mehaye* and the *meshalesh*; the second is composed of the 4 and 5 poems; and the third contains poem 6, *rahitim* and a *siluk.* The internal structure of the sections is also composed in the classical *qedushta* pattern: the *magen* and *mehaye* units include the body of the units, strings of verses and a closing string, whereas the unit of the *meshalesh* usually ends with a string of verses. Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's poems 5 are usually in the *qiqlar* pattern in accordance with what is prevalent in many classical *qedushta'ot*.

The fact that Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's poems retain the overall framework of the classical *qedushta* is far from obvious. Around the poet's times, strong forces acted against the complex and balanced structure of the classical *qedushta*. The origins and action modes of these destructive forces were varied: some derived from changes in the prayers and in the artistic taste of the prayer congregants; others developed as a result of the strengthening of the Babylonian custom of an annual cycle of reading the Torah; and some were due to the revival of the fixed formulae for public prayer. These processes resulted in a complete disintegration of the classical structure of the *qedushta* and its patterns, the creation of *qedushta'ot qil'ayim,* the flourishing of the *strophe* and *pizmon* pattern and an unprecedented rise in the creation of *rehatim*, small

poem segments whose liturgical context is unclear. It must be reiterated that these radical processes are not even remotely echoed in the compositions of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman, who continued to compose entire *qedushta'ot* in the archaic patterns. Moreover, the poet consistently rejected any possibility to vary and innovate in the patterns of his *qedushta'ot* and preferred to use choir patterns that were already adopted by poets preceding him.

However, the structural and pattern-related innovations in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* should not be ignored. The fact that the poet created *rashuyot* for some of his *qedushta'ot* attests to the fact that he did not view them as a total replacement for the fixed prayers, but understood that his compositions are an ornament and an expansion of these prayers. This is why the poet felt the need to gain permission from God and from his audience before he started singing his compositions. It is also clear that the poet did not understand clearly the delicate system of balances existing between the different sections and components of the ancient classical *qedushta,* and that his understanding of the structure of the *qedushta* was compositional on the verge of pedanticism. He did not differentiate between the first section of the *qedushta* and the other sections, and was liberal in pattern ornamentation such as scriptural verse openings and closings on the bodies of the *magen,* the *mehaye* and the *meshalesh* as well.

It seems that the *shlemut kerova* we found in two of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* are an expression of an artificial compositional view of the structure of the *qedushta* m. It would not have occurred to an ancient Israeli poet to poetize the final blessings of the *amidah*, since, by its very definition, the *qedushta* only poetizes two and a half of its blessings. It could be the case that here the poet imitated a tradition of composing *qedushta'ot sheva* that poetize the verses of S*hir Ha'shirim.*

The poet's post-classical facets are also evident in the way he formed the 4 poems in his *qedushta'ot*, their *rahitim* and their *silukim*. Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's 4 poems are usually constructed of four column rhymes, a number of his *rahitim* and *silukim* are constructed in strophic patterns and the patterns of these poems are also more complex and complicated than what was common in the ancient Israeli liturgical poetry. However, it must be noted that a tendency to organize the 4 poems, their *rahitim* and their *silukim* in some regularity is already apparent in the *qedushta'ot* of some classical poets.

Another post-classical characteristic of Rabbi Shelomo's compositions is the way he organized the contents of his *qedushta'ot*: the poetic process characterizing several classical and pre-classical *qedushta'ot*, a process based on a movement from the obscure and implied to the clear and explicit is almost never apparent in Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot*.

However, we must also consider the possibility that the described phenomena do not derive from developments in Eastern liturgical poetry but are connected to Rabbi Shelomo's Babylonian origin and to the fact that his poetic liturgical perceptions were not childhood knowledge, but such that developed from the study, absorption and internalization influenced by an adult learner whose views had been formed earlier in his life.

In my study, the pattern ornamentations, rendered an important component by Rabbi Shelomo in most of his compositions, are examined individually. The alpha-betical acrostic is found in Rabbi Shelomo's liturgy even in poems freed from its impositions in the tradition of classical liturgy, and the poet's tendency to play around with the alpha-betical order organizing his compositions is apparent.

The poet's frequency of signatures is somewhat higher than that of other classical poets and he tended to expand his signature form. However, he did not exaggerate in this as did some poets in the late Eastern liturgical era. The poet's full signature is שלמה סולימן בירבי עמר יזכה לחיי עולם הבא The truth is that this version of the signature is rare in Rabbi Shelomo's compositions and the more frequent form is *Shelomo Suleiman* with the characteristic benediction יזכה לחיי עולם הבא. His denomination, *Al-Sanjary,* never appears in his signature in his *qedushta'ot* and it appears only in some of their titles.

The poet usually kept to the classical liturgical tradition regarding the parts of the *qedushta* where the signature is interweaved, but in contrast to what is customary in classical *qedushta'ot,* the 4 poems in Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot* are also organized according to a part of his signature (usually יזכה לחיי עולם הבא) and his signature also appears in the *silukim.*

Anadiplosis is also a frequent pattern ornamentation in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot*. The poet's perseverance in using anadiplosis throughout three large compositions, for Passover (3), for the Day of Atonemenet (22) and for *Succoth* (28) is especially impressive. In most of his *qedushta'ot*, Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman used pattern ornamentation based on scriptural verse openings and closings. Five of the poet's *qedushta'ot* (four for Passover and one for *Succoth*) are especially worthy of mention as they are entirely based on verse openings from *Shir Hashirim.* In addition, one should mention the huge *qedushta* the poet composed for *shaharit* on the Day of Atonement (21; 26), which contains a sequence of scriptural verse openings from the book of *Psalms.*

Scriptural verse openings and closings impart prestige onto the poetic composition and help the poet organize the chain of his poems, but they also impose a heavy

burden on his shoulders: he must integrate the scriptural quote, whose language and order are fixed, into his poem and write lyric sentences with logical meanings and sequences. Liturgical poets of the late Eastern period often failed in this task and in their poems, we often find scriptural verse openings that simply do not match the following poetic column and scriptural verse closings that are not connected to the string they conclude. Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman, in contrast, possessed the talent of linguistic flexibility and, in ways discussed in detail in the study almost always managed to integrate the scriptural verse openings and closings in his compositions in a way that did not render the gap between the two poetic levels discernible.

However, the accumulation of the scriptural verse openings and closings seem to have caused the poet to eventually deviate from the primary subjects he had started to deal with, usually the day for which the *qedushta* was composed, and to deal with general abstract issues in whose arrangement a wide variety of scriptural openings and closings can be integrated. Thus did the scriptural verse openings and closings restrict the poet's movements and reduce the wealth of the contents of his compositions.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions revealed a relatively new phenomenon, namely the use of *siyomot mikraiyot metoamot*, i.e. interweaving verses in the liturgy while severing them from their original scriptural meaning and adapting them to their new meaning and context. By doing so, Rabbi Shelomo continued a tendency begun in the compositions of Rabbi Pinhas Ha'cohen, which Rav Sa'adya Gaon developed in a very creative manner.

Another pattern ornamentation appearing in some of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's poem systems is fixed words whose meaning relates to a central aspect of the festival for which they were composed such as the fixed words במוסף and בצהרים which are

interspersed alternately in each of the strings of the *qedushta* for *mussaf* on the Day of Atonement (22).

An examination of the pattern ornamentations in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* reveals that the poet did not create any new ornamentations of this sort. His uniqueness in this area lies, on the one hand, in the high frequency and the consistency in which he used pattern ornamentations in his works as well as in the liberty he took to use such ornamentations in the important parts of the *qedushta* and, on the other hand, in the extreme competence and linguistic flexibility he showed in the task of interweaving the pattern ornamentations in the strings of his *qedushta'ot.*

The study of Rabbi Shelomo's poetic ways teaches us about his way of using denominations in his *qedushta'ot.* Although most of his denominations are, as expected, borrowed from the repertoire of denominations collected by his predecessor classical and pre-classical poets, we sometimes encounter surprising innovative denominations in his poems. The denominations the poet granted Biblical figures such as חורש צמדים for Cain and נשא עיניו והשקיף for Abraham are interesting and often amusing.

Generally speaking, well-developed linguistic depiction is rare in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's works, but his poetic talent led him to create renewed similes and metaphors, some of which are especially beautiful. Noah, the only righteous in his evil generation is likened to לפיד באשונים (13, col. 39) and Abraham, who takes Issac to from his mother's arms to be sacrificed, is described as one who צדו מקן קנון (14, col. 421). At times, the poet's linguistic depiction is expanded to span an entire string. A salient deviation from the poet's tendency not to use many developed linguistic depictions is found especially in the monumental *seder olam* אז קדם נבראים (14). The cause of the change in the poet's attitude to linguistic depictions seems to derive from

the classical tradition of composing *sidrei olam* for *Shavuoth*, the central one of which is likening the Torah to a reluctant bride who wishes to remain by her father' s side and refuses to marry men who do not meet with her approval. The traditional mode of composing *sidrei olam* with a central allegorical motif is what may have led the poet to interweave a relative abundance of well-developed linguistic depictions in his *qedushta'ot*.

Parallelisms are quite rare in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* and most of them appear in the *seder avoda* אאזרה גבורה (24), whose quadric rhythm is amenable to direct and contrastive parallelisms. On the other hand, Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's liturgy shows a renewed awareness of the poetic license granted to a poet to play with language and to please his audience with sound patterns such as alliteration and puns. Dramatizing exciting situations is not a significant component in Rabbi Shelomo's liturgy, which is in contrast to the tendency prevalent in the late era of classical liturgy. However, in one area of his compositions, namely in the *sidrei olam* for *Shavuoth*, the poet could not ignore the traditional conventions of the dramatic formulation of the liturgical genre, and in this case too did the poet exhibit his poetic talent.

In the study of liturgy it is customary to agree that the rhyming norms of the classical Israeli liturgy were based on two principles: complete identity in the final syllable of the rhyming foot and the use of two of the stem's consonants in rhyming, albeit interrupted rhyming. However, the latter principle is not consistently extant in many liturgical works of the classical era.

Up to now, the study of liturgy tended to believe that the later Eastern liturgy waived the classical rhyming norms and was content with rhyming in which the last syllables of the rhymed word was identical, be the syllable open or closed. According to this

belief, the addition of vowels and consonants to the rhyme was considered an occasional ornamentation and not a deliberate tendency in the later Eastern liturgy.

An examination of the corpus of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's liturgy reveals his total adherence to the first principle of classical rhyming, namely that of complete identity in the last syllable of the rhymed foot. As for the requirement of the participation of two of the stem's consonants in the rhyming, Rabbi Shelomo tended to observe it, but without any strict systematicity. At times, the poet's *qedushta'ot* contain rhymes with alternate consonants and vowels. Although these rhyming phenomena may attest to the pronunciation of Hebrew in the poet's times, it is more probable that Rabbi Shelomo rhymed in such a manner as a result of examining classical liturgical poems and not as a reflection of the pronunciation patterns of his times. Rhyming methods characteristic of Babylonian poets were also found in the poet's *qedushta'ot*, which attests to the fact that he did not forget the linguistic heritage of his family's place of origin.

The unique rhyming mode of the *seder* אז קדם נבראים (14) show that Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman realized that rhyming can be a pattern ornamentation just like any other and that its role as a organizing and regulating factor is not obligatory. This area in the corpus of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* is the central innovative factor in the rhyming of his compositions, which is in contrast to his usual relative adherence to the rhyming conventions of classical liturgical poetry.

As is well known, the classical Israeli liturgical poets used to write their compositions in a meter with an identical number of words with a strong stress in each column. The principles of this system are rather vague and at times, they render determining the exact type of meter in which the composition was written difficult. In the Late Eastern Era, the poets were even more flexible in the rhythm of the columns of their poems,

sometimes so much so that it seems that they paid no attention to the symmetrical balance between them. An examination of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions shows that he too was affected by this tendency. Although in most cases the stress rhythm in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions can be discerned by utilizing the combination freedom enabled by the flexibility of the rhythm, the accumulation of deviations sometimes render the definition of a regular and organized meter in his compositions rather difficult. Only in very few of his *qedushta'ot,* and not in the most splendid among them, did the composer maintain a rather strict metric balance.

The language of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions is basically similar to that of the Israeli liturgical poetry. Most of the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of the liturgical poetry, which are unique to this genre, are clearly apparent in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions, in the liturgical vocabulary, the liturgical morphology and the liturgical syntax, which makes liturgical language unique. Although the linguistic characteristics of the late Eastern liturgical poetry, are usually apparent in the poet's compositions, the most salient one being the relatively low frequency of original linguistic innovations and frequent use of familiar liturgical phrases, Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions also reveal new linguistic forms, which attest to his creative abilities in the domain of language as well, a fact that distinguishes him from most of his contemporaries.

The vocabulary in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions is primarily scriptural, as has always been customary in Hebrew liturgical poetry. However, a linguistic stratum based on the language of the Sages, that of the *Mishna,* the *Tossefta*, the *Talmud* and the homilies is quite prominent in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot*, perhaps more so than in his predecessors' compositions. The poet did not use Greek words very often, but Aramaic words are highly prevalent in his compositions. He usually

used Aramaic stems very productively, using them to invent Hebrew-meter verbs and nouns.

Rabbi Shelomo's poetic style is usually characterized by a wealth of content based on scriptural and homily sources and by a high liturgical register, but his style is clear and his language does not present clues and riddles that must be solved in order to understand the meaning of the composition.

However, in some of his *sidrei olam*, especially those for *Shavuoth*, the poet seems to have found it hard to abide by the pattern demands to which he subjected himself, and, therefore, he found himself struggling with the language, inventing strange and astonishing linguistic forms and writing poetic sentences whose syntax is far fetched and inarticulate.

A comparative examination of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's style and that of late Eastern poets reveals that although the linguistic phenomena involved in the content impoverishment, the shallowness and the rhyming in the compositions of the pets of that era is evident in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's compositions as well, the low frequency of these phenomena renders them negligible in his works.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's origin was, as his denomination attests, from the Sanjar province in Babylon, but an examination of his *yozrot* has revealed his affinity to the Israeli prayer and Torah reading customs. This edition of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* usually confirms the poet's basic connections to the ancient Israeli prayer and Torah reading customs. However, the attribution of additional *qedushta'ot* to the poet and the reconstruction of the original version of other *qedushta'ot* reveals a more complex picture and shows that the poet also had a clear affinity to Babylonian prayer and Torah reading customs. Therefore, is seems that in addition to Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's activities among the inhabitants of Israel, who adhered to Israeli customs,

he also served in communities whose Torah reading customs were Babylonian and in at least one community of Israelis residing outside of the borders of Israel.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* provide evidence for interesting prayer customs such as physically supporting the cantor, preventing the cantor from sleeping on the night of the Day of Atonement, saying *selihot* in *asseret yemei teshuva* and reciting the *seder avoda* in *shaharit* of the Day of Atonement.

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* deal mainly with subjects that have a clear affinity to the festivals for which they were intended such as the Exodus from Egypt, the breaking of the Red Sea and the giving of the Torah. The homilies in the poet's *qedushta'ot* are well-known legends pertaining to events connected to the themes of the festival such as the fight among the mountains on who will get the privilege of being the one upon which the Torah would be given to the Israelites, God's attempts to give the Torah to the sons of Esau and Ishmael and the angels' attempts to prevent Moses from getting the Torah.

Many of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* devote much space to describing the sufferings in the Diaspora and the longing for deliverance. They contain depictions of the ingathering of the exiles, the construction of The Temple and the subjugation of peoples in the days of the Messiah.

In his *qedushta'ot,* Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman tended to present lists, countings and temporal calculations originating in the Sages' writings such as the list of Sabbatical Years, which is at the center of the *seder olam* שבעה דברים קדומים (13) the ten descents of the Divine Presence, which is the subject of the *siluk* for Shavuoth (17) and the different 'tens' counted in the *qiqlar* in the *qedushta* for Shavuoth (10). An examination of the components of these lists and a comparison between them and

those in the Sages' homilies is a complex task, which is significant in determining the sources Rabbi Shelomo had before him.

Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot* convey little information about the poet's time and place and about major events in his life. In any case, the *seder olam* שבעה דברים קדומים seems to imply that in his times, the Israeli Yeshiva was led by a family of priests. Other interesting subject matters in the poet's *qedushta'ot* are the 'sins' of the fathers of the world appearing in the *sidrei olam* for Shavuoth and the list of those nullifying the Ten Commandments in the composition (יט) אנכי אימנתי לך.

Identifying the homily sources of Rabbi Shelomo's compositions is a complex task, which requires a separate study. In my study, evidence of the poet's affinity to *Pirqei de Rabbi Eliezer* from the domains of structure, contents and linguistics was deemed to be sufficient and demonstrates how the poet presents traditions regarding scriptural events that are unique to this homily. An examination of the poet's affinity to the Babylonian *Talmud* revealed that sermons and subjects originating in the *Talmud* are evident in Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot* but it is hard to prove that the poet used the *Talmud* as a source for these homilies since it is highly likely that these sermons were composed in Israel. The ways in which Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman adapted his homily sources are also examined in this study, including presenting the homily sources by using clues, adapting the homily narrative to the poet's own language and presenting the homily source in its original wording. I also presented the poet's custom of providing parallel homily sources on the same subject, even when they are explicitly contradictory. In this chapter, I also presented homilies appearing in the poet's *qedushta'ot* whose sources are unknown and homilies that seem to have been composed by the poet himself.

In my study, I also examined content-related connections between Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot* and the preceding liturgical tradition. I mention a number of areas of possible influence of Rabbi Elazar Birabbi Kilir's liturgy on Rabbi Shelomo's *qedushta'ot*, and present the affinity between Rabbi Yohanan Hacohen Birabbi Yehoshua's *seder* for Shavuoth אז טרם נוסדו ארץ ושמים and Rabbi Shelomo's *seder* for Shavuoth.

The influence of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta'ot* on later liturgical poets was not examined in depth since following the time of Rabbi Shelomo, creative activity in the *qedushta* declined sharply. In this context, Rabbi Yosf Al-Baradani's imitation of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *qedushta* for *Succoth* (28) is worthy of mention. In any case, Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's liturgical poetry had great influence on the formulation of the *ma'archot yozer* in the late Eastern liturgy. The patterns of the *ma'archot yozer* formulated by the poet, be they form or size related, were a frame of reference for all the following Eastern liturgical poets, whether they adhered to his mode or deviated from it to a small or great extent. A number of *rahitim* with developed patterns composed by Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman constituted a role model for later liturgical poets, examples of which are presented in my study.

The study also deals with Rabbi Shelomo's time and the location of his activities. The poet's *qedushta'ot* clearly attest to the fact that he was active when the sons of Ishmael ruled the Israelites. One string in the *qedushta* Rabbi Shelomo wrote for *shaharit* of the Day of Atonement (21) points to the fact that at that time, the Jews longed to access the Temple Mount but they were denied permission to do so. However, since we do not know exactly when Jews were forbidden to go to the location of The Temple, this string does not provide concrete evidence for the poet's precise time of activity. As for the location of his activities, as aforementioned, the

study of liturgical poetry shows the affinity of Rabbi Shelomo's compositions to the Israeli prayer and Torah reading customs, which may suggest that the poet resided in Israel and served in a community adhering to Israeli customs. However, the findings of this study reveal that Rabbi Shelomo was connected to a community whose Torah reading customs were Babylonian and to a community of non-Israelis. Therefore, it is not possible to claim with any certainty that the poet spent his entire life in Israel.

Apart from these general findings, I did not succeed in finding clear clues regarding the time and place of the Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's activities. In any case, the poet's *qedushta'ot* clearly attest to the fact that he served as cantor in a community in which his *qedushta'ot* were used.

The most substantial anchor regarding the time and place of Rabbi Shelomo is his affinity to Rav Sa'adya Gaon's liturgical poetry. M. Zulai examined the series of *yozrot* signed שלמה in the Genizah, and discussed their attribution to Rav Sa'adya. He explains that Rav Sa'adya signed these *yozrot* שלמה as in his time it was customary to compose liturgical poets for cantors who did not have the creative abilities to compose them on their own and to interweave the name of the cantor who was going to sing these compositions into the poems. J. Tobi discovered additional *ma'archot yozer* from this series that are also signed שלמה סולימן and doubted whether Shelomo Suleiman, who may be the poet Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman Al-Sanjry, was Rav Sa'adya's cantor or whether Rav Sa'adya knowingly imitated Rabbi Shelomo's original *yozrot* in order to prevent the congregation's using them since they were not to his literary taste.

Conduction an exhaustive examination of the components of Rav Sa'adya's *yozrot*, E. Fleischer pointed at Rav Sa'adya's ways of imitating the patterns of Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *yozrot* but tended to argue that Rav Sa'adya imitated these patterns of

Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman in the domain of *ma'archot yozer* in order to create a replica of Rabbi Shelomo's *yozrot*. In my opinion, the signatures of שלמה and שלמה סולימן in Rav Sa'adya's *yozrot* derives from the custom of signing the liturgical poems with the name of the cantors singing the compositions written by the poets and it is likely that this שלמה is the poet Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman. I believe it is improbable to assume that there were two Shelomo Suleiman's, one Rav Sa'adya's cantor and the other the composer of the series of *yozrot* according to whose pattern Rav Sa'adya composed his own *yozrot.* It is more likely that the name refers to one person, from whose *yozrot* the Rav Sa'adya learned how to compose a *ma'arechet yozer.* But Rav Sa'adya's great creative talents and the power of his assertive and energetic personality resulted in the cantor's singing the compositions of his 'student' to the public.

Rabbi Shelomo and Rav Sa'adya's liturgical poems counting the 'nullifiers' of the Ten Commandments also reveal the way Rav Sa'adya imitated Rabbi Shelomo's poems. However, in my study I present clues for the fact that Rabbi Shelomo was slightly influenced by Rav Sa'adya's liturgy in the linguistic domain as well as from his hermeneutic views in the polemic with the Karaites. It is probable that Rav Sa'adya Gaon was familiar with the heritage of the Israeli liturgical poetry and became familiar with Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's *yozrot* when he resided in Tiberias among the *Ba'alei Messurah*, linguists and liturgical poets in the second decade of the tenth century. At that time, Rav Sa'adya may have been in Rabbi Shelomo Suleiman's company, adopted the formulation patterns according to which Rabbi Shelomo used to create his *ma'archot yozer*, imparted to Rabbi Shelomo some of his linguistic knowledge and his views regarding the controversy with the Karaites, and composed *ma'archot yozer* which were given to Rabbi Shelomo to sing before the local prayer

congregants. If this is the case, I propose that the time and place of the poet's activities was Tiberias in the first quarter of the tenth century.

Rabbi Shelomo, then, was a liturgical poet whose main strengths lay in two areas. On the one hand, he had a phenomenal creative longevity that enabled him to compose huge liturgical works that were constructed according to strict pattern frameworks, and on the other hand, he was gifted with creativity and linguistic flexibility that enabled him to interweave his liturgical poems with a variety of pattern ornamentations, to invent fresh denominations, to portray well-developed depictions and to present a great wealth of contents of the spiritual world of the Israeli Jews in the ninth and tenth centuries in a clear, pleasant and intelligent lyric style.

From this and many other aspects, this corpus of *qedushta'ot* is an important contribution to all lovers of holy Hebrew poetry.